

DHARMA EYE**法眼**

News of Soto Zen Buddhism: Teachings and Practice

A Greeting

Rev. Wafu Takizawa
Director, Educational Division
The Administrative Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism



I would like to extend greetings to each of you. I imagine that all the readers of *Dharma Eye* are well and everything is proceeding satisfactorily for you. I would like to thank you for your interest in this publication.

On October 21, 2006, I was appointed as the Director of the Educational Division succeeding Rev. Shoyu Kawamura who has become the Director of the Mission Division. It is truly a great honor for me to receive this appointment even though I still have much to learn. Thus far, I have been involved with overseas teaching activities as a board member of the Overseas Dissemination Committee, the Special Committee for Overseas Dissemination, and as an advisor to Soto Zen International. Now that I am directly in charge of this department, I have the firm resolve to exert myself in working toward the resolution of the various issues we are faced with.

The first Sotoshu overseas teaching activities began with ministering to Japanese immigrants in Hawaii and South America. Since then, the scope of these activities has widened dramatically to include North America and Europe. Having passed the Centennial Anniversary of Sotoshu overseas teaching activities, the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha, the Eminent Ancestor Dogen Zenji, and the Great Ancestor Keizan Zenji has clearly spread throughout the people of the world and consequently the target of overseas teaching activities has become diversified.

As one way to respond to this global diversification, in November 2006 we moved the English publication *Zen Friends*, the Portuguese publication *Caminho Zen*, and the Spanish publication *Zen Amigos* to our website and from now on will publish them electronically. We will also deliver this material on the Internet in three other languages: French, German, and Italian for a total of six languages.

Until now, we have been mostly following in the footsteps of the official Sotoshu homepage, and translating that material. From now on, however, our objective is to establish separate contents for the above-mentioned multilingual website that we hope will advance Sotoshu overseas teaching activities by providing enriched teaching materials. At the same time that we begin this new project, we would like to hear your opinions so that we can work on this in a way that we can respond appropriately to world trends and not miss international currents.

Presently, the Sotoshu is in a period of transition as it directly faces a wide variety of problems. There is pressure for us to respond to and resolve all of these matters quickly. At Shumuchō (the Administrative Headquarters of Soto Zen Buddhism in Tokyo), the question of standardizing the regulations for overseas priests is one that has been under review for some time. This is an issue that doesn't concern only the International Department, but is rather one that has brought the involved departments closer

together as we exchange information. As quickly as possible, our intention is to amend the Sotoshu Regulations. We are now examining the remaining questions; in particular, the objective of establishing a specific training monastery located overseas that would be recognized by Sotoshu. I think that when these two things are implemented that Sotoshu overseas teaching activities will develop and proceed to the next level.

Next, five years have passed since the Soto Zen Buddhism Europe Office was reopened. In that time, there has been a favorable deepening of connections between the various Kokusai Fukyoshi and Dendokyoshi teachers who are within the jurisdiction of the Europe Office and this has come about through conferences and study workshops that have been held on a rotating basis.

Consequently, we began to look at the possibility of moving the Europe Office to Paris where the first Kaikyo office had been established. After receiving approval from

the concerned parties in this area of jurisdiction, we pressed forward with the task of relocating the office. Following that, the bylaws of this office were recognized as a French non-profit organization and the registration for non-profit status was completed. In December 2006, the Soto Zen Buddhism Europe Office was moved to Paris and is now open for business.

In addition, the fortieth anniversary of Sotoshu teaching activities in Europe will be held in June of this year. Painstaking preliminary discussions have been made and we expect that the preparations will be sufficient, but this is something that cannot be undertaken without your assistance. Your continued support will be greatly appreciated.

To the best of my ability, I intend to fulfill my responsibilities with regard to Sotoshu teaching activities both with in Japan and overseas. I appreciate your continued support and assistance.

At Forty Years, A New Beginning

Rev. Genshu Imamura,
Director of the Soto Zen Buddhism Europe Office

Forty years have passed since Taisen Deshimaru Roshi came to the bustling back streets of Paris and aloofly introduced zazen just like Bodhidharma who sat silently facing a wall. It can certainly be said that through the teaching of one Zen priest “Zen”, the living activity of Buddhism which provides fundamental human truth and stability, transcends the differences of language, ethnicity, region, age, and gender and is presently forming a “culture” which is being sympathetically received by many people in every part of Europe. Religion should have such a free and balanced universality, but it isn’t uncommon that there is an adverse effect brought about by a sort of pressure arising from the sanctity and prestige of religion.

This year, as we greet the fortieth year since the practice of “zazen” (the practical body of activity in Zen) became widespread, I think it would be good to speak together

once again from a wide perspective and from many different angles about the essence of Buddhism as a universal religion and make a new step forward that would enhance the inheritance of the future.

In light of this, the Fortieth Memorial Celebrations will be held this year over a three-day period from June 8th (Friday) through June 10th (Sunday) at La Gendronnière, France.

1. Memorial Service for Taisen Deshimaru Roshi, the first Kaikyo Sokan
2. Memories and Recollections of Taisen Deshimaru Roshi
3. A Fortieth Memorial Symposium: Concerning the Universal Nature of Buddhism

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4. 40th Memorial Tanbutsu Ceremony (a special ceremony in praising Buddha)
 5. Memorial Service for those who have rendered distinguished service teaching in Europe.

I hope that we call all work toward making 2007 a

bright and fulfilling year, one that isn't only to honor the memories of those who have exerted themselves for the sake of teaching Soto Zen in Europe, but also for all of the priests and lay people who are presently active as well as for those people who will correctly carry on the practice of zazen in the future.

Living Genuinely: Practicing Sympathetic Identification Millions of Times

Rev. Yuko Masuda
Sotoshu Special Dissemination Teacher



A Talk Given at Green Gulch Farm,
Muir Beach, CA Sept. 7, 2006

Good evening. Thank you for coming tonight after a full day of work. It has gotten dark. Outside the door in the faint moonlight, there were two large deer walking leisurely. Surely, they were a mother and her child. I called, "Come here, come here," but I didn't have anything delicious for them to eat so they didn't approach. I feel relieved at having come to this natural setting.

When the sun sets and it becomes dark, don't you sometimes feel lonely? There is a well-known Japanese author named Eiji Yoshikawa. He wrote *Miyamoto Musashi*, *The New Heike Monogatari*, and other works. He used to say that after reaching the age of fifty, at those times he felt lonely, he would extend his wrist and search for his pulse. Do you have a pulse? Is there anyone without one? It would be a serious problem if you didn't. (Laughter). If you look for the pulse, you will hear a sound. And then, think... "That sound was also there thirty years ago. It was there forty years ago. Looking back forty years, there was my mother, my father, my siblings, and there were my close friends nearby. There were the delicious dishes my mother made. I was surrounded by all these people. I tore about with my sisters and brothers." Mr. Yoshikawa remembered such things. In that way, he realized that he was not alone. Throughout the beat of his pulse, he once again realized that he was connected to many people. "Going back further, there was a time when my mother

held me and changed my diapers. There was a time she fed me with her breasts." He strongly felt that there many people, many diapers, many breasts, much food, and that everyone is one continuation. And then, going back even further, there was a time when he was inside his mother's womb. And going back even further, his mother was within her mother's womb, and going back still further, her mother's mother was within her mother's womb, and so on.

This teaches us that we are connected to the lives of many, many people and to the lives of many, many things in one continuous life. I think it is important that we want to embrace all lives that we are connected to with a feeling of affection, familiarity, and gratefulness. "Causality" is the Buddhist teaching that all things are related and exist in a way that supports other things. At the same time however, these things are constantly changing. This is "impermanence."

Another person, a friend of mine, while checking his pulse, said "The sound of this pulse is the sound of a plane shaving away my life." How many more years do you people expect to live? Do you have a plan? My life might end tomorrow and I might live thirty more years. In either case, it is certain that the length of life is limited and so it's only natural that the number of pulse beats is also limited. That limited pulse is now beating for me. With each beat, the remaining number of beats becomes fewer. So, one beat is the sound of a plane shaving away life. Dogen Zenji sternly instructed us that our lives are fleeting in this way.

"Dharma" is the word used to symbolize "causality"

and “impermanence.” This Dharma is not something that Shakyamuni Buddha realized easily. As you know, the Buddha was born a prince some 2,500 years ago in the country of Kapilavastu. After his enlightenment (satori), he spoke with his disciples. “My father’s castle gardens boasted lotus flowers that were blue and red and yellow. In my room, there was always rich, fragrant incense. My clothes were all made in Kasi.” The Buddha enjoyed those privileged days. Nevertheless, confronted with the sufferings of sickness, old age, and death – things he could not escape – he felt ashamed when noticing that he was continually trying to escape such things. Within this sort of suffering and difficulty, Shakyamuni Buddha discovered the meaning of life through many years of practice. If we are absent-minded, we will finally not be able to reach the Buddha’s teaching.

This teaching was transmitted to China and then Dogen Zenji transmitted it to Japan. He then established Eiheiji and Keizan Zenji, the fourth abbot of Eiheiji, founded Sojiji. The abbots of Eiheiji and Sojiji take turns at working at the Head Priest of Sotoshu. Ohmichi Kosen Zenji, abbot of Sojiji, is now the Head Priest of Sotoshu. I have a message from Ohmichi Zenji for you.

Words of Wisdom from the Head Priest

Throughout my life, I have had only one long cherished desire and that is to build a harmonious society in which people can live together helping and supporting each other. The world is a place where in the midst of the bargaining that surrounds people’s self interests, blood is shed through war and wretched terrorist incidents that are centered on ethnic and religious strife. In our own country of Japan as well, we hear one case after the other of brutal crimes and people who take their own lives. That we are unable to do anything about these things is something that is extremely painful for those of us who are Buddha’s disciples.

A society in which people fight over things and harm each other faces imminent extinction. It is a society in which people share and help each other, however, that shows hope for the future. The Soto Zen School looks squarely at the times and at society. The theme this year, in terms of actually carrying out our life of faith is practice based on “sympathetic identification.”

Each person has a limited life. Don’t we all live on one planet, each of us returning to the Great Earth? There is an inseparable connection between human beings and Nature. The important thing is the way in which we hold this relationship. Going beyond the barriers of egocentric viewpoints and attachment to the ego, let us walk together on the Way of Buddha in which people help and support each other. This is the teaching of “sympathetic identification” taught in the Shushogi (The Meaning of Practice and Verification).

Prejudice and discrimination do not bring about good human relations. Let us build relationships based on mutual understanding and reflection, in which we can smile at each other. (Human rights)

Fighting with each other and harming one another will only bring about hatred. Let us bring about happiness through the joy of knowing how to share with and support each other. (Peace)

Ongoing destruction of nature is the road to extinction. When there is compassion for all of life, we are enveloped in the brilliance of coexistence. (Environment)

It is my ardent wish that we can all walk together on the path that is in accord with the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha. Namu Shakyamuni Butsu.

These are the words of Ohmichi Zenji that express the strong wishes, in other words, the vows that Sotoshu has made for the upcoming year. An important point here is the practice of “sympathetic identification” and the word “practice” is especially crucial here. Practice, the activity, the things we are thinking are also very important. But the most significant point of the Zenji’s message is to do the practice, to change our actions. And yet, it is indeed difficult for us to practice sympathetic identification. Why is that? Within our hearts, we want to swing it so that we profit more than another person. We want to do little and be praised a lot for it. We want the good feeling of being a little bit famous. It is because of that mind that it is difficult to practice sympathetic identification. Don’t you people have these feelings? This is not something that applies to someone else, but to you. The practice of sympathetic identification is something we will not be able to do until

we get rid of that mind that wants to have its own way.

In fact, the form of implementing this practice is *zazen*. When we sit in *zazen*, various thoughts arise in our minds. Usually, there isn't much value in what appears. Keeping distance from each of these thoughts when sitting *zazen*, we let such thoughts silently wash away; let them all be swept away sideways. Repeating this activity infinitely, the thought will naturally appear "I'm doing practice as I would like to; in other words, this is the self that is free of attachment." This is what Keizan Zenji taught as *kakusoku*. This is to say that the nature of my existence during *zazen* is the development of sympathetic identification. In this way, it is possible to actually experience the interconnection of the many lives that I mentioned at the beginning of this talk. I can then honestly notice that the existence of each and every thing and person is important for me. This matter was explained by Dogen Zenji's teacher, Nyojo Zenji, in the following way: "The *zazen* of the Buddhas and Ancestors from the initial aspiration to awaken to the Way is the wish to gather all Buddhas' dharmas; therefore, in *zazen* they never forget sentient beings, they never throw away sentient beings, and are always giving compassion to insects. In this way, they make the vow to save all sentient beings and return all benefits to everything. Therefore, Buddhas and Ancestors always practice *zazen* and wholeheartedly practice the Way within the world of desire." (*Hokyoki*)

This is not an order to treat insects with care. Rather, it is the mind that is brimming over with the intention of treating all things and life in our surroundings with care, to the extent that there is even gentleness toward insects. This intention isn't limited to insects but extends to people and all sorts of things. A concrete way in which Dogen Zenji taught about this is *Tenzo Kyokun* (Instructions to the Cook). As you know, the *Tenzo* is the duty of preparing and cooking food in the monastery. This event took place while Dogen Zenji was practicing at a Chinese monastery called Tendo-zan. It was a hot summer day and Dogen Zenji was walking in the hallway when he noticed an old monk drying sea vegetables. The monk was using a cane. His eyebrows were snow-white, as white as a crane. Dogen Zenji was astonished to see this old monk sweating profusely, his back bent like a bow. Then, he asked him, "I

can see that you are in charge of the kitchen. There are many younger monks here. Why don't you get one of them to do this work for you?" The old monk stood up straight and said, "Young monk from a foreign country, you still don't understand. You say that I should have someone else do this work, but even if I did so, then I wouldn't have anything to do. I do what must be done. I do my own practice." Dogen Zenji didn't clearly understand what the old monk had said, he asked again, "Even if this is so, wouldn't it be better do this work in the evening or early morning when the sun isn't so hot?" Then, the old monk replied, "There is only the time now. What is human life if the moment now isn't productive and fulfilling? The moment now is important."

This is certainly true. If, for example, I said that my life until yesterday had been such that I was doing something smart and clever, that would only be speaking about something from the past, something I remembered. Tomorrow and the day after tomorrow are uncertainties that haven't come yet. The only thing that is certain for me is "now," "this moment." If my priority now is to face you earnestly, then it can be said that all the contents of my life are rich and meaningful. How is the moment "now" for each of you?

Let's have a look now at a portion of the *Instructions for the Cook*:

1. From the beginning in Buddha's family, there have been six temple administrators. They are all Buddha's children and together they carry out Buddha's work.
2. Long ago, someone said, "When steaming rice, regard the pot as if it were your own head."
3. "Guard rice and vegetables (temple properties) as if they were your own eyes." Know that water is life.
4. When you take care of things, do not see with your common eyes; do not think with your common sentiments.

Here, Dogen Zenji writes that we must treat the cauldrons, the pots, the rice, and so on in the kitchen with great care. In particular, it is written that we should treat rice and vegetables as importantly as our own eyes. But this doesn't refer simply to the eyes. When we refer in this way

to “eyes” in Japanese, it refers symbolically to our mind. So this means that to treat rice and vegetables carefully means that we must treat them in the same way as ourselves. How is it for you? Do you value each grain of rice, each slice of vegetable? I’m not referring to someone else. This is something that applies to each of us. In the fourth phrase mentioned above, there is the expression “common eyes.” This is an absent-minded, sleeping eye. The extreme opposite of “common, ordinary eye” is “the eye of Buddha.” The eye of Buddha is the teaching of Dogen Zenji, the teaching of Keizan Zenji, the teaching of Hokyoki, the teaching of *Instructions to the Cook*.

Incidentally, let’s think about this (Roshi holds up a wilted spinach leaf) as study material as we consider “common eyes” and “the eye of Buddha.” Imagine that many guests have arrived. You are the Tenzo in charge of cooking the meal. This leaf is part of the ingredients for the meal. What do you think? An ordinary person would probably think “This spinach leaf is really wilted. How could I ever use it?!” By the way, I have many more spinach leaves. (Roshi holds up a bunch of fresh leaves). Look, there is much more. How about you? What do you think? You probably are thinking “These are wonderful vegetables and will surely make a delicious meal.” But when you saw the wilted leaf, I’m sure you thought that it wouldn’t be possible to use it in the cooking. To see it this way, to think that the good leaves will make a delicious meal and that the wilted leaf will not is the “common eye.”

The way to see things with the eye of Buddha is that even with this leaf, no matter how wilted it may be, that that leaf is one living thing; that it is precious, precious life. For that reason I would like you to be able to make good use of it if you are the Tenzo. So, even if these nice leaves are ready to use, I would like you to think of this wilted leaf in the same way you think of the fresh ones. *Instructions to the Cook* does not contain instruction only about rice, vegetables, and water. This way of looking at things applies to each person and each thing we encounter. This is the important point. There are people who are physically weak, those who are strong, those who can do lots of work, and those who cannot. There are those who can learn quickly and those who cannot. However, it is each person’s life – precious, precious life. And the, each

person is different. Each person is fully within the activity of life and so that difference is “verification.” That important life is a sofa for all of us. It is an important carpet. It is a valuable wall. To see it like this is the eye of Buddha.

“People who change their mind according to ingredients, or adjust their speech to the status of whoever they are talking to, are not people of the Way.” (*Instructions for the Cook*). This sentence teaches us that we must use everything such that a vegetable leaf would say “thank you for treating me with care and attention.” This is the work of Buddha, the activity of a Buddha.

One other thing is that the words “compassionate mind and activity” can be substituted for the practice of sympathetic identification. With regard to being compassionate, Shakyamuni Buddha taught in the following way: “149. Just as a mother would protect her only child with her life even so let one cultivate a boundless love toward all beings.” (*Sutta Nipata*). The mind of compassion is a mother’s mind. If, for example, a child were to fall down, crying with pain after scraping a knee, the mother would feel the child’s pain as if it were her own. Another thing, if one of the mother’s friends were there and were to ask her how she felt...when the child fell down, the mother ran and embraced the child helping the child to stand up. What is the mother thinking at this time? Would she think, for example, “I’ve just now picked my child up and so when I grow old this child will take care of me and give me an allowance...” No, the mother doesn’t think like that. In other words, the mother doesn’t calculate in terms of profit and loss when she does something for her child.

“151. While standing, while walking, while sitting, or while lying down, as long as they are not drowsy, let them resolve to always be compassionate. In the world, this condition is called a noble attitude.” (*Sutta Nipata*). When walking, when working, when awake, the compassionate mind at all times. In other words, the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha is that we mustn’t forget this mind of sympathetic identification. Dogen Zenji said “Arousing the bodhi-mind millions of times,” which is to say “never forget.” Millions of times means to arouse the mind of compassion once, twice, three times...millions of times. This is to say we mustn’t forget the mind of compassion,

repeatedly practicing sympathetic identification.

Well, we are at the end of the talk. We are all able to live thanks to many other lives, so let us continually practice sympathetic identification toward every form of

life we encounter. Moreover, let's continue arousing bodhi-mind millions of times.

Thank you for listening.



Glimpses of the 2006 Dendokyoshi Kenshusho

Rev. Taikan Yanasak
Kojin-an Zendo, Oakland, California

When leaving for Kasuisai Soto Zen Monastery, I didn't have a clue as to how the thirty days were going to be spent. I never received a schedule so my mind wasn't filled with expectations. I was just to be there at the prescribed day and time. The rest, as I knew it, was not my concern. All I had to do was commit myself to doing my best in whatever was expected or asked of me.

Rolling my suitcase behind me, I stepped into the main lobby of the temple, stating that I was here for the Dendokyoshi Kenshusho. The monk at the desk asked for my name and checked it off in the registry. Another monk was summoned to get me to my room. From that moment on, my life, for the next 30 days, belonged to the monastery.

What I was most impressed with was the attention that Sotoshu Shumucho had dedicated to those of us given the opportunity to study and practice in a Zen Training Monastery with Japanese monks, in Japan. They had provided a rotating staff of priests that were dedicated to do whatever it took to make certain we received as much attention as was necessary for us to absorb as much of what the temple had to offer in training as was possible within the time frame of 30 days. We've all practiced in our own countries but here we were, sitting, chanting, eating, studying and working with the monks, experiencing what it was like to practice as our ancestors had. I am immensely grateful to all of them for giving a part of their lives over to doing what they could to make our stay meaningful.

I loved and was impressed with how the monks worked

together, complementing the collective effort or purpose, never demanding attention for or to themselves. That attitude was very evident during service, not only in the attention given to the details of the performance of the service itself but in the chanting as well. It was impossible to isolate a single voice. All I heard was one sound, chanting where the sound was as one voice, strong but gentle, clear but evident, regardless of the number of monks present for the service.

Because of the speed that some chants were chanted, it was impossible to successfully join in, regardless of how hard I tried. I could only be impressed, time over and over. By the end I was 'getting' it but most often lost in what I thought I was hearing and what I was looking at in the sutra book. It was always an impressive coordination on the part of the Japanese monks.

Most every day, for a total of three hours, we practiced service positions ourselves, with the help and instruction of the resident monks when needed, which was most often. They displayed an amazing generosity and patience with all of us as we stumbled through the requirements each position demanded. As we became familiar with what we were doing, we were allowed to join them; eventually holding all of the key positions in the service ourselves. At times we would be the Doan, Fukudo, Kokyo, or maybe strike the Densho bell when appropriate. It never seemed to go as well as we had hoped, as it did for the resident monks, but we kept on trying, over and over, to do our best.

It was always a challenge to not only know what to do for each position but equally important, to be aware of the other monks and what they were doing so the service moved with grace. As one noted during one of the classes, it was akin to dancing. Done well, we all experienced an equanimity that highlighted our teaching that states that there is no gap between the Buddha and what we were doing, that be it zazen or service or sweeping or whatever, we are always at one with the essence of Buddhism itself. More than once I realized that our practice is not something to think about but rather something to do, completely, immediately, with our whole body.

Given the opportunity to take that same awareness and apply it to tea ceremonies, flower arrangement and Tai Chi that we participated in, only reinforced the same experience that the goal in our lives was to be present, to do our best, mindfully. We had many laughs in our attempts to do well in all of these different disciplines—at times doing well, at other times, being in agony. I realized time and again that I needed to be patient with myself, to trust my body enough to let go, to surrender my habit of control and give my hand over to what proved to be natural. Extremely difficult and extremely rewarding.

In the afternoon on the 10th day, Rev. Shohaku Okumura gave the first of eight lectures on Dogen Zenji's *Bendowa*. He lectured with a scholarly depth of understanding blended with an experiential knowledge base that had this captivating quality to it. With surgical attention, everything he said or discussed was laced with this quiet passion, giving Dogen's every word a vibrant immediacy.

On the morning of the 19th day, Rev. Issho Fujita initiated another eight lectures on Keizan Zenji's *Zazen Yojinki*, offering a totally different air to his classes. He was lighthearted in his manners but very sincere in his discussing our practice, in particular, the importance of zazen. What I appreciated most in Rev. Fujita was his candid approach to openly discuss our practice as we actually experienced it in our daily life, be it encouraging or otherwise. That format in his lectures allowed all of us to participate openly with aspects we were dealing with personally. It proved to be invaluable as well as

encouraging seeing others struggling with the same issues.

Rev. Shinjo Yoshino, Godo of Kasuisai, led us through a three-day sesshin, giving teisho's each afternoon that expressed the immediacy of our lives, the importance of being present and of doing zazen with our whole body. The quality of his presence, of his total commitment to being with us, to practicing with us, I found extremely encouraging. I never felt he held himself apart from any of the students, always meeting us with a smile and helpful, encouraging words. I had the opportunity to engage in a number of conversations with him on my practice and where I was struggling. He always had something to offer that added insight and a lightness to the problem. I remember asking him what he did when he had a student or just someone in his life that was proving to be impossible. He made me laugh when he said, "It's important to know when you're in hell."

I am grateful to all of the monks that were so generous with their time to help us, over and over and over, the temple priests that made our stay so meaningful and the teachers that traveled many miles to share their wisdom, to give their time in hopes of making a difference in our lives. I can only pray that I am able to manifest their teachings and intentions in ways that will compliment their Buddha-nature.

When we were asked at the end of the month to give our feedback, to share with the staff our experiences, I had to state that it was very difficult to blend into the Japanese culture, that our ways of being, of moving, were so different. I had no judgment in that, just stating that it was obviously difficult for them as well.

Another point was that it was difficult to be criticized for a month for doing things wrong. It was difficult but that very difficulty is what afforded me the opportunity to see myself, to become familiar with what wasn't obvious in myself. It was that training that today I am so grateful for.

The seeds that were planted during my short stay at Kasuisai are continuing to take root. Most every day, I realize something that happened that has in some way complimented my practice.

In particular, I want to thank Rev. Daigaku Rummé for his patience, his commitment to work with us, regardless of how distressing we may have been to him in our ‘not-getting-it’ mode. I don’t know how he was able to cope with the kindness he displayed but he did, and did it very well in ways that were always encouraging.

I could go on but I’ll end here by saying that my time at Kasuisai was nothing less than complete. I was

exhausted, my knees were swollen and in pain and I was often frustrated.

I was also in a Soto Zen Monastery training to be awake, to be present, and to be true. For that I am immensely grateful for everyone that had anything to do with my being there, everyone and everything.

Gassho.

Relections on the Dendokyoshi Kenshusho 2006

By Rev. Kakudo Pierre Gérard
Centre Zen Soto De Geneve, Switzerland



I have always wanted to experience, as a novice, total immersion in a Zen monastery. But to have this experience in a Soto Zen temple school in Japan was even more than I had hoped for.

Kasuisai Monastery is renowned for its teaching and excellence. Distinguished personalities of Zen have studied or taught there, such as Bokusan Nishiari, to name just one. I can only express my gratitude to all those¹ who allowed me to live and study there for five weeks. I will always be grateful to the monastery staff and monks for the sensitivity and forbearance they showed towards me. They never displayed an ounce of irritation or exasperation at my intrinsic shortcomings.

From the beginning I struggled with the long periods of sitting, especially during ceremonies, meals and instructions. Everything was done in seiza. Although I was later permitted to sit, when it became unbearable, on a zafu. I nevertheless had to endure the incessant assault of extreme pains which, too often, prevented me from having the quality of concentration required to properly organise the processes that were asked of me and which were unfamiliar to me. I often got a feeling of confusion, which seemed to come from nowhere. At these moments this phrase, which can be attributed to Master Dogen, constantly came to mind: *it is with this body that we reach understanding*. I would have given up hope if the Kasuisai

monks had not come to my assistance with their very understanding nature. From this reciprocity came the most noble deeds and moving chants in which one with this limited and limiting body finds inspiration in the relationship with the ceremonial.

To claim to be able to reproduce, in exactly the same way, all of the ceremonies that we were taught during this period of learning would be pretentious. It takes time to internalise them, to be able to anticipate and attain the excellence of the Kasuisai monks. To achieve this somehow would be “gyojiho-on²”. Thus for me, the need to achieve it was *the irreversibility of my evolution*. I therefore decided to record everything by creating my own codex to allow me to complete this training as soon as I return home.

There were periods set aside for talks, which took up much of the days for the participants in the Kenshusho. The talks given by the priests, Rev. Okumura and Fujita, made me realise the danger of our desire – however legitimate – for a westernised, native Zen: a tendency to be short-sighted and to experience mental bulimia. Or in Zen terms, without, for all that, having the corresponding experience of what they really indicate in the experience of Japanese Zen.

The imposing presence of Rev. Shinjo Yoshino, the Godo of Kasuisai, during his talks justified, in my eyes, the fact that I can also have an intention in practice. He gave

me a desire for confidence and self-reliance³ so that I could make daily progress in zazen. I was encouraged by his practice in three ways: simplicity, flexibility and sincerity.

During an introductory session, the Ino, Rev. Bunmei Suzuki, an excellent teacher, invited us to sing the sutras without ruining our voices, in a burlesque way⁴. His instructions on the art of playing the drums reconciled me with learning “on the job.” I have gone from arbitrary trial and error to “acting to understand”, from the continual why to the essential how.

Apart from these anecdotal facts, what remains of this Kenshusho? The result of a connection between what is best in others and what is best in oneself. A mind of excellence combined with the desire for an enlightened mind and which is induced to revisit its experience and to constantly be renewed by basing itself on a model. The model – the essence – was given to us generously. These five weeks at Kasuisai were the update of the “shoden no buppo⁵.”

Can it be said, following the example of Master Dogen, that I have returned empty-handed? If coming back empty-handed is a metaphor to illustrate the fact that suitable rules or laws remain to be integrated, i.e. practised, determined, that one still has to establish all of this in oneself and then communicate it to others, then I have not returned empty-handed. But if to return empty-handed is a way of expressing that I am aware of a possible inevitability, then yes, I have returned empty-handed.

But how can one forget Rev. Yoshino and Rev. Suzuki who, with simple words and their “grandmotherly” ways, always knew how to give meaning to my participation at the Kenshusho, the goodwill of the monk Rev. Daigaku Rummé, the pugnacity of Rev. Yuji Ito in wanting to take me beyond what I thought I could achieve, the humour of the priest Kohnin Narisawa for eliminating any traces of discouragement, and the brotherly hospitality of each of the Kasuisai monks? Without them, I simply might not have been able to accept my weaknesses, to shake off the desire to be someone, and to accept this reality without bitterness.

Thanks to all.

¹ My Master Nishiyama Kosen and the directors of the Sotoshu in Japan and Europe.

² The expression of our gratitude.

³ In the sense of a person who values their independence and their right to be themselves.

⁴ Comic imitation

⁵ Buddhism correctly transmitted.



Monks Leaving for Takuhatu During Kenshusho

My Zazen Notebook (18)

Rev. Issho Fujita

Fragmentary Thought XXVII “Zazen and Everyday Life”

If I were to express my view of zazen in a nutshell, it would be the “nothing to be attained” of “upright sitting.” I think that if these two points are carefully examined they will cover most of zazen. Nevertheless, there is for me one other very important topic and that is “zazen and everyday life.” Unfortunately because of space limitations though, I will confine my remarks to briefly mentioning the main issues. I will wait for another opportunity to develop these ideas.

- Zazen is, to the end, the direct abandonment of everyday life. It is the extra-ordinary activity in which all activities of usual, everyday life have been brought to a stop. In every regard, the value of zazen exists within this extraordinary nature. Zazen can have a power to change our everyday lives from its foundation, precisely because we keep the continual practice of zazen that is thoroughly extra-ordinary in the middle of ordinary everyday life. Even if zazen is integrated into everyday life, we must not obscure the difference between zazen and everyday life. It is also a mistake, however, to cut off zazen from the context of everyday life and try to grasp it that way. It is necessary to discern both the difference and the link between zazen and everyday life.
- Zazen cuts vertically through the horizontal flow of everyday with its extra-ordinary nature. This means that the mechanically recurring nature of customary patterns is stopped for some time as I mentioned before. Unconsciously, without our awareness, our everyday lives that dawdle along are punctuated with a line clearly drawn that marks the beginning and ending. In this way, a rhythm and awareness is brought into everyday life. Life then has a cadence which is marked by means of zazen.
- To make time for zazen within the limit of the twenty four hours of the day inevitably means

cutting back on other activities. In what manner will you do this? This question will stare you in the face as you reconsider what is really important to you. Rearrangement and streamlining your life.

- In zazen, the response to physiological and psychological phenomena such as sensations, thoughts, and feelings is different than the usual response. In zazen, we are clearly aware of them and yet there is no intention of doing something with them. It is only natural that this attitude which is fostered in zazen is also displayed in activities other than zazen. The things that are fostered through the practice of “no gaining mind” and “upright sitting” (i.e. the body/mind attitude of “shikan”) are also reflected as a matter of course in everyday life. There is a subtle ripple effect brought into everyday life by zazen.
- “Making zazen as the standard, from morning to night, the attitude of the self is cultivated and refined, cleansed and purified. With regard to the unlimited changes that take place within our everyday lives, we reflect upon our attitude of living, being illuminated by zazen.” (Sawaki Kodo Roshi) Zazen is one type of mold (a fundamental form) that molds and forms our outlook on everyday life.
- The way in which we live everyday is clearly revealed within zazen. Zazen is something like a tree that has sunken its roots into the soil of everyday life. In order to cultivate zazen as a great, stable tree, quiet dedication and effort in building up an orderly, respectable, and decent everyday life as its soil is indispensable. Without that, zazen becomes nothing but an escape from everyday life.
- All of the events in everyday life challenge us to choose between doing zazen or not. There is a mountain of excuses nearby for postponing or stopping zazen. Within this situation, it is necessary, in order to continue zazen, to have a vision with regard to your own zazen practice that is not borrowed from someone else. How will you foster that vision?

(Conclusion)

Thus far, I have introduced my studies and investigations regarding zazen. There are still plenty of other themes I would like to look into, but I will wind up this series of articles at this point. On rereading what I have written, I think I've been somewhat forceful in my approach, writing things that were at times headstrong. This has given me pause for thought. I would like to sincerely thank *Dharma Eye* for giving me this opportunity. If these articles have given any of you who are interested in zazen food for thought, then this gives me great happiness.

Gassho.

The 28th Chapter of Shobogenzo: Bodaisatta-Shishobo The Bodhisattva's Four Embracing Actions Lecture (8)

Rev. Shohaku Okumura
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(Edited by Rev. Shoryu Bradley)

[Identity-action]

[text]

Identity-action *means to be not different - neither different from self nor from others. For example, it is like the way that, in the human world, the Tathagata identifies himself with human beings. Because he identifies himself in the human world, we know that he must be the same in the other worlds. When we realize identity-action, self and others are one suchness. Harps, poems, and wine make friends with people, with heavenly beings, and with spirits. People befriend harps, poems and wine. There is a principle that harps, poems, and wine befriend harps, poems, and wine; that people make friends with people; that heavenly beings befriend heavenly beings, and that spirits befriend spirits. This is how we study identity-action.*

“Identity-action” is an English translation of the Chinese expression *Doji* (同事). Do (同) means “same”, “identical”, “similar”, “equal”, or “common”. Ji (事) means “thing”,

“matter”, “affair”, “business” or “experience”. This Chinese expression is a translation of the Sanskrit word *samanarthata-sangraha* (Pali, *samanattata-samgaha*). *Samana* means “identical”, “same”, “equal”, or “common”. *Artha* in Sanskrit means “business”, “purpose”, “meaning”, or “benefit”, as in the Sanskrit word *arthacariya* (*beneficial action*), the third of the Four Embracing Actions. The compound word *samanartha* can be translated as “sharing the same purpose or goal”.

So, *samanarthata* means “an action taken for the common benefit”, or “an action that benefits both those who act and those receiving the action”. In Gudo Nishijima’s and Thomas Cleary’s translation of *Shobogenzo Shishobo*, *samanarthata* is translated as “cooperation,” and in *Eihei Dogen: Mystical Realist*, Hee-Jin Kim translates it as “identity with others.” Following the example of Tanahashi’s translations in *Moon in a Dewdrop*, my colleagues and I use “identity-action” in our translations because we think it expresses a deeper reality that gives people *the ability* to cooperate. Identity-action is a practice for benefiting both self and others simultaneously, and this is possible because all of us are interconnected with all beings within True Reality. The Four Embracing Actions (offering, loving speech, beneficial action, and identity-action) are practices that are based on awakening to the True Reality that exists before we conceptually separate reality into subject and object. Dogen Zenji’s statement, “Beneficial-action is the whole of Dharma; it benefits both self and others widely,” expresses an idea that he also applied to identity-action. Here he teaches that bodhisattva practice includes making an effort to practice in a way that simultaneously benefits both self and others. Practicing the Four Embracing Actions is not simply a method to guide others; it is also helps us to awaken and mature. Through the practice of sincere offering, we become more generous; through the practice of loving speech, we cultivate our own compassion. As Dogen said, beneficial action benefits both self and other simultaneously, and as we will see in the following discussion, identity-action shows us how and why this benefit happens.

In the same way that each of the five fingers of a hand have different names, shapes, and functions, each one of us has our own uniqueness, beauty and dignity that can never

be exchanged with any other person. We actually *are* different from others, so what did Dogen mean when he wrote in the first sentence of this section, “Identity-action means to be not different - neither different from self nor from others”? Perhaps it is more clear and understandable to say “not to be separate” rather than “not to be different” in such a statement. Here Dogen is saying that as bodhisattvas, we strive to carry out identity-action that benefits both self and others. Bodhisattva practice is not self-sacrifice. Yet in bodhisattva practice we cannot sacrifice others for the sake of our own personal benefit, either. To practice as bodhisattvas means we must find the best way to benefit both self and others.

[text]

For example, it is like the way that, in the human world, the Tathagata identifies himself with human beings. Because he identifies himself in the human world, we know that he must be the same in the other worlds.

The *Tathagata* of the *Dharmakaya* has no particular form; it is beyond all form. But in the human world, the formless *Dharmakaya* of the *Tathagata* appears as the form of a human being. All statues and paintings of the *Tathagata*, such as *Shakyamuni*, *Amitaba*, and *Mahavairocana*, take the form of a human being within this human world.

When Dogen Zenji wrote the above sentences, he was probably thinking of a Tendai Buddhist teaching called *jukkai-gogu* (十界互具) which states that all of the ten realms of existence include all of the other nine realms. The ten realms include the realms of hell dwellers, hungry ghosts, animals, *asuras* (fighting spirits), human beings, heavenly beings, sravakas, pratyekabuddhas, bodhisattvas, and buddhas. The first six of these realms are usually referred to as the six realms of *samsara*, and the other four are named after categories of spiritual practitioners within the Buddhist tradition. Tientai Chiyi (Japanese pronunciation: Tendai Chigi), the great master who established the system of Tendai teachings, said that each of these ten realms contain all of the other nine realms. For example, the hell realm includes the realms of hungry ghosts, animals, *asuras*, etc., as well as the realm of buddhas. Therefore even in the hell realm one may experience the awakening of Buddha or find the compassion of Buddha.

This also means that even within the buddha realm the hell realm exists, and this is the reason a buddha is able to help all beings, even those dwelling in hell. So buddhas appear not only in our human realms, but they also appear in all other realms (the original Chinese words for “world” and “realm” are identical). When a buddha appears in the human realm, that buddha therefore takes the form of a human being, and when a buddha appears in the animal realm, that buddha may therefore take an animal form. This is an example of an identity-action that a buddha performs for the sake of helping all beings.

Tientai Chiyi said that since all ten realms contain all other realms, there are actually one hundred realms (10x10=100). We find a similar way of thinking in the final sentence of Dogen Zenji’s *Shobogenzo Shishobo*: “Because each of these four embracing dharmas include all the four embracing dharmas, there are sixteen embracing dharmas.”

When we realize identity-action, self and others are one suchness.

In this sentence it is clear that Dogen Zenji is saying that through our practice of identity-action, the basic reality of the Network of Interdependent Origination manifests. In other words, no such True Reality exists for us if we do not actually practice identity-action; we actualize True Reality within our practice. This is another way of expressing Dogen Zenji’s teaching, “practice and verification are one.”

[text]

Harps, poems, and wine make friends with people, with heavenly beings, and with spirits. People befriend harps, poems and wine. There is a principle that harps, poems, and wine befriend harps, poems, and wine; that people make friends with people; that heavenly beings befriend heavenly beings, and that spirits befriend spirits. This is how we study identity-action.

I think it is true even today that “harps, poems, and wine make friends.” Dogen Zenji takes these examples from Chinese classic literature. If melodious music is played and suitable, harmonious poetry is recited at a party where wine is being served, people attending really will become friends without separation. This phenomenon is like the performance

of a symphony. Each and every musical instrument has a different shape, sound, and function, but a collection of instruments played together in a certain way will create one body of harmonious music. Awakening to the reality of non-separation allows us to practice identity-action, and identity-action creates the music of interdependent origination. Realizing that all beings are players in this symphony allows us to study and understand identity-action in our lives. Identity-action is not simply some technique used to establish a good social relationship, and I don't think that the word "cooperation" adequately expresses Dogen Zenji's insight concerning this teaching. For this reason we decided to use the term "identity-action" in our translation, even though it is not a common English expression.

[text]

For example, "action" means form, dignity and attitude. After letting others identify with our "self," there may be a principle of letting our "self" identify with others. Relations between self and others vary infinitely depending on time and condition.

This is an explanation of *ji* (事、action). To actualize the reality of the Network of Interdependent Origination, a person must use certain forms in practicing with his or her whole body and mind. A form of action such as this that is inspired by awakening, wisdom, and compassion, has dignity. If we take this attitude as we deal with our own lives and interact with others, Buddha's awakening is manifested.

After letting others identify with our "self," there may be a principle of letting our "self" identify with others.

Here Dogen Zenji tells us to first let others identify with our "self" and to then identify with others. However, there are many other ways to practice with this aspect of identity-action. We may first identify with others and then let others identify with us, for example, and this is just one of many possible variations.

In the Lotus Sutra, for example, there is a story of a son who ran away from home, leaving his father. The son lived in various other countries for a long time, and the

older he grew, the needier he became. By chance he happened upon his father's house, and although the father recognized the poor, destitute son, the son did not recognize his father. When the son ran away in fear after seeing the wealth and dignity of his father, the father sent servants to hire his son as a laborer, and they put him to work cleaning the wealthy man's home. While the son was doing his job, the rich father removed his strings of jewels and ornaments, took off his fine clothing, and put on a coarse, torn, dirty garment. Then he smeared his body with dust, took a dustpan in his right hand, and with an intimidating voice and countenance said to the laborers: "Get on with your work, don't be lazy!" The father used this and other devices to gain more and more contact with his son, and he gradually trained his son to be a mature and suitable heir to his fortune. So this story is an example of how, in practicing identity-action, it is possible to first identify with others and to then allow others to identify with us. In the story the rich father first identified compassionately with his son and then worked with him gradually. Eventually the son came to identify with his wealthy benefactor and accepted him as his father.

There are numberless variations of interactions between teachers and students, parents and children, doctors and patients, etc. Sometimes we are like the destitute son in the story, and sometimes we take a role like the wealthy father. Although the relationship between self and others differs in every situation, we must find some way to identify with others and permit others to identify with us in each case. This becomes possible when we awaken to the common ground of interconnectedness where we live together with all beings.

[text]

Guanzi says, "The ocean does not refuse water; therefore it is able to achieve its vastness. Mountains do not refuse earth; therefore they are able to become tall. Wise rulers do not weary of people, therefore they form a large nation."

That the ocean does not refuse water is identity-action. We should also know that the virtue of water does not refuse the ocean. This is why water is able to form an ocean, and earth is able to form mountains. We should know in ourselves that because the ocean does not refuse to be the ocean, it can be the

ocean and achieve greatness. Because mountains do not refuse to be the mountains, they can be mountains and reach great height. Because wise rulers do not weary of their people they attract many people. "Many people" means a nation. "A wise ruler" may mean an emperor. Emperors do not weary of their people. This does not mean that they fail to offer rewards and punishment, but they never tire of their people.

Here Dogen Zenji quotes from a Chinese classic, *Guanzi* (管子, J. *Kanshi*) attributed to *Guanzhong* (管仲, J. *Kanchu*) who was a minister of *Qi* (齊, J. *Sei*), a country existing in the *Chunqiu* Era (春秋, Spring and Autumn; *Shunju* 722-481 BCE). This book is a collection of essays primarily about politics, economics, military affairs, and education. Before he became a Buddhist monk, Dogen Zenji probably studied this text as part of a childhood education designed to prepare him to be a politician.

In the above passage the text is discussing the attitude of a good ruler. According to the quote, to become a wise ruler one must accept and embrace all of the nation's people without discrimination. One should do this in the same way that the ocean accepts all kinds of water from different rivers or the way that a mountain does not reject even tiny bits of dirt or small stones.

Each and every drop of water is a part of the ocean, and all kinds of dirt, mud, soil, sand, stones, and rocks are elements of a mountain. The ocean does not refuse any form of water and the mountain does not reject any form of earth. For this reason, the ocean can be the vast ocean and a mountain can be a great mountain. When a wise ruler embraces all people living in the nation, the country becomes a great country. When Dogen Zenji speaks of the ocean and mountains in this analogy, he is referring to the entire Network of Interdependent Origination. When he speaks of a drop of water and tiny pieces of dirt and stone, he is referring to individuals within the network in the same way that we speak of knots within Indra's net. In ancient China the emperor was considered to be the nation itself, and all people belonged to the emperor. Here Dogen Zenji considers identity-action in terms of the relationship between the self and the myriad dharmas. He discusses this relationship in the same way he discusses practice/enlightenment in *Shobogenzo Genjo-koan*, teaching

that the self is a part of the vast network of the myriad dharmas.

Identity-action is practice based upon the realization of this interconnectedness of all things. We can illustrate this interconnectedness by again taking the example of the five fingers of a hand. Each finger has its own unique name, shape, and function, yet all of the fingers are connected in functioning as part of a single hand. Without its connection with the other fingers of the hand, a finger cannot properly function and exist as a finger. In this example, "identity" refers to the unity of the fingers that manifests as one hand. This does not mean that each finger is alike. All of the fingers of a hand are different, but each different finger can exist only in interconnectedness with the other fingers that function as part of the hand. There is no hand that exists outside of the five fingers. The hand and the five fingers are exactly the same thing, so when we touch any single finger, we automatically touch the entire hand. This is the same as saying that when we touch one knot of Indra's net we indeed touch the entirety of the whole net. Our attitude toward our lives and our attitude toward all other beings should therefore be the same as our attitude would be toward a wise ruler. We can then wholeheartedly play our own designated role within the orchestra and at the same time keep sight of the conductor who has responsibility for the entire symphony. This is Dogen Zenji's insight concerning identity-action.

Dogen Zenji also said that because of their virtue, water also embraces the ocean, earth embraces the mountain, and subjects embrace their ruler. Without the virtue of each drop of water, there can be no ocean, and without the virtue of sand and stones, the mountain cannot exist. The greatness of the ocean and mountain is the greatness of each drop of water and each bit of sand and stone. In other words, each tiny drop of water is as vast as the ocean because without the drops, there is no ocean. In the same way, each finger is the entirety of the whole hand it belongs to. This is the wondrous way that all beings exist together within the Network of Interdependent Origination.

We should know in ourselves that because the ocean does not refuse to be the ocean, it can be the ocean and achieves greatness. Because mountains do not refuse to be the mountains, they can

be mountains and reach great heights.

This is the *jijuyuzanmai* (samadhi of self accepting and utilizing) of the ocean and the mountain. The ocean accepts being the ocean. The mountain accepts being the mountain. The ocean allows all water to be within it and the mountain allows all earth to be part of it. All of us are also the ocean, mountain, and wise ruler, and we are simultaneously a drop of water, a spec of dirt, and an individual person.

Because wise rulers do not weary of their people, they attract many people. "Many people" means a nation. "A wise ruler" may mean an emperor. Emperors do not weary of their people. This does not mean that they fail to offer rewards and punishments, but they never tire of their people.

It would be unrealistic to say that we cannot have expectations of reward or punishment for our efforts and activities, because we could not otherwise find the motivation to do anything. Sometimes our expectations are fulfilled and we feel happy and satisfied, and sometimes we fail and we feel terrible, as if we were being punished in hell. Yet throughout all of these conditions, just as the wise ruler does not weary of his people, bodhisattvas do not tire of making the effort to live and walk together with all beings.

[text]

In ancient times, when people were gentle and honest, there were no rewards and no punishments in the country. The idea of reward and punishment in those days was different. Even these days, there must be some people who seek the Way with no expectation of reward. This is beyond the thought of ignorant people.

In ancient China, people viewed human history differently than we do in modern times. Chinese people thought that the quality of the world and its people was progressively declining with time. They thought that ancient people before them were superior to the people inhabiting the Earth in their own day. This is the opposite of what I was taught during my education. I was taught that the world is better than it was in ancient times because of improvements developed through scientific knowledge

and technological advances. I was told that we still have many difficulties and problems because we are still in the process of development, but once human civilization is fully developed, we will be released from all difficulty. Today there are probably not many people that are still naïve enough to agree with this. We have begun believe that technological development and economic growth are injuring nature and the Network of Interdependent Origination; in other words, we have begun to think we have been injuring ourselves during the course of our "progress". Yet what I learned as a child contrasts sharply to the ancient Chinese belief that society had been much more peaceful and harmonious in former times. Ancient Chinese people thought that people in prior times engaged only in wholesome activity without expectation of reward, and they believed their predecessors refrained from all unwholesome activities even though there was no social penalty for undesirable behavior.

Even these days, there must be some people who seek the Way with no expectation of reward. This is beyond the thought of ignorant people.

Here Dogen Zenji says that even in his own day there must have been some eminent people who engaged in wholesome activity without expectation of reward. Such people would refrain from unwholesome things not because of fear of punishment, but because they were practicing in accordance with reality. Such people are, according to Mahayana Buddhism, called bodhisattvas. Bodhisattvas do not avoid unwholesome activity out of fear of punishment and they do not engage in wholesome activity out of expectation. They do so because their behavior is in itself awakening to the True Reality of interdependent origination.

In *Eihei Shingi* (Pure Standards for Eiheiji Monastery), Dogen Zenji gives concrete instructions on how to practice in a Zen community with this attitude of awakening. For example, in *Tenzo-kyokun* (Instruction for the Cook) he wrote the following passage:

"As I observed the people who were devoting themselves for a year to the jobs of temple administrators or heads of monastic departments in the various temples of Song China, each of them maintained the three essential attitudes

of an abbot whenever they performed their jobs, encouraging themselves to strive at their tasks. Benefit others, which simultaneously gives abundant benefit to the self. Make the monastery thrive and renew its high standards. Aspire to stand shoulder to shoulder and respectfully follow in the heels of our predecessors. Clearly know that there are fools who treat themselves as indifferently as others, and there are honorable people who consider others as themselves.”

Dogen Zenji vowed to create a community of practitioners that lived with this boundless attitude. This vision of the practice community came from the traditional Buddhist teachings of the Four Embracing Actions. Is such an attitude still possible in this modern society? Dogen Zenji said that even “these days” there must be such people who hold this attitude, although this attitude was “beyond the thought” of ignorant people. Was he successful in fulfilling his vow? Was his vision fully actualized? “These days” for Dogen Zenji is now eight hundred years ago for us, and we are living in an age that is a very different from his world. How can we apply this teaching to our own lives in this time?

[text]

Because wise rulers have clear minds, they do not weary of their people. Although people always desire to form a nation and to find a wise ruler, few of them fully understand why a wise ruler is wise. Therefore, they are glad simply to be embraced by the wise ruler. They don't realize that they themselves are embracing a wise ruler. Thus the principle of identity-action exists both in the wise ruler and ignorant people. This is why identity-action is the practice and the vow of a bodhisattva. We should simply face all beings with a gentle expression.

We are like people who, though they don't know what a nation truly is and what a wise ruler truly is, nonetheless wish to form a nation and find a wise ruler. Other than the network of ordinary people like ourselves, there is no nation and there is no wise ruler, yet we must indeed find a way to embrace a nation and embrace a wise ruler. In other words, if none of us does anything to embrace the entire Network of Interdependent Origination, there is no such network for us. The network's existence for us depends

entirely upon our actions, and this is the guiding principle of bodhisattva practice.

As the conclusion to this piece Dogen Zenji urges us to simply face all beings with a gentle expression. We can do this without any special training, wealth or status, yet this is a most difficult practice that we must practice endlessly.

[text]

Because each of these Four Embracing Actions includes all the Four Embracing Actions, there are sixteen embracing actions.

These Four Embracing Actions all embrace each other; these are not four separate items.

The 28th Chapter of Shobogenzo:

Bodaisatta-shishobo

The Bodhisattva's Four Embracing Actions

Written on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month in the 4th year of Ninji (1243)

By Monk Dogen who went to Song China and transmitted the Dharma

Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma Book 44 The Way of the Buddha *Butsudo*

Translated by Carl Bielefeldt

Introduction

This chapter of the *Shōbōgenzō* was composed in 1243, soon after Dogen moved from the capital to Echizen (modern Fukui). It occurs as number 44 in the seventy-five chapter redaction of the *Shōbōgenzō*. This text is not to be confused with another chapter of the same title (sometimes known as *Dāshin*, or “Mind of the Way”) found in the twenty-eight chapter “secret” *Shōbōgenzō* preserved at Eihei-ji.

The central theme of “The Way of the Buddha” concerns what we might call the institutional character or identity of Dōgen’s tradition. The title reflects the claim, made at the very outset of the text, that the lineage of the ancestral masters of the tradition is continuous with the ancient line of the Seven Buddhas leading up to Śākyamuni; it is thus the lineage of the buddhas, not merely a Buddhist school. From this, Dōgen goes on to criticize sharply the common practice of referring to this lineage as the “Zen” (Sanskrit *dhyāna*, or “meditation”) school.

The text then moves to the question of the “five houses” into which the Zen historians in the Song dynasty often divided the tradition. Quoting the dismissal of distinctions among the houses by his teacher, Rujing, Dogen attributes the notion of distinct houses to the decline of the tradition in China. He then takes up each of the five houses in turn, arguing that none of the ostensible founders of these houses ever spoke of them as distinct schools. Near the end of this section, he singles out for criticism the twelfth-century work, *Rentian yanmu* (“The Eye of Humans and Gods”), which provides a summary account of Zen based on the history and teachings of the five schools.

Finally, the text returns to the broader of issue of school identity, pointing out that the true transmission of the Buddha’s wisdom is not a school, and that the establishment of a Buddhist school is a violation of the Buddha’s own practice.

This translation is based on the Japanese edition in Kawamura Kōdō, *Shōbōgenzō*, vol. 1 (1991), pp. 471-488. In order to avoid technical detail, annotation here has been held to a minimum; additional notes will be available on the Soto Zen Text Project website: <http://scbs.stanford.edu/sztp3>. Other English translations of this chapter can be found in Nishiyama, *Shōbōgenzō*, vol. 3 (1983); Yokoi, *The Shobogenzo* (1986); and Nishijima and Cross, *Master Dogen’s Shobogenzo*, Book 3 (1997).

Translation

The old buddha of Caoqi once said to the assembly, “There are forty ancestors from Huineng to the Seven Buddhas.”¹

In investigating these words, [we should understand them to mean that] from the Seven Buddhas to Huineng there are forty buddhas. This is the way to count in counting the buddhas and ancestors. Counting in this way, the Seven Buddhas are seven ancestors, and the thirty-three ancestors are thirty-three buddhas. Such is the import of Caoqi’s [saying]. It is the instruction of a buddha of correct descent: only a direct heir to the correct transmission correctly transmits this way of counting.

From the Buddha Śākyamuni to Caoqi there are thirty-four ancestors. This succession of buddhas and ancestors is in each case like Kāśyapa encountering the Tathāgata, like the Tathāgata gaining Kāśyapa.²

Just as the Buddha Śākyamuni studied under the Buddha Kāśyapa, so do the masters and disciples living now; therefore, the treasury of the eye of the true dharma [transmitted from Śākyamuni to Mahākāśyapa] has actually been passed down to us from heir to heir. The correct life of the buddha dharma is nothing but this correct transmission. Because the buddha dharma is thus correctly transmitted, [the masters and disciples] are each the direct heir of the [Buddha’s] bequest.

Thus all of them have been fully endowed with the virtues and the essential functions of the way of the buddha. Transmitted from the Western Heavens to the Eastern Earth [i.e., from India to China], [this tradition spans] 18,000 li; transmitted from [Śākyamuni’s] lifetime to the present, [it continues] over two thousand years. A group that has not studied this principle rashly and mistakenly says [the following]. The treasury of the eye of the true dharma, the wondrous mind of nirvana, correctly transmitted by the buddhas and ancestors, they rashly call the “Zen school.” They call the ancestral masters “Zen ancestors”; they call the students “Zen masters” or “Zen preceptors”; or they call themselves “lines of the Zen houses.” These are all but “branches and leaves” that have taken a biased view as the “root.” When, throughout the Western Heavens and Eastern Earth, from ancient times till the present, there has not been the term “Zen school,” rashly to call oneself [by this term] is to be a demon who would destroy the way of the buddha, an unbidden enemy of the buddhas and ancestors.

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In the Linjian lu by Shimen [i.e., Juefan Huihong], it is said,

When Bodhidharma first went to Wei from Liang, he proceeded to the foot of Mt. Song, where he stopped at Shaolin. There he just sat facing a wall. This was not the practice of dhyana [i.e., zen, “meditation”], but after a while others, unable to fathom what he was doing, held that Dharma practiced dhyāna. This dhyana is but one among various practices; how could it suffice to exhaust [the practice of] the holy ones? Nevertheless, people of the time took it in this way; the historians followed this and recorded him with those that practiced dhyāna, thus making him a confederate of the partisans of “dead wood and cold ashes.” Be that as it may, the holy ones do not stop at dhyāna, and yet they do not oppose dhyāna. It is like “change,” which is beyond yin and yang and yet does not oppose yin and yang.

[Bodhidharma] is called the twenty-eighth ancestor when [Śākyamuni’s disciple] Kāśyapa The Great One is taken as the first ancestor; from the Buddha Vipasyin, he is the thirty-fifth ancestor. These Seven Buddhas and twenty-eight ancestors have never taken dhyāna to exhaust the verification of the way; therefore, our ancient forebear [Huihong] says here, “Dhyāna is but one among various practices; how could it suffice to exhaust [the practice of] the holy ones?”

This ancient forebear has seen something of the person [of Bodhidharma], has entered the interior of the hall of the lineage of the ancestors; therefore he has these words. Nowadays, throughout the entire land of the Great Song, [his type] would be difficult to meet, would be welcome indeed. Even if [Bodhidharma were practicing] dhyāna, we should not call [this practice] the “Dhyāna [or Zen] school,” much less [consider] dhyāna to be a general essential of the buddha dharma.

Yet, there are those who speak of the great way correctly transmitted from buddha to buddha as the “Zen school.” They have never seen the way of the buddha even in their dreams; they have never heard of it in their dreams; they

have never participated in its transmission in their dreams. We are not to acknowledge that those who call themselves the “Zen school” have the buddha dharma. Who ever spoke of a “Zen school”? There has never been a buddha or ancestor who spoke of a “Zen school.” We should realize that the name “Zen school” is a name used by Māra Pāpīyān; and those who use Māra Pāpīyān’s name are the minions of Māra, not the progeny of the buddhas and ancestors.³

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When the Bhagavat, before an assembly of a million on Sacred [Vulture] Peak, took up an udumbara flower and winked, the assembly was silent; only Kāśyapa the Worthy smiled. The Bhagavat said, “I have a treasury of the eye of the true dharma, the wondrous mind of nirvana; together with my sāmghātī robe, I bequeath it to Mahākāśyapa.”⁴

In the Bhagavat’s bequeathal to Kāśyapa The Great One, [he said] “I have a treasury of the eye of the true dharma, the wondrous mind of nirvana.” He did not go on to say, “I have a ‘Zen school,’ which I bequeath to Mahākāśyapa.” He said, “Together with my sāmghātī robe,” not “together with the ‘Zen school.’” Thus, we do not hear of the name “Zen school” during the Bhagavat’s lifetime.

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The First Ancestor [Bodhidharma] addressed the Second Ancestor [Huike], saying,

The unsurpassed wondrous way of the buddhas takes vast kalpas [æons] of spiritual fortitude, practicing what is difficult to practice, enduring what is difficult to endure. How could one of little virtue and little wisdom, of frivolous mind and vain mind, think to aspire to the true vehicle?

He also said, “The seal of the dharma of the buddhas is not obtained from another.”

And he said, “The Tathāgata bequeathed the treasury of the eye of true dharma to Kāśyapa The Great One.”

Both the “unsurpassed wondrous way of the buddhas” and the “treasury of the eye of the true dharma” spoken of here are the “seal of the dharma of the buddhas.” At this time, there is no mention at all of a “Zen school,” nor does one hear of reasons to speak of a “Zen school.” The “treasury of the eye of the true dharma” here is what has been personally bequeathed in “raising the eyebrows and blinking the eyes,” what has been conferred in the “bones and marrow of body and mind,” what has been received in the “bones and marrow of body and mind.” It is what has been transmitted and received “before the body and after the body,” what has been transmitted and received “beyond the mind and outside the mind.”⁵

One does not hear the name “Zen school” in the assembly of the Bhagavat and Kāśyapa; one does not hear it in the assembly of the First and Second Ancestors [Bodhidharma and Huike]; nor does one hear it in the assembly of the Fifth and Sixth Ancestors [Hongren and Huineng], or in the assemblies of [Huineng’s two major disciples,] Qingyuan and Nanyue. No one knows when or by whom this name originated. Probably it comes from scholars, unworthy of the name, who secretly sought to destroy the dharma or to steal the dharma. For later students rashly to use a name never acknowledged by the buddhas and ancestors will be the ruin of the house of the buddhas and ancestors. Moreover, [such use] suggests that there is some dharma called the “Zen school” other than the dharma of all the buddhas and ancestors. If there were [a dharma] other than the way of the buddhas and ancestors, it would be a dharma of those outside the way [i.e., non-Buddhists]. As progeny of the buddhas and ancestors, we should study the “bones, marrow and countenance” of the buddhas and ancestors. We should throw ourselves into the way of the buddhas and ancestors, not shrink off to study what is outside the way. We enjoy the rare opportunity of having the body and mind of a human, due to the [karmic] power of past pursuit of the way; having received this beneficent power, mistakenly to serve those outside the way is no way to repay the beneficence of the buddhas and ancestors.

Recently in the Great Song, the common classes throughout the country hear this false name “Zen school,” and the lay followers compete to spread talk of such false

names as the “Zen school,” or the “[Bodhi]dharma school,” or the “Buddha Mind school,” till they would corrupt the way of the buddha. This is the corrupt way of those who have never known the great way of the buddhas and ancestors, who have not seen or heard, believed or accepted even that there is a treasury of the eye of the true dharma. Who, knowing the treasury of the eye of the true dharma, would use a false name for the way of the buddha?

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Therefore,

The Great Master Wuji of Shitou Hermitage on Mt. Nanyue [i.e., Shitou Xiquian] ascended the hall and addressed the assembly, saying, “My dharma gateway has been transmitted from prior buddhas. It doesn’t concern meditation or vigor; it merely masters the buddhas’ knowledge.”

We should know that the buddhas and ancestors who have the correct transmission from the Seven Buddhas, from the various buddhas, talk in this way. [Here, Shitou] expresses the words “my dharma gateway has been transmitted from prior buddhas”; he has no expression of the words, “my Zen school has been transmitted from prior buddhas.” He does not distinguish the items “meditation or vigor”; he makes “the buddhas’ knowledge” “merely master.” He does not dislike vigor and meditation; [they are] “the buddhas’ knowledge” “merely mastered.” This is [equivalent to Śākyamuni’s saying] “I have a treasury of the eye of the true dharma . . . I bequeath it.” [Shitou’s] “my” is [Śākyamuni’s] “I have”; [Shitou’s] “dharma gateway” is [Śākyamuni’s] “true dharma.” This “my,” “I have,” and [Bodhidharma’s saying] “my marrow” are the “I bequeath it” of [Bodhidharma’s saying] “you have got.”⁶

The Great Master Wuji was the only child of the Eminent ancestor Qingyuan; he alone entered the interior of the [ancestor’s] hall. He was a dharma heir through tonsure of [Qingyuan’s master,] the Old Buddha Caoqi. Thus, the Old Buddha Caoqi was both his grandfather and his father; and the eminent ancestor Qingyuan was both his older brother and his teacher. The only “hero of the ancestral seat” on the way of the buddha was the Great

Master Wuji of Shitou Hermitage; only Wuji “merely mastered” the correct transmission of the way of the buddha. In the expressions of his words, every point and every line is the agelessness of an old buddha, the long presence of an old buddha. We should take him as the eye of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma; we should not compare him with others. Comparisons with Jianxi Daji [i.e., Shitou’s contemporary Mazu Daoyi] by those who do not know this are in error.

Thus, we should know that, in the way of the buddha transmitted and received by prior buddhas, they do not speak of dhyāna, much less, needless to say, of the term “Zen [or Dhyāna] school.” We should clearly understand that using the term “Zen school” is an extreme error. A shallow group, thinking that it is like the [scholastic doctrinal categories] “school of being” or “school of emptiness,” lament that, without a name for the school, there would be nothing to study. The way of the buddha is not like this. We should be firmly convinced that the term “Zen school” was never used.

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Nevertheless, the mediocre types of recent generations are stupid and do not know the ancient style. Those without transmission from the prior buddhas mistakenly say that, within the buddha dharma, there are the teaching styles of the five schools. This is a natural decline and diminution. There has not been one or a half to salvage it. My former master, the old buddha of Tiantong [i.e., Tiantong Rujing], was the first to take pity on them. It was good fortune for people; it was mastery of the dharma.

My former master, the old buddha, ascended the hall and addressed the assembly, saying,

Nowadays everyone just talks of [the five houses of] “Yunmen, Fayan, Weiyang, Linji, Caodong.” To have distinctions of house styles is not the buddha dharma; it is not the way of the ancestral masters.

The expression of these words is hard to encounter in a thousand years; my former master alone said them. They

are hard to hear throughout the ten directions; [those at] the “perfect seat” alone hear them. This being the case, among one thousand monks, there is none with the ears to hear it, none with eyes to see it. How much less are there those who will take up the mind and hear it, those who will hear it with the body? Even though they hear it with their own full body and mind for one hundred million ten thousand kalpas, they will not take up my former master’s entire body and mind and hear it, verify it, believe it, and slough it off. It is pitiful that, throughout the ten directions of the one land of the great Song, all have thought that the local elders and such are of equal stature with my former master. We cannot take the group that thinks like this as “equipped with the eye”; we cannot take them as “unequipped with the eye.” Again, they have thought that Linji [i.e., Linji Yixuan] and Deshan [i.e., Deshan Xuanjian] were the equal of my former master. We have to say that this group has also not seen my former master, has not met Linji. Before I had paid obeisance to the old buddha, my former master, I thought to investigate the dark import of the five schools. After paying obeisance to the old buddha, my former master, I knew the import of the corrupt term “five schools.”

Thus, when the buddha dharma flourished in the land of the great Song, there was no term “five schools,” and there were no ancients who raised the term “five schools” or heard of “house styles.” Ever since the buddha dharma became weak, we have this arbitrary term “five schools.” It is like this because people are stupid in their study and do not become intimate with pursuit of the way. To monks who would seek to investigate the real thing, I offer this strict prohibition: do not note or retain the false term “five houses”; do not note or designate the teaching styles of the five houses. How much less are there [such catch phrases of the house styles as] “the three darknesses” or “the three essentials,” “the four considerations” or “the four illuminations and functions,” “the nine girdles,” and so on. How much less are there “the three phrases” or “the five ranks” or “the ten identical true wisdoms.”

The way of old master Śākya is not a small measure like this and does not take something like this as a great measure. It does not express it in words, nor is it heard in Shaolin or Caoqi. It is pitiful, something said now by little

shavepates of the last age who have not heard the dharma and whose bodies and minds and eyes are dark. Descendants of the buddhas and ancestors, do not utter such words! In what the buddhas and ancestors keep, one has never heard these mad words. One has never heard these mad words from those occupying [the positions of] buddhas and ancestors. Recent little teachers, those who have never heard of the entire way of the buddha dharma, who lack the entire reliance on the way of the ancestors, who are ignorant of their original lot, boasting of one or two little parts, set up such names of schools. Ever since they set up the names of schools, the little children, because they do not study the way that seeks out the root, vainly follow the branches. Lacking the aspiration that yearns for the ancient, they have the conduct that blends with the secular. Even the secular warn that following [the ways of] the secular world is base.

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King Wen [of Zhou] asked the grand duke [Lü Shang], “What about the lord who labors to elevate the wise but does not garner the effect, so that the disorder of the world increases to an extreme that becomes dangerous?”

The grand duke said, “He elevates the wise but does not use them. This is because he elevates the names of the wise and does not get the reality of the wise.

King Wen said, “Where is the fault?”

The grand duke said, “The fault is in using what the worldly praise and not getting the really wise.”

King Wen said, “What is using what the worldly praise?”

The grand duke said, “To listen to the praise of the worldly is to take the unwise as the wise, to take the unintelligent as the intelligent, to take the disloyal as the loyal, to take the unfaithful as the faithful. If the lord takes as wise and intelligent those praised by the worldly and takes as unworthy

those reviled by the worldly, then the majority party will advance and the minority party will retreat. Thus, when the wicked group together, they obscure the wise; the loyal ministers die without crime, and the wicked ministers seek court ranks with flattery. Thus, the disorder of the world increases to an extreme, and as a result, the country cannot avoid peril.” [From the early Chinese work of martial strategy, the Liu Tao.]

Even the secular lament when the way is imperiled for their country; when the dharma of the buddha and the way of the buddha are imperiled, the children of the buddha should naturally lament. The basis of the peril is the indiscriminate accord with the secular world. When one listens to what the worldly praise, one fails to get the truly wise. If one would get the truly wise, one should have the wisdom to illumine behind and see ahead. What the worldly praise is not always wise, is not always holy; what the worldly disparage is not always wise, is not always holy. While this is the case, where we thrice examine the wise inviting disparagement and the inauthentic being praised, we should not confuse them. Not to use the wise is a loss to the country; to use the unworthy is a regret for the country.

To set up the name “five schools” is a confusion with the secular world. Though there are many who follow the secular world, there are few people who understand the secular as secular. The holy should convert the secular; to follow the secular is extremely stupid. Those that would follow the secular — how could they know the correct dharma of the buddha? How could they become buddhas or become ancestors? What has been received from the legitimate heirs of the Seven Buddhas — how could it be like setting up the five divisions of the rules by the bunch in the Western Heavens who “rely on the texts to understand the meaning”?⁷

Thus, we should realize that the ancestral masters who have taken the correct life of the buddha dharma as the correct life have never said that there are houses of the five schools. Those who learn that there are five houses in the way of the buddha are not legitimate heirs of the Seven Buddhas.

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My former master addressed the assembly, saying,

In recent years, the way of the ancestral masters has declined. The beasts and minions of Māra are many. Again and again they bring up the teaching styles of the five houses. Painful. Painful.

Thus, we know clearly that the twenty-eight generations of the Western Heavens and the twenty-two ancestors of the Eastern Earth [from Huike to Rujing] never proclaimed the houses of the five schools. The ancestral masters that are ancestral masters are all like this. Those who set up the five schools and claim that each has its own message are deluded worldly types, the sort with little knowledge and shallow understanding. If, within the way the buddha, we set up our own separate ways, how would the way of the buddha have reached us today? [The First Ancestor] Kāśyapa would have set up his own; [the Second Ancestor] Ānanda would have set up his own. If the principle of setting up one's own [way] were the correct way, the buddha dharma would have quickly disappeared in the Western Heavens. Who would “yearn for the past” of the messages set up by each [faction]? Who could judge the truth or falsity of messages set up by each? If we cannot judge its truth or falsity, who could say this is the buddha dharma or this is not the buddha dharma? If this principle is not clear, it is difficult to call it the buddha dharma. The name “five schools” was not set up during the time of any of the ancestral masters. After the perfect quiescence of the ancestral masters who are called the ancestral masters of the five schools, perhaps branches of their followers, those whose eyes were not yet clear, whose feet had not yet walked, without asking their fathers, opposing their ancestors, set up this name. The point is clear. Anyone should recognize it.

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The Chan master Dayuan of Mt. Dawei [i.e., Weishan Lingyu] was a child of Baizhang Dazhi [i.e., Baizhang Huihai]. He lived on Mt. Wei at the same time as Baizhang. He never said that the buddha dharma should be called the Weiyang school [i.e., the school named after Weishan and his disciple Yangshan Huiji]. Nor did Baizhang say, “[since] you lived on Mt. Wei, from your

time on, [your line] should be called the Weiyang school.” Neither the master [Weishan] nor the ancestor [Baizhang] used the name. We should realize it is a false name. Even though it is willfully used as a school name, we should not necessarily trace this to Yangshan. Were personal names supposed be used [for schools], they would have been used; since personal names should not be used, personal names were not used in the past, and we do not have personal names [for schools] today. We do not say “the Caoxi school” [of the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng]; we do not say “the Nanyue school” [of the Sixth Ancestor's disciple Nanyue Huairang]; we do not say “the Jiangxi school” [of the master Mazu Daoyi]; we do not say “the Baizhang school [of the master Baizhang Huihai].” When it comes to Weishan, it cannot be that he is different from Caoxi; he should not be superior to Caoxi; he should not be equal to Caoxi. One word and half a phrase spoken by Dawei is not necessarily “one staff carried by two people” with Yangshan. If one were to set up the name of the school, one should call it the Weishan school, or one should call it the Dawei school; there is no reason to call it the Weiyang school. Were it supposed to be called the Weiyang school, it should be have been called that when both the venerable worthies were alive. Because of what obstacle was it not called what it should have been called when they were alive? Those who would go against the way of their father and grandfather and call it what it was not called when the two were alive are unfilial children and grandchildren. This is not the original desire of the Chan master Dawei; it is not the genuine intention of the old man Yangshan. It has no correct transmission of a correct teacher; it is clearly the false name of a false faction. Do not spread this in the entire realm of the ten directions.

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The great master Huizhao [i.e., Linji Yixuan], casting aside a house that explicates scripture, became a follower of Huangbo. Three times he tasted Huangbo's stick, altogether sixty staffs. Visiting Dayu [i.e., Gaoan Dayu], he had an awakening. He subsequently resided at the Linji cloister in Zhenchou. While he may not have fully investigated Huangbo's mind, he has no saying of one phrase, no saying of a half phrase, that the buddha dharma he inherited should be called the Linji school; he does not raise his fist

[to it]; he does not take up his whisk [to it]. Nevertheless, immediately mediocre factions among his followers, without protecting the work of the father, without protecting the buddha dharma, mistakenly set up the name “Linji school.” Were it constructed during the life of the Great Master Huizhao, since it goes against the words of the ancient ancestor, there should have been prior discussion about setting up that name.

Moreover,

When Linji was indicating his extinction, he entrusted the Chan master Sansheng Huiran, saying, “After my transformation, do not let my treasury of the eye of the true dharma be extinguished.”

Huiran said, “How could I let the venerable’s treasury of the eye of the true dharma be extinguished?”

Linji said, “If someone suddenly asks you, what will you answer?”

Huiran shouted.

Linji said, “Who could have known that my treasury of the eye of the true dharma would have been extinguished around this blind donkey?”

Such is what master and disciple had to say.

Linji does not say, “Do not let my Zen school be extinguished.” He does not say, “Do not let my Linji school be extinguished.” He does not say, “Do not let my school be extinguished.” He just says, “Do not let my treasury of the eye of the true dharma be extinguished.” Clearly, we should realize that the great way correctly transmitted by the buddhas and ancestors should not be called “the Zen school,” should not be called “the Linji school.” We should have no dreams of calling it “the Zen school.” Even though “extinguished” is the principle and shape of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma, this is how it is bequeathed. The “extinguished” “around this blind donkey” is truly the “who would have known” of the

bequeathal. Among the followers of Linji, Sansheng is the only one. He should not be compared with, or ranked with, his elder and younger dharma brothers. Truly, he is to be “placed under a bright window” [as a superior student]. The story of Linji and Sansheng is [an instance of] the buddhas and ancestors. The bequeathal of Linji today is the bequeathal of Vulture Peak in the past. Therefore, the reason we should not call it the Linji school is obvious.

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The great master Kuangzhen of Mt. Yunmen [i.e., Yunmen Wenyan] in the past studied with the venerable worthy Chen [i.e., Muzhou Daozong]; he would have been a descendant of Huangbo. Later, he succeeded Xuefeng [i.e., Xuefeng Yicun]. This master did not say that the treasury of the eye of the true dharma should be called the Yunmen school. His followers, not realizing that the false names Weiyang and Linji were false names, newly established the name “Yunmen school.” If the message of the great master Kuangzhen had aspired to a name that established a school, it would be difficult to acknowledge him as the body and mind of the buddha dharma. When [his teaching] is now called by the name of a school, it is like calling the emperor a commoner.

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The Chan master Great Fayen of Qingliang cloister [i.e., Fayen Wenyi] was a legitimate successor of Dizang Yuan [i.e., Lohan Guichen]; he was a dharma grandchild of Xuansha Yuan [i.e., Xuansha Shibe]. He had a message and lacked mistakes. “Great Fayen” is the teacher’s title of his signature. In his thousand words he had not a single word, in his ten thousand phrases he had not a single phrase, in which he said that the name “Fayen school” should be established as the name of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma. Nevertheless, his followers established the name “Fayen school.” If Fayen were converting people today, he would erase the term for the current falsely named Fayen school. With the Chan master Fayen already departed, there is no one to save us from this calamity. Even a thousand or ten thousand years later, people who would be filial to the Chan master Fayen must not take the name “Fayen school” as a name. This is basic filiality toward

the Chan master Fayan. In general, Yunmen and Fayan are the distant descendants of the eminent ancestor Qingyuan. They transmitted the bones of the way; they transmitted the marrow of the dharma.

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The eminent ancestor great master Wuben [i.e., Dongshan Liangjie] succeeded to the dharma under Yunyan [i.e., Yunyan Tancheng]. Yunyan was the legitimate heir of the great master Yueshan [i.e., Yueshan Weiyang]; Yueshan was the legitimate heir of the great master Shitou. The great master Shitou was the one child of the eminent ancestor Qingyuan. There are not two or three of comparable stature; he correctly transmitted the work of the way. It is on the strength of the great master Shitou's transmission without loss that the correct life of the way of the buddha still remains in the Eastern Earth.

At the same time as the old buddha Caoxi, the eminent ancestor Qingyuan adopted Caoxi's teaching methods at Qingyuan. Seeing that he was put forward in the world [as a teacher] and that his advancement was in the same generation [as Caoxi], he must have been the legitimate descendant among legitimate descendants, he must have been the eminent ancestor among eminent ancestors. It is not a case of a manly student and weak advancement. Those of his stature at his time would be prominent today. This is something students should realize.⁸

On the occasion when the old buddha Caoxi was teaching humans and gods by manifesting his complete nirvana, from the last seats Shitou came forward and requested a master on whom to rely. On that occasion, the old buddha indicated that he go visit Si [i.e., Qingyuan Xingsi]; he did not say that he go visit Rang [i.e., [Nanyue Huairang]]. Therefore, the treasury of the eye of the true dharma of the old buddha was correctly transmitted to the eminent ancestor Qingyuan alone. Though we may grant that they were equally "spiritual feet" [i.e., disciples] who attained the way, the eminent ancestor was still the "sole pace of the real spiritual foot." The old buddha Caoxi had Qingyuan make a child of [Caoxi's] child; the father of the child would be the father of the father; that he attained the marrow is obvious; that he was the legitimate heir of the

ancestors is obvious.

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The great master Dongshan, as the legitimate heir in the fourth generation of Qingyuan, correctly transmitted the treasury of the eye of the true dharma and opened the eye of the wondrous mind of nirvana. Beside this, there is no separate transmission, there is no separate school. The great master never had a "fist" or a "blink of the eye" in which he instructs the assembly that they should be called the Caodong school. Among his followers as well, because they were not corrupted by mediocre types, there was no follower who called them the Dongshan school, much less said it was the Caodong school.

The name Caodong school likely includes the name "Caoshan" [of Dongshan's disciple Caoshan Benji]. If this is the case, Yunju [i.e., Dongshan's disciple Yunju Daoying] and Tong'an [i.e., Yunju's disciple Tong'an Daopi] ought also to be included. Yunju was a guide among humans and the heavens above, more revered than Caoshan. We know of this name "Caodong" that the stinking skin bags of a marginal faction, seeking to be of equal stature, called themselves by this name "Caodong." Truly this is a case where, "though the white sun is bright, the floating clouds cover below."

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My former master said,

Nowadays, while there may be many who ascend the lion seat, many who would be the teachers of humans and gods; there are none who understand the principle of the buddha dharma.

Therefore, those competing to establish the schools of the five schools, those mistakenly stuck in the phrases of words and phrases, are truly the enemies of the buddhas and ancestors. Again, the faction of the Chan master Nan of Huanglung [i.e., Huanglung Huinan] has been called the "Huanglung school," but it will not be long before this faction is known to be mistaken. More generally, when the Buddha was present, he never called [his teachings] "the

Buddha school,” or called them “the Vulture Peak school,” or spoke of “the Jetavana school,” or spoke of the “My Mind school,” or spoke of the “Buddha Mind school.” Where in the words of the Buddha does he use the name “Buddha school”? Why do people today use the name “Buddha Mind school”? Why would the World Honored One necessarily call the mind a school? Why would a school necessarily be the mind? If there is a Buddha Mind school, there should be a Buddha Body school, should be a Buddha Eye school, should be a Buddha Ear school, should be a Buddha Nose or Tongue school, should be a Buddha Marrow school, Buddha Bones school, Buddha Feet school, Buddha Kingdom school, and so on. Now, there are none of these. We should realize the fact that the name “Buddha Mind school” is a false name.

When the Buddha Śākyamuni takes up the real mark of the dharmas throughout the buddha lands of the ten directions and preaches of the buddha lands of the ten directions, he does not preach that he has constructed some school in the buddha lands of the ten directions. If the designation “school” is the dharma of the buddhas and ancestors, it should be in the kingdom of the buddha; if it is in the kingdom of the buddha, the buddha should preach it. The buddha does not preach it; we know it is not a tool of the kingdom of the buddha. The ancestors do not talk of it; we know it is not a furnishing in the region of the ancestors. Not only will you be laughed at by people [if you speak of your school]; you will be prohibited by the buddhas and laughed at by yourself. I beg of you, do not call [yourself] a school. There is no such thing as the five houses in the buddha dharma.

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Lately, there was a little child named Zhicong [i.e., Zhicong Huiyan], who collected one word or two words of the ancestral masters, said they were the denominations of the five houses and called it Rentian yanmu [“The Eye of Humans and Gods”]. People not knowing how to assess it, beginners and late comers think it true, and some even keep it hidden in their robes. It is not “the eye of humans and gods”; it blinds the eye of human and gods. How could it have the virtue of blinding the treasury of the eye of the true dharma?

This Rentian yanmu was collected by trainee Zhicong, in the twelfth month of Chunxi, [in the year] wushen [1188], at the Wannian monastery on Mt. Tiantai. Though it is a late production, if its words were right, we should attend to it. It is craziness; it is foolishness. It lacks the eye of study; it lacks the eye of pilgrimage. How much less could it have the eye that sees the buddhas and ancestors? We should not use it. He should not be called “Zhicong” [“Wise and Bright”]; he should be called “Yumeng” [“Stupid and Dull”]. He who does not know “that person,” who does not encounter the person, in collecting words and phrases, does not pick words and phrases of the person who would be that person. We know that he does not know the person.

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That those who study the teachings in the land of Cīnasthāna [i.e., China] called themselves schools was because there were others of equal stature. Now, the treasury of the eye of the true dharma of the buddhas and ancestors has been bequeathed from heir to heir; there are none of equal stature, there are no others that could be confused with it.

Despite this, the illiterate elders nowadays always rashly call themselves a school; scheming for themselves, they show no fear of the way of the buddha. The way of the buddha is not your way of the buddha: it is the buddha’s and ancestors’ way of the buddha; it is the way of the buddha’s way of the buddha.

The grand duke said to King Wen, “The realm is not one person’s realm: it is the realm’s realm.” [From the Liu Tao.]

Thus, even the secular gentleman has this wisdom, has these words. Children in the quarters of the buddhas and ancestors must not arbitrarily follow “Stupid and Dull” in calling the great way of the buddhas and ancestors by the names of schools they establish. This is a major violation; not [worthy of] people of the way of the buddha. If we should use the term “school,” the World Honored One would have himself used it. When the World Honored One did not himself use it, how as his descendants can we

use it after his extinction? Who is more skilled than the World Honored One? Were [he] not skilled, [we] would not benefit. Again, when you turn against the traditional way of the buddhas and ancestors and independently establish your own school, which of the descendants of the buddha would take your school as a school? We should study by illuminating the past and observing the present. Do not be reckless. Trying not to differ one hair from [the dharma] when the World Honored One was in the world, to lament our failure to reach even one part in a billion, to rejoice in reaching it, to aspire not to differ [from it] — only this is what the disciples left behind make their repeated thought. So we should vow to meet and serve [him] for many lives; so we should aspire to see the buddha and hear the dharma for many lives. Those who, violating the teaching style when the World Honored One was in the world, would intentionally set up the name of a school are not the disciples of the Thus Come One, are not the descendants of the ancestral masters; [their misdeed] is heavier than the weighty violations [of monastic rule]. Taking lightly the unsurpassed bodhi of the Thus Come One, impulsively to devote oneself exclusively to one's own school is to neglect antecedents, to depart from antecedents. We must say [such people] do not know the antecedents. They do not believe in the virtues of the days of the World Honored One. In their dwelling, there can be no buddha dharma.

Thus, in correctly transmitting the work of the way of studying Buddhism, we should not see or hear the term “school.” What buddha after buddha and ancestor after ancestor bequeath and correctly transmit is the unsurpassed bodhi of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma. The dharma possessed by the buddhas and ancestors has all been bequeathed by the buddha; there is no further additional dharma. This principle is the bones of the dharma, the marrow of the way.

Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma

Way of the Buddha

Number 44

Presented to the assembly, sixteenth day, ninth month, first year of Kangen (mizunoto-u) [1243],

At Kippōji, Yoshida District, Etsu Province

NOTES

1. “The old buddha of Caoqi” refers to the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng. The number forty adds the standard list of the Seven Buddhas of the past, from Vipaśyin to Śākyamuni, to the thirty-three ancestors in the traditional Zen lineage from Mahākāśyapa to Huineng.
2. “Kāśyapa” here probably refers to the First Ancestor, Mahākāśyapa, as opposed to the Buddha Kāśyapa, mentioned just below, who is the sixth of the Seven Buddhas of the past, just preceding Śākyamuni.
3. Māra Pāpīyān, or Māra the Evil One, is the deva who sent his minions to prevent Śākyamuni from attaining enlightenment under the Bodhi tree.
4. The famous story of the transmission from Śākyamuni to the First Ancestor, Mahākāśyapa. The “sāmghāti robe” is the monk’s formal outer garment.
5. “Raising the eyebrows and blinking the eyes” is another reference to the first transmission on Vulture Peak; “bones and marrow of body and mind” alludes to the transmission from Bodhidharma to Huike.
6. “My marrow” and “you have got” allude to the story of the transmission from Bodhidharma to Huike, in which the former says, “You have got my marrow.”
7. “The five divisions of the rules” refers to the tradition that five schools of monastic rules developed in India from the time of the Fifth Ancestor, Upagupta.
8. The expression “a manly student and weak advancement (as a teacher)” is variously interpreted; Dōgen’s statement is generally taken to mean that Qingyuan was no less a master than Caoxi.

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NEWS

Oct. 10 - Nov. 10, 2006

The Dendokyoshi Kenshusho (a training/practice session for Dendoshi) was held at Kasuisai Monastery in Fukuroi, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan. There were three participants from Europe and two from North America.

International Events

European Soto Zen Conference _____ Place: Ryumonji, France
Date: January 20 and 21

North American Soto Zen Conference and Workshop _____ Place: Zenshuji, Los Angeles, California
Date: March 10 and 11

Fortieth Memorial Celebrations of Soto Zen Teaching Activities in Europe _____ Place: La Gendronniere, France
Date: June 8, 9, and 10

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