



SOTO ZEN JOURNAL

DHARMA EYE

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A Greetings

Rev. Tenyu Fukagawa

Director of the Department of
Education and Dissemination
Sotoshu Headquarters

I would like to begin this issue of *Dharma Eye* No. 51 with a few words.

My name is Tenyu Fukagawa. As of October 21, 2022, I was appointed as the Director of the Department of Education and Dissemination at Administrative Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism (Sotoshu Shumuchō). I am deeply humbled by this important responsibility, which is the foundation of Soto Zen, and I would like to ask for your continued guidance and love for the Dharma in the future. I hope that all of you who read the Soto Zen Buddhism International Center's newsletter, "*Dharma Eye*", are enjoying continued good health and prosperity.

Although the number of people infected with the new coronavirus, which began spreading in 2022, has risen and fallen, I feel that people's lives are gradually regaining their former vigor. In the aftermath of the Corona pandemic, the Soto school has been seeking new forms of international teaching activities such as the use of online resources, in addition to the face-to-face international teaching activities that we have been engaged in up until now. Last October, restrictions on foreigners entering Japan were eased, and the movement of people has become more active. The addition of online resources to the original face-to-face format has greatly expanded the possibilities for teaching activities not only

within Japan, but also across national borders.

Last year, 2022, marked the 100th anniversary of the international teaching activities of Soto Zen in North America. To commemorate this event, Soto Zen North America 100th Anniversary Jukai-e was held at Zenshuji, the North American branch temple of the two Head Temples, in Los Angeles, California. About 70 priests and 90 ordinands from all over North America and abroad participated in the ceremony, which was a great success. Although I had just been appointed as the head of the Department of Education and Dissemination, I was very impressed by the dedication of the local priests to Soto Zen. Furthermore, in May of this year, a commemorative ceremony to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the international teaching activities to North America, and a symposium to celebrate the publication of the English translation of "The Treasury of the True Dharma Eye" ("*Shobogenzo*") are scheduled to be held at the same place. The completion of the English translation of "The Treasury of the True Dharma Eye" is a project that has been more than 20 years in the making, and one that has been eagerly awaited by people in Japan and abroad. We sincerely hope that the teachings of the Soto school will be spread to as many people as possible.

In 2024, Great Memorial Ceremony for the 700th Anniversary of Daihonzan Sojiji's Founder Taisho Keizan Jokin Zenji will be held at Sojiji. Prior to the memorial ceremony, a preliminary memorial ceremony will be held in Japan, as well as in Hawaii, North America, South America, and Europe. We believe that this is an excellent opportunity for people in Japan and

abroad to learn about the international teaching activities of the Head Temple.

The history of international teaching can be traced back to 1903, when it began with Japanese immigrants in Hawaii and Peru, and later spread to North America and Europe. Our predecessors overcame many difficulties, but continued to devote themselves passionately to overseas missionary work, and the teachings of priests steadily spread among the local people. Later, overseas missionary teaching work was transformed into international teaching activities, and to carry on the spirit of our predecessors, there are now about 150 *Kokusai Fukuyoshi* (Soto Zen International Teachers) active in various parts of the world, and the number of priests overseas has increased to about 750. This year marks the 120th anniversary of international teaching activities. Looking back at the history of international teaching activities, we will continue to follow the Dharma light correctly and work in unison with local *Kokusai Fukuyoshi* and priests to promote the spread of Soto Zen Buddhism.

As time goes by, the forms of international teaching change. I would like to express my sincere wishes for the further development of international teaching activities and ask for your continued cooperation and love for the Dharma in the future.



After the North America 100th Anniversary Jukai-e

Rev. Ejo McMullen

Administrative Secretary of Soto Zen
Buddhism North America Office

“Smack!” The sting of the *kyosaku* was welcome. Turning, “*Kichijo Kichijo Daikichijo!*” sprang from my belly. Prostrating, I felt deep gratitude for this tradition, for this Precept Master, and for all the masters of our school reaching back into antiquity.

The scene was the *Gankai Jodo* (The Convocation Upon Completing *Jukai*) held on the last day of the *Jukai-e* commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Soto Zen in North America. The team of priests responsible for the *Jukai-e* had gathered many times in Los Angeles to plan and practice. We were not sure if the COVID pandemic would even allow us to hold such an intimate event. We stayed true to our intention, and in the end 93 *Kaitei* (those participating in the *Jukai-e*) received precepts through the long standing Director of Soto Zen North America, Rev. Gengo Akiba.

I have known Director Akiba for many years now. We first met when, I was a young monk of 25, I visited him at his temple, Kojin-an, in Oakland. I asked him about starting a temple in the United States. He was kind and encouraging. That was 28 years ago, and like so many others, I have been guided by his steady, kind, and encouraging hand ever since. At the request of the *Kokusai Fukuyoshi* (Soto Zen International

Teachers) of North America Director Akiba agreed to be the Preceptor for this incredibly important milestone for North American Soto Zen Buddhism.



So it was with a real desire to know his mind that I asked as the first questioner of the convocation, “What is the heart that is intimately transmitted from east to west?” That is when he hit me with the *kyosaku*. It was a kindness. In that moment were all the years since that first meeting, all the work trying to keep Soto Zen vibrant in North America, all the work to prepare and carry out this *Jukai-e*. To meet like this we both had to put ourselves on the line, just as each person had to do to gather for this *Jukai-e*, just as each person has to do to live their true life.

As the long line of questioners each brought their heart forward, we all knew something of what it takes to transmit the dharma. Real questions and honest responses are not complicated, but neither are they easy! We are required to risk for the sake of what is true. Sometimes that is revealed in a short exchange of questioning and response. Ultimately though, the risk is in how we live our lives, and how we care for each

other. We were not sure how this *Jukai-e* would turn out, if people would even come, if they would resonate with the teachings and practices, coming from different backgrounds if they would even get along. It was a risk to dedicate so much, but taking the risk is what allowed us to rely on each other, uncover and transmit the Buddha Dharma.

Whatever transmission was possible through this was due to the countless efforts of our ancestors in the Buddha Dharma, especially those who have cared for the lineage here in North America. At least on Hundred years of the line in North America so that we may be able to receive this life of Buddha Dharma. The 100th Anniversary *Jukai-e* was the current generation’s way of honoring these ancestors, and what they risked to our benefit. I am incredibly thankful that over the past several years our North American Soto Zen communities have become more aware and more venerative of our early Japanese American ancestors and Japanese ancestors who traveled here to bring us the dharma. We are one line of Buddha Dharma, beyond east and west.

Several years ago when we first began to plan activities for the 100th Anniversary, we were deeply aware that it would be difficult to enact a *Jukai-e* in its proper form. We made a commitment at that time not only to enact a *Jukai-e* but to do it using the strength of North American priests. Furthermore, we committed to finding ways to make this *Jukai-e* harmonize with the culture of a wide variety of Soto Zen people in North America. With the exception of a handful of advisors and assistants from Japan, Europe, South America, and Hawaii, we carried

out the *Jukai-e* with all the roles filled by Priests living and practicing in North America. Some were from Japanese ancestry, and many from other backgrounds. The same was true for the *Kaitei*. Our various backgrounds made us stronger, and we were able to accomplish something profound as one Buddha Family.

Over the 5 days of the *Jukai-e* we saw the faces of the *Kaitei* change. They were hopeful and bright eyed when they arrived. As we settled into practice, calmness and depth began to shine, and as the lights were raised on the third night after the *Sangedojo* (Right of Repentance) the purity of their faces told us they were ready to receive the precious gift of the lineage. On night four by the time we arrived at the *Shojudojo* (The Rite of Correctly Bestowing the Precepts), the practices of circling and being circled by the Buddhas and Ancestors were natural and true. The *Kechimyaku* had become our bodies.

As for the staff, everyone gave it their all. Because we were wrapped up in making the best *Jukai-e* we could, it was impossible for us to see the change in our own faces. I imagine they changed at least as much as the faces of the *Kaitei*, because we also received a precious gift, the gift of offering ourselves.

Standing at this vista of 100 years, we are looking out over the landscape of possibility that is the next 100 years. Rolling hills, jagged peaks, and broad valleys are our terrain. What will we do? Where will we travel? These are important questions, but we must also consider how we will travel. What is the form of our tradition and institutions? How will we grow in our North American soil while remaining accountable to our ancestors and to each other? It is my prayer that this *Jukai-e* serves as a model for how we continue forward as one line of Shakyamuni Buddha's, Dogen-zenji's and Keizan-zenji's heirs.





The Fragile Robe of Liberation

Rev. Zenki Anderson

Green Gulch Farm, Soryuji,
California, U.S.A.

Now we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of Soto Zen in North America. The care and efforts of many people have sustained this resilient and ever-renewing practice for the welfare of this world. In the midst of constant change an ancient tradition has been maintained and transmitted.

Not long after I was ordained as a priest in 1970, I asked Suzuki Roshi's wife, whom we called *Okusan*, to order a new linen *okesa* (robe) for me. Originally, the robe was black. About fifteen years later, after completing the formal ceremonies of dharma transmission, I was given some brown robes and permission to wear them. Later, I had the idea to bleach my nice black linen robe. When I did this, it came out a lovely, uneven, almost mangy dull brown color. This was a result of my endeavors, which were part of my training. However, I didn't do a very good job of bleaching the robe. As a result of my color-changing activities, the fabric was weakened, and gradually started to fall apart in various ways. Even now, it continues falling apart.

For more than fifty years, I and many other dharma students have made since efforts to repair and maintain this fragile robe. A couple of years ago, a kind person skillfully sewed a new backing on it. The new backing is holding

the robe together, so it is quite a bit heavier now. The front continues to need ongoing repair. When people see this delicate old robe, they often say that it is beautiful. Even though what they're seeing is a motley robe that is falling apart, this falling-apart robe gives people an opportunity to see beauty. Part of its beauty is in the variety of the stitches in which we can see the kindness of many people.

It is easy for me and others to see that this old robe is falling apart. We may not know what we are seeing. What we are seeing is a robe that is in an open-ended process of deterioration and change and renewal. This robe is not permanent and it is not annihilated. It is a superficial, perceptible appearance of our profound, imperceptible, original nature.

When I wear this robe, people have an opportunity to open their eyes and heart to the teaching that all compounded things fall apart: the robe and me. If we can endure this awesome falling apart, we can experience its beauty. However, if we can't tolerate things falling apart, we close the door on reality because compounded things are falling apart. They are not falling apart into annihilation; they are falling into bits and pieces of the entire universe.

The way we are falling into bits and pieces and becoming the whole universe, and the way the universe is becoming us falling apart, is our original nature. This is the reality of our life and death. If we can be present and endure the terror of this tremendous process of falling apart and becoming, which is the reality of our life, we will witness the beauty of life and death. As long as we can tolerate the feeling of trembling and awe

in the face of reality, this process will come to us as beauty.

Everything is turning into infinite parts all day long, and all day long infinite parts are turning into things. This process is our true, original nature. It offers us an opportunity to develop the ability to live in accord with the terrifying beauty of wreckage and renewal. In our original nature, there is no beginning or end. Nothing is completely intact in and of itself. We and all compounded things are subject to wreckage and ruin. It is in the midst of our fragility that truth comes to us as beauty.

R.M. Rilke wrote:

*For beauty is nothing but the beginning of
terror
which we are barely able to endure, and it
amazes us so,
because it serenely disdains to destroy us.
Every angel is terrible.*¹

Opening to and enduring the awesome impermanence of things is simultaneously opening to their beauty and truth. Ironically, we sometimes say that something is beautiful in an attempt to protect ourselves from its real beauty. Doing this, we close the door on the unmanageable and inconvenient reality of our life. We might say that something or someone is beautiful in order to avoid the fear of really meeting them. Once, Suzuki Roshi surprised me by saying that to call something beautiful is a sin. Calling things beautiful might be a way to minimize them in an attempt to make them manageable by trying to put them into a box called beauty. We could also use the word “cute” for similar

purposes. It could be that someone or something we comfortably call “cute” suddenly becomes much more than cute. At that moment the door of mystery might open, and we might feel terror.

I also remember Suzuki Roshi saying that our zazen is a great tenderizer. In our sitting, we become tender, flexible, and curious like children so that we have the opportunity for initiation into the vastness of reality. Since childhood, we have been learning techniques to hold the vastness of reality at bay, but right now in our sitting, we have the opportunity to let go of all techniques, at least temporarily. In this way, we learn to be more soft, flexible, upright, and honest like children, like bodhisattvas. But children and adults do sometimes need techniques in order to cope and feel safe in the face of impermanence. We may need to temporarily turn away from a reality that scares us.

A few years ago, my younger grandson died suddenly in a terrible accident when he was 17 years old. At the time of his death someone asked me, “How are you?” I said, “I’m full of life and death.”

As the ancient teacher Yuan Wu wrote:

*Birth is the manifestation of the whole
works.
Death is the manifestation of the whole
works.
Filling up the great empty sky,
Upright heart is always bits and pieces.*²

Our family grieved the loss of the life of this beautiful boy and simultaneously faced the beginning of a terror we could barely tolerate. When this beautiful boy was alive, we were not

so aware of the terrible aspect of his beauty. His tragic death opened the door of an unbearable beauty. In our relationship with those we love, there is no way to really hold on to self and other. Attempting to hold on walls off real love. If we face the terror of losing our hold on these relationships, the wall of separation starts to crack. When we open to that crack and compassionately meet how we feel, the light of beauty and truth emerge. This beauty is not our idea of beauty, because our idea of beauty just cracked.

The full experience of beauty and truth includes feeling and accepting our human vulnerability. But experiencing our vulnerability may be frightening. We may feel that the universe is going to overwhelm us and gobble us up. The universe consumes us. That is half of reality. The other half is that we consume the universe. The universe is vulnerable to us, too. This reciprocal vulnerability is our true nature. It is awesome. In the beginning of that awe, beauty is glistening.

As the moon-poet, Saigyô, said:

*This leaky, tumbledown
Grass hut left opening for the moon,
And I gaze at it
All the while it was mirrored
In a teardrop fallen on my sleeve.³*

There are training methods, like our sitting practice, to enable us to tolerate being a leaky tumbledown grass hut and to allow the light of the moon to penetrate our wreckage. We also have the opportunity to train by taking care of things so that they show us the truth of our mutual vulnerability. Training helps us to be

present with this potentially frightening vulnerability and enables us to be present with our impulses to deny it or run away from it. Training is not to “get” beauty. Training is to become able to tolerate the terror of vulnerability and thus to open to the beauty of the moon. The moon just happens to be beautiful if we accept and realize that we and the moon are always on the verge of breaking, of changing without being annihilated. Looking at the moon may be exquisitely painful as we accept our mutual dependence and impermanence.

Wearing and caring for this old dharma robe for more than 50 years has been an opportunity for me and my friends to learn and practice the Buddha Way together. In this world of change, I pray that we, together with all beings, will continue to study and practice the Buddha Way without end.

¹ Rainer Maria Rilke, The First Elegy from *Duino Elegies*, translation by Stephen Mitchell, Vintage Books (bilingual edition) 2009, p 3

² Author’s translation. **Source..** Yuan Wu Keqin (1063-1135) He was the commentator of the Blue Cliff Record. After studying with various teachers, he became the dharma heir to Wuzu Fayen of the Linji school. The Chinese character literally is red heart but here it is understood to mean upright, genuine.

³ Mirror for the Moon: A collection of Poems by Saigyô”, translated by William R. Lafleur, New Directions Publications, NY, 1977, p 16



The Life and Great Work of Keizan Zenji (1)

Rev. Ryuken Yokoyama
Lecturer, Aichi Gakuin University

I have been given the opportunity to describe the life and work of Keizan Zenji (1264-1325)¹. I will discuss over the course of four *Dharma Eye* articles the life of Keizan Zenji and his work as a zen priest. It is impossible to say that the Soto Zen school in Japan has been able to maintain its vitality until the present day without the presence of Keizan Zenji. It would be my great pleasure if I could interest you in Keizan Zenji, even if only a little. As an introduction to these articles, I would like to review the position of Keizan Zenji in the Soto Zen tradition.

The Position of Keizan Zenji in the Soto Zen Order Today

Keizan Zenji was a Zen master in the Soto Zen School who was active in the late Kamakura period. Tracing the origins of the Soto Zen School from Dogen Zenji (1200-1253) through his Dharma lineage, we find Dogen Zenji - Ejo Zenji (1198-1280) - Gikai Zenji (1219-1309) - Keizan Zenji. Although the name of Keizan Zenji may not be familiar to many, he is an extremely important figure in the Soto Zen school. The Soto Zen school today has two head temples. One of them is Eihei-ji Temple (Yoshida-gun, Fukui Prefecture), founded by Dogen Zenji. The other is Sojiji Temple (Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture)², founded by Keizan Zenji.

In the present Soto Zen school, the principal objects of worship are referred to as “Shakyamuni Buddha and Two Founders.” Shakyamuni Buddha was the founder of Buddhism. The two founders are the Eminent Ancestor Dogen Zenji and the Great Ancestor Keizan Zenji. In Soto Zen Buddhism, Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji together are considered to be the founders of the Soto Zen school. In other words, Dogen Zenji is the “founder of the Soto Zen teachings” and Keizan Zenji is the “founder of the temple lineages” (founder of the order).

It’s very likely that there are hanging scrolls and statues of Shakyamuni Buddha and the Two Founders enshrined in temples and Zen centers outside of Japan. Shakyamuni Buddha is in the center, with Dogen Zenji (on the right) and Keizan Zenji (on the left).



Keizan Zenji as “Founder of the Order”

The fact that Keizan Zenji is one of the founders of the Soto Zen school becomes clear when we look into the history of the Soto Zen school.

He established seven new temples in Kaga-no-kuni and Noto-no-kuni (present-day Ishikawa Prefecture), and trained many disciples. In the subsequent history of Soto Zen, it was the zen monks who were disciples of Keizan Zenji and their lineages who were always at the center of the Soto Zen tradition, and it was through them that the Soto Zen tradition expanded throughout the country of Japan. In other words, the history of the development of the Soto Zen school cannot be discussed without mentioning Keizan Zenji.

It was none other than Keizan Zenji who formed the foundation of the Soto Zen school that has continued to the present day, and it is truly a great honor to celebrate him as the “founder of the lineage of temples” and the founder of the school.

Keizan Zenji had six disciples who were officially recognized as his Dharma heirs. Together, they are called “Six brothers who included all of the four gatekeepers.” His lineage developed around Yokoji Temple (Hakui City, Ishikawa Prefecture) and Sojiji Temple (Now, Sojiji Soin, Wajima City, Ishikawa Prefecture).

Among the disciples who received *Shiho* (Dharma transmission) from Keizan Zenji were Zen Masters Meiho Sotetsu (1277-1350) and Gasan Joseki (Gasan Zenji : 1276-1366), who together were called the two “high disciples.” Zen Master Meiho succeeded Keizan Zenji as abbot at Yokoji and Gasan Zenji succeeded Keizan Zenji as abbot

at Sojiji. Among those who contributed to the nationwide development of Soto Zen Buddhism as we know it today were Gasan Zenji and his followers, or those in the lineage of the Sojiji Order. It was the expansion of the lineage of Gasan Zenji and his followers to various parts of Japan that led to the nationwide expansion of Soto Zen Buddhism. Incidentally, Rev. Shunryu Suzuki (1904-1971), known as “the true founder of Zen in America³,” was born at Shoganji Temple (Hiratsuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture), which is a direct branch temple of Sojiji.

The Rinju Seido (a system of rotating the abbot) adopted by Yokoji and Sojiji cannot be overlooked. This rotational system is one in which the resident priests are rotated within a short period of time (from one day to several years). This system opened up the possibility for many people to serve as abbots at the temples founded by Keizan Zenji, and it also fostered a spirit among his followers to maintain these temples’ rotation of abbots.

This system of rotation of abbots was based on Keizan Zenji’s instruction to “maintain temples in the order of the succession of the Dharma and to spread the Buddha Dharma.” (Taken from *Tozan Jinmiraisai Okibumi*, author’s translation). This was a teaching of a system created by the disciples to embody the teachings of Keizan Zenji. Yokoji converted from the rotation system to a “one abbot system” in the early Edo period (1603-1868), but the rotation system continued at Sojiji until 1870 (Meiji 3). Over the course of its 500-year history, Sojiji began to have people from lineages other than that of Keizan Zenji reside at the temple. By integrating people from other schools into the system, the Sojiji Order expanded its power.

Let us examine the records to see how far the Sojiji lineage has spread. According to the “*Jiin Honmatsu Jisu Kakiage Cho*” (A Record of the Number of Major and Branch Soto Zen Temples) compiled in 1785, 17,896 out of 18,769⁴ Soto Zen temples were branch temples of Sojiji, a percentage of more than 95%.⁵ This ratio does not seem to have changed significantly in modern times.

When seen in this way, we can understand the importance of Keizan Zenji and the Sojiji Order in the history of the Soto Zen school in Japan.



¹ For a long time, the "58-years-old" theory (counting the years of his birth and death) was common that Keizan Zenji was born in 1268 and died in 1325. However, in the 1970s, new documents were discovered that proved the "62-year-old theory" to be correct. It has recently been shown that the "58-year-old theory" was a misunderstanding caused by a misreading of documents in the Sojiji Order during the Edo period. This point is discussed in detail in my article "Reexamination of the Biography of Keizan Zenji (1): The Process of Establishment of the Biographical Materials and Its Problems" (Bulletin of the Institute for Zen Studies, 49,

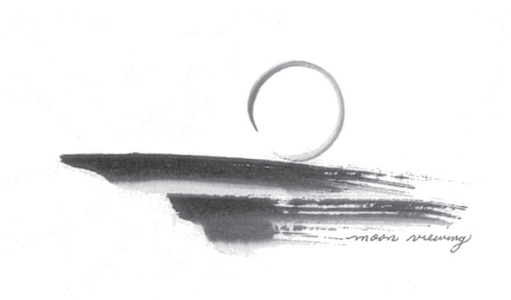
2021), which can be found at <https://zenken.agu.ac.jp/research/53/08.pdf>.

² Sojiji Temple was originally located in Noto (Wajima City, Ishikawa Prefecture), but was relocated to Tsurumi-ku, Yokohama in 1911 after a fire in 1898 destroyed most of the temple buildings.

³ Author of "*Zen Mind: Beginner's Mind*." A new translation by Issho Fujita, (PHP Kenkyujo, 2022), p.334.

⁴ The current number of Soto Zen school temples in Japan is 14,485 (according to the 2022 edition of the "*Shukyo Nenkan*", the Religious Yearbook published by the Religious Affairs Division of the Agency for Cultural Affairs). This is the largest number of temples for a single sect in Japan. The Jodo Shinshu sect is divided into the Honganji sect (10,092 temples) and the Otani sect (8,451 temples), so the number of temples per sect is smaller than that of the Soto Zen school (the Soto Zen school is not divided into sects).

⁵ Fumio Tamamuro, "*Reading the Ancient Documents of Sojiji Temple Soin : The Development of the Soto Shu Order in the Early Modern Period*" (Sotoshu Headquarters, 2008), p.73.





**The 18th Chapter of
Shobogenzo
Kannon (Avalokitesvara)
Lecture (7)
Rev. Shohaku Okumura
Sanshinji, Indiana, U.S.A.
(Edited by Rev. Shoryu Bradley)**

**24. “The whole body is hands and eyes,”
(17)**

雲巖道の「偏身是手眼」の出現せるは、「夜間背手摸枕子」を講誦するに、「偏身これ手眼なり」と道取せると参學する観音のみおほし。

As for the emergence of Yunyan’s statement “The whole body is hands and eyes,” there are many Avalokitesvaras who, when explaining [Daowu’s expression] “in the night, reaching his hand behind, groping for a the pillow,” only study that [Yunyan] asserted that the whole body is covered with hands and eyes.

この観音たとひ観音なりとも、未道得なる観音なり。These Avalokitesvaras, though they are Avalokitesvara, are Avalokitesvaras who are unable to express [the truth].

雪巖道の「偏身是手眼」といふは、「手眼是身偏」といふにあらず。

Yunyan’s statement, “the whole body is hands and eyes,” does not mean that hands and eyes are spreading everywhere in the body.

「偏」はたとひ偏界なりとも、身手眼の正當恁麼は、偏の所偏なるべからず。

Even if [these hands and eyes] are spreading in “the entire world,” the very thusness of “body hands -and -eyes” cannot be [in the dualistic relationship] between something that is spreading and the place where that thing is spreading.

「身」手眼にたとひ偏の功德ありとも、篡奪行市の手

眼にあらさるべし。

Even though the body that is hands -and -eyes has the virtue of “spreading [in the entire world], it should not be the hands and eyes that plunder the marketplace.

手眼の功德は、「是」と認する見取・行取・説取あらざるべし。

The virtue of hands and eyes should not be a seeing, practicing or expounding that recognizes this.

「手眼」すでに「許多」といふ、千にあまり、萬にあまり、八萬四千にあまり、無量無邊にあまる。

Since [Yunyan] has already said that hands and eyes are “innumerable,” there are more than a thousand or ten thousand of them, more than eighty-four thousand; indeed they surpass being immeasurable and boundless.

只「偏身是手眼」の、かくのごとくあるのみにあらず、度生説法も、かくのごとくなるべし、国土放光もかくのごとくなるべし。

It is not only that “the entire body as hands and eyes” is thus; “saving all beings and expounding the Dharma” or “enabling the nation’s land to emit light” must also be thus.

かるがゆゑに、雲巖道は「偏身是手眼」なるべし、手眼を偏身ならしむるにはあらず、と参學すべし。

Therefore, we should learn that what Yunyan said is that “The entire body is hands and eyes”. It is not that he is making the hands and eyes into the entire body.

「偏身是手眼」を使用すといふとも、動容進止せしむといふとも、動著することなかれ。

Even though we employ “The entire body as hands and eyes,” and allow its active or resting functions, we should not be surprised.

This is Dogen’s comment on Yunyan’s saying “the entire body as hands and eyes,”

henshin kore shugen, (徧身是手眼). In lecture (2), I introduced older versions of the conversation between Yunyan and Daowu about Avalokitesvara. In those versions, their conversation was simpler, and this expression doesn't appear. Instead, Daowu said, "Throughout the body, there are hands and eyes," *tsu shin ze shugen* (通身是手眼). There is only one word that is different in these sayings. But because in this new version Daowu said, "[what] you are saying is pretty good, but you are only eighty percent correct," within this newer version there's a trap, and this trap was mentioned by those persons who made *Hekiganroku* and *Shoyoroku*.

The trap is that it seems Daowu's saying is superior to Yunyan's because there is a twenty percent difference between them. So it appears we have to investigate and find this twenty percent that is lacking in Yunyan's saying. That is one of the points of this *koan* in Chinese Buddhism. But both the *Hekiganroku* and *Shoyoroku* say this is not the point, that these two statements are the same. Still, the conversation is in the texts, even though Chinese masters didn't pay attention to this point or didn't care about it. But here Dogen wants to make it clear that Yunyan's saying and Daowu's saying are exactly the same. There's no such twenty percent gap.

To do so, Dogen made a unique interpretation of Daowu's statement "You speak quite well. But you said only eighty to ninety percent." This sentence clearly says there's some gap, but Dogen tried to read it in a different way. His interpretation is twisted

around, and in my opinion it doesn't work so well. Dogen's word-play is sometimes very good, having an amazing effect –but I don't think that is the case this time. This time there's something that's not right because it's not possible to read the text in the way he intended. But somehow he still tried.

As for the emergence of Yunyan's statement "The whole body is hands and eyes," there are many Avalokitesvaras who, when explaining [Daowu's expression] "in the night, reaching his hand behind, groping for a pillow," only study that [Yunyan] asserted that the whole body is covered with hands and eyes.

"Many Avalokitesvaras" means everyone within this network of interconnectedness is Avalokitesvara. There are some Avalokitesvaras who don't understand that they are part of Avalokitesvara, but nonetheless they are still Avalokitesvara. I think this is the meaning of, "is it manifested or not manifested?" He's saying that some Avalokitesvaras awaken, understand, practice and live as hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara, but others are not yet doing so. Even so, everything within this network is still the hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara.

Dogen is saying that the conventional way of interpreting Yunyan's saying, "whole body is covered with hands and eyes," as inferior to "entire body is hands and eyes" is the immature Avalokitesvara's interpretation. He says because both sayings are equal, if we read Yunyan's saying in the way most people interpret it, we don't understand them, even though we are the

hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara.

These Avalokitesvaras, though they are Avalokitesvara, are Avalokitesvaras who are unable to express [the truth].

According to Dogen, there are some Avalokitesvaras who awaken to truth or reality and express it, and there are some Avalokitesvaras who don't. There are those who are immature and there are those who are mature. In my case, I have been practicing for over 50 years, since I was 19 years old. For the first twenty years, I didn't understand what Dogen was saying at all, even though I had some knowledge of his teachings, having read his writings and many books about him. Even though I memorized some of his writings in various chapters of *Shobogenzo* as well as some of the commentaries, that was still in the realm of philosophy or some kind of theory, something that had nothing to do with my actual life. But when I reached around 40 years old, Dogen's writing started to make sense to me. Before that, even though I had said similar things using the same expressions and words, I was just talking about Dogen's philosophy or Soto Zen doctrine, and I was not sure whether what I was doing and what Dogen taught were the same or not.

I did much practice and study for a long time before I began to feel I understood his sayings in relation to what I was actually doing in my life. Even now, I'm not sure that I fully understand what he's saying, but somehow it makes sense to me to a certain degree, and this is what I'm trying to share with you. Dogen

would probably say that even before I understood his teachings at all and before I tried to incorporate them into my behavior, my practice was still Avalokitesvara. That is because there are many different kinds of Avalokitesvaras, but they are all Avalokitesvara.

Yunyan's statement, "The whole body is hands and eyes," does not mean that hands and eyes are spreading everywhere in the body.

"Hands and eyes spreading throughout the body" refers to the thousand-armed *Avalokitesvara*, as depicted in statues which actually have a thousand hands and eyes. [See the photo in Lecture (2)]. In these statues the hands and eyes emanate from the back like wings, in order to avoid hiding the bodhisattva's body, but the idea is that they are spreading all over the body, perhaps like hair. This is a possible understanding of Yunyan's statement. But if we understand it in that way, our understanding is completely different from what Yunyan said. That is because the entirety of our body and mind is functioning as one of the hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara. So Dogen is saying here that if we interpret Yunyan's expression in the way immature bodhisattvas do, that is a mistake, even though ours is likely the common interpretation.

Even if [these hands and eyes] are spreading in "the entire world," the very thusness of "body, hands, -and -eyes" cannot be [in the dualistic relationship] between something that is spreading and the place where that thing is spreading.

“Entire world” is a translation of *henkai* (徧界) which comes from the expression *henkai fu zozo* (徧界不曾藏), “In the entire world, nothing is hidden,” which Dogen quotes in *Tenzokyokun Instructions for the Tenzo*; (典座教訓). “Body, hands, and eyes” are all one thing. Instead of referring to our own hands and eyes as part of our own body, this refers to our entire body functioning as the hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara; this is why I put these words in quotes.

To say that Avalokitesvara’s hands and eyes are spreading over his/her entire body assumes the body is there as a place and the hands and eyes are there as things that spread all over that body. So in this case there are two things: a space we call “the body” and the hands and eyes that occupy that space.

This understanding is similar to what we see in Indian cosmology where our world is supposedly supported by four circles: a gold circle, a water circle, a wind circle, and an empty space circle. There is an assumption in this system and others that the phenomenal world is supported by something like a base substance or element. But Dogen says in *Shobogenzo Sansuikyo* that there is no such support, that this world is floating without any such support, and everything in it is continually coming and going.

That is the meaning of emptiness or non-self; nothing is a fixed entity and everything appears and disappears without having any fixed foundation. It means things are coming and going without any base substance.

This is Buddha’s teaching of emptiness, but somehow we might come to think emptiness is a kind of a foundation. We might think empty space somehow exists independently, with all beings coming and going within it. But there is a slight difference between the Buddha’s emptiness teachings and the view of emptiness as a foundation. In one, for example, this world is like a hotel, and all beings are like visitors who come, stay for a while, and then leave. Here phenomenal beings are like visitors, but this world of emptiness is like a hotel that exists forever. When we have this kind of idea, we might think we somehow need a kind of foundation to explain how things are coming and going. In order to say things are coming and going, it seems there must be some place from which things are coming and some kind of place where things are going. This again is a problem created by our thinking. When we think using words and concepts, somehow we need something that doesn’t change. If there’s nothing at all which doesn’t change, then we can’t even say something is changing.

The color of my hair is changing year after year, but I think “I” as a person am not changing. I can say the color of “my” hair is changing, comparing it with something that doesn’t change, like “I”. If everything is changing, we cannot say that anything is changing. It’s only by comparing something that is changing to something that isn’t changing that we can talk about change. When I was born 74 years ago, for instance, my body was much smaller and my mind worked very differently than it works now. Since then my body and mind have been constantly changing.

Still, I say when “I” was a baby ..., when “I” was a teenager..., when “I” was in my forties..., in my fifties..., etc. The “I” which we assume does not change is actually going through the process of constant change. But if “I” is also changing and becomes different in each moment, we cannot even say “I” have been changing because we cannot say there is an “I” at all. That is because when we say “something is changing,” the “something” is identical with the change itself, and it therefore becomes something different than what it was.

To talk about impermanence, we need to assume something is permanent, because the word impermanence is a negation of something permanent. The concept of permanence exists first, then we negate it: “there’s no such thing as permanence,” or “everything is impermanent.” This is what impermanence means. Without the concept of permanence, we can’t even think or speak of impermanence. This is the nature of our thinking. Somehow we need some fixed foundation, even to talk about things that are always changing.

Unless we understand this nature of thought, we are deceived by our own use of words, concepts and logic. First of all, we must see the emptiness of words and concepts. Nagarjuna showed us the emptiness of words and concepts by analyzing them and probing into their meaning, revealing that they have no fixed nature. Therefore, whatever we try to communicate using words is also without an unchanging nature. So when Nagarjuna discusses emptiness, he is talking not only about the emptiness of things but also the

emptiness of “emptiness.”

Even though the body that is hands -and -eyes has the virtue of “spreading [in the entire world], it should not be the hands and eyes that plunder the marketplace.

“Plunder the marketplace,” is a translation of *sandatsu koshi* (篡奪行市). *Sandatsu* (篡 or 攬奪) means “to plunder” or “to steal.” This expression appears in case five of the Blue Cliff Record. *Koshi* (行市) means “market place.” Part of Thomas Cleary’s translation of this case is, “Where the King’s rule us a little more strict, it’s not permitted to plunder the open markets.”¹ This seems to refer to stealing commercial goods from merchants at a marketplace or to control the prices of a marketplace. In the context of Dogen’s commentary, this would mean that these hands and eyes occupy the entire body (marketplace) and spread all across it and control it. That means these hands and eyes steal this space, without its consent. But this is not what Dogen meant, because for him there is no such marketplace, there is only hands and eyes. There is no separate space that is occupied by hands and eyes, rather, the hands and eyes and their functioning are nothing other than the entirety of Avalokitesvara.

The virtue of hands and eyes should not be a seeing, practicing or expounding that recognizes this.

This means there is no fixed thing that recognizes the virtue of the hands and eyes as objects. When we say something, see something,

practice something, expound something, and so on, we suggest there is a subject “I” that does these activities and there are things that exist as objects of our actions.

Since [Yunyan] has already said that hands and eyes are “innumerable,” there are more than a thousand or ten thousand of them, more than eighty-four thousand; indeed, they surpass being immeasurable and boundless.

Here Dogen repeats what he has already said, that the number of hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara is beyond any number. That means they are numberless or boundless, but as soon as we say “numberless” or “boundless,” we have created a boundary. So, we should go even beyond boundlessness, as Dogen said in paragraph (6) and repeats here.

It is not only that “the entire body as hands and eyes” is thus; “saving all beings and expounding the Dharma” or “enabling the nation’s land to emit light” must also be thus.

These are the activities of a Bodhisattva. In order to save all beings, the Buddha expounded the Dharma. It’s often said that when the Buddha taught the Dharma, the entire land or even the entire universe became bright, and sometimes everything shook as if there was an earthquake. It was said that his practice and teaching activities were like empty lightning, and yet they were beyond any boundary, even beyond boundlessness.

This reminds me of what is written at the beginning of the Diamond Sutra:

The Buddha said to him, “Subhuti, those who would now set forth on the bodhisattva path should thus give birth to this thought: ‘However many beings there are in whatever realms of being might exist,whether they have form or no form, whether they have perception or no perception or neither perception nor no perception, in whatever conceivable realm of being one might conceive of beings, in the realm of complete nirvana I shall liberate them all. And though I thus liberate countless beings, not a single being is liberated.’²

Therefore, we should learn that what Yunyan said is that “The entire body is hands and eyes”. It is not that he is making the hands and eyes into the entire body.

This means the whole body is hands and eyes; it is not that hands and eyes are spreading all over the body. The meaning of Yunyan’s saying is exactly the same as Daowu’s saying. It’s not that Avalokitesvara is putting hands and eyes all over his/her entire body.

Even though we employ “The entire body as hands and eyes,” and allow its active or resting functions, we should not be surprised.

“Active function” refers to times when we’re active, engaging with something or somebody, and “resting function” refers to times when we simply sit or sleep, when we are not active. Both of these are practice. In Zen monasteries, for example, the day did not start in the morning, but in the evening. Monks sat in the evening and slept in the monks’ hall, and

they woke up very early in the morning for zazen and then had breakfast. They practiced or studied in the morning, had lunch, and then did something in the afternoon. This was all one day. The day started in the evening, and ended in the evening. That meant that even sleeping in the night was part of their practice. So our daily practice does not start when we wake up and it doesn't end when we go to bed. Even our time in bed is part of our practice; we must practice twenty four hours a day. I think this is the meaning of "its active or resting function," that even resting or taking a break is part of our practice. This is a part of the activity of the hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara's body.

When we rest, we do it as practice. That means we need to rest in the most effective way. But often, when we have some days off or some time to rest, we do many things and become more tired than we do even on workdays. But that is not the way to make rest a part of our practice. Practice should include working, resting, and even sleeping. Even when we are sick and cannot practice in our usual way, we must take care of our body in order to heal, and that becomes our practice. In practice there is no break –that means a break is also a practice. "We should not be surprised" means throughout the twenty four hours of the day, whatever we do is Avalokitesvara using his/her hands and eyes, and we should ask ourselves, "How can I live as the hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara, taking care of these five skandhas and the five skandhas of others?"

25. Only eighty or ninety percent was achieved (18)

道吾道取す、「道也太殺道、祇道得八九成。」

Daowu says, "You spoke quite well. But only eighty or ninety percent was achieved."

(19)

いはくの宗旨は、道得は、太殺道なり。

The essential meaning indicated here is that your statement greatly expresses [the truth].

「太殺道」といふは、いひあて、いひあらはす、のこれる未道得なしといふなり。

The phrase "greatly expresses" means that his saying points out and reveals [the truth] precisely. There is nothing that remains unexpressed.

いますでに未道得のつひに道不得なるべき、のこりあらざるを道取するときは、「祇道得八九成」なり。

When we express completely without leaving out something unexpressed or something inexpressible, we simply say, "[your expression is] eighty or ninety percent perfect."

When Yunyan said, "The whole body is hands and eyes," Daowu responded, "You spoke quite well." But only eighty or ninety percent was achieved." Paragraph (19) and (20) are Dogen's comments on this response.

The common understanding of Daowu's saying is what Dogen will later call incorrect, since it is based on a misunderstanding of Yunyan's statement. I can see what Dogen is saying about this exchange and why he wants to say it this way, but what he is saying in this passage doesn't make sense to me. There's something strange in it, but anyway, let me examine it sentence by sentence.

The essential meaning indicated here is that your statement greatly expresses [the truth]. The

phrase “greatly expresses” means that his saying points out and reveals [the truth] precisely. There is nothing that remains unexpressed.

What Daowu said is *do ya dai satsu do, shi do hatchi ku jo* (道也太殺道, 祇道得八九成). In this case *do* (道), even though this character is the same as *tao* or “Way,” means “to say” or “to speak”; and *daisatsu* (太殺) means “greatly,” “very well,” or “very much.” So his statement literally means, “as for your speaking, you speak very well.” *Shi* (祇) means *tada*, which means “just.” This *shi* is the same *shi* in *shikan*, as in *shikantaza*, “just sit,” so *shi* means “just” or “only.” Next is again *do* (道), “speak” , then *hatchi ku* (八九), “eight, nine,” and then *jo* (成), the same *jo* as in *Genjokoan*, which means “to achieve,” “to become,” “to be successful” or “to be complete”; “speak eighty to ninety percent complete.” So the entire sentence reads, “You say it quite well, but your saying is only eighty to ninety percent complete.” This is an accurate Chinese sentence. But I don’t understand why even though Daowu said, “only eighty to ninety percent complete,” Dogen says, “There is nothing that remains unexpressed.”

The phrase “greatly expresses” means that Yunyan’s saying reveals the truth precisely. There is nothing that remains unexpressed. Dogen says Yunyan’s saying, “the entire body is hands and eyes” (*henshin kore shugen*; 徧身是手眼) is one hundred percent complete, and yet in spite of that, Daowu said that Yunyan’s expression is only eighty to ninety percent complete. I don’t understand this logic.

The Zen Masters who commented in *Hekiganroku* or *Shoyoroku* didn’t care about this difference, they didn’t even discuss this point. But according to Dogen, if these sayings are equal, then we should interpret this saying “eighty to ninety percent complete” differently. This interpretation is unique, but there’s something strange about it, because it’s very clear, almost too clear, that Daowu said there is twenty percent lacking in Yunyan’s saying. I’m not Dogen, but if I had wanted to say Yunyan’s saying *henshin* (徧身) and Daowu’s saying *tsushin* (通身) were really the same and completely equal, probably the best thing to do would have been to delete the second half of this sentence. Then it becomes clearer and simpler, and Dogen wouldn’t need to use this strange logic. I don’t really understand why he had to make the following twist in meaning:

When we express completely without leaving out something unexpressed or something inexpressible, we simply say, “[your expression is] eighty or ninety percent perfect.”

I don’t think we say someone’s expression is only eighty to ninety percent perfect when that saying fully expresses what we want to hear. This would only be understandable if it were said about one’s own saying and could therefore be seen as an expression of modesty.

As I showed in Lecture (2), the earlier two versions of this dialogue are different from the later versions that were made in the Song Dynasty and appear in *The Blue Cliff Record*, *The Book of Serenity*, and *Dogen’s Shobogenzo Kannon*. I will present them again here:

In vol. 5 of *Zutanji* (*Sodoshu*; 祖堂集) made in 952 it says;

Daowu asked Yunyan, “What is the bodhisattva with a thousand hands and eyes like?” (千手千眼如何。)

Yunyan said, “It is like grabbing a pillow in the night without light.” (如無灯夜把着枕头。)

Yunyan asked, “Do you also know it?” (汝還知不。)

Daowu said, “I understand! I understand!” (我会也。我会也。)

Yunyan said, “How do you understand it?” (作麼生会。)

Daowu said, “The whole body is an eye.” (通身是眼。)

After this conversation, Shenshan’s comment appears: “The entire body is an eye.” (渾身是眼). Shenshan Sengmi (神山僧密, ? - ?) was one of Yunyan’s dharma heirs, and he practiced with his dharma brother, Dongshan Liangjie (洞山良价, 807–869). Shenshan’s comment might be the source of inspiration for the later versions of this conversation where Yunyan’s *henshin* (徧身) and Daowu’s *tsushin* (通身) became parallel.

In vol.14 of *Jingde Chuandeng lu* (*Keitoku Denntoroku*; 景德伝灯録) made in 1004 we read:³

Daowu asked, “The Great Compassion [Bodhisattva] with a thousand hands and eyes. What is it like?” (大悲千手眼如何。)

Yunyan said, “What about grabbing a pillow when there is no light?” (如無灯時把得枕头作麼生。)

Daowu said, “I understand! I understand!” (我会也。我会也。)

Yunyan said, “How do [you] understand!” (作麼

生会。)

Daowu said, “The entire body is an eye.” (通身是眼。)

In the older versions of this conversation, Daowu was the one who asked the question, “What is [the bodhisattva with] a thousand hands and eyes like?” (千手千眼如何) and Yunyan answered, “it is like grabbing a pillow in the night without light.” To this Daowu responded, “The entire body is an eye.” Since their sayings are not parallel, it is not possible to compare them and consider which is superior.

But in the later version, probably to make this dialogue into a koan, their sayings became parallel, and these sentences were added: “You spoke quite well. But only eighty or ninety percent was achieved.” I suppose the person who made the later version wanted to turn this dialogue into a question and ask the readers to consider what the twenty percent difference between the sayings was. Because in much of Zen literature Yunyan was portrayed as dull-witted and Daowu portrayed as sharp-witted, the position of Yunyan and Daowu was reversed in the conversation. In that way, readers were led to believe Daowu’s sayings were twenty percent superior to Yunyan’s and then led to discover the difference between them.

The next paragraph is quite long, and it is difficult for me to understand.

(20)

いふ意旨の参學は、たとひ十成なりとも、道未盡なる力量にてあらば、参究にあらず。

In studying the above-mentioned meaning, even if there is one hundred percent achievement [using language], if the person is unable to express the whole [through his practice], it is not actual penetration.

道得は八九成なりとも、道取すべきを、八九成に道取すると、十成に道取するとなるべし。

Even if his expression is eighty or ninety percent perfect, if [he] expresses eighty or ninety percent perfectly, then he expresses one hundred percent perfectly.

當恁麼の時節に、百千萬の道得に道取すべきを、力量の妙なるがゆゑに、些子の力量を擧して、わづかに「八九成」に道得するなり。

At the very moment [of speaking], because [Yunyan] has excellent capability, using a little of his power, he expresses eighty or ninety percent of the [meaning], which would require a hundred or a thousand myriad words to express it.

たとへば、盡十方界を百千萬力に拈来するあらんも、拈来せざるにはすぐるべし。

For example, someone who might be able to express the entire ten-direction world through the power of a hundred or a thousand myriad words, must be superior to others who cannot express it [at all].

しかあるを、一力に拈来せんは、よのつねの力量なるべへからず。

In that case, if [someone like Yunyan] can express it with the power of one [word], [his] capability is beyond ordinary.

いま「八九成」のころ、かくのごとし。

The meaning of the expression “eighty to ninety percent perfect” is like this.

しかあるを、佛祖の「祇道得八九成」の道をききては、道得十成なるべきに、道得いたらずして、八九成といふと會取す。

However, hearing the Buddha-ancestor say, “you express eighty or ninety percent,” some people may think that the statement should be one hundred percent perfect, that what was said was incomplete, and that for that reason [Daowu] said that [Yunyan] expressed only eighty or ninety percent.

佛法、もしかくのごとくならば、今日にいたるべからず。

If the Buddha-dharma were like that, it could not have been transmitted down to the present day. いはゆるの「八九成」は、百千といはんがごとし、許多といはんがごとく參學すべきなり。

We should learn that “achieving eighty or ninety percent” is tantamount to saying [achieving] “hundreds or thousands” or “innumerable.”

すでに八九成と道取す、はかりしりぬ、八九にかざるべからずといふなり。

[Daowu] already said “eighty or ninety percent was achieved,” and we should know that [what he meant] is that it is not limited to [a particular fixed number such as] eight or nine.

佛祖の道話、かくのごとく參學するなり。

Expressions of the Way by Buddha-ancestors should be studied in this way.

In studying the above-mentioned meaning, even if there is one hundred percent achievement [using language], if the person is unable to express the whole [through his practice], it is not actual penetration.

“One hundred percent achievement” is *ju jo* (十成). The words Daowu used are “eight” (八) and “nine” (九成) and Dogen also uses “ten,” (十). Here these mean eighty, ninety, and one hundred percent. So Dogen is saying that even if a person is able to express one hundred

percent of reality using language, if they are not able to express it through his/her practice experience, the person's expression is not the actual penetration of it (*sankyu*; 参究). But this doesn't make sense to me. How can a person who has not experienced the penetration of reality express it one hundred percent in words? But for some reason Dogen says this is possible.

In the next sentence Dogen says:

Even if his expression is eighty or ninety percent perfect, if [he] expresses eighty or ninety percent perfectly, then he expresses one hundred percent perfectly.

I again don't understand what this means. How can eighty to ninety percent perfect be equal to one hundred percent perfect?

At the very moment [of speaking], because [Yunyan] has excellent capability, using a little of his power, he expresses eighty or ninety percent of the [meaning], which would require a hundred or a thousand myriad words to express.

In the original text, Dogen doesn't say Yunyan uses words to express the meaning, but rather he uses his "power" (*riki ryo*; 力量). *Riki* means "power" and *ryo* is "amount." "Amount of power" means the amount of his capability. So Dogen says Yunyan used a small part of his capability to express eighty to ninety percent of the meaning. I still don't understand what this means. Dogen changed the meaning of "eighty to ninety percent" from referring to Yunyan's expression or achievement to referring to the

percent of the power he used. I don't know how such a change can be possible.

For example, someone who might be able to express the entire ten-direction world through the power of a hundred or a thousand myriad words, must be superior to others who cannot express it [at all].

Again, the word he uses is "power" or "capability." He says if there is a person who may be able to express the truth of the entire ten-direction world using myriads of words, this person must be superior to people who cannot do so. And if there is another person who can express the same truth with the power of one word, or one percent of their capability, this person's capability is beyond ordinary. Again, I really don't understand this comparison.

It seems to me that here Dogen changed what the eighty, ninety or hundred percent refers to from the quality of achievement to the number of words, or the amount of power the person used. I don't know why he would make such a change, but Dogen strongly says,

The meaning of the expression "eighty to ninety percent perfect" is like this.

It seems he was very sure that what he was saying was correct and the only possible way to understand Daowu's statement. There is something here I don't quite understand.

The understanding he presents in the next sentence accords with the common interpretation and to me seems reasonable:

However, hearing the Buddha-ancestor say, “you express eighty or ninety percent,” some people may think that the statement should be one hundred percent perfect, that what was said was incomplete, and that for that reason [Daowu] said that [Yunyan] expressed only eighty or ninety percent.

I think I’m included in these “some people.” I think in this context of the conversation this is the only way I can interpret what Daowu says. But somehow Dogen strongly wants to twist the meaning, yet this twist is not successful, at least to me.

If the Buddha-dharma were like that, it could not have been transmitted down to the present day. We should learn that “achieving eighty or ninety percent” is tantamount to saying [achieving] “hundreds or thousands” or “innumerable.”

It seems Dogen is saying that eighty to ninety percent is the same as one hundred percent. If so, I think it is best to erase such numbers all together and stop analyzing the inferiority or superiority of the statements.

[Daowu] already said “eighty or ninety percent was achieved,” and we should know that [what he meant] is that it is not limited to [a particular fixed number such as] eight or nine.

If this is the case, why didn’t he delete Daowu’s saying, “eighty or ninety percent was achieved,” in his commentary?

Expressions of the Way by Buddha-ancestors should be studied in this way.

Somehow Dogen wants to make Yunyan’s and Daowu’s sayings the same and equal, even though Daowu said Yunyan’s saying was only eighty to ninety percent complete. Anyway, I think we can forget about the numbers, but if these two sayings are really the same and equal, if there’s no difference between them, maybe we should just delete this saying by Daowu. In fact, in older versions such as Zutanji and The Record of the Transmission of the Lamp, there are only three sayings:

Daowu asked, “What is Avalokitesvara doing?” and Yunyan said, “It’s like a person searching for a pillow in the darkness.” He then asked Daowu, “How do you understand?”

Then Daowu said, “It’s like the entire body is hands -and eyes.”

I think this is all we need. Why do we need to have the two almost identical sayings to compare and search for a twenty percent difference between them? This is my question.

Dogen could not have read the oldest version of this conversation in Zutanji (Sodoshu: 祖堂集), made in 952, because this text was lost in China and somehow preserved in Korea until the 20th century. But I’m sure he read the second oldest one, from the *Record of Transmission of the Lamp*, made in 1004, because Dogen quotes this text in his writings.

My guess is that even though he didn’t like

this saying about Yunyan's statement being eighty to ninety percent complete, somehow Dogen wanted to show that these two sayings are essentially the same. That was kind of necessary so that he could keep the parallel meaning of their statements. In other words, that means Yunyan and Daowu's sayings are equal but at the same time somewhat different. This is what I think Dogen wanted to keep, the equal but different nature of the sayings.

To me, the difference has to do with an emphasis on either entirety or on individuality. First, Yunyan said, "Avalokitesvara, the bodhisattva of great compassion, using innumerable hands and eyes, is doing what." As it is said in the *Hekiganroku*, this Avalokitesvara's innumerable hands and eyes refers to Indra's net, in which all beings are connected. Here each and every being, as a knot in the thread of the net, is one of the hands and eyes of Avalokitesvara. Yunyan is saying that the totality of interconnectedness is Avalokitesvara, and each being is a knot or a mani jewel in Indra's Net, where all beings and things permeate each other completely. I think this is what Yunyan said, emphasizing that this entirety is Avalokitesvara.

Daowu, on the other hand, said Avalokitesvara's activity is like the activity of a sleeping person who loses their pillow and tries to find it in complete darkness. He emphasized the activity of one person as a part of this interconnectedness, using their entire body as hands and eyes.

I think Yunyan is talking about Avalokitesvara as the totality of interconnectedness, and Daowu

is talking about Avalokitesvara as a collection of individual knots. They are both asking, from different perspectives, "How can our practice be like simply groping for a pillow? How can each one of us, as a part of this interconnectedness, embody or express this totality of interconnectedness, using our body and mind as Avalokitesvara's hands and eyes?"

I think Yunyan's *henshin* (徧身), and Daowu's *tsushin* (通身) are an example how they keep this kind of tension. Yunyan is saying "totality," while Daowu is saying "individuality" or "particularity," showing how each and every particular person behaves, practices or lives based on this awakening to totality. Their sayings represent the universal and the particular.

Yunyan says that the entire body is hands and eyes, and Daowu says the same, but Yunyan's *henshin* (徧身) refers to the entire body of Avalokitesvara. Daowu's *tsushin* (通身) refers to a particular person's entire body, as in the story from the *Shoyoroku* about a blind person whose cane and feet functioned as his eyes, enabling him to walk on a muddy road without stepping in the mud. That is how our entire body works as hands and eyes. The two sayings are complementary, supporting each other while at the same time being different, and yet neither is superior or inferior. I think Dogen wanted to keep these two sayings parallel, but he probably didn't want to delete the sentence mentioning the eighty to ninety percent difference.

Daowu represented Avalokitesvara as each

and every one of us, and Yunyan represented Avalokitesvara as the totality of interconnectedness. That is my guess. But still I don't understand Dogen's comments on the eighty to ninety percent difference between Daowu's and Yunyan's statements. I understand what he was saying, but I don't understand why he needed to say what he did about the completeness of Yunyan's saying. I think it would have been best simply to delete the sentence about the difference in the two statements.

¹ The Blue Cliff Record (Thomas Cleary, Shambhala, 1992), p.32; I added the bold emphasis.

² The Diamond Sutra (by Red Pine, Counterpoint, 2001), p. 2-3.

³ In lecture (2) I introduced this dialogue from the different versions of the Transmission of the Lamp. Now I think this version is more compatible with Zutanji and later versions.



Treasury of the True Dharma Eye Number 24

Painted Cakes *Gabyō*

Translated by
The Soto Zen Text Project

Introduction

This essay was composed at *Kōshōji*, in late autumn of 1242. It represents number 24 in both the seventy-five and sixty-chapter compilations of the *Shōbōgenzō* and number 40 in the Honzan edition.

“*Gabyō*” concerns the famous saying, best known from the story of the ninth-century figure Xiangyan Zhixian, that “a painted cake doesn’t satisfy hunger.” In this story, which Dogen had two years earlier recounted in his “*Keisei sanshoku*,” Xiangyan is challenged by his teacher, Weishan Lingyou, to say something “from the time before your father and mother were born.” Unable to find anything in his books, he uttered his famous saying in despair.

The painted cake is thus a traditional symbol of representations of reality, including the Buddhist representations in Xiangyan’s books, as opposed to the real thing that is held to be the proper concern of Zen. But Dōgen has a different view. The teachings of Buddhism are the real thing. The representation of the cake is the real thing. The real things around us — the cakes, the humans, the mountains, the buddhas — are, all of them, painted. Therefore, Dōgen concludes at the end of his essay, only a painted cake can satisfy our hunger; for our hunger is also painted, our satisfaction is also

painted.

This translation is based on the text published in Kawamura Kōdō, ed., *Dōgen zenji zenshū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shunjusha, 1991).

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye

Number 24

Painted Cakes

Since the buddhas are verification, things are verification.¹ Nevertheless, they are not one nature, they are not one mind. Although they are not one nature and are not one mind, at the time of verification, the verifications appear without obstructing one another; at the time of appearance, the appearances will appear without engaging one another. This is an obvious truth of the ancestors. Do not hold up reckonings of oneness and difference as the power of study.

Therefore, it is said, “A single dharma barely penetrated and the myriad dharmas are penetrated.”² It is not that the “single dharma penetrated” spoken of here snatches away the previous face of the “single dharma”; it is not that the “single dharma” is opposed; it is not that the “single dharma” is unopposed.³ To make it unopposed would be a mutual obstruction.⁴ When the obstacle of penetration is eliminated from the “penetration,” a single penetration is myriad penetrations.⁵ A single penetration is “a single dharma”; “a single dharma penetrated” is “the myriad dharmas penetrated.”

* * * * *

An old buddha has said, “A painted cake

doesn’t satisfy hunger.”⁶

Those robed in clouds and sleeved in mist who study these words, the bodhisattvas and *Śrāvakas* coming from the ten directions, are not of one name or rank; the skin and flesh of the spirit heads and demon faces arriving from the ten directions are thick and are thin.⁷ While they may be studying the way of the old buddhas and present buddhas, they make their living under trees and in thatched huts. Therefore, in directly transmitting the family enterprise, some say that this is said because the work of studying the sūtras and treatises does not inculcate true wisdom; some hold the view that such words are to say that instruction in the three vehicles and the one vehicle is not the path to *sambodhi*.⁸ In general, those who hold the view that such words are to say that provisionally established dharmas are actually worthless are greatly mistaken.⁹ They do not directly transmit the work of the ancestors; they are in the dark about the words of the buddhas and ancestors. If they are not clear about this one statement, who would acknowledge that they have investigated the sayings of other buddhas?

To say, “a painted cake can’t satisfy hunger” is like saying, for example, “Do no evil, practice the good”; like saying, “What thing is it that comes like this?”; like saying, “I’m always close to this.”¹⁰ We should study it like this for a while.

In the past, there have been few who saw the words “painted cake,” and no one at all who really knew them. How do I know this? Previously, when I examined one or two stinking skin bags, they were unable even to question it, unable personally to attend to it;

they seemed unconcerned, as if not bending an ear to the neighbors' talk.¹¹

"A painted cake," we should realize, has a face born of father and mother, and has a face before your father and mother were born.¹² Precisely when it is being made using rice flour, while it is not necessarily "born" or "not born," its realization is the moment that the way is attained; and we should not study it constrained by our perception of coming and going.¹³ The pigments for painting cakes should be the same as the pigments for painting mountains and waters.¹⁴ That is, we use blue cinnabar to paint mountains and waters, and we use rice flour to paint painted cakes. Such being the case, what is used is the same and the work is identical.

This being so, the "painted cake" spoken of here means that all the pastry cakes, vegetable cakes, milk cakes, roasted cakes, steamed cakes, and so forth — all of them appear from paintings. We should realize that the paintings are equal, the cakes are equal, the dharmas are equal.¹⁵ For this reason, the cakes appearing here are all "painted cakes." When we seek painted cakes other than these, we will never meet them, never bring them out.¹⁶ While they may be a simultaneous occurrence, they are a simultaneous non-occurrence.¹⁷ Nevertheless, it is not [that they show] signs of old age or youth, it is not [that they leave] traces of coming and going. Here, in such a place, the land of the "painted cake" appears and is established.

"Doesn't satisfy hunger" means that, while "hunger" is not employed by the twelve times, there is no opportune time to meet the "painted cake"; and that, when we consume the "painted

cake," it does not in the end have the power to end our "hunger."¹⁸ Since there is no cake relative to "hunger," and there is no hunger relative to "hunger," no [such] livelihood is transmitted, no house style transmitted.¹⁹ "Hunger" is a single staff; shouldered horizontally, shouldered vertically, it is a thousand changes and a myriad transformations. "Cake" is the single occurrence of body and mind; it is blue, yellow, red, and white; long, short, square, and round.²⁰

Now, when we paint mountains and waters, we use blue patina and cinnabar and ochre, we use weird cliffs and strange rocks, we use the seven treasures or four treasures.²¹ The task of painting a cake is also like this. In painting a person, we use the four elements and five aggregates.²² In painting a buddha, we use not only a clay shrine and dirt clod: we use the thirty-two marks; we use one blade of grass; we use the incultation of three *asamkhyeya* and one hundred kalpas.²³ In this way, because we have been drawing the painted buddha on a single scroll, all the buddhas are painted buddhas, and all the painted buddhas are the buddhas. We should examine the painted buddha and the painted cake. Which is the black stone tortoise, and which is the iron staff?²⁴ Which is a form dharma and which is a mind dharma?²⁵ We should work away at investigating this in detail. When we work away at it like this, birth and death, coming and going, are all paintings; unsurpassed bodhi itself is a painting. Overall, the dharma realm and empty space are nothing but paintings.

* * * * *

An old buddha has said,²⁶

The way attained, white snow flies off in a thousand flakes;

The painting done, blue mountains come forth in multiple scrolls.

This is the talk of great awakening, a saying revealing concentrated effort in pursuit of the way. Thus, at the very moment of gaining the way, the blue mountains and white clouds have been painted in what he calls “multiple scrolls.”²⁷ One moving, one still, yet all of it nothing but a painting.²⁸ Our present concentrated effort has come solely from a painting. The ten epithets and three knowledges — these are a single scroll of painting; the faculties, powers, awakening, and path — these are a single scroll of painting.²⁹ If we say that paintings are not real, then all the myriad dharmas are not real; if all the myriad dharmas are not real, then the buddha dharma is also not real. If the buddha dharma is real, then the “painted cake” must be real.

* * * * *

Great Master Kuangzheng of Yunmen was once asked by a monk, “What is the talk that transcends the buddhas and surpasses the ancestors?”³⁰

The Master said, “Pastry cakes.”

This saying, we should work on quietly. Where “pastry cakes” are fully realized, there will be ancestral masters who speak of “talk that transcends the buddhas and surpasses the ancestors,” men of iron who do not hear it, and students who listen to it; and they have sayings that realize it.³¹ Divulging the matter and achieving accord using “pastry cakes” here is

certainly one or two “painted cakes.”³² They have the “talk that transcends the buddhas and surpasses the ancestors”; they have the status of entering into buddha and entering into Māra.³³

* * * * *

My former master said, “The tall bamboo and the banana plant enter the picture.”³⁴

This saying is a saying in which one who has transcended and surpassed the long and the short studies the picture of both.

“Tall bamboo” is long bamboo.³⁵ While it may be the movement of yin and yang, what makes the yin and yang move are the years and months of the “tall bamboo.”³⁶ Those years and months, the yin and yang, cannot be calculated. The great sage may observe the yin and yang, but the great sage cannot measure the yin and yang; for with both yin and yang, the dharmas are equal, the measurements are equal, the ways are equal.³⁷ They are not the yin and yang now seen by the mind and eye of the other paths and the two vehicles; they are the yin and yang of the “tall bamboo.”³⁸ They are the transit of the “tall bamboo”; they are the world of the “tall bamboo.”³⁹ As attendants of the “tall bamboo,” there are the buddhas of the ten directions. We should realize that heaven and earth are the “roots, stalks, branches, and leaves” of the “tall bamboo.”⁴⁰ Therefore, they make heaven and earth long endure; they stabilize the great oceans and Sumeru, and all the worlds in the ten directions; they make the staff and the bamboo stick “one old, one not old.”⁴¹

“The banana plant” takes earth, water, fire, wind, and space; mind, mentation, consciousness,

and wisdom as its “roots, stalks, branches, and leaves, flowers and fruit, lustrous and colored”; therefore, it wears the autumn wind and is broken by the autumn wind.⁴² Not a single dust mote remains; we can say it is pure. In the eye, there are no sinews or bones; in the colors, there is no adhesive: there is liberation on the spot.⁴³ Since it is restricted to being quick, it is not a question of moments or *ksana*.⁴⁴ Taking up this power, it makes a livelihood of earth, water, fire, and wind; it makes the great death of mind, mentation, consciousness, and wisdom.⁴⁵ Thus, in this family enterprise, the work has been taken on with spring, autumn, winter, and summer as the implements.

Now, as for the whole situation of the “tall bamboo” and “banana plant,” they are a picture. Based on this, those who have a great awakening by hearing the sound of bamboo, whether dragons or snakes, must be pictures.⁴⁶ We should not doubt this with the sentiments of common people and sages.⁴⁷ It is “that stem is that long”; it is “this stem is this short”; it is “this stem is this long”; it is “that stem is that short.”⁴⁸ Because they are both pictures, inevitably they match long and short pictures. It is not that, when there are long pictures, there are no short pictures. We should clearly study this principle. Truly, because all the worlds and all the dharmas are a picture, persons and dharmas appear from the picture; buddhas and ancestors are realized from the picture.

This being so, if it is not a “painted cake,” it has no cure that “satisfies hunger”; if it is not painted hunger, it never encounters a person; if it is not painted satisfaction, it has no efficacy. In general, satisfying hunger, satisfying non-hunger, not satisfying hunger, not satisfying

non-hunger — if they are not painted hunger, they are not attained, they are not spoken of. We should study for a while the fact that this is a painted cake.⁴⁹ When we study the essential point of this, we exhaustively investigate with body and mind a little of the virtue of turning things and things turning.⁵⁰ Where this virtue is not yet manifest, the power of studying the way is not yet realized. To bring about the realization of this virtue is the realization that verifies the painting.

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye
Painted Cakes
Number 24

[Ryūmonji MS:]

Presented to the assembly at Kannon Dōri
Kōshō Horin Monastery; fifth day, eleventh
month of the senior water year of the tiger, the
third year of Ninji [28 November 1242]

[Tōunji MS:]

Copied this in the guest office at Kōshō;
seventh day, eleventh month of the senior
water year of the tiger, in Ninji [30 November
1242]. Ejō

Notes

1. **Since the buddhas are verification, things are verification:** A play on the word for “things,” read here *shomotsu*, which can also be read *shobutsu*, a homophone for “the buddhas.”

2. **“A single dharma barely penetrated and the myriad dharmas are penetrated”:** A sentence in

Chinese that appears to be a quotation but for which no source has been identified. The phrase “a single dharma barely penetrated” is found in a saying of the twelfth-century figure Nantang Yuanjing (dates unknown): “A single dharma barely penetrated, every dharma throughout”; and the tenth-century *Zongjing lu*: “A single dharma barely penetrated, and the myriad dharmas all return to the mind ground.”

3. **snatches away the previous face of the “single dharma”**: Perhaps meaning something like, “denies the identity of the dharma in question.” **the “single dharma” is opposed; the “single dharma” is unopposed**: Exactly to what the “single dharma” is (or is not) opposed is not clear; perhaps, to other dharmas (though it might also be taken as the “penetration”).

4. **mutual obstruction**: Presumably, meaning that the “single dharma” and other dharmas would obstruct each other (though, again, one might imagine an obstruction between the “dharma” and its “penetration”).

5. **obstacle of penetration**: Or “obstacles to penetration.” **a single penetration is myriad penetrations**: Some would read this “it is just one penetration and myriad penetrations.”

6. **An old buddha**: I.e., Xiangyan Zhixian (d. 898), after searching in vain in texts for something with which to answer his teacher’s demand that he say something “from the time before your father and mother were born.” The story that is the context of this saying is included in Dōgen’s *shinji Shōbōgenzō* and discussed in the “*Shōbō-*

genzō keisei sanshoku.”

7. **robed in clouds and sleeved in mist**: A literary expression for the monk, imagined as wandering the landscape; akin to the more common “clouds and water.”

the skin and flesh of the spirit heads and demon faces arriving from the ten directions are thick and are thin: I.e., the many different monks everywhere who have studied this saying. “Spirit heads and demon faces” (i.e., “weird things”) is used in self-deprecating reference to monks.

8. **family enterprise**: I.e., Buddhism.

instruction in the three vehicles and the one vehicle: I.e., doctrinal learning in the vehicles of *śrāvaka*, *pratyeka-buddha*, and bodhisattva, and the one, buddha vehicle.

9. **provisionally established dharmas**: I.e., the teachings of Buddhism based on conventional categories.

10. **“a painted cake can’t satisfy hunger”**: This version of the saying, with the auxiliary verb “can” does not seem to occur in the Chinese sources.

“Do no evil, practice the good”: From the famous “Verse of the Common Precepts of the Seven Buddhas,” found throughout the Buddhist canon:

To do not evil,

Practice the good,

And purify one’s mind:

This is the teaching of the buddhas.

“What thing is it that comes like this?”: A question famously put by the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng (638-713), upon greeting Nanyue Huairang (677-744), from a dialogue often cited by Dōgen.

Chan Master Dahui of Mount Nanyue

(descendant of Caoxi, named Huairang) visited the Sixth Ancestor. The Ancestor asked him, “Where do you come from?”

The Master said, “I come from the National Teacher An on Mount Song.”

The Ancestor said, “What thing is it that comes like this?”

“I’m always close to this”: Variant of a phrase that occurs in the “Jinzu” and “Henzan” chapters of the *Shōbōgenzō*. The sense of the glyph *setsu* here is subject to interpretation: the translation takes it as *sekin* (“to be familiar with,” “to be intimate with”), but it could also be, and has been, understood as *shinsetsu* (“to be ardent,” “to care deeply,” etc.). From a remark attributed to Dongshan Liangjie (807-869), in answer to a question about the three bodies of a buddha. The *Dongshan yulu* gives the question as:

[A monk] asked, “Among the three bodies [of the buddha], which body doesn’t fall among the numbered?”

Dōgen’s *shinji Shōbōgenzō* has a variant version:

Dongshan was asked by a monk, “Among the three bodies, which preaches the dharma?”

The Master said, “I’m always close to this.”

The monk later asked Caoshan [i.e., Caoshan Benzhi (840-901)], “Dongshan said, ‘I’m always close to this.’ What does that mean?”

Shan said, “If you want my head, cut it off and take it.”

The monk again asked Xuefeng [i.e., Xuefeng Yicun (822-908)]. Feng struck him in the mouth with his staff and said, “I’ve been to Dongshan.”

^{11.} **stinking skin bags:** A common term for the body, especially of humans; often used by Dōgen in reference especially to Chan monks.

^{12.} **face born of father and mother; face before your father and mother were born:** I.e., phenomenal and ultimate identities respectively. The phrase “before your father and mother were born” is a classic Zen expression for the true self, sometimes understood as “before your father and mother gave birth.” The use of this metaphor here likely reflects Weishan’s challenge to Xiangyan to say a word “from the time before your father and mother were born.” Other versions of the story give somewhat different phrasing; for example, Dōgen’s *shinji Shōbōgenzō* has:

Now, I ask you: When you were an infant just born, before you could distinguish north, south, east, and west — try saying something for me from just this time.

^{13.} **Precisely when it is being made using rice flour:** Taking *shōtō inmo* (“just such”) as the common *shōtō inmo ji* (“at just such a time”). Some read *beimen* (“rice flour”) as “rice and wheat”; however it is read, note that, here and below, the “painted cake” is painted with the ingredients of the cake.

its realization is the moment that the way is attained (*genjō dōjō no jisetsu nari*: A tentative translation of a phrase somewhat difficult to parse, taking *genjō* (“realization”) as the grammatical subject and reading *dōjō* as “attainment of the way” in accordance with its use below, in the first line of the verse in section 11. The exact sense of this sentence is subject to interpretation, but one reading might be something like, “whatever cake is or is not produced from the ingredients, the making of the cake is the realization of Buddhist practice.”

14. **pigments:** More literally, “cinnabar and ochre,” used as a generic term for the colors employed in painting. The compound “mountains and waters” is a standard term for “landscape.”

15. **the paintings are equal, the cakes are equal, the dharmas are equal:** A common rhetorical pattern that Dōgen will repeat below, section 18. It can be seen, for example, in a saying by Mazu Daoyi (709-788):

The names are equal, the meanings are equal, and all the dharmas are equal, pure and unadulterated.

Dōgen quotes this line in his *Fushukuhānpō* and uses a variant of the pattern in his “Shōbōgenzō shinjin gakudō” (DZZ.1:49):

The words are equal, the minds are equal, the dharmas are equal.

16. **we will never meet them, never bring them out:** Borrowing the fixed expression, “meeting without bringing it out”; here, probably meaning simply that there are no other painted cakes.

17. **while they may be a simultaneous occurrence, they are a simultaneous non-occurrence:** Probably, meaning that the cakes and the paintings occur and do not occur together.

18. **employed by the twelve times:** The notion of employing and being employed by the twelve times (into which the day was traditionally divided) occurs frequently in the *Shōbōgenzō*; it comes from a popular saying attributed to the famous Tang-dynasty Chan master Zhaozhou Congshen (778-897);

[A monk] asked, “How does one use the mind throughout the twelve times [of the day]?”

The Master [Zhaozhou] said, “You are employed by the twelve times. This old monk employs the twelve times.”

19. **Since there is no cake relative to “hunger,” and there is no hunger relative to “hunger,” no [such] livelihood is transmitted, no house style transmitted:** Perhaps meaning that, since “cake” and “hunger” are not related to each other, there is no Buddhist tradition of eating painted cakes to satisfy hunger. The first two phrases here could also be parsed, “There is no cake relative to hunger; and because there is no hunger relative to hunger”

20. **single occurrence of body and mind:** Or “occurrence of a single body and mind.”

blue, yellow, red, and white; long, short, square, and round: A fixed set, appearing often in Buddhist literature, for the variety of things in the world.

21. **blue patina and cinnabar and ochre:** The term *seiroku* (translated here “blue patina”) is thought to be synonymous with *rokushō* (literally, “greenish blue,” referring to the patina forming on bronze and copper used as a pigment); the expression *seiroku sansui* indicates a colored landscape painting (as opposed to a black ink landscape).

weird cliffs and strange rocks: A fixed idiom for the bizarre natural forms in Chinese landscape painting.

seven treasures or four treasures: “The seven treasures” is a standard term in Buddhist literature for various lists of precious substances; one common version gives gold, silver, beryl, crystal, agate, ruby, and cornelian. Mount Sumeru, at the

center of the world, is sometimes said to be made of the seven treasures. “The four treasures” is a somewhat less common list consisting of gold, silver, beryl, and crystal. Interestingly, in our context of painting here, the same expression can refer to the four implements used in calligraphy: brush, ink, paper, and inkstone.

22. **four elements and five aggregates:** I.e., the four primary forms of matter — earth, water, fire, and wind — of which the physical world is composed; and the five “heaps” — form, sensation, cognition, formations, and consciousness — into which the psychophysical organism can be analyzed.

23. **clay shrine and dirt clod:** I.e., the materials of the Buddhist icon. Perhaps alluding to the conversations of Chan Master Zhaozhou Congshen. E.g.,
A monk asked, “What is a buddha?”
The Master said, “What’s in the hall.”
The monk said, “What’s in the hall — that’s nothing but a molded image in a clay shrine.”
The Master said, “Right.”
And again,
A monk asked, “What is a buddha?”
He said, “A dirt clod.”

thirty-two marks: The extraordinary physical characteristics ascribed to the body of a buddha in Buddhist literature.

one blade of grass: Likely reflecting a well-known Zen trope, invoked elsewhere in the *Shōbōgenzō*, that equates a single blade of grass with the body of the buddha:

Sometimes we take one blade of grass and use it as a sixteen-foot golden body [of the buddha]; sometimes we take a sixteen-foot golden body and use it as one blade of grass.

three *asamkhyeya* and one hundred kalpas: The length of time it takes in some accounts to become a buddha; three incalculable (*asamkhyeya*) aeons to master the six (or ten) perfections of the bodhisattva, and a hundred additional aeons to develop the thirty-two marks of a buddha’s body.

24. **black stone tortoise; iron staff:** The former is a stone image of a black tortoise used as an auspicious decoration and sometimes used in Zen texts as a symbol of something free from deluded discrimination; the latter is the walking stick of the traveling Buddhist monk, often carried by the Zen master when he “ascends to the hall” for a formal lecture. Why the two appear together here is uncertain.

25. **form dharma; mind dharma:** Standard terms for physical and mental phenomena respectively; or for the first of the five aggregates and the remaining four, respectively.

26. **old buddha:** The source of this verse, given in Chinese, has not been identified.

27. **what he calls “multiple scrolls”:** Following the reading of MSS that give *sūjiku* to *nazuku*.

28. **One moving, one still:** Or “each movement, each stillness.” The translation assumes “clouds” and “mountains” respectively as the antecedents.

29. **Ten epithets and three knowledges:** (a) Ten titles by which a buddha is known, and (b) the three paranormal knowledges possessed by a buddha.

a) Ten epithets: (1) *tathāgata* (“thus come”), (2) *arhat* (“worthy”), (3) *samyak-sambuddha*

(“perfectly awakened”), (4) *vidyā-cara a-sampanna* (“perfectly endowed with wisdom and conduct”), (5) *sugata* (“well gone”), (6) *lokavid* (“knower of the world”), (7) *anuttara* (“unsurpassed”), (8) *puru adamya-sārathi* (“tamer of people”); (9) *śāstā-devamanu yānām* (“teacher of devas and humans”); *bhagavān* (“world-honored”).

b) Three knowledges: (1) *divya-caksus* (“the deva eye”), (2) *pūrva-nivāsānusmṛti* (“recollection of former lives”), (3) *āsrava-ksaya-jñāna* (“knowledge of the elimination of the contaminants”).

faculties, powers, awakening, and path: Four of the groups of virtues that make up the traditional list of the thirty-seven factors of bodhi (for Dōgen’s discussion of which, see “Shōbōgenzō sanjūshichi hon bodai bunpō”): (1) the five faculties (*indriya*); (2) the five powers (*bala*); (3) the seven factors of awakening (*bodhya ga*); and (d) the eightfold path (*mārga*).

³⁰. **Great Master Kuangzheng of Yunmen:** I.e., Yunmen Wenyan (864–949). “Great Master Kuangzheng” is a posthumous title; “Yunmen” is the name of a mountain in the Shaozhou area of Guangdong Province. This dialogue, given here mostly in Japanese, is found in several Chinese sources.

³¹. **men of iron who do not hear it:** “Man of iron” is a common Zen term, occurring frequently in Dōgen’s writings, for the solid practitioner.” Some manuscript witnesses give here the less surprising “have heard it.”

³². **Divulging the matter and achieving accord using “pastry cakes” here:** “Divulging the matter and achieving accord” is a fixed idiom, common in Zen texts, used especially for the

relationship between master and disciple.

³³. **status of entering into buddha and entering into Māra:** I.e., advanced spiritual abilities. To “enter into buddha and Māra” is a common image in Zen texts, as in the saying, “You can enter into buddha, but you can’t enter into Māra.

³⁴. **My former master:** I.e., Tiantong Ruji (1162–1227).

³⁵. **“Tall bamboo” is long bamboo:** Dōgen is here simply explaining the Chinese term.

³⁶. **While it may be the movement of yin and yang:** I.e., although the length of the bamboo is a result of the processes of yin and yang.

³⁷. **great sage:** May refer either (a) to a buddha or other advanced Buddhist adept, or (b) to a sagely figure of Chinese tradition.

³⁸. **mind and eye of the other paths and the two vehicles:** I.e., the perceptual faculties of the members of non-Buddhist religions and non-Mahāyāna Buddhist traditions.

³⁹. **transit of the “tall bamboo”:** Using an astrological term for the progress of a body through the celestial houses.

⁴⁰. **“roots, stalks, branches, and leaves”:** Recalling a verse from the *Lotus Sūtra*, repeated in the following section; see Note 42, below.

⁴¹. **great oceans and Sumeru:** I.e., Mount Sumeru, the mountain at the center of a Buddhist world system. “The great oceans” refers to the rings of

seas surrounding Sumeru.

they make the staff and the bamboo stick “one old, one not old”: “Staff” and “bamboo stick” refer to implements carried by the Zen master: a walking staff and a curved stick held when teaching. The expression “one old, one not old” likely reflects a verse by Dongshan Liangjie, quoted by Dōgen in his *Eihei kōroku*:

The way, without mind, accords with the person;

The person, without mind, accords with the way.

If you want to know the point in this,

It’s one old, one not old.

42. **earth, water, fire, wind, and space; mind, mentation, consciousness, and wisdom:** I.e., the physical and mental realms. The first five terms represent the five elements of Buddhist physics; the next three terms are a common expression for mental functions; the last item is the standard compound expression for “wisdom” (though, for linguistic symmetry, it might be that we are supposed to read it here as separate words, “knowledge” and “wisdom”).

“roots, stalks, branches, and leaves, flowers and fruit, lustrous and colored”: From a verse in the *Lotus Sūtra* describing the varied plants of the world watered by the same rain.

43. **in the colors, there is no adhesive:** Referring to the bonding agent in pigments. The choice of “color” for the Japanese term *shiki* here obscures its use to render *rūpa*, the object of the “eye” with which it is being paired.

there is liberation on the spot: It is not obvious what is liberated from what. Perhaps the banana plant is liberated, or the “eye” and “colors” are

both liberated.

44. **Since it is restricted to being quick:** Some editions read here “since it is not restricted in its quickness.”

moments or ksana: The term *ksana* is used in Buddhist texts for the shortest unit of time. The term for “moment” here (*shuyu*) is used for Sanskrit *muhūrta*, a very short period of time, sometimes reckoned as 216,000 *kṣāna*, or one thirtieth part of a day.

45. **Taking up this power:** Both the agent of the verb and the antecedent of the pronoun are unexpressed. The translation assumes that the “banana plant” takes up the power of liberation, but one might also understand that we take up the power of the “banana plant.”

46. **those who have a great awakening by hearing the sound of bamboo:** Likely an allusion to the story, alluded to above, Note 6, of the awakening of Xiangyan Zhixian, who gained an understanding upon hearing the sound of a bit of debris striking a bamboo stalk.

dragons or snakes: Used generically for reptilian creatures, and sometimes used for great men (“a dragon of a snake”); in the context here, likely “the great and the small” — i.e., akin to “common people and sages.” Perhaps, reflecting the expression “dragon head, snake tail,” used in reference to those who pretend to be better than they are.

47. **common people and sages:** I.e., ordinary people and advanced adepts on the Buddhist path.

48. **“that stem is that long”**: Reference to the culm of the bamboo; after a saying of Cuiwei Wuxue (dates unknown) included in Dōgen’s *shinji Shōbōgenzō* and treated elsewhere in his writings. Here is one version:

[Yunmen Wenyan] asked, “What is the clear intention of [Bodhidharma’s] coming from the west?”

Cuiwei said, “Once no one’s around, I’ll tell you.”

The Master [i.e., Wenyan] waited a while and said, “No one’s around; I beg the Master to tell me.”

Cuiwei got down from his meditation seat and led the Master into the bamboo garden. The Master said again, “No one’s around; I beg the Reverend to tell me.”

Cuiwei pointed at the bamboo and said, “This stem is this long; that stem is that short.”

49. **this is a painted cake**: The pronoun “this” here has no obvious antecedent; perhaps, a reference to both our hunger and its satisfaction.

50. **turning things and things turning**: Expressions best known from the Chinese *Śūrangama-sūtra*:

Living beings from beginningless time have all been deluded by things. They lose their original mind due to being turned by things. Therefore, they see here the large and see the small. If they could turn the things, they would be the same as a tathāgata. Their bodies and minds would be perfect and bright; without moving from the place of awakening, in the tip of a single hair, they could fully include the lands of the ten directions.



My Footnotes on Zazen (24) To Be Skillful on the Path of Connecting Thoughts (1)

Rev. Issho Fujita

(Continued from previous article) Another thing I felt was a sense of *déjà vu*: somewhere before I had seen the expressions “with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth.....” and “It is just like a strong person grabbing a weak person by the head, throat, or shoulders” Then, after a while, I remembered a passage from the *Mahasacchaka Sutta* (Majjhima Nikāya, 36th Sutra). It was indeed written as follows:

“O Aggivessana, I thought: ‘Suppose, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrain, and crush mind with mind.’ O Aggivessana, so, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrained, and crushed mind with mind. O Aggivessana, while I did so, sweat ran from my armpits. O Aggivessana, just as a strong man might seize a weaker man by the head or shoulders and beat him down, constrain him, and crush him, so too, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrained, and crushed mind with mind, and sweat ran from my armpits. O Aggivessana, but although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and

uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. O Aggivessana, but such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.”

This passage is written as the Buddha reflects on the intense suffering he experienced as a young man. Interestingly, it is here that he uses the phrases, “With my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrain, and crush mind with mind” and “Just as a strong man might seize a weaker man by the head or shoulders and beat him down, constrain him, and crush him.” This part of the *Vitakkasanthana Sutta* and the *Mahasacchaka Sutta* is probably a canonical expression of the Buddhist scriptures, which in the original Pali texts are exactly or almost exactly the same words. At any rate, what must not be forgotten here is that in the context of this *Mahasacchaka Sutta*, the “forceful” and “forcible” practice indicated by such expressions was finally abandoned by the Buddha.

This passage is translated in another translation as follows, and it is more likely that the Buddha is reflecting such a way of practice:

In the past, I gritted my teeth, pressed my tongue against my palate, and used my mind to overrule and suppress my mind. As I did this, I was bathed in sweat. Although I was not lacking in strength, although I maintained mindfulness and did not fall from mindfulness, my body and my mind were not at peace, and I was worn out by these exhausting efforts. This practice caused other feelings of pain to arise in me besides the pain associated with the austerities, and I was not able to tame my mind.” [From Transforma-

tion and Healing: *Sutra on the Four Establishments of Mindfulness* by Thich Nhat Hanh]

If you have been reading this series of articles of mine, you will know that the Buddha clearly stated that such practices with such qualities as “gritting the teeth,” “controlling and holding the mind with the mind,” “no peace of mind or body,” “painstaking effort,” “exhaustion,” and “further suffering in the mind,” are “futile.” I hope you understand that my position is that the Buddha gave up on these qualities and sat under a tree, and that this is the origin of zazen. In other words, zazen is a completely different kind of activity from “gritting one’s teeth” (forceful) in that it is a “spontaneous action.” So, how should we accept the Buddha’s advice to “grit one’s teeth” in the “*Vitakkasanthana Sutta*” (“Stop Thinking Sutra”) which is treated negatively in the *Mahasacchaka Sutta*?

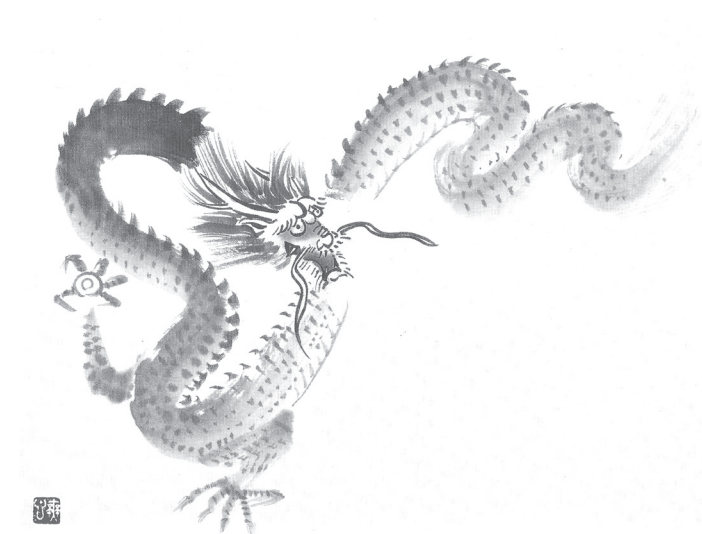
First of all, I should take the Buddha’s advice favorably and literally, in other words, I should try to understand it in a way that is consistent with my own understanding of zazen. What I can do now is to accept that the Buddha’s intention is not to appeal to the fifth and final method¹, but to expect us to do our utmost to let go of our thoughts through earlier methods. This is to be understood as saying that we should practice by avoiding the use of these methods as much as possible, even if they are mentioned as methods. We treat it as a method that is conceivable, but not actually used.

Another way to take this is to interpret it as saying that even if, in the worst case scenario, you have to use this fifth method, you are not to

“make enemies” of the unwholesome thoughts with aversion, hatred, shame, and other self-destructive and offensive feelings and thoughts, and to take the fight to them, literally “to defeat, subdue, and crush” them by force. Although the text may evoke violent and combative images, as the Buddha clearly states, “By awareness, you will defeat, cut off, and crush the mind,” when this fifth method is actually applied, the energy of awareness will cause the unwholesome thoughts to evaporate as if the morning dew were evaporating in the sun’s rays. This will be a quiet and peaceful development letting it be without resistance, far from a “battle” in the common sense of the word, and this is how you will carry it out as such.

Let’s recall here the scene of the Buddha’s so-called “subduing the demons and attaining the Way.” When Shakyamuni Buddha was sitting under a tree, a demon (Mara) attacked him with his army to prevent him from sitting, but he defeated the demon at every turn and attained enlightenment. The story is told of a demon, but it is nothing more than the evil movement of the mind. The army sent by the demons to disturb one’s practice is actually a metaphor for the delusive afflictions that arise in zazen such as desires, anger, and foolishness. How did Shakyamuni Buddha under the tree “repel” these forces? As shown in depictions of “subduing the demons and attaining the Way,” Shakyamuni Buddha was alone in the face of a huge army of demons. It was truly a solitary struggle. In such a situation, we would either surrender in fear or “clench our teeth and press our tongue against our upper palate,” and try to fight to the best of our ability.

¹ The fifth method is the last and final coping method, which is what to do if none of the four preceding coping methods have been successful. In a sense, it is the worst-case scenario. That is, “grit your teeth, press your tongue against your upper palate, and use your awareness to defeat, block, and crush the mind.” (Quoted from the previous article in this series)



NEWS

September 28, 2022 February 3, 16, 2023 March 8, 15, 2023

South America Soto Zen Workshop was held on Zoom

October 7~9, 2022

Europe Soto Zen Workshop was held at Zendonien in Blois, France.

October 15, 2022

South America Soto Zen Conference was held at Daisenji, in Florianópolis, Brazil

October 22, 2021

Hawaii Soto Zen Conference was held on Zoom

November 14, 2022

North America Soto Zen Conference was held at Zenshuji in Los Angeles, U.S.A.

November 14 - 15, 2022

North America Soto Zen Workshop was held at Zenshuji in Los Angeles, U.S.A.

November 16~20, 2022

Soto Zen North America 100th Anniversary Jukai-e held at Zenshuji in Los Angeles, U.S.A.

February 11, 2023

South America Soto Zen Conference was held at Daishiji, in Bogota, Colombia

February 24~26, 2023

Hawaii Soto Zen Workshop was held at Shoboji, in Hawaii, U.S.A.

February 25, 2023

Hawaii Soto Zen Conference was held at Shoboji, in Hawaii, U.S.A.