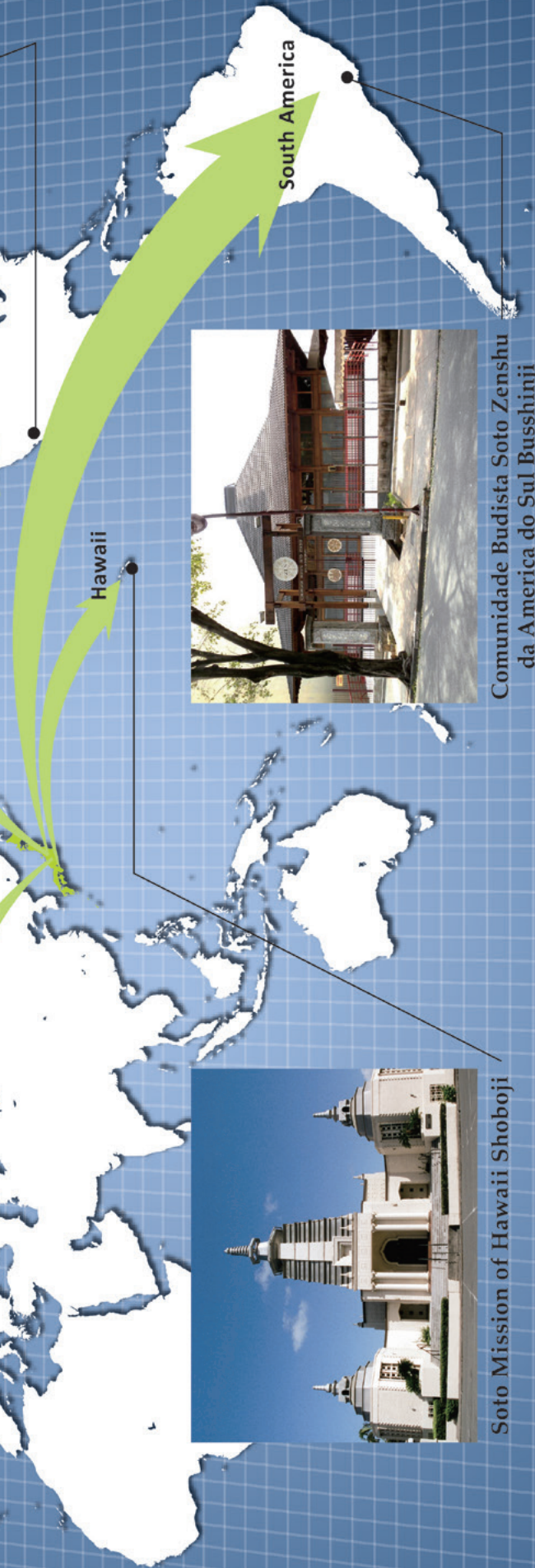




Soto Mission of Hawaii Shoboji



Comunidade Budista Soto Zenshu da America do Sul Busshinji



Soto Zen Buddhism International Center has been established in the United States of America by Sotoshu as the base for teaching activities outside Japan. There are also International Regional Offices in Hawaii, North America, South America and Europe, and they work to disseminate Soto Zen Buddhism. Please refer to their contact information in this leaflet. Please feel free to visit or call.

Administrative Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism

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277 Rue du Faubourg Saint Antoine, 75011, Paris, France
TEL: (33)-1-4633-7738 / FAX: (33)-1-4633-6004 / info@sotozen.eu

CONTACT INFORMATION

Head Temples:

Daihonzan Eiheiji
Daihonzan Eiheiji was founded in 1244 by Dogen Zenji. The temple was funded by Hatano Yoshishige and was named Sanshoho Daibutsuji, but was later renamed as Kichijozan Eiheiji. Eiheiji training is now a 750-year tradition. Even today, more than two hundred monks dedicate themselves to Zen practice night and day.



Eiheiji-cho, Fukui Prefecture

Daihonzan Sojiji
Daihonzan Sojiji was founded in 1321 when Keizan Zenji renamed the already existing temple Morookaji in Ishikawa Prefecture as Shogakuzan Sojiji. During the Meiji Period (late 19th century) the original temple was lost to fire and Sojiji was moved to Yokohama, its present location. The temple complex is extensive and the great size of the temple buildings is impressive.



Yokohama-city, Kanagawa Prefecture

Sound of ZEN

禅



SOTOZEN Buddhism

Soto Zen in the World

Soto Zen teaching has been spreading around the world.

The teaching of Soto Zen outside Japan originally began for the sake of Japanese immigrants in Hawaii and South America in 1903. A bit later, teaching activities began in North America and Europe as well. This prolonged effort has resulted in countless followers and friends including more than 800 Sotoshu priests of diverse nationalities who are active throughout the world as well as the building of many temples and zen centers.



Temple Zen de La Gendronniere

These temples and zen centers not only provide zazen but also have a variety of annual Japanese cultural events. Along with the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha, Dogen Zenji, and Keizan Zenji these events extend beyond the boundaries of race and cultural differences, making the temple or zen center a place for the community to meet and share their lives.



Zenshuji Soto Mission



Doctrine (Shushi)

Soto Zen Buddhism is based on the correctly transmitted Buddha Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha through the Ancestors. The practice of Soto Zen Buddhism is to realize *Shikantaza* (just sitting) and *Sokushinzebutsu* (Mind itself is Buddha), practicing zazen to attain physical and mental peace. It also teaches that the act of sitting itself is the form of *Busshin* (Buddha-Mind). Bringing the practice of zazen into our daily life through *Gyojuzaga* (walking, standing, sitting, and sleeping), we are able to truly understand the significance of our life and live peacefully with one another.



Buddhist Tenets (Kyogi)

We are all children of the Buddha and come into this world endowed with the Buddha-Mind. However, failing to realize this, we live selfishly and cause suffering to ourselves and to others.

Buddha-Mind is the act of mindfulness, in which we not only appreciate our life but we appreciate the life of others. By following the teachings of the Buddha, Dogen Zenji, and Keizan Zenji, we are able to have our minds come to rest. We experience harmony in our lives as we rejoice in serving our society. We will also experience the deep faith that will allow us to stand up against any hardships. By focusing on our daily action, we will discover happiness and a life worth living, which is the teaching of the Soto Zen Buddhism.

Shakyamuni Buddha & Two Founders

Shakyamuni Buddha

Shakyamuni Buddha was born a prince in the Shakya tribe in a town called Lumbini which is located in present-day Nepal. As a prince, he was blessed with a life of riches. However, he was deeply troubled by the problems of his life and left home at the age of twenty-nine to become a monk. After six years of ascetic practice, he realized the Way at the age of thirty-five in Bodhgaya. After his realization until his death in Kushinagara, the Buddha continued his travels to preach the Buddhadharma while also fostering his disciples.

Taiso Keizan Zenji

Following Dogen Zenji's death, it was Keizan Zenji who built the foundation upon which Soto Zen Buddhism would grow. Keizan Zenji entered Eiheiji at the age of eight, and went on pilgrimage at nineteen. Subsequently, he established Sojiji in Ishikawa Prefecture, and dedicated himself to nurturing many disciples.



Koso Dogen Zenji

In the Kamakura Period (the early 1200s), Dogen Zenji went to Song Dynasty China at the age of twenty-four to learn Buddhism. After he trained in strict practice, he received the Buddha's teachings, which had been inherited by the Ancestors from Tiantong Rujing (Tendo Nyojō). After returning to Japan, Dogen Zenji built Eiheiji in Fukui Prefecture.

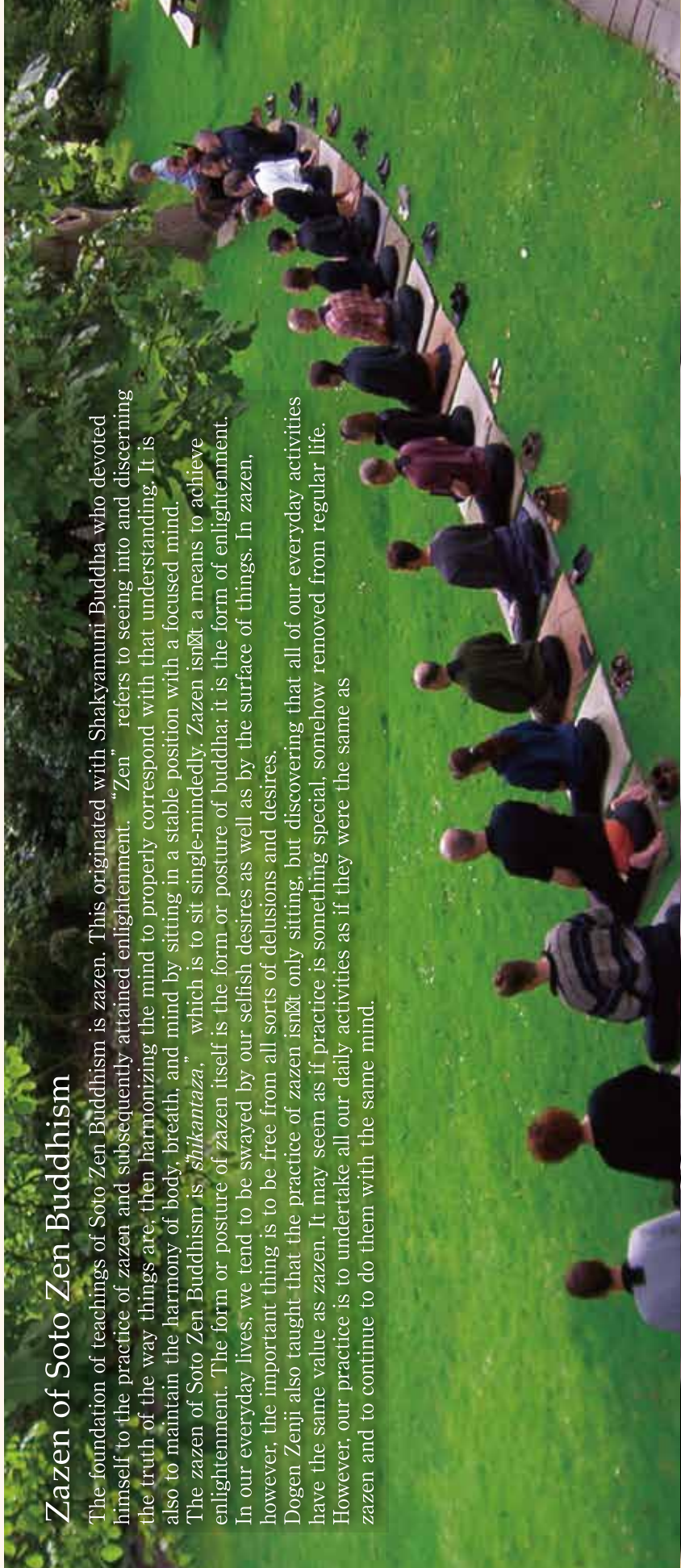


Zazen

Zazen of Soto Zen Buddhism

The foundation of teachings of Soto Zen Buddhism is zazen. This originated with Shakyamuni Buddha who devoted himself to the practice of zazen and subsequently attained enlightenment. "Zen" refers to seeing into and discerning the truth of the way things are, then harmonizing the mind to properly correspond with that understanding. It is also to maintain the harmony of body, breath, and mind by sitting in a stable position with a focused mind. The zazen of Soto Zen Buddhism is "*shikantaza*," which is to sit single-mindedly. Zazen isn't a means to achieve enlightenment. The form or posture of zazen itself is the form or posture of buddha; it is the form of enlightenment. In our everyday lives, we tend to be swayed by our selfish desires as well as by the surface of things. In zazen, however, the important thing is to be free from all sorts of delusions and desires.

Dogen Zenji also taught that the practice of zazen isn't only sitting, but discovering that all of our everyday activities have the same value as zazen. It may seem as if practice is something special, somehow removed from regular life. However, our practice is to undertake all our daily activities as if they were the same as zazen and to continue to do them with the same mind.

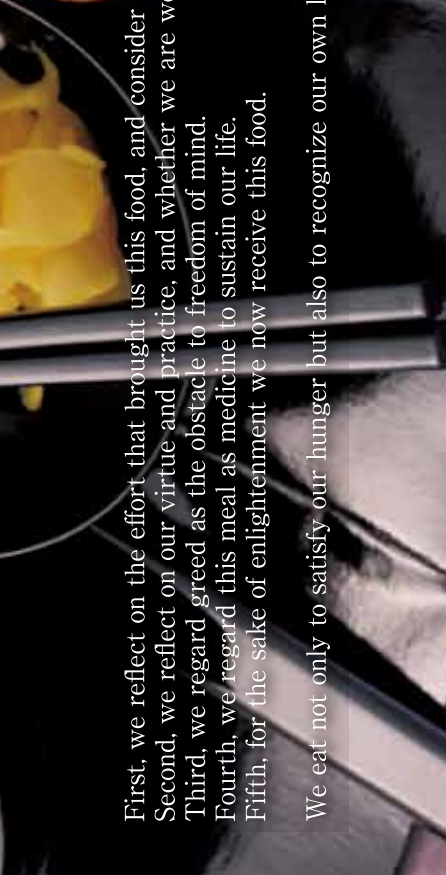


Practice of Eating

Teaching of Food in Soto Zen Buddhism

In the scriptures, the Buddha says many things about the practice of eating: "All of us sustain our life by eating. We lose our life if we do not eat." "By eating we maintain our life, increase our strength, build a more healthy appearance, overcome distress, and stop hunger and weakness." Because nourishment is an essential part of life, the Buddha taught about what to eat, when to eat, and most importantly, how to eat. Dogen Zenji further developed the Buddha's teachings on eating. In his writings, he gave concrete and detailed accounts of what *thetanzo* (Zen cook) must keep in mind, and what we should be mindful of when we eat.

Dogen Zenji taught careful consideration of all aspect of nourishment. He instructed us to receive and prepare all ingredients with equal gratitude and to handle kitchen implements, people, and the mind with care. Eating is done with gratitude, with care for body and mind, and with respect to the unity of giver, receiver and gift in serving and eating. In Soto Zen Buddhism, we recite the Verse of Five Contemplations before meals to remind ourselves how eating and practice are one:



First, we reflect on the effort that brought us this food, and consider how it comes to us.

Second, we reflect on our virtue and practice, and whether we are worthy of this offering.

Third, we regard greed as the obstacle to freedom of mind.

Fourth, we regard this meal as medicine to sustain our life.

Fifth, for the sake of enlightenment we now receive this food.

We eat not only to satisfy our hunger but also to recognize our own life and the lives of others.