



SOTO ZEN JOURNAL

DHARMA EYE

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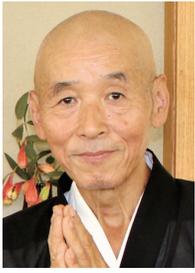
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Arriving at Tokozaan Jikishoan 20th Anniversary

Rev. Ekai Korematsu
Jikishoan, Australia

In May this year, Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community Inc. marked the 20th Anniversary of its incorporation in 1999. Jikishoan members celebrated this memorable occasion with a weeklong special events program from 6 to 12 May 2019.

Shinsan-shiki, Shuso Hossen-shiki, the 20th Anniversary Ceremony of Jikishoan were the three official events - *Shinsan-shiki* and *Shuso Hossen-shiki* were held at Tokozaan Jikishoan, Jikishoan's new home temple, and the 20th Anniversary Ceremony of Jikishoan, as its big ceremony, place at St. Pius Primary School where near from Jikishoan. In addition, a series of commemorative lectures were delivered during this period.

Over 200 people, including 40 Soto monastics from overseas, attended and shared joy with this weeklong celebration program. Owing to my late teacher Daigen Ikko Daiosho and to the Founder of Tokozaan Jikishoan, Rev. Narasaki Tsugen, and due to many other great Roshi's guidance and kind advice, we could come to this day.

On the last day, the 20th Anniversary Ceremony of Jikishoan, the commemorative lecture was given by Rev. Hoitsu Suzuki, the abbot of Rinsoin. Then, Rev. Seido Suzuki, the abbot of Toshoji offered incense for the late Daigen Ikko Daiosho Memorial Ceremony, for the requital of

his great kindness. Finally, the 20th Anniversary Ceremony of Jikishoan was held with Rev. Kenshi Kimikohbe, the Director of Education and Dissemination Division. The loud and clear voice of Rev. Kenshi Kimikohbe echoed in the large hall space, and people listened to its elegance.

Dharma Statement for 20th Anniversary Ceremony

Establishing a Zen temple to repay our Ancestors for what they have done for us.

Spring and autumn have passed, time and time again, with wholehearted effort.

Three thousand oceans and mountains separate ordinary worlds.

The base of five aggregates opens the gate of Mahayana.

Thinking over respectfully, this month, this day, I come to the auspicious day of 20th Anniversary of Tokozaan Jikishoan. By kindly asking venerable priests in all directions to come here, we set up a ceremony of revering Buddha Dharma. We offer this gathering merit, solely praying for

The flourishing of the true Dharma

Harmony among all nations

Tranquillity within the Sangha

All beings in peace.

And wishing all relations and Buddha Dharma to be favourable.

Now, I humble myself, having the honour of officiating at this celebration ceremony.

Here and now, how can we penetrate the deep truth?

Expression!

Every stroke of writing brushes emits the same spiritual light.

In everyone's eyes, venerable appears.



Many priests from Japan, Sotoshu Shumicho, every regional International Office and International Center helped this event and gave us a chance of practicing together at this anniversary ceremony, for which I am very grateful.

Humbly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for all the people who have given time, heartwarming material and non-material support, and guidance to enable us to arrive at this commemorative events. I felt it brought a lot of joy and offered something for everyone who attended.

“Activity of the Members is the temple” as Jikishoan’s motto; we have managed to maintain its *Sanzen* spirit and teaching activities without owning a building / temple over 20 years. Though its scale is very small and humble compared to a typical Zen temple in Japan, now we have a temple. *Rakkei* (Completion of Construction) Dedication for the new buildings such as *Sammon* (Mountain Gate), *Kuin* (Kitchen), *Zendo*/Buddha Hall and *Kaisando* (Founding

Abbot’s Hall) has special meaning and historical significance for members of Jikishoan and myself.

Lastly, I mention, *Kaisando* enshrines the five teachers: Rev. Shunryu Suzuki, Rev. Kobun Chino, Rev. Keibun Otokawa, Rev. Ikko Narasaki, and Rev. Tsugen Narasaki, to whom my pursuit as a monastic over past 40 years of my life is deeply indebted. I humbly feel that if it were not for their great virtues and guidance that I have received, I would not have survived as a Zen monk and Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community would not have existed as it is today:

- Rev. Shunryu Suzuki for bringing Zen into my life
- Rev. Kobun Chino for initiating me into the monastic career
- Rev. Keibun Otokawa for preparing me for formal training in Soto Zen Buddhism
- Rev. Ikko Narasai for his example, guidance and teaching in Sangha level practice
- Rev. Tsugen Narasaki for continuing support for my missionary work in Australia.



Soon after I read “Zen Mind, Beginners Mind” by Rev. Shunryu Suzuki in 1972, I began zazen practice with Rev. Sojun Mel Weitsman of Shogakuji (Berkeley Zen Center) in California for the first time. Ever since, I had the good fortune to meet many people who kindly pointed the way and supported me when I encountered challenges and needed help.

Having arrived at Jikishoan’s 20 Anniversary, I would like to express my sincere appreciation from the bottom of my heart for the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha and the Two Founders.



Report on “Sound of Zen” in Sydney

Rev. Kenji Oyama

Seiryuji Temple, Yamagata, Japan

The Heisei Era changed to the Reiwa Era, two historical events for Sotoshu’s international teaching activities took place in Australia.

The history of Sotoshu international teaching activities is one that spans more than 100 years so that the Soto Zen teaching has now spread to Hawaii, North America, South America, and Europe. Then, in 2018, Tokozaan Jikishoan became the first temple to be given recognition as a Sotoshu Special Overseas Temple in the Oceania District.

From May 10th to 12th, the commemorative events for the 20th Anniversary of the founding of Tokozaan Jikishoan were carefully and properly observed in Melbourne. Following that, on May 14th, a “Sound of Zen” (*Zen o kiku kai*) was held in Sydney.

I was sent by the All-Japan Young Soto Zen Buddhists Priest Association to help with the 20th commemorative Anniversary events for the founding of Tokozaan Jikishoan and also served as the lecturer at the “Sound of Zen.” The main topic I spoke about was “Food.”

In collaboration with people from Japan who have immigrated to Australia, the “Sound of Zen” was comprised of two parts. The first part featured videos about food, Dharma talks, and an

introduction to zazen. For the second part, we moved the venue to a Japanese restaurant, where we enjoyed a Japanese meal.



At first, the number of applicants were 30 people to attend the event. However, since more than 50 people asked to participate, we hurriedly changed the venue for the event. As this was the first attempt to try something like this in Australia, and we were forced to change the venue because we had many more participants than anticipated, this meant we could begin the event as a very happy occasion.

For the first part, in keeping with the theme of “Food”, we watched a documentary film about the *Tenzo* Roshi (Head Cook) at Daihonzan Eihei-ji. We also showed a video about the Sotoshu’s international teaching activities. This was followed by a talk about the “Instructions for the Monastery Cook” (*Tenzo Kyokun*) and “Verses of Five Contemplations” (*Gokan no ge*). For those people hearing a detailed explanation of Dogen Zenji’s teaching about the way of face to eat, it was clear from their facial expressions that they were surprised and listening intently. In particular, I could see they were nodding in vigorous agreement with the statements “Others are not me” and “What time should I wait for?”,

two key teachings in “Instructions for the Monastery Cook.” With the explanation of “Verses of Five Contemplations” as well, I could see that the people in the audience had great empathy. They looked at the reference materials with great interest. By turning our attention to the food which we eat several times a day and often take for granted and facing each and everything in a careful manner – something that we usually go about without thinking too much about it – it suddenly has a big significance. Once again, we notice how grateful we should be for the food we eat. Everyone was also interested in the topic of the “Three Minds” (joyful mind, nurturing mind, and magnanimous mind). I think this is something they could understand and empathize with as Japanese people.

Finally, Rev. Taiga Ito of the Soto Zen Buddhism International Center guided the participants in the experience of sitting in zazen. For most of the people, this was their first time to do zazen. Each person sat on the cushion they had brought, straightened up their posture, and folded their legs. While they did not sit for a long time, a stillness arose in the air which calmed and steadied the body and mind.

For the second part of the event, we walked to a nearby Japanese restaurant, where we enjoyed a meal together in which soba noodles were featured. Before the meal, I spoke again about the “Verses of Five Contemplations.” And then, after chanting the verses, we ate. In fact, with facing the meal, each person chanted the “Verses of Five Contemplations” enunciating each word clearly. We had a fulfilling time, speaking about many things during the second part of this event.



The participants in the “Sound of Zen” were mainly Japanese people who had immigrated to Australia. Some of them had lived there for more than 20 years, others had not even been there for a year. The most surprising thing about the participants is that they were so young, and ranged in age from their 30’s to their 50’s. While the reasons for participating in this meeting differed somewhat from person to person, perhaps it can be said that since they were all living far away from Japan, they were attracted to traditional Japanese culture. So am I, I grew up in Hawaii. Living abroad, I wanted to learn more about my native culture. Couldn’t we say that the people who came to this event were exposed to the culture of their own country through this experience of “Zen” and that they were able to achieve a measure of peace of mind?

I would like to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude for being given this good opportunity. I look forward with earnest anticipation to the time when the 2 seeds of Soto Zen that were planted at these two events take root and the day comes when flowers bloom just as they have in other parts of the world.



The Sotoshu Understanding of Zazen: Learning About the *Fukan zazengi* (4)

Rev. Kenshu Sugawara

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In present day Japan when people sit in zazen, there are cases when standing up following a period of zazen that, for some reason or other, they get up off the sitting platform in a dash as if they were competing with each other. But we must not finish zazen as if we are in a hurry.

When you arise from sitting, move slowly and quietly, calmly and deliberately. Do not rise suddenly or abruptly. In surveying the past, we find that transcendence of both mundane and sacred, and dying while either sitting or standing, have all depended entirely on the power of zazen. In addition, triggering awakening with a finger, a banner, a needle,

or a mallet, and effecting realization with a whisk, a fist, a staff, or a shout – these cannot be understood by discriminative thinking; much less can they be known through the practice of supernatural power. They must represent conduct beyond seeing and hearing. Are they not a standard prior to knowledge and views?

As is pointed out in this passage, the way it should be done is, “*When you arise from sitting, move slowly and quietly, calmly and deliberately. Do not rise suddenly or abruptly.*” In other words, after sitting for thirty or forty minutes and sometimes sitting for several hours at a time, the body becomes quite stiff. So, when it’s time to get up from sitting, we begin by moving slowly. In Keizan Zenji’s “Precautions Concerning Zazen” (*Zazen Yojinki*), it is written that following zazen, “sway your body” (Dogen Zenji mentions swaying the body only before sitting in zazen); this is something that should also be done slowly. Therefore, it is necessary to make these movements “slowly and gradually.” The reason why he gives this instruction is because this has something to do with samadhi (*zenjo*).

In other words, when standing up after being in sitting samadhi, we mustn’t do it in a hurry. It isn’t possible to force oneself to come out of sitting samadhi. The deeper the samadhi is then certainly the slower the movements will be when a person stands up. From the perspective of those who have continued to sit zazen for a longer time, this is something they can agree with in the context of that experience. If you try to force yourself to stand up, the body won’t move quickly. In Shigetsu Eiin Zenji’s “Words That

Cannot Be Spoken About the *Fukan zazengi*,” he wrote precisely about this matter. “The Buddha – the World-honored One, as well as his disciples, all thought it good to get up slowly when standing after having been in sitting samadhi. Calmly and deliberately means that one must not do this suddenly or abruptly...In general, when the Dharma King stood up, it was always in a quiet and peaceful manner.” In Dogen Zenji’s “The Dharma for Taking Food” (*Fushukuhanpo*), we find “The manner for taking down the bowls is as follows: moving calmly and carefully, stand up from sitting.” The character used here for “sitting” is the second character in the compound translated in this text as “samadhi” (*zenjo*). For this reason, we can understand this to mean that Dogen Zenji is encouraging us to be in a samadhi of zazen. Also, at the very end of “The Dharma of Taking Food,” Dogen Zenji speaks about the way to stand up at the end of sitting in zazen when he wrote, “Taking a half step with each breath is the dharma of walking for those who are emerging from samadhi.” In other words, when coming out of sitting samadhi, the way to start walking at that time is “taking a half step with each breath.” Therefore, from this teaching as well, you must know why it is necessary to move calmly and deliberately when beginning to walk slowly after coming out of zazen samadhi. Considering this interpretation based on Shigetsu Zenji’s commentary, there are, for example, the following excerpts from Buddhist sutras:

*“At that time, the Bhagavat arose tranquilly out of samadhi and addressed Shariputra.”
Lotus Sutra, Chapter Two “Skillful Means”*

“At that time, the World-honored One arose

from samadhi calmly and deliberately.”

The Great Wisdom Sutra, Introduction

“When (the Buddha) was born, the earth did not move with the six kinds (of earthquakes). Moving forward seven steps, he walked calmly and deliberately like the Elephant King.”

Commentary on the Great Wisdom Sutra, Chapter 21

Regarding the meaning of these words, Menzan Zuiho Zenji in “Listening and Understanding the *Fukan zazengi*,” wrote, “Calmly and deliberately standing means to stand up maintaining one’s peace of mind.” Other than this, there is no other remarkable interpretation of these words. In this case as well, he discusses this by contrasting it with “suddenly and abruptly” and so here, after all, both “calmly and deliberately standing” and “don’t do it suddenly and abruptly,” when “calmly and deliberately” is used, “suddenly and abruptly” is hidden.

I think you understand from this explanation that Dogen Zenji is instructing us how to stand up from zazen with the premise that we have maintained “zazen samadhi” for a long time. If you understand this, then the following point, “*In surveying the past, we find that transcendence of both mundane and sacred, and dying while either sitting or standing, have all depended entirely on the power of zazen,*” and so forth are phrases that you will in due course understand by yourself.

In Bannan Eishu Zenji’s “Commentary on the Records of Dogen Zenji” Second Part, he comments, “It is through the power of everyone’s merit,” in other words, it is because of the extent of zazen samadhi that “the mundane and sacred

are transcended,” and “dying while either sitting or standing”, which is to transcend birth and death (dying while either sitting or standing refers to the way a Zen priest might die), that this power of everyone’s merit is “the power of zazen.” It is by means of this outstanding power of zazen samadhi that it is possible to transcend these various things. This is why we must stop from abruptly standing after zazen and thereby easily abandoning zazen samadhi.

Also, regarding “*In addition, triggering awakening with a finger, a banner, a needle, or a mallet, and effecting realization with a whisk, a fist, a staff, or a shout,*” this is also based on the power of zazen samadhi. It is precisely because of the function of “a finger, a banner, a needle, a shout,” which function as Zen teaching methods through the power of Zen samadhi, that the result, on the disciple’s side, functions as “triggering awakening” and “effecting realization.”

However, we mustn’t think that we can understand these functions on our own, we must grasp the functioning of samadhi as it is. We must endure Dogen Zenji’s criticism, “*these cannot be understood by discriminative thinking.*” And similarly, “*much less can they be known through the practice of supernatural power.*” In other words, it isn’t possible to understand “the power of truth” brought about by “triggering awareness” and “effecting realization” through so-called supernatural powers – some sort of transcendent power which only results in misunderstanding. In other words, the power of samadhi is “the manifestation of all functions.”

It is precisely because of this premise of samadhi that the various activities of Zen monks can

be understood without discrimination. Therefore “They must represent conduct beyond seeing and hearing. Are they not a standard prior to knowledge and views?” Since this is demeanor (the power of dignified appearance) which is outside of relative knowledge, it is a standard prior to knowledge and views. That actual situation, as it is, is just like Dogen Zenji pointed out in “The Model for Engaging the Way” (*Bendoho*), “Therefore, when the assembly of monks is sitting, sit together with them; when the assembly of monks lies down to sleep, lie down and go to sleep with them. In activity and stillness, be at one with the monastic assembly. Throughout death and rebirth, do not be separate from the monastery.” This is not the standard of self-centered views or willfulness. This standard is the proper conduct in a monastery.

If everyone within a Zen monastery knows that they will sit in zazen with everyone else, then we must think carefully about the meaning of “Universal”, a word that appears in the English translation of *Fukan zazengi* (“Universally Recommended Instructions for Zazen”).

This being the case, intelligence or lack of it is not an issue; make no distinction between the dull and the sharp-witted. If you concentrate your effort single-mindedly, that in itself is wholeheartedly engaging the way. Practice-realization is naturally undefiled. Going forward is, after all, an everyday affair. In general, in our world and others, in both India and China, all equally hold the buddha-seal. While each lineage expresses its own style, they are all simply devoted to sitting, totally blocked in resolute stability.

Although they say that there are ten thousand distinctions and a thousand variations, they just wholeheartedly engage the way in zazen. Why leave behind the seat in your own home to wander in vain through the dusty realms of other lands? If you make one misstep, you stumble past what is directly in front of you.

From long ago, the first part of this passage has been understood to be pointing at the true meaning of “universal.”

This section of the text is the direct meaning of ‘universal.’ Menzan Zenji in “Listening and Understanding the Fukan zazengi.”

“This is the sincere meaning of ‘universal’”; it is truly the sharp pain of falling tears.” Shigetsu Zenji in “Words That Cannot Be Spoken About the Fukan zazengi.”

Particularly in Menzan’s understanding, we can see the words of Ven. Nagarjuna which appear in Chapter 83 of the “Commentary on the Great Wisdom Sutra.” “The World-honored One! It is through this gate that superior bodhisattvas and mahasattvas enter. The Buddha said, ‘Dull bodhisattvas can also enter through this gate.’” Quoting this section, Menzan testifies to the meaning found in *Fukan zazengi*. In other words, the important thing is to concentrate your effort single-mindedly. At that time, since you are certainly practicing the Way, then, to begin with, there is no need to consider the ability of the practitioners. To repeat myself, for Dogen Zenji, practice/realization is of itself “undefiled.” Consequently, it can be said that emphasizing differences is to end up as “defilement.”

The meaning of the following expression “going forward” is used in the same way. “Going forward” means to practice, to proceed, to focus on a specific interest. And yet, Dogen Zenji says that this “going forward” must be an “everyday affair.” Regarding this matter, I would like you look at the following passage, relating it to the prior phrase “undefiled.”

“Undefiled does not mean forcibly endeavoring to exclude intention or discrimination, or that you establish a state beyond intention. Being undefiled cannot be intended or discriminated at all.”

Dogen Zenji, Shobogenzo, “Only A Buddha and A Buddha”

From this context, a place that cannot be intended, in other words, the place where a particular intention is lost, is the practice/realization of undefiled-ness. This is “no discrimination”; it is “everyday-ness.” No discrimination means it is not dependent on a particular value. This is the place beyond discrimination of good and evil; it is where there is only practice for the sake of practice. This is the zazen called “*shikantaza*” in the Soto school because it is the practice of being undefiled.

Regarding the following part of *Fukan zazengi*, “*In general, in our world and others, in both India and China, all equally hold the buddha-seal. While each lineage expresses its own style,*” this means that all worlds are imprinted with the seal of the Buddha’s enlightenment. At that time, the lineage style of enlightenment passed down by buddhas and ancestors can be used freely. Through our practice of

zazen, we are one with the lineage of the buddhas and ancestors. The state of being one with the lineage of buddhas and ancestors is “*simple devotion to sitting, totally blocked in resolute stability.*” “Resolute stability” is like a boulder, a condition which is insentient, without thinking, without discrimination. To be in that condition is to be one with our lineage style. For that reason, there is no awareness that this is the lineage style. There is no attachment to a lineage or to zazen. There is no conflict with the world. There is only wholehearted engagement in zazen. There may be some people who take no attachment to zazen to mean not sitting in zazen, but this is to misunderstand what the prerequisite is. This text assumes that zazen is being practiced. It is based on the premise that not even zazen can be grasped or latched onto. Therefore, it says, “*Although they say that there are ten thousand distinctions and a thousand variations, they just wholeheartedly engage the way in zazen.*” Even if there are 10,000 distinctions and 1,000 variations in the facets of this world or in the different talents people have, it is enough just to endeavor in zazen.

When we practice zazen wholeheartedly, while not being attached to zazen, “*Why leave behind the seat in your own home to wander in vain through the dusty realms of other lands?*” There is no longer any need at all for other forms of practice. There is no longer any need for teaching. While there is no reason to say that all sentient beings are not saved, the actual merit of a person who practices zazen is certainly received by all people. Going beyond this, it is strange to talk about looking for specific salvation for the phenomena of body and mind. For a

person who practices zazen, all things are saved before this world is made the way it is. This is the state expressed in words found in Dogen Zenji's "On the Practice of the Way" (*Bendowa*), "allowing all things to come forth in realization." If we are unable to understand this, then we end up with a preference, a plan, a scheme. This is "*If you make one misstep, you stumble past what is directly in front of you.*"



**The 7th Chapter of Shobogenzo
Ikaka-myōju (One Bright Jewel)
Lecture (10)**

Rev. Shohaku Okumura
Sanshinji, Indiana, U.S.A
(Edited by Rev. Shoryu Bradley)

**【5】明珠の声色 (We are already a bright
jewel)
(22)**

しかあればすなはち、転不転のおもてをかへゆくに
にたれども、すなはち明珠なり。

Therefore, while either turning around or not
turning around, it seems that it has changing
faces, and that is nothing other than the bright
jewel.

まさにたまはかくありけるとして、すなはちこれ明
珠なり。

Precisely knowing that the jewel is thus is noth-
ing other than the bright jewel.

明珠はかくのごとくきこゆる声色あり。

The bright jewel has a sound and a color that
teach us in this way.

既得恁麼なるには、われは明珠にはあらじとたどら
るるは、たまにはあらじとうたがはざるべきなり。

Because we are already a bright jewel, even
when we may think that we are not a bright
jewel, we should not doubt it.

たどりうたがひ、取舍する作無作も、ただしばらく小
量の見なり、さらに小量に相似ならしむるのみなり。

Even when we are inquiring, doubting, and pick-
ing and choosing, all such action and non-action
are [based on] small, limited views. Such views
make [the bright jewel] resemble things small.

*Therefore, while either turning around or not
turning around, it seems that it has changing
faces, and that is nothing other than the bright
jewel.*

Previously Dogen Zenji said the bright jewel
is always turning around freely, but here he says
it can be "turning around" or "not turning
around." We can interpret this sentence in vari-
ous ways. "Turning around" can be positive,
meaning moving freely, and "not turning
around" can be negative, representing stagna-
tion. We can also interpret this in the opposite
way; "turning around" can be negative, being
shaky and unsettled, and "not turning around"
can be positive, something immovably settled.
This is like the proverb, "A rolling stone gathers
no moss", which can have different interpreta-
tions. In Japan we interpret it as, "We should not
roll. We should stay patiently immovable at one
place. Otherwise we cannot have the beauty of
moss." I think in English the proverb is under-
stood in the opposite way. It means unless we
keep turning we will acquire something dirty
like moss, so we should keep turning and rolling.
We can interpret the parable either way, depend-
ing on whether we think moss is something
desirable or not. But here Dogen says whether it

is turning or not, it is still the bright jewel.

Precisely knowing that the jewel is thus is nothing other than the bright jewel.

As a karmic person, sometimes we feel we are stuck and cannot move forward. But we are not sure whether the jewel is stuck or not. It might be that the jewel is still freely rolling, but I feel I'm stuck. Depending on which side we view it – karmic consciousness or Buddha nature – we will have different interpretations. But from the side of emptiness, nothing is stuck, because even the condition of being stuck is a way this jewel turns. The jewel never stops within time and space. Even when we think we are stuck as a person of karmic consciousness, from the perspective of the bright jewel, nothing is stopped because everything is always moving and changing and turning. Dogen says to know that is nothing other than the bright jewel.

The bright jewel has a sound and a color that teach us in this way.

In whatever situation or condition we find ourselves, even a very difficult situation like that of Uchiyama Roshi's painful injury I introduced in lecture (3), it is part of the scenery of this bright jewel turning. Because of that experience, Uchiyama Roshi was able to be released from the suffering of his pain, right within the pain itself. Not trying to escape is the way to be released from pain. Ryokan, the Japanese Soto Zen priest and well-known poet, taught this when he wrote a letter of sympathy to his close friend who experienced the effects of a terrible earthquake. In it he said, "When it's time to face

disaster, it's best to face it. When it's time to die, it's best to die. This itself is the wonderful method for averting disaster."¹ Experiencing disaster or being submerged in a difficult or painful situation is also a part of this turning of the bright jewel. If we see them in this way, we can see such situations from a very different perspective. That is the teaching of the bright jewel.

Because we are already a bright jewel, even when we may think that we are not a bright jewel, we should not doubt it.

Dogen Zenji doesn't say the bright jewel is hidden within us, but rather we are already a bright jewel. Usually I don't think I'm a bright jewel. But Dogen says even when I think I am not a bright jewel, still I am a bright jewel. It has nothing to do with whether I think so or not or whether I believe it or not or whether I agree with it or not; the bright jewel is always the bright jewel. That is the meaning of the reality "beyond thinking."

Even when we are inquiring, doubting, and picking and choosing, all such action and non-action are [based on] small, limited views.

These are all the usual things we almost always do, day after day. "Action" can signify things we do in our daily lives based on thinking, and "non-action" can refer to just sitting in the zendo. When we think using karmic consciousness, everything we do, whether "action" or "non-action," whether we act based on thinking of mundane things or thinking of the teachings of the buddha dharma, is based on our small, limited views. Sometimes, for example, we may

think that the bright jewel is “my” possession, that “I” truly understand the Dharma.

Such views make the bright jewel resemble things small.

Even the things we think about the jewel are based on small, limited views, and yet actually those views also are a function of the bright jewel. Even when we study this bright jewel as we are now, we are thinking and we see this bright jewel as an object of our mind. When we are studying and thinking and talking and discussing, the bright jewel is a concept. That is not the real bright jewel, but rather a small limited view of the jewel. Yet we can study the real bright jewel using this incomplete copy of the jewel. According to Dōgen, the important point is living out the bright jewel and expressing it within our activities. If our small, limited views help us to practice, they are meaningful. We don't need to negate and erase these views.

【6】明珠の採光 (The colors and luster are infinite)

(23)

愛せざらんや、明珠かくのごとくの彩光きはまりなきなり。

How can we fail to love the jewel? The colors and luster are infinite.

彩彩光光の片片條條は、尽十方界の功德なり。

Each and every aspect of the color and luster are the virtue of the entire ten-direction world.

たれかこれを擄奪せん、行市に瓢をなぐる人あらず。

Who can take them away? No one would throw a tile away at a marketplace.

六道の因果に不落有落をわづらふことなかれ。

Do not worry about falling or not falling into

cause and effect within the six realms [of samsara].

不昧本来の頭正尾正なる、明珠は面目なり、明珠は眼睛なり。

Not being blind to cause and effect is the original rightness from head to tail. The bright jewel is the face. The bright jewel is the eye.

How can we fail to love the jewel? The colors and luster are infinite.

This jewel is really lovely, so we cannot help loving it. It's truly infinite; even within our delusions this jewel is shining.

Each and every aspect of the color and luster are the virtue of the entire ten-direction world.

This bright jewel has many different facets, and it is always beautiful. There are different colors and lusters, and they are connected with all of the virtue of the ten-direction world.

Who can take them away? No one would throw a tile away at a marketplace.

These phrases are taken from two koan stories. “Take them away,” is from case 5 of the Blue Cliff Record where we read, “Where the King's rule is a little more strict, it's not permitted to plunder the open markets.” This refers to a marketplace where a merchant tries to sell his commercial goods at a certain price, but a customer wants to buy the goods at a much cheaper price. Even though the merchant doesn't want to sell, somehow this customer convinces the merchant to sell the goods at the lower price. “Who can take them away?” means there's no

way this bright jewel can be “taken away” or bought at a discount price like goods in a marketplace. No one, even a buddha, cannot take this bright jewel away from us.

“No one would throw a tile away at a marketplace” appears in vol. 16 of the *Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, the section featuring Xuefeng Yicun who says, “Recently having abandoned a brick, I got a piece of jade in return.”² This is the opposite of “to take away.” It means to exchange something valueless for something precious. This is almost always what we want to do; we want to exchange cheap things for more valuable things. We think this is a successful business transaction. But we cannot do this kind of trading when it comes to the bright jewel. The tile and jewel refer to karmic consciousness and Buddha nature. There’s no way we can throw away the tile, our karmic nature, and get the jewel, buddha nature, in exchange. This is because the tile and the jewel are the same thing. We are not in the marketplace, so there’s no way to trade or exchange things by throwing away something we don’t want and getting something we do want. Yet often in our practice we have the attitude of a merchant; we want to get rid of our delusion and receive wisdom or enlightenment in return. This is exactly throwing away the tile and picking up the jewel.

The next two sentences are rather difficult but important. They are about cause and effect, or causality.

Do not worry about falling or not falling into cause and effect within the six realms [of samsara]. Not being blind to cause and effect is the

original rightness from head to tail. The bright jewel is the face. The bright jewel is the eye.

“Falling or not falling into cause and effect” comes from a famous koan story. Dogen discusses this koan in two fascicles of *Shobogenzo*, *Daishugyo* (Great Practice), and *Jinshin Inga* (Deeply Believing in Cause and Result). The *koan* is about the Chinese Zen master Baizhang Huihai (Hyakujo Ekai), who was a disciple of Mazu (Baso).

This Zen master was the Abbot of a monastery on Mount Baizhang. Whenever this master gave a dharma discourse to his assembly, an old man attended. When the Master finished talking and the assembly retired, the old man would disappear without speaking to anyone, including Baizhang. One day the old man stayed and asked to talk with the master. The master eventually asks him, “What person is this standing before me?” The old man answered, “I am not a human being. In the past age of Kasyapa Buddha I used to live here as the abbot on this mountain. Once a practitioner asked me, ‘Does a person of great practice fall into cause and effect or not?’ I replied, ‘They do not fall into cause and effect.’ Because of this mistaken answer, I fell into cause and effect and became a wild fox for five hundred lifetimes. Now I beg you to say for me a word of transformation. I long to be rid of the body of a wild fox.”

It is said that a fox can transform its appearance into a human being's. The old man had been a fox for five hundred lifetimes because of his mistaken answer. Probably this wild fox is actually part of Zen Master Baizhang. I think the

wild fox represents his karmic nature because five hundred is the same number of lifetimes Shakyamuni Buddha practiced as a bodhisattva, according to the Jataka stories. When the old man asks the same question of the current abbot, “Do people of great practice fall into cause and effect or not?”, Baizhang answers, “Do not be blind to cause and effect.”

Dogen wrote two different chapters of *Shōbōgenzō* about this *kōan* story, and in these two chapters he said completely opposite things. That is a problem for us, but I won't discuss it here since I must discuss what it means in this fascicle, One Bright jewel. In the koan the old man and the wild fox are part of Zen Master Baizhang, representing his buddha nature and karmic nature. The story says because of our bodhisattva vow we must stay in samsara, and to stay in samsara we need karmic consciousness. And yet, as part of our bodhisattva vow we are determined to become free from our karmic nature. So here is a basic contradiction: In our bodhisattva practice we must stay in samsara, and yet as the direction of our practice we must be free from samsara. The koan is about this contradiction. As part of our vow, we keep transmigrating within samsara, but at the same time our intention is to be free from samsara. We must transform the meaning of our practice of remaining in samsara based on our bodhisattva vow.

In this sense, to be a wild fox is not a completely bad thing, it's a form of bodhisattva practice. We need the wild fox to be a bodhisattva. That means we need our individual, self-centered way of thinking and behaving. Even when we practice, we are partly motivated to

satisfy ourselves. If we look deeply into our mind, we will find something self-centered in our motivation, and this is completely necessary to live as a person within samsara. And yet at the same time our practice centers on being released from this karmic consciousness. We therefore need to be free from karmic consciousness, and at the same time if we lose karmic consciousness we are no longer a bodhisattva. What can we do? We must stay within causality and yet we must be free from causality. How can we do both?

Dogen says “Do not worry about falling or not falling into cause and effect within the six realms [of samsara]” because this is a process of bodhisattva practice. It's not necessary to worry about becoming a wild fox because that is a condition in which we practice as a bodhisattva. If we practice to avoid falling into cause and effect, we stop being bodhisattvas like the arhats who entered nirvana. We should see that because of our need to practice with karmic action, we must stay within the realm of causality. Wholeheartedly being and living in causality is the way we can be free from causality. This is the same as Uchiyama Roshi really facing his pain and thereby being released from his pain. When we intentionally or wholeheartedly become a wild fox and sincerely use that condition to live together with all beings, we can be free from being a wild fox.

I think this is what I'm doing now. Because of my unfortunate karma I have to write about Dōgen's *Shobogenzo* in English. This is really painful karma for me. If I hadn't studied English and continued sitting in a small, quiet, Japanese temple, I wouldn't have this difficulty. My life

would be much easier and more comfortable. And yet this is my karmic condition as a wild fox. Therefore, I try to do my best to share this strange practice and teaching as part of my practice of being a wild fox. We can be free from cause and effect while dwelling within cause and effect if we intentionally and sincerely practice in the here and now.

Not being blind to cause and effect is the original rightness from head to tail.

“Not being blind” is *fu mai* (不昧), clearly seeing cause and effect. “The original rightness from head to tail” means whether we fall into it or not, we see the cause and effect or results of our activity. Clearly seeing the effects of our activity is important whether we fall or not, because this process of falling and not falling is the way the bright jewel is turning and rolling. We can express the beauty of the bright jewel within this process of coming and going within cause and effect.

“The bright jewel is the face. The bright jewel is the eye.”

“Face (面目, *menmoku*)” in common usage means the facial appearance a person inherits from their ancestors, but as a Zen expression it also means “original face,” the true form of all things as they are. “Eye (眼睛, *ganzei*)” means “wisdom” or “essence”.

【7】全明珠 (Every activity in the demon’s cave is the bright jewel)

(24)

しかあれども、われもなんども、いかなるかこれ明

珠、いかなるかこれ明珠にあらざるとしらざる百思百不思議は、明明の草料をむすびきたれども、玄沙の法道によりて、明珠なりける身心の様子をもききしり、あきらめつれば、心これわたくしにあらざらず、起滅をたれとしてか明珠なり、明珠にあらざると取舍にわづらはん。

And yet, both you and I don’t know what the bright jewel is like or what the bright jewel is not like. Hundreds of thoughts and hundreds of non-thoughts have been combined to form a clear insight. By virtue of Xuansha’s dharma utterance, we have heard, recognized and clarified the situation of our body and mind that is the bright jewel. [We understand that] the [body and] mind are not our individual [possession]. Why should we be worried by attachment to whether it is a bright jewel or is not a bright jewel, as if what arises and perishes were our possessions?

たとひたどりわづらふも、明珠にあらぬにあらざらず、明珠にあらぬがありておこさせける行にも念にもにてはあらざれば、ただまさに黒山鬼窟の進歩退歩、これ一顆明珠なるのみなり。

Even such questioning and worrying are not different from the bright jewel. No action or thought has ever been caused by anything other than the bright jewel. Therefore, forward steps and backward steps within the demon’s cave in the black mountain are nothing other than the one bright jewel.

In this final paragraph of this fascicle, Dogen Zenji writes the conclusion of his interpretation of Xuansha’s saying, “The entire ten-direction world is one bright jewel.”

And yet, both you and I don’t know what the bright jewel is like or what the bright jewel is not like.

We don't really know what the bright jewel is like. We don't really even know if our life as it is the bright jewel. As an individual being, we are one out of many people or myriad things (1), and yet this individual being, this "I", is empty of any substantial being (0). Precisely because we are empty and zero, we are interconnected with all beings (∞). This is how our life is existing as the bright jewel. But we don't know this.

Hundreds of thoughts and hundreds of non-thoughts have been combined to form a clear insight.

This means without actually knowing the true reality of all beings, we think of it in this way or in that way, depending upon our particular karmic conditions, or we may adopt some method to try to stop thinking altogether, saying it is beyond the reach of thinking. Or believing we truly know our origins, we create various mythological stories and form various "clear" insights, concepts or theories.

By virtue of Xuansha's dharma utterance, we have heard, recognized and clarified the situation of our body and mind that is the bright jewel. [We understand that] the [body and] mind are not our individual [possession]. Why should we be worried by attachment to whether it is a bright jewel or is not a bright jewel, as if what arises and perishes were our possessions?

However, because we have heard Xuansha's expression, "The entire ten-direction world is one bright jewel," our five skandhas (body and mind) are nothing other than a bright jewel ($1=0=\infty$). I think what Dogen says in *Shobogenzo Inmo*

(Thusness) is a precise expression of what he is saying here:

What he (Yunju, Jp. Unjo) said is one who wishes to attain the matter of thusness must be a person of thusness, and because he is already a person of thusness, why does he have to worry about the matter of thusness? The essential point of this saying is that "directly heading toward the unsurpassable awakening," for the time being, is called thusness. We are also furnishings existing within the ten-direction world. How do we know that we are thus? We know that [the reality] is thus because our bodies and minds appear within the entire world, and yet they are not our selves. Even the body is not our personal [possession]; our life is moving through the passage of time and we cannot even stop it for an instant. Where have our rosy cheeks gone? Even if we wish to find them, there is no trace. When we carefully contemplate, we understand there are many things in the past we can never see again. The sincere red heart does not stay either—bit by bit, it is coming and going. Although there is sincerity, it does not stagnate within the boundary of individual ego-centered self.

Dogen says because we as individual beings (1) are impermanent, non-self, and empty (0), we are universal, connecting with all beings within time and space (∞). What he says here is very clear. I don't think I need to explain more.

Even such questioning and worrying are not different from the bright jewel. No action or thought has ever been caused by anything other than the bright jewel. Therefore, forward steps and backward steps within the demon's cave in the black mountain are nothing other than the one bright jewel.

As I said in lecture (8), Dogen's interpretation of the demon's cave in the black mountain is the reality beyond thinking, void of discrimination, duality, and picking and choosing. Yet within this absolute reality beyond discrimination we must discriminate, evaluate, pick and choose, and make a livelihood. Dogen urges us to see both absolute reality and conventional reality at the same time and to live as human beings led by the bodhisattva vows.

¹. Great Fool : Zen Master Ryokan (translated by Ryuichi Abe and Peter Haskell, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1996) p.230.

². Record of the Transmission of the Lamp vol. 4 (translated by Randolph S. Whitefield, 2017) p.147.

正法眼藏 一顆明珠第七

Shobogenzo *Ikka-no-myōju* (One bright jewel), Chapter 7

爾時嘉禎四年（1238）四月十八日在雍州宇治縣觀音導利興聖宝林寺示衆。

On the 18th day of the 4th month in the 4th year of Katei (1238) taught to the assembly at Kannon-Dori-in Kosho-Horin-ji in Uji district of

Yoshu.

寛元元年（1243）癸卯閏七月二十三日書于越州吉田郡志比莊吉峰寺院主房、侍者比丘懷曄。

Copied in the Prior's office of Kippo-ji in Shibi County, in the Yoshida district of Eschu

On the 23rd of the 7th month in the 1st year of Kangen

Attendant Biku, Ejo

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye Number 4 Studying the Way with Body and Mind *Shinjin gakudō*

Translated by
The Soto Zen Text Project

Introduction

This work was written at the Kōshō Monastery in the autumn of 1242, during one of the most productive periods in its author's literary career. It appears as number 37 in the 95-chapter vulgate edition of the *Shōbōgenzō* and as number 4 in both the sixty- and seventy-five-chapter compilations.

Dōgen explains the title of his essay at the outset: “studying the way” means to study the way of the buddhas — which, for him, means not simply to learn what the buddha taught but to put into practice what all the buddhas practice. For purposes of discussion, he says, we can divide such study into two: studying with the body and studying with the mind. He then divides his essay into roughly equal parts, focused on each of these two in turn.

Elsewhere (in the “secret” *Shōbōgenzō* text of the *Butsu kōjō ji*), Dōgen defines studying

with the mind as “clarifying the buddha mind” and studying with the body as “pursuing the way in seated meditation, practicing buddhahood without seeking to make a buddha.” But in our essay here, body and mind are expanded well beyond the mind and body of the individual student of the way. “Mind” is “fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles”; “the mountains, rivers, and earth, the sun, moon, and stars.” “Body” is “all the worlds of the ten directions”; “birth and death, coming and going.” Studying ourselves as such bodies and minds is studying the way with body and mind.

Studying the Way with Body and Mind

The way of the buddhas: should we think not to speak of it, we cannot; should we think not to study it, we grow distant from it.¹

Chan Master Dahui of Nanyue said, “It’s not that it lacks practice and verification, but it can’t be defiled by them.”²

When we do not study the way of the buddhas, we fall into the ways of other paths and the *icchantika*.³ It is for this reason that prior buddhas and later buddhas invariably practice the way of the buddhas.

In studying the way of the buddhas, [we may say] for the time being there are two [approaches]: studying with the mind and studying with the body.⁴ “Studying with the mind” means to study with all the various minds. These “various minds” mean the mind of *citta*, the mind of *hrdaya*, the mind of **vrddha*, and the like.⁵ Again, with the interaction of feeling and

response, after we have brought forth the mind of bodhi, we take refuge in the great way of the buddhas and ancestors and train in the observances of bringing forth the mind of bodhi.⁶ Even if the true mind of bodhi has not yet been brought forth, we should study the dharma of the buddhas and ancestors who previously brought forth the mind of bodhi. This is bringing forth the mind of bodhi; it is the bare mind in pieces; it is the old buddha mind; it is the ordinary mind; it is the three realms are one mind.⁷

There is casting away these minds and studying the way; there is taking them up and studying the way. At this time, one thinks and studies the way; one does not think and studies the way.⁸ Some directly transmit the golden brocade robe and receive the golden brocade robe.⁹ Or there is “you’ve gotten my marrow,” and there is “bowing three times and standing in place.”¹⁰ There is the study of the mind by means of the mind that pounds the rice and transmits the robe.¹¹ To shave the head and dye the robe is to turn the mind, is to illumine the mind.¹² To leap the wall and enter the mountains is to exit one mind and enter one mind.¹³ That the mountains are entered is “thinking of not thinking”; that the world is abandoned is “nonthinking.”¹⁴ Having balled this up as one’s eye is two or three bushels; having played with this as karmic consciousness is a thousand or ten thousand lengths.¹⁵ In studying the way like this, whether the reward naturally comes from the effort, or the effort has yet to reach the reward, secretly to borrow the nose of the buddhas and ancestors and breathe through it; to take up the hoofs of a donkey and validate with them — these are a model ten thousand ages old.¹⁶

For now, [let us say that] the mountains, rivers, and the whole earth, the sun, moon, and stars — these are mind.¹⁷ At just such a moment, taking on what [form] does it appear before us?¹⁸ When we say, “the mountains, rivers, and the whole earth,” the “mountains and rivers,” for example, are mountains and waters; and “the whole earth” is not merely this place.¹⁹ The mountains, too, should be many: there are great Sumerus and small Sumerus; they are situated horizontally; they are situated vertically.²⁰ There are the three chiliocosms; there are countless countries.²¹ There are some hanging on form; there are some hanging in emptiness.²²

And rivers must also be still more numerous: there is the River of Heaven; there are rivers of earth; there are the four great rivers; there is Heatless Lake.²³ On the continent of Uttarakuru, there are the four Anavatapta Lakes; there are seas; there are lakes.²⁴

Ground is not necessarily soil; soil is not necessarily ground.²⁵ There must be soil ground; there must be mind ground; there must be jeweled ground.²⁶ Although they are of myriad types, they must not lack “ground.”²⁷ And there must be worlds in which emptiness represents ground.²⁸

Of the sun, moon, and stars, what is seen by humans and devas must not be the same; what is seen by the various types of beings must not be the same. Such being the case, what is seen by one mind is equivalent.²⁹

These are “mind.” Can we take them as internal? Can we take them as external? Can we take them as coming? Can we take them as going? When they are born, do they add one iota, or do they not add it? When they die, do they remove one dust mote, or do they not remove it? Where

are we to put this birth and death, and the view of birth and death? Up till now has been merely one moment or two moments of mind.³⁰ “One moment or two moments” is one “mountains, rivers, and the whole earth,” is two “mountains, rivers, and the whole earth.” Since these “mountains, rivers, and the whole earth” are neither existent nor nonexistent, they are neither large nor small, neither attained nor unattained, neither known nor unknown, neither penetrated or unpenetrated; nor do they change with understanding or not understanding.

We should firmly believe that such minds themselves becoming accustomed to studying the way is called “the mind studying the way.” This belief is not [a matter of] large or small, existent or nonexistent. Studying the way here — which, knowing the home is not a home, abandons home and leaves home — is not an amount large or small, not an amount far or near.³¹ It exceeds first founder and final follower; it exceeds ascending or descending.³² There is divulging the matter: it is seven feet or eight feet; there is achieving accord: it is for oneself and for the other.³³ Being like this is studying the way. Because studying the way is like this, fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles are mind.³⁴ It is not furthermore the three realms are only mind; it is not the dharma realm is only mind: it is “fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles.”³⁵ “Before the Xiantong years,” it builds them; “after the Xiantong years,” it breaks them.³⁶ It is dragged through the mud and drenched with water; it is binding oneself without a rope.³⁷ It has the power to take in a jade; it has the ability to enter the water.³⁸ There are days when it dissolves; there are times when it shatters; there are times when it is

ultimately reduced to atoms. It does not study together with the pillars; it does not stand shoulder to shoulder with the lanterns.³⁹ Because it is like this, it is studying the way while running barefoot.⁴⁰ Who looks at it? It is studying the way while doing flips.⁴¹ Each one “goes along with it.”⁴² At this time, the walls and fences let it study the ten directions; the lack of a gate lets it study the four sides.⁴³

Bringing forth the mind of bodhi — there is attaining it in birth and death; there is attaining it in nirvāna; there is attaining it elsewhere than in birth and death or nirvāna. It does not depend on the place; yet bringing forth the mind is not impeded by the place.⁴⁴ It is not that sense objects bring it forth; it is not that wisdom brings it forth: it is the mind of bodhi bringing it forth; it is bringing forth the mind of bodhi. Bringing forth the mind of bodhi is not existent, it is not nonexistent; it is not good, it is not evil, it is not neutral. It is not that it arises from conditions depending on one’s land of recompense; it is not the case that heavenly beings definitely cannot attain it.⁴⁵ We simply bring forth the mind of bodhi in accordance with the time; for it has nothing to do with secondary recompense.⁴⁶ At the very moment one brings forth the mind of bodhi, the dharma realm in its entirety brings forth the mind of bodhi. Although it may seem as if one is transforming the secondary recompense, it is not known to the secondary recompense. It is “together, extending a single hand”; it is oneself, extending a single hand; it is “moving among different types.”⁴⁷ Even among those in the hells, hungry ghosts, beasts, *asura*, and the like, there is the bringing forth of the mind of bodhi.

“Bare mind in pieces” means that what is “in

pieces” is all the “bare mind.” It is not one piece or two pieces: it is “in pieces.”⁴⁸

The leaves of the lotus are round, round, round like a mirror;

The horns of the water caltrop are sharp, sharp, sharp like an awl.⁴⁹

Though one may say it is “like a mirror,” it is “in pieces”; though one may say it is “like an awl,” it is in pieces.”

“Old buddha mind”: Long ago, there was a monk who asked the National Teacher Dazheng, “What is the old buddha mind?” Whereupon, the National Teacher said, “Fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles.”⁵⁰

Therefore, we should understand that the “old buddha mind” is not “fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles”; “fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles” are not called the “old buddha mind.” “Old buddha mind” — this is how it is studied.

“Ordinary mind”: it is the ordinary mind without reference to this world or other worlds.⁵¹ Yesterday leaves from this place; today comes from this place. When it leaves, the whole of heaven leaves; when it comes, the entire earth comes. This is “ordinary mind.” The ordinary mind opens the gates to the interior of the house. Since a thousand gates, ten thousand doors, open and close simultaneously, it is “ordinary.”⁵² This covering of heaven and covering of earth is like words not remembered, like the sound of a sneeze.⁵³ The words are equal, the minds are equal, the dharmas are equal.⁵⁴ While the arising and ceasing throughout our lives arise and cease each *ksana*, we will never know this before our final body.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, because we bring

forth the mind [of bodhi], we inevitably progress on the way of bodhi. We already have this place; we should not harbor any further doubts. We do already harbor doubts; this is “ordinary.”

* * * * *

“Body studying the way” means to study the way with the body, it is the study of the way of the lump of red meat.⁵⁶ The body comes from studying the way, and whatever comes from studying the way is “body.”⁵⁷ It is “all the worlds of the ten directions are this true human body”; it is “birth and death, coming and going, are the true human body.”⁵⁸ Turning this body and leaving the ten evils, keeping the eight precepts, and taking refuge in the three jewels, to “abandon the home and leave the home” — this is the true study of the way.⁵⁹ Thus, it is called the “true human body.” Later students, never be like the other paths that hold the view of natural occurrence!⁶⁰

Chan Master Dazhi of Baizhang said, “If you cling to the view that you are inherently pure and inherently liberated, that you are naturally a buddha and naturally on the way of Chan, you belong to the other paths that hold the view of natural occurrence.”⁶¹

These are not the broken furniture of a vacant house; they are the accumulation of the merit and amassing of the virtue of studying the way.⁶² He springs up, and it is crystal clear on all eight sides; he sloughs off, and it is “like the wisteria clinging to the tree.”⁶³ He manifests this body, attains deliverance, and preaches the dharma to them; or he manifests another body, attains deliverance, and preaches the dharma to them; or

he does not manifest this body, attains deliverance and preaches the dharma to them; or he does not manifest another body, attains deliverance and preaches the dharma to them; and so forth, till we come to, he does not preach the dharma to them.⁶⁴

Still, where he discards his body, there is “raising one’s voice to stop the echo”; where he abandons his life, there is cutting one’s guts and getting the marrow.⁶⁵ Even those who set out to study the way before King Majestic Voice, he fosters as his own descendants.⁶⁶

“All the worlds of the ten directions” means that the ten directions are “all the worlds.”⁶⁷ East, west, south, and north, the four ordinal points, and up and down, are called the “ten directions.” We should think about the time when their surface and interior, length and breadth, are thoroughly complete.⁶⁸ To “think about” means to perceive clearly and be certain that, though the human body may be obstructed by self and other, it is “all the ten directions.” This is hearing something never heard before; for the directions are the same, for the worlds are the same.⁶⁹ The human body is the four elements and five aggregates. The elements and the dusts are not something thoroughly investigated by common people; they are what is investigated by the sages.⁷⁰ Moreover, we should clearly perceive the ten directions in a single dust mote. It is not that the ten directions are bundled up in a single dust mote. Sometimes, we construct a saṃgha hall or a buddha hall in a single dust mote; sometimes we construct all the worlds in a saṃgha hall or buddha hall. They have been constructed from this; the construction has come about from this.⁷¹

Suh a principle is “the true human body of all the worlds of the ten directions.” We should not learn the false view that things arise spontaneously or occur naturally. Since there is no measure of the worlds, they are not wide or narrow. “All the worlds of the ten directions” are the aggregate of eighty-four thousand dharmas, are the eighty-four thousand samādhis, are the eighty-four thousand dhāranīs.⁷² Because the aggregate of the eighty-four thousand dharmas is turning the wheel of the dharma, where the dharma wheel turns spans the worlds, spans time. It is not without location; it is the “true human body.” The present you and the present I are the humans that are “the true human body of all the worlds of the ten directions.” We study the way without ever missing these.⁷³ Whether for three great *asamkhyeya-kalpas*, for thirteen great *asamkhyeya-kalpas*, for innumerable *asamkhyeya-kalpas*, the continued casting aside a body and receiving a body are invariably a study of the way, stepping forward and stepping back, that is the time of studying the way.⁷⁴ Paying obeisance and making inquiries is deportment in motion and rest.⁷⁵ One depicts the withered tree and polishes the tile of dead ashes, without the slightest interruption.⁷⁶ Though the passing days are short and pressing, the study of the way is deep and distant. Though the style of one who abandons home and leaves home is lonely, do not confuse it with that of the woodcutter. Though his way of life is a struggle, it is not the same as that of the tenant farmer. Do not compare them in discussions of delusion and awakening, good and evil; do not stay within the limits of false and true, real and spurious.

“Birth and death, coming and going, are the

true human body”: while “birth and death” here may refer to the drifting about of the common person, it is what is discarded by the great sages.⁷⁷ While one may transcend the commoner and surpass the sage, not only does this represent “the true human body,” but in this, while there are twofold and sevenfold types, when thoroughly investigated, we should not fear them, for each and every one of them is birth and death.⁷⁸ When we ask why, even though we have not abandoned birth, we already now see death; though we have not abandoned death, we already now see birth. Birth does not obstruct death; death does not obstruct birth. Birth and death are not what is understood by the common people. Birth is like the cypress tree; death is like the iron man: although the cypress tree is obstructed by the cypress tree, because birth is not obstructed by death, it is studying the way.⁷⁹ Birth is not one thing; death is not a second thing.⁸⁰ Death is not opposed to birth; birth is not relative to death.

Chan Master Yuanwu said,
 Alive, a manifestation of full function;
 Dead, a manifestation of full function.
 Filling the whole of empty space,
 The bare mind, always in pieces.⁸¹

We should quietly make concentrated effort to examine these words. Chan Master Yuanwu, though he may have spoken like this, does not yet understand that birth and death have exceeded “full function.”⁸² In studying “coming and going,” there is birth and death in “going”; there is birth and death in “coming.” There is coming and going in “birth”; there is coming and going in “death.” With all the worlds of the ten directions as its two wings or its three wings,

coming and going goes flying away and comes flying back; with all the worlds of the ten directions as its three feet or its five feet, it steps forward and steps back. With birth and death as its head and tail, the true human body of all the worlds of the ten directions flips its body and spins its brain.⁸³ When it flips its body and spins its brain, it is the size of a coin, it is like the interior of an infinitesimal dust mote. “Level and flat, it’s a wall rising a thousand fathoms; where the wall rises a thousand fathoms, it’s level and flat.”⁸⁴ Therefore, it has the faces of the Southern Continent and Northern Continent; we study the way by examining them.⁸⁵ It has the bones and marrow of neither conception nor nonconception; we simply study the way by raising them.⁸⁶

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye
Studying the Way with Body and mind
Number 4

Presented to the assembly at Hōrin Monastery,
the day of double yang, senior water year of the
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spring, the junior water year of the rabbit, Ninji
[21-22 February 1243].
Ejō⁸⁸

Notes

¹. **should we think not to speak of it, we cannot; should we think not to study it, we grow distant from it** (*fudō o gi suru ni futoku nari,*

fugaku o gi suru ni ten'on nari): A tentative translation of a sentence variously interpreted. Dōgen appears here to have split the term *gakudō* (“studying the way”) in his title and negated both its component glyphs. The translation treats the two resulting negatives, *fudō* and *fugaku*, as verbs, rendered here respectively as “not to speak of [the way of the buddhas]” and “not to study [the way of the buddhas]”; the first term is often interpreted “to deny [the way of the buddhas].” The negative *futoku* (rendered here “cannot”) is ambiguous: it could mean that, if we fail to speak of (or if we deny) the way of the buddhas, we cannot attain it; or, perhaps more interestingly, that, though we might attempt not to speak of (or to deny) the way of the buddhas, we cannot avoid doing so. However exactly we are to interpret this sentence, it should probably be read as an introductory comment on the quotation that follows: i.e., that the way of the buddhas is something that must be put into practice.

2. **Chan Master Dahui of Nanyue** (*Nangaku Daie zenji*): I.e., Nanyue Huairang (677-744). His saying here occurs in a famous dialogue, cited throughout the *Shōbōgenzō*, with the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng (638-713). Here is the version recorded in Dōgen’s *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:178, case 101):

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

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

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

The Master was without means [to

answer]. After attending [the Ancestor] for eight years, he finally understood the previous conversation. Thereupon, he announced to the Ancestor, “Huairang has understood what the Reverend put to me when I first came: ‘What thing is it that comes like this?’”

The Ancestor asked, “How do you understand it?”

The Master replied, “To say it’s like any thing wouldn’t hit it.”

The Ancestor said, “Then does it depend on on practice and verification?”

The Master answered, “It’s not that it lacks practice and verification, but it can’t be defiled by them.”

The Ancestor said, “Just this ‘not defiled’ is what the buddhas bear in mind. You’re also like this, I’m also like this, and all the ancestors of Sindh in the West [i. e., India] are also like this.”

3. **the ways of other paths and the *icchāntika*** (*gedō senda tō no dō*): I.e., non-Buddhist religions and those incapable of attaining the Buddhist goal of liberation from *samsāra*. The sense of the head word *dō* (“ways”) here is unclear — it is redundant if modified by *gedō* (“non-Buddhist ways”) and seemingly inappropriate in reference to the *icchāntika*, who would not normally be said to have their own “way.”

4. **for the time being there are two approaches** (*shibaraku futatsu ari*): I.e., “for purposes of our discussion here, let us say there are two.” Dōgen repeats this twofold division of study in the so-called “secret” *Shōbōgenzō* text of the *Butsu kōjō ji* (DZZ.2:572):

In studying the way of the buddhas, [we

may say] for the time being there are two forms: to study with the mind, and to study with the body.

He goes on there to define “studying with the mind” as “clarifying the buddha mind” (*busshin wo akiramuru*), and “studying with the body” as “pursuing the way in seated meditation”, practicing buddhahood without seeking to make a buddha (*zazen bendō suru tokoro ni, sabutsu wo motomezaru gyōbutsu*).

5. **the mind of *citta*, the mind of *hrdaya*, the mind of **vṛddha*** (*chitta shin karida shin irida shin*): These three senses of mind are thought to have been borrowed from a passage in the *Mohe zhiguan* (T.1911.46:4a20-23), in which Zhiyi (538-597) defines three Sanskrit terms rendered by the Chinese glyph *xin* (“mind” or “heart”):

Zhiduo [S. *citta*] is the pronunciation of *Sindhu*; here, we say *xin* — i.e., the thinking “mind.” In *Sindhu*, they also speak of *wulituo* [S. *hrdaya*], which here is called [*xin* in the sense] the “heart” [or “core”] of grasses and trees. They also speak of *yilituo* [S. *vṛddha*(?)], which here is [*xin* in the sense] the “heart” [or “pith”] of accumulated spiritual essence.

The Sanskrit original of Zhiyi’s third term here is uncertain: some scholars have suggested *vṛddha* (“expanded,” “developed”), while others take *yilituo* simply as an alternative transliteration of *hrdaya*, here treated as a separate Sanskrit term. These three terms are also introduced in the *Hotsu bodai shin* chapter of the twelve-chapter *Shōbōgenzō*.

6. **interaction of feeling and response** (*kannō*)

dōkō): A fixed expression for the communication between a devotee and a deity; the devotee's feeling evokes a response from the deity and vice versa. Dōgen's reliance on the expression here (as also in his *Shōbōgenzō hotsu bodai shin* chapter) no doubt reflects Zhiyi's use of it to explain bringing forth the mind of bodhi (at *Mohe zhiguan*, T.1911.46:4c13-15):

Question: Do practitioners bring forth the mind by themselves, or are they caused to bring forth the mind by another?

Answer: It cannot happen apart from self and other together. Only when feeling and response interact can we speak of bringing forth the mind.

mind of bodhi (*bodai shin*): I.e., the bodhisattva's aspiration to attain the unsurpassed, perfect bodhi of a buddha; S. bodhi-citta. The translation of shin as "mind" (rather than the more common "thought") reflects its place here in the discussion of "studying with the mind."

observances of bringing forth the mind of bodhi (*hotsu bodai shin no anri*): The exact meaning here is unclear; perhaps "observances that express one's bringing forth the mind of bodhi."

7. **bare mind in pieces** (*sekishin henpen*); **old buddha mind** (*kobutsushin*); **ordinary mind** (*byōjō shin*): Dōgen here introduces three popular Chan expressions that use the term "mind," which he will discuss below.

three realms are one mind (*sangai isshin*): An uncommon variant of the common Buddhist expressions "the three realms are only one mind" (*sangai yui isshin*) or "the three realms are only mind" (*sangai yui shin*).

8. **one thinks and studies the way; one does not**

think and studies the way (*shiryō shite gakudō su*, *fushiryō shite gakudō su*): Allusion to the words, much cited by Dōgen, of Yaoshan Weiyuan (751-834) (recorded in Dōgen's *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:196, case 129):

Once, when the Master was sitting, a monk asked him, "What are you thinking of, [sitting there] so fixedly?"

The Master answered, "I'm thinking of not thinking."

The monk asked, "How do you think of not thinking?"

The Master answered, "Nonthinking."

9. **directly transmit the golden brocade robe** (*kinran'e o shōden shi*): Allusion to the legend that the Buddha Sākyamuni gave his robe to the First Ancestor of Chan, Mahākāśyapa, to keep for the coming buddha, Maitreya. (See, e.g., *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*, ZZ.135:612a1-4.)

10. **"you've gotten my marrow"** (*nyo toku ga zui*); **"bowing three times and standing in place"** (*sanpai e i ni ryū*): Allusion to the famous story of Bodhidharma's testing of his disciples, in which Huike answered by simply bowing, and Bodhidharma said of him that he had got his marrow. (See, e.g., *Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.2076.51:219b27-c8.)

11. **study of the mind by means of the mind that pounds the rice and transmits the robe** (*tai bei den e suru i shin gaku shin*): "To pound the rice and transmit the robe" (*tai bei den e*) alludes to the biography of Huineng (638-713), who worked pounding rice at the Fifth Ancestor's monastery before receiving the transmission of Bodhidharma's robe as a token of his

recognition as the Sixth Ancestor. (See, e.g., *Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.2076.51:222c6-223b5; Dōgen’s four-character phrase here does not seem to be common and does not appear elsewhere in his writing.) “Study the mind by means of the mind” (*i shin gaku shin*), another unusual expression not appearing elsewhere in the *Shōbōgenzō*, is apparently Dōgen’s variation on the well-known Chan expression, “transmit the mind by the mind” (*i shin den shin*).

12. **shave the head and dye the robe** (*tei hatsu zen e*): A standard expression for joining the Buddhist clerical order.

turn the mind (*kaishin*); **illumine the mind** (*myōshin*): The former expression can mean simply to “change one’s mind” but is commonly used, as here, in the sense of spiritual “conversion”; the latter expression, while most often encountered as the nominative “bright mind,” or “lucid mind,” is here clearly a verb-object construction.

13. **leap the wall and enter the mountains** (*yujō shi nissan suru*): Allusion to the legend of Prince Siddhārtha’s departure from the palace in search of liberation; by extension, to leave home and become a renunciant.

exit one mind and enter one mind (*shutsu isshin nyū isshin*): This could be understood simply to mean that, by leaving home, one moves from one state of mind to another. More likely, given that “the three realms are one mind,” both the household life and the life of renunciation occur “within” the one mind.

14. **“thinking of not thinking”** (*shiryō fu shiryō tei*); **“nonthinking”** (*hishiryō*): See above, Note 8.

15. **Having balled this up as one’s eye is two or three bushels; having played with this as karmic consciousness is a thousand or ten thousand lengths** (*kore o ganzei ni dan shikitaru koto nisan koku, kore o gosshiki ni rō shikitaru koto senman tan nari*): A sentence subject to varied interpretation. The antecedents of the two pronouns “this” (*kore*) are not clear. Somewhat as in English, the “eye” (*ganzei*) typically indicates (a) what is essential or central, and (b) (spiritual) vision, or insight; hence, to “ball up as (or in) one’s eye” suggests to “see as something really is.” To “play with karmic consciousness” (*rō gosshiki*) is a common expression in Chan literature for being caught up in ordinary, deluded thoughts; some readers follow that negative sense here, but others see our sentence as a playful affirmation of karmic consciousness. “Two or three bushels” (*nisan koku*) renders the dry measure *koku*, typically figured at five pecks (*to*); “a thousand or ten thousand lengths” (*senman tan*) refers to a measurement for bolts of cloth, the exact dimensions varying in different periods. A possible interpretation of the two clauses might be something like, “when seen with the eye of wisdom, these [the mountains entered and the world abandoned (?)] are just a bit; when experienced with our ordinary consciousness, they are a lot.

16. **whether the reward naturally comes from the effort, or the effort has yet to reach the reward** (*ukō ni shō onozukara kitari, ushō ni kō imada itarazaredomo*): Presumably, meaning, “whether or not one has reaped the rewards of his or her Buddhist practice.” Dōgen here plays with the term *ukō* (“effort”).

nose of the buddhas and ancestors (*busso no bikū*): The term *bikū* refers both to the nose and

the nostrils; often used in Chan texts to indicate (a) the person, especially (b) that which is essential to the person, or (c) the very essence or identity of someone or something. A term occurring frequently in the *Shōbōgenzō*. To borrow and cause this nose to exhale presumably means to practice just as the buddhas and ancestors do.

hoofs of a donkey (*roba no kyakutei*): Likely reflecting a saying of Huanglong Huinan (1002–1069) on which Dōgen comments in the *Eihei kōroku* (DZZ.4:8, *jōdō* 420). The version recorded in the *Jiatai pudeng lu* (ZZ.137:302c24) reads:

Raising his hand, he asked a monk, “Why is my hand like a buddha’s hand?” Stretching out his leg, he said, “Why is my foot like a donkey’s foot?”

To take up and cause these hoofs to seal and verify presumably means to use one’s own feet to tread the path of the buddhas and ancestors.

model ten thousand ages old (*banko no bōyō*): I.e., an ancient precedent [for studying the way of the buddhas].

17. **mountains, rivers, and the whole earth, the sun, moon, and stars** (*sanga daichi nichigatsu seishin*): Common expressions for heaven and earth, appearing frequently in Dōgen’s writings, likely reflecting an exchange recorded in the *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:212, case 168):

Dawei [i.e., Weishan Lingyou (771–853)] asked Yangshan [i.e., Yangshan Huiji (803–887)], “The wondrous, pure, clear mind — how do you understand it?”

Yang said, “The mountains, rivers, and the whole earth, the sun, moon, and stars.”

18. **taking on what [form] does it appear before**

us? (*ikanaru hōnin ka genzen suru*): A tentative translation of a phrase difficult to interpret; taken here to mean “how does the mind appear [when it is mountains, etc.]?” The grammatical subject, *hōnin* (also read *honin*), a term appearing often in the *Shōbōgenzō*, generally means “to maintain” or “preserve,” “to take responsibility for” or “be entrusted with”; here, perhaps, “make one’s own.”

19. **“mountains and rivers,” for example, are mountains and waters** (*sanga wa tatoeba sansui nari*): Perhaps the point is that mountains and rivers as the mind are the actual physical landscape of the world around us.

20. **great Sumerus and small Sumerus** (*dai Shumi shō Shumi*): “Sumeru” is the name of the mountain at the center of a world system in Buddhist cosmology. “Great” and “small” here may reflect the size of the world system.

21. **three chiliocosms** (*sanzenkai*): Abbreviation of *sanzen daisen sekai* (“great threefold thousand-fold worlds”), equal to one billion Sumeru world systems.

countless countries (*muryō koku*): Given the context here, this could be taken as a reference to the innumerable buddha lands (*butasukoku*).

22. **There are some hanging on form; there are some hanging in emptiness** (*shiki ni kakaru ari, kū ni kakaru ari*): Or “some hanging in the sky”; reading *kū* as “emptiness” (rather than “sky”) here, in contrast to “form” (*shiki*).

23. **River of Heaven** (*Tenga*): A term for the Milky Way.

four great rivers (*shi daika*): Usually given as

the Gangā, Sindhu, Sītā, and Vāksu, sometimes identified with the modern Ganges, Indus, Syr Darya, and Amu Darya respectively.

Heatless Lake (*Munetchi*): A Chinese translation of the Sanskrit Anavatapta (*Anouda*; “unheated”); identified with Lake Manasarovar, in western Tibet, and traditionally thought to be the source of the four great rivers.

24. **Uttarakuru** (*Hokkuro*): The continent to the north of Mount Sumeru in Buddhist cosmology.
four Anavatapta Lakes (*shi Anokudatsu chi*): The source of this claim is unknown. Dōgen has here used the transliteration of the Sanskrit name for the “Heatless Lake” mentioned just above; perhaps representing a confusion with the tradition that this lake was the source of the four rivers.

25. **Ground is not necessarily soil** (*ji wa kanarazushimo do ni arazu*): The translation of the term *ji* (or *chi*) as “ground” obscures the fact that Dōgen is turning here to his comments on “the whole earth” (*daichi*). He expands the term to include its use as “ground,” both in the material and metaphorical senses.

26. **soil ground** (*doji*); **mind ground** (*shinji*); **jeweled ground** (*hōji*): Three examples of the semantic range of the term *ji*: “soil ground” is an overly literal translation for a binomial expression meaning “land” (as in “tract of land”); “mind ground” is a common Buddhist term for the fundamental nature of the mind; “jeweled ground” is a geological feature commonly attributed to the lands ruled over by buddhas.

27. **Although they are of myriad types, they must not lack “ground”** (*banpan nari to iutomo,*

ji narakaru bekarazu): A somewhat problematic sentence, taken here to mean that, although the sense of “ground” [in the preceding examples] may be different, each example includes the notion of ground.

28. **there must be worlds in which emptiness represents the ground** (*kū o ji to seru sekai mo aru beki nari*): Again, reading *kū* as “emptiness,” in parallel to the previous concluding remark on mountains. This sentence could also be read, “there are worlds in which the sky represents the ground.”

29. **what is seen by one mind is equivalent** (*isshin no shoken, kore issei naru nari*): A sentence subject to various interpretations, the senses of both *isshin* (“one mind”) and *issei* (“equivalent”) here being uncertain. Some would take the sentence to mean that “the one mind” (*isshin*) sees all things as equal. In the context here, perhaps a more likely reading would take “one mind” as “each instance of mind,” or “any given mind,” making the point to be that what each type of being sees is consistent within that type.

30. **Up till now has been merely one moment or two moments of mind** (*kōrai wa tada kore shin no ichinen ninen nari*): “Up till now” (*kōrai*) should probably be taken as “in our discussion up till now.” Here and in the following sentence, *ichinen ninen* can also be understood as “one thought or two thoughts.”

31. **knowing the home is not a home, abandons home and leaves home** (*chi ke hi ke shake shukke*): Variation on a standard trope in Buddhist literature describing the process by which

one “leaves home” (*shukke*) to enter the order (see, e.g., *Mohesengqi lu*, T.1425.22:227c7-8). Dōgen’s version here (repeated in *Shōbōgenzō hotsu bodai shin*) does not seem to correspond exactly to any extant text; more common versions give “believing that one’s home is not a home, abandons home and leaves home” (*shin ke hi ke shake shukke*) or “believing that one’s home is not a home, leaves home and studies the way” (*shin ke hi ke shukke gakudō*). Dōgen’s “knowing the home is not a home” (*chi ke hi ke*) may reflect the *Mohe zhiguan* at T.1911.46:96a20.

32. **first founder and final follower** (*biso bimatsu*): A loose translation of an unusual expression found also in *Shōbōgenzō busshō*, here perhaps suggesting the beginning and end of one’s Buddhist training. The first element, *biso*, is a common term denoting “founder” or “the first person to do something.” Literally translated, it means “ancestor from the nose,” thought to reflect an early Chinese belief that the nose is the first part of a creature to take shape in the womb. *Bimatsu* (literally, “the tip of the nose”) does not occur by itself but only in combination with *biso*. **ascending or descending** (*kōjō kōge*): A term also meaning simply “above and below,” but used, as perhaps here, to indicate the two phases of the bodhisattva path: “ascending” toward one’s own liberation, and “descending” into the world for the sake of sentient beings.

33. **divulging the matter** (*tenji*); **achieving accord** (*tōki*): These two terms regularly occur together in Chan literature, the former used for expressions of what one really thinks; the latter, for expressions that accord with one’s interlocutor. **seven feet or eight feet** (*shichi shaku hachi*

shaku): Dōgen may have in mind here a conversation between Chan Masters Xuansha Shibeī (835-908) and Xuefeng Yicun (822-908) on which he comments in *Shōbōgenzō juki* (DZZ.1:249ff); here is the version recorded in Dōgen’s *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:158, case 60).

Once, when Xuansha was traveling with Xuefeng, Feng pointed at the ground in front of them and said, “This piece of land would be a good place to build a seamless pagoda [i.e., a deceased cleric’s monument stone].” The Master said, “How tall would it be?”

Feng looked up and down.

The Master said, “Of the fortunate recompense of humans and devas, the Reverend is not lacking; the conferring [of the treasury of the true dharma eye] on Vulture Peak, he has not seen in his dreams.”

Feng said, “How about you?”

The Master said, “Seven feet or eight feet.”

34. **“fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles”** (*shō heki ga ryaku*): A set expression for the world of things, its identification with the mind is treated below, section 10.

35. **the three realms are only mind** (*sangai yui shin*); **the dharma realm is only mind** (*hokkai yui shin*): For the former phrase, see above, Note 7; the latter, less common phrase does not occur elsewhere in the *Shōbōgenzō*. In this sentence and those that follow here, while no grammatical subject is expressed, the translation assumes the antecedent of “it” is “studying the way.”

36. **“Before the Xiantong years”** (*Kantsū nen zen*); **“after the Xiantong years”** (*Kantsū nen go*): Allusion to a saying of Shushan Kuangren

(807-869) (see, e.g., *Liandeng huiyao*, ZZ. 136:802a14-15), recorded in Dōgen's *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ. 5:270, case 285):

Before the Xiantong year, this old monk understood what's in the vicinity of the dharma body; after the Xiantong year, I understood what's beyond the dharma body. The Xiantong era of the Tang dynasty corresponds the years 860-874. Since Kuangren died in 869, his reference to "after the Xiantong years" would have to be understood as "after the onset of the Xiantong years."

it builds them (*tsukuri*); **it breaks them** (*yaburu*): Neither the subjects nor the objects of these two verbs is expressed. The translation takes the sense to be that "the study of the way" first posits a mind of "fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles" ("what's in the vicinity of the dharma body") and then transcends this ("what's beyond the dharma body").

37. **dragged through the mud and drenched with water** (*dadei taisui*): An idiomatic expression for being "sullied" by words and concepts; it can be used both in a pejorative sense for deluded thinking and in ironic praise of a Chan master's "getting his hands dirty," as we might say, in the teaching of his students.

binding oneself without a rope (*mujō jibaku*): A common expression for the state of ignorance, though in the context here, like the preceding phrase, it may refer to the master's "binding" himself to the work of teaching.

38. **take in a jade** (*tama o hiku*): Japanese expression likely reflecting the Chinese idiom *paozhuān yīnyu* ("to toss out a tile and take in a jade"); in literary usage, a polite way to ask another for a

capping verse for your poem; used in Chan for the give and take between interlocutors.

enter the water (*mizu ni iru*): Thought to allude to a story in the *Nirvāna Sūtra* of a wise man who "enters the water" and retrieves a jewel that had been dropped in a lake. (See *Da banniepan jing*, T.375.12:617c3-10.) The sūtra goes on to compare the jewel to its doctrine that nirvāna is "permanence, bliss, selfhood, and purity" (*jō raku ga jō*).

39. **study together with the pillars** (*rochū to dōsan*); **stand shoulder to shoulder with the lanterns** (*tōrō to kōken*): The "pillars and lanterns" of monastic halls are regularly used in Chan texts in reference to inanimate objects in the immediate surroundings. The point here is presumably that the mind that studies the way, while it may be defined as "fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles," is not the same as inanimate objects.

40. **running barefoot** (*shakkyakusō*): A phrase, not repeated elsewhere in the *Shōbōgenzō*, perhaps expressing total commitment.

41. **doing flips** (*honkinto*): An expression, occurring several times in the *Shōbōgenzō*, expressing vigorous energy.

42. **"goes along with it"** (*zui ta ko*): From a saying of Suishan Fazhen (878-963) that "this" (*zhege*) "goes along with it" when the chiliocosm is destroyed at the end of the kalpa. See, e.g., Biyan lu, T.2003.48:169a17-20; *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, DZZ.5:138, case 24:

Great Master Shenzhao of Dasuishan in Yizhou (succeeded Changqing Daan, called Fazhen) was once asked by a monk, "When

the conflagration at the end of kalpa rages, the chiliocosm will all be destroyed. I don't understand. Will this also be destroyed?"

The Master said, "It will be destroyed."

The monk said, "If so, then it goes along with it."

The Master said, "It goes along with it."

43. **the walls and fences let it study the ten directions; the lack of gates lets it study the four sides** (*hekiraku kore jippō o gaku seshimu, mumon kore shimen o gaku seshimu*): From a saying by Guanqi Zhixian (d. 895): see, e.g., *Liandeng huiyao*, ZZ.136:830a13; *Biyān lu*, T.2003.48:192b10: "The ten directions have no walls or fences; the four sides also have no gates."

44. **bringing forth the mind is not impeded by the place** (*hosshin no tokoro ni saerarezaru ari*): The translation takes *ari* here as *nari*; otherwise, perhaps "there are [instances in which] bringing forth the mind is not impeded by the place."

45. **land of recompense** (*hōji*): I.e., the realm into which one is born as recompense for past actions. **heavenly beings** (*ten ujō*): Literally, "sentient beings of the heavens"; i.e., the devas, who are often thought of as incapable of producing the aspiration for bodhi.

46. **secondary recompense** (*e*): Abbreviation for *ehō*, a standard term for the circumstances into which one is born as recompense for past actions; in contrast to the "primary recompense" (*shōhō*) of one's psychophysical organism.

47. **"together, extending a single hand"** (*gu shutsu isseki shu*): Presumably here, the person

and the secondary recompense together. Perhaps reflecting the words of Luoshan Daoxian (dates unknown), in a story recorded in Dōgen's *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:174, case 97): A monk asked Luoshan Daoxian how much he should pay to have a stūpa built. Luoshan said,

If you offer the artisan three cash, the Reverend will definitely not get a stūpa in this lifetime.

If you offer the artisan two cash, the Reverend and the artisan will together extend a single hand. If you offer the artisan one cash, you'll so perplex him that the artisan's eyebrows and beard will fall off.

"moving among different types" (*irui chū gyō*): A saying especially associated with Nanchuan Puyuan (748-834) (see, e.g., *Zongmen tongyao ji*, ZTS.1:148a14; quoted in *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, DZZ.5:154, case 57). Though the phrase usually expresses the teaching activities of the bodhisattvas, the grammatical subject here is not clear; given the context, likely "the bringing forth of (or the one who brings forth) the mind of bodhi."

48. **"bare mind in pieces"** (*sekishin henpen*): A common expression in Chan texts for a sincere mind in every matter. Dōgen here begins his discussion of the three Chan phrases on mind that he introduced above, in section 4.

49. **"The leaves of the lotus are round, round, round like a mirror; the horns of the water caltrop are sharp, sharp, sharp like an awl"** (*kayō dandan dan i kyō ryōkaku sen sen sen i sui*): Quotation of a popular Chan saying, attributed to Jiashan Shanhui (805-881) (see, e.g., *Liandeng huiyao*, ZZ.136:774b4-5).

50. **"old buddha mind"** (*kobutsushin*): Second of

the phrases on mind introduced in section 4.

National Teacher Dazheng (*Daishō kokushi*): I.e., Nanyang Huizhong (d. 775), disciple of the Sixth Ancestor. His saying on “fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles” (*shō heki ga ryaku*) occurs in several Chan texts (see, e.g., *Jingde chuandeng lu*) (T.2076.51:438a9):

A monk asked further, “What is the buddha mind?”

The Master answered, “Fences, walls, tiles, and pebbles.”

Dōgen discusses this exchange in his *Shōbōgenzō kobutsushin* (DZZ.1:89).

51. **“Ordinary mind”** (*byōjō shin*): The third of the three phrases on mind introduced in section 4. The expression “the ordinary mind” is perhaps best known in the saying, “The ordinary mind is the way” (*bianchang shin shi dao*), attributed to Nanquan Puyuan (748-834) (see, e.g., *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, DZZ.5:134, case 19; *Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.2076.51:276c15.)

this world or other worlds (*shikai takai*): Terms of ambiguous referent. Depending on context, *shikai* (“this world”) can indicate (a) this Sahā world (*shaba sekai*) of the Buddha Sākyamuni; or (b) the human realm (*ningen*), as opposed to other realms of samsāra. Similarly, *takai* (“other worlds”) can refer to (a) other buddha lands, or (b) other realms of samsāra; it can also be translated in the singular, as a reference (much like the English “the other world”) to (c) the world of the dead, of spirits, etc.

52. **a thousand gates, ten thousand doors** (*senmon banko*): A fairly common expression for the multiplicity of “entrances” to the dharma; their “opening and closing” here may reflect a ques-

tion of Yungai Zhiyuan (dates unknown) (*Jingde chuandeng lu* (T.2076.51:321a8-9):

“I don’t ask about when the myriad doors all close, but how about when the myriad doors all open?”

53. **covering of heaven and covering of earth** (*gaiten gaichi*): I.e., the entire expanse of heaven and earth; roughly synonymous with the previous “whole of heaven” (*manten*) and “entirety of earth” (*jinchi*).

like words not remembered, like the sound of a sneeze (*oboezaru kotoba no gotoshi, funchi no issei no gotoshi*): Perhaps best taken to mean sounds unintelligible to the hearer.

54. **The words are equal, the minds are equal, the dharmas are equal** (*gotō nari, shintō nari, hōtō nari*): Perhaps a variation on the four ways in which buddhas are said to be the same (according to the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* (*Lengjia jing*, T.672.16:608b02): sameness of title (*zi pingdeng*), sameness of speech (*yu pingdeng*), sameness of body (*shen pingdeng*), sameness of dharma (*fa pingdeng*). Most readers, however, take Dōgen’s sense to be here that words, minds, and dharmas are all equivalent — i.e., match each other and the “covering of heaven and covering of earth.” (See, e.g., *Shōbōgenzō keiteki* 3:314.)

55. **ksana** (*setsuna*): Transliteration of the Sanskrit for “instant.”

final body (*saigo shin*): I.e., our final rebirth on the bodhisattva path to bodhi.

56. **lump of red meat** (*shaku nikudan*): A common expression for the physical body.

57. **The body comes from studying the way** (*shin wa gakudō yori kitaru*): Perhaps expressing a common Buddhist conviction that our fortunate birth as humans reflects the karma of spiritual practice in past lives.

58. **“all the worlds of the ten directions are this true human body”** (*jin jippō kai ze ko shinjitsu nintai*): Words attributed to Xuansha Shibei (835-908); see, e.g., Dōgen’s *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, DZZ.5:196, case 131.

“birth and death, coming and going, are the true human body” (*shōji korai shinjitsu nintai*): Likely reflecting the words of Yuanwu Keqin (1063-1135) (*Yuanwu yulu*, T.1997.47:740b23-24):

Now, I ask, what are birth and death, coming and going; earth, water, fire, and wind; sound, smell, taste, and touch? They’re all this true human body.

59. **ten evils** (*jūaku*): (1) killing, (2) stealing, (3) sexual misconduct, (4) lying, (5) frivolous speech, (6) insult, (7) slander, (8) coveting, (9) anger, and (10) false views.

eight precepts (*hakkai*): A set of precepts followed by the laity on specific days of the month: (1) not to kill, (2) not to steal, (3) not to engage in sexual misconduct, (4) not to lie, (5) not to drink alcohol, (6) not to indulge in adornments or entertainments, (7) not to sleep on fine beds, and (8) not to eat after noon.

60. **other paths that hold the view of natural occurrence** (*jinen ken no gedō*): I.e., those teachings (like the so-called Cārvākas, often criticized in Indian Buddhist literature) that claim events occur of their own accord or accidentally, not by reason of prior cause.

61. **Chan Master Dazhi of Baizhang** (*Hyakujō Daichi zenji*): I.e., Baizhang Huaihai (720-814). His remark can be found at *Guzunsu yulu*, ZZ. 118:173b15-16.

62. **These are not the broken furniture of a vacant house** (*korera kanka no hagu ni arazu*): The antecedent of *korera* (“these”) is not certain; in the context, likely Baizhang’s words.

63. **He springs up, and it is crystal clear on all eight sides** (*botchō shite reirō hachimen nari*): The unusual term *botchō* (translated here “springs up”) seems akin to the more common *chōshutsu* (“to jump out,” “to jump beyond”) — i.e., “to escape” or “transcend.” The subject here is unstated; the translation takes it as the speaker, Baizhang. *Reirō hachimen* is a variant of “the eight sides are crystal clear” (*hachimen reirō*), a common term for perfect clarity; the image is of the sound of crystal (*reirō*) throughout the eight points of the compass.

he sloughs off, and it is “like the wisteria clinging to the tree” (*datsuraku shite nyo tō i ju*): The term “to slough off” (*datsuraku*) is best known from the expression “body and mind sloughed off” (*shinjin datsuraku*) that Dōgen attributes to his master, Tiantong Rujing (1163–1228). The phrase “like the wisteria clinging to the tree,” comes from a saying attributed to Weishan Lingyou, (771-853) (see, e.g., *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, DZZ.5: 208, case 157:)

The terms “being” and “nonbeing” are like the wisteria clinging to the tree.

64. **He manifests this body, attains deliverance, and preaches the dharma to them** (*waku gen shishin tokudo ni i seppō*): Dōgen here shifts to

Chinese, in playful variation on the famous passage in the *Lotus Sūtra* describing the thirty-three manifestations of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. The passage (at *Miaofa lianhua jing*, T.262.9:57a23ff) begins:

The Buddha said to the Bodhisattva Aksayamati, “Good man, if there are living beings in the land who are to attain deliverance by the body of a buddha, then the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara manifests the body of a buddha and preaches the dharma to them.”

65. **Still, where he discards his body, there is “raising one’s voice to stop the echo”** (*shika aru ni, kishin suru tokoro ni yōshō shigō suru koto ari*): Continuing to take Baizhang as the unexpressed subject. “Raising one’s voice to stop an echo” (*yōshō shigō*) is an expression found in words attributed to the sixth-century Layman Xiang (*Xiang jushi*) (see *Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.2076.51:221b13-16:)

The shadow arises from the shape; the echo comes from the voice. To play with the shadow to work on the shape is not to recognize that the shape is the basis of the shadow. To raise one’s voice to stop the echo is not to realize that the voice is the root of the echo. To eliminate the afflictions to hurry to nirvāna is like getting rid of the shape and looking for its shadow. To separate from living beings and seek the fruit of buddhahood is like silencing the voice and seeking its echo.

The expression in the original is clearly critical of a confusion of cause and effect, but some would give Dōgen’s use of it in this context a positive interpretation; see, e.g., *Shōbōgenzō*

keiteki 3:324.

cutting one’s guts and getting the marrow (*danchō tokuzui*): The term *danchō*), translated literally here as “cutting one’s guts,” has the common meaning, “to be in great pain.” The second element here alludes to the well-known story of Bodhidharma’s having said of his disciple, Huike, that he had “gotten his marrow” (*tokuzui*). As others have suggested, it may be that *danchō* here should be replaced by the more common *danpi* (“cutting the arm”), in reference to the famous legend that Huike cut off his arm in order to become Bodhidharma’s disciple.

66. **“before King Majestic Voice”** (*Ionnō yori saki ni*): Japanese rendering of the Chinese expression *Weiyin wang yiqian*, an expression used in Chan texts to suggest the primordial past or a state prior to any differentiation. King Majestic Voice, the Buddha Bhīsmagarjitasvararāja (“King Whose Voice is a Terrible Roar”), appears in the “Sadāparibhūta” chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T.262.9:50b29ff.), where he is introduced as having lived “immeasurable, limitless, inconceivable kalpas ago.”

67. **“All the worlds of the ten directions”** (*jin jippō sekai*): Dōgen here turns to a discussion of the expression, introduced above (section 13), “all the worlds of the ten directions are this true human body” (*jin jippō kai ze ko shinjitsu nintai*).

68. **the time when their surface and interior, length and breadth, are thoroughly complete** (*kano hyōri jūō no gūjin naru jisetsu*): Here, and in the following sentence, the translation obscures the fact that Dōgen is playing on the adjective *jin* in the phrase *jinkai* (“all the worlds”), shifting its

sense from the qualitative “all” to the quantitative “thoroughly completed” or “thoroughly mastered” (*gūjin.*), and treating it as modifying “the ten directions,” rather than “the worlds.”

69. **for the directions are the same, for the worlds are the same** (*hōtō naru yue ni, kaitō naru yue ni*): Recalling this usage above, section 12; typically taken here to mean that the directions and the worlds are equal.

70. **The elements and the dusts are not something thoroughly investigate by common people** (*dai jin tomo ni bonbu no gūjin suru tokoro ni arazu*): “Dusts” here refers to the objects of the six senses; the literal translation seeks to convey something of the play with the term here in the following expression “single dust mote” (*ichijin*).

71. **They have been constructed from this** (*kore yori kenryū*): The grammatical subject is unexpressed and the antecedent of “this” (*kore*) is open to interpretation.

72. **aggregate of eighty-four thousand dharmas** (*hachiman shisen no seppōun*): I.e., the entire body of the buddhist teachings. “Eighty-four thousand” (*hachiman shisen*) is a standard expression for a great number.

73. **We study the way without ever missing these** (*korera o shaka suru koto naku gakudō suru nari*): The antecedent of “these” (*korera*) is unclear; perhaps, “all the worlds of the ten directions.”

74. **three great asamkhyeya-kalpas** (*san dai asōgi kō*): “Three great incalculable æons,” a standard measure of the time required to attain buddha-

hood on the bodhisattva path.

casting aside a body and receiving a body (*shashin jushin*): I.e., dying and being reborn.

“study of the way, stepping forward and stepping back, that is the time of studying the way” (*gakudō no jisetsu naru, shinpo taiho gakudō*): An awkward phrase, likely meaning that the time of studying the way is made up of the ongoing practice of “stepping forward and stepping back” (*shinpo taiho*), an expression that can refer to ordinary activities or, more specifically, to movement forward and back.

75. **Paying obeisance and making inquiries** (*raihai monjin*): In Zen practice, to “make inquiries” (*monjin*) refers to a formal bow of greeting, with hands together.

76. **“One depicts the withered tree and polishes the tile of dead ashes”** (*koboku o gazu shi, shikai o masen su*): An odd mixing of Chan metaphors, presumably in ironic reference to Zen training. The idiom “withered trees and dead ashes” (*koboku shikai*) is a metaphor typically used, often pejoratively, in reference to meditation; hence, “depicting the withered tree” suggests depicting meditation practice. “Polishing a tile” (*masen*) alludes to the famous story, often cited in the *Shōbōgenzō*, of Nanyue Huairang’s (677-744) description of the futility of trying to make a buddha by sitting in meditation as “polishing a tile to make a mirror” (see, e.g., Dōgen’s *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, DZZ.5:128, case 8).

77. **“Birth and death, coming and going, are the true human body”** (*shōji korai shinjitsu nintai*): See above, Note 58, for the source. The term *shōji*, can indicate both “birth and death” and

“life and death”; for consistency’s sake, the translation here will stick to the former, even when, as might sometimes be the case in this passage, the latter would seem more natural.

drifting about of the common person (*bonbu no ruten*): I.e., the process of rebirth experienced by the ordinary human. The “great sages,” or “great nobles” (*daishō*) are the advanced Buddhist adepts.

78. **transcend the commoner and surpass the sage** (*chōbon osshō*): I.e., to go beyond the stages of the Buddhist spiritual path; a common expression in Chan literature. The point of this sentence is that even those who transcend the most advanced spiritual adepts share the true human body of birth and death, coming and going.

twofold and sevenfold types (*nishū shichishū no shina*): I.e., (a) a standard Buddhist twofold classification of rebirth into (1) the reincarnation of sentient beings according to their karma, known as “delimited birth and death” (*bundan shōji*; S. *pariccheda-jarā-marana*), and (2) the incarnations of advanced bodhisattvas according to their salvific purposes, known as “transformational birth and death” (*ben’i shōji*; S. *parinamiki-jarā-marana*); and (b) a sevenfold classification, perhaps of the sort found, for example, in the *Zhiguan fuxing zhuan hongjue* (T.1912.46:358a 21-25), by the Tiantai author Zhanran (711-782): (1) “delimited birth and death” (*fenduan shengsi*); (2) “birth and death drifting” (*liulai shengsi*), the beginning of ignorance; (3) “birth and death of resistance” (*fanchū shengsi*), turning away from delusion; (4) “birth and death of expedients” (*fangbian shengsi*), entering the nirvāna of the two vehicles; (5) “birth and death and causes and conditions” (*yinyuan shengsi*), above the first bodhisattva stage; (6) “birth and death with

remainder” (*youhou shengsi*), the tenth bodhisattva stage; (7) “birth and death without remainder” (*wuhou shengsi*), the vajra mind.

79. **Birth is like the cypress tree; death is like the iron man** (*shō wa hakujushi no gotoshi, shi wa tekkan no gotoshi*): Why Dōgen chose these two particular similes for birth and death is not clear, and no source in which they are meaningfully juxtaposed has been identified. While in popular discourse, the cypress was associated with longevity or eternal life and the man of iron was a symbol of virility, we do not know that Dōgen had such connotations in mind. In Chan texts, the cypress tree is best known from the famous words of Zhaozhou Congshen (778-897), “The cypress tree at the front of the garden,” in response to the question, “What is the intention of the Ancestral Master’s coming from the west?” “The man of iron” appears regularly in Chan texts and in the *Shōbōgenzō* for the solid practitioner.

“although the cypress tree is obstructed by the cypress tree, because birth is not obstructed by death, it is studying the way” (*hakuju wa tatoi hakuju ni ge serarudomo, shō wa imada shi ni ge serarezaru ga yue ni gakudō nari*): The antecedent of “it” in the translation is not clear; indeed, the sentence could be read, “they [i.e., birth and death] are the study of the way.” The pattern “A is obstructed by A” is very common in Dōgen’s writing, seemingly used in the sense “A is just A,” “A is completely A.” The point here, then, would seem to be that, in the study of the way, birth is just birth and death is just death.

80. **Birth is not one thing; death is not a second thing** (*shō wa ichimai ni arazu, shi wa ryōhitsu ni arazu*): Or, perhaps, “birth is not one sheet; death

is not two head.” The translation ignores the playful numerical counters *mai*, used for flat objects, and *hitsu* (or *hiki*), used for horses (and lengths of cloth).

81. **Chan Master Yuanwu** (*Engo zenji*): I.e., Yuanwu Keqin (1063–1135). His words here are a partial quotation from *Yuanwu Foguo chanshi yulu*, T.1997.47:793c6-8:

Alive, a manifestation of full function;

Dead, a manifestation of full function.

He doesn’t say, and again doesn’t say;

Here, without facing it or turning away.

Directly accede to it,

Without the gap of a single thread.

Filling up the whole of empty space;

The bare mind, always in pieces.

Alive, a manifestation of full function; dead, a manifestation of full function (*shō ya zenki gen, shi ya zenki gen*): The translation here and below of *shō* and *shi* as “alive” and “dead” respectively (rather than “birth” and “death”) reflects the fact that, in the original text, Yuanwu is commenting on a conversation over whether a corpse is alive or dead. In which sense Dōgen took the terms in his comments below is unclear.

82. **birth and death have exceeded “full function”** (*shoji no zenki ni amareru*): Or “‘alive’ and ‘dead’ are more than ‘full function.’”

83. **flips its body and spins its brain** (*honshin kainō*): Two expressions for spiritual transformation — the former quite common; the latter rather unusual.

84. **“Level and flat, it’s a wall rising a thousand fathoms”** (*heitantanchi, sore heki ryū sen jin*): Again, quoting (with slight variation) Yuanwu

Keqin (1063–1135), at *Yuanwu Foguo chanshi yulu*, T.1997.47:797c1213:

Where it’s level and flat, a wall rises a thousand fathoms; where the wall rises a thousand fathoms, it’s level and flat.

The Chinese *jin* (“fathom”) was a linear measure, used chiefly for vertical distances, ranging in value from 4 to 8 feet (*chi*).

85. **faces of the Southern Continent and Northern Continent** (*Nanshū Hokushū no menmoku*): I.e., the continents of Jambudvīpa (*Enbudai*) and Uttarakuru (*Kurushū*), to the south and north respectively of the central Mount Sumeru according to Buddhist cosmology.

86. **neither conception nor nonconception** (*hisō hi hisō*): I.e., the highest state in the three realms of samsāra; the last of the four formless concentrations (*shi mushiki jō*; S. *ārūpya-samāpatti*).

87. **double yang** (*chōyō*): The ninth day of the ninth month of the lunar calendar; the date of the Chinese Chongyang festival — also known as *denggao* (“scaling the heights”) and, in Japan, as *kiku no hi* (“chrysanthemum day”).

88. **mid-spring** (“*chūshun*”): The second month of the lunar calendar.

junior water year of the rabbit, Ninji (*Ninji mizunoto-u*): The tenth stem-fourth branch year of the sexagenary calendar would have been the fourth year of the Ninji era, changed during that year to the Kangen era.



My Footnotes on Zazen (17) “Just breathe naturally through your nose”(2)

Rev. Issho Fujita

The next experience I would like to relate is one that took place at a retreat led by Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh when he came to Japan in 1995. In a previous article that was published in the *Daihorin* magazine published in 2012 entitled “Thich Nhat Hanh’s Breathing Method,” I touched on this subject. That article was rather long, so I would like here to excerpt some of the parts related to this subject. [*Daihorin*, July 2012, Special Edition on “Putting the Body-Mind in Order” (“An Introduction to Breathing Methods”)]

[The following part is excerpted]

In the following article I will refer to the Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh as “Thay”, which means “master” or “teacher” in Vietnamese. In the West as well, he is referred to in a friendly manner with this term. In any event, I have been asked to write about Thay’s breathing method. First, I would like to point out that he does not teach a special “breathing method” that could be called “Thay’s breathing method.” For me, the expression “breathing method” suggests, for example, the yoga breathing method called *sukha purvak*, which is a method of alternating breathing first through one nostril and then the other. Or, *kapal-abhati*, the forceful exhalation of the breath after having momentarily tightened the stomach muscles thereby making the stomach smaller. Or,

like the breathing method established in Japan called *Chowado Tanden* Breathing which is to breathe from the lower abdomen. These are all breathing methods that are in some way consciously controlled and done in accordance with clearly defined methods.

In fact, the breathing method that Thay earnestly aspires to transmit to others uses the naturally occurring breath. He teaches us how we can deepen our awareness of it. It is called “the method of being mindful through breathing” or “mindful breathing” in short. Furthermore, rather than a method which Thay originated himself, this is a traditional method of meditation using the breath, a method that has been carefully transmitted in the Buddhist teaching. In particular, this is a meditation method based on Theravada Buddhist sutras such as the *Arapanasati Sutta* (“The Breath-Mindfulness Sutra”) and the *Satipatthana Sutta* (“The Four Foundations of Mindfulness Sutra”). And so just to keep the record straight rather than giving it the title of “Thich Nhat Hanh’s Breathing Method”, it would be more accurate to call it “the traditional Buddhist method of breathing meditation recommended by Thich Nhat Hanh.” However, this way of Thay’s teaching, as a Zen priest, surely has something original about it.

With this, there is an episode that comes to mind. It was the time I mentioned above when Thay came to Japan in 1995. It was five days retreat, which was being held at Kiyosato in Nagano Prefecture. Each day, when he was giving a talk, I sat next to Thay. I would translate into Japanese what he said in English. As he did in the West, Thay also spoke in his first talk

about how great “breathing meditation” is and about the specifics of this practice. “So, everyone, now let’s give it a try. First, close your eyes and slowly please enjoy conscious breathing.” In this way, he invited everyone to try this breathing meditation. I had translated “conscious breathing” quite literally as “conscious breathing.” Then, here and there, I could hear noises coming from the people in attendance “Mu” sound when they strongly sucked air in and a “Ha” sound when they exhaled. At that moment, I thought, “I’ve got to clarify this,” thinking that my translation of his words was off. It was unacceptable technique for a translator, but I asked him, “Thay, when you just spoke about ‘conscious breathing’ that meant turning one’s consciousness toward the natural breath. You didn’t mean to try to consciously control the breath by breathing in deeply and then expelling the breath in a forceful manner, right?” Thay responded by saying, “That’s right. That is an important point. Please make sure that everyone understands it that way.”

The practice of being mindful about the breath is in fact nothing by the foundation of the foundation of the system of Buddhist practice. From there, while being mindful of the incoming and outgoing breath, and at the same time turning your awareness to various other objects (for example, the body, emotions, images, the quality of being, and so forth), you proceed to climb up the stairs of advanced practice.

For example, Thay spoke of the following:

‘When breathing, we mustn’t exert some special effort. It is sufficient to give yourself permission to breath in the way that is natural for

you. Even if you don’t have the intention to breathe, the breath itself will begin to breathe. And so, it isn’t necessary to say, ‘Breath, you must come in just as I tell you to.’ We mustn’t force the breath in any way. We mustn’t interfere with the breath. Leave the breath be just as it is. The thing that you must do is be aware of the fact of the breath is happening now. If you do it like that, then you will be able to enjoy breathing. You mustn’t wrestle or fight with the breath. Please know that breathing is the fact of amazing. If you are unable to enjoy breathing, then you are mistaken in some way or other.

‘When breathing in, I know that I am breathing in. When breathing out, I know that I am breathing out.’ It is to simply know that there is inhalation and exhalation there, and that’s all. If you are able to do this, then there, you will be completely present. This is nothing other than a miracle. So, for a few minutes while conforming with breathing in and out, recite ‘In-Out’ to yourself. After having done this for a while, next, say to yourself, “When breathing in, I know that it has become deeper. When breathing out, I know that it has become slower.” This can be simplified such that you recite to yourself ‘Deep-Slow’ while in accompaniment with breathing in and out. There is no need to try to control the breath so that you breathe in more deeply or breathe out more slowly. This is because the breath itself will become deeper and slower. It is enough simply to be aware of this fact. After having done this for a while, you can say to yourself, “Inhalation, I feel that I’m becoming calm. Exhalation, I feel that I’m at ease. This can be simplified to ‘Calm-Ease.’ Recite these words to yourself for a while in accompaniment with breathing in and out. This isn’t self-suggestion, but rather to confirm

this fact. Next, you say to yourself, 'Incoming breath, I'm smiling. Outgoing breath, I'm releasing all anxiety.' Again, this can be simplified to 'Smile-Release.' Practice breathing like this for some time. Then, finally, "Breathing in, at this moment, I'm peacefully present. While breathing out, I know this is a wonderful moment.' Reciting to yourself, 'Present moment- wonderful moment' in accompaniment with your breathing.

[End of excerpt]

In our zazen, we do not try to control the heartbeat. To begin with, I don't think that people would have that intention, but even if they did, how would they do it? We don't even know how to do it. (At the same time, it may be that there is someone who by means of some

special training has learned a technique for controlling the heart...)

And so, regarding the movements of the heart, we are accepting of it. It isn't that difficult to leave the heartbeat as it is. Rather, it may be better to say it is only possible to be accepting of the beat of the heart. In fact, it is not possible for us to control the heart, so the only thing we can do is let it be. The same can be said for the secretion of saliva in our mouth. It would be good if in the same way as our heartbeat or the secretion of saliva we had an accepting attitude toward the breath, but for some reason or other when it comes to the breath, we unconsciously want to control it.

(To be continued)

NEWS

May 17–19, 2019

Europe Soto Zen Conference were held at Zendonien in Blois, France.

May 26–June 6, 2019

Baika classes by Sotoshu Specially Dispatched Baika Teacher were held at five places in Brazil and at one place in Peru.

Jun 12, 2019

South America Soto Zen Conference was held at Busshinji in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Jun 12–13, 2019

South America Soto Zen Workshop was held at Busshinji in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Jun 17–25, 2019

Baika classes by Sotoshu Specially Dispatched Bika Teacher were held at four places in North America.

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