



SOTO ZEN JOURNAL

# DHARMA EYE

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## LIBERATION DHARMA

**Rev. Konjin Godwin**

*The gate of liberation stands open*, as Dogen Zenji writes in *Kyojukaimon, the sweet dew saturates all and harvests the truth*. This principle of the open gate of zen is widely known and widely quoted. Many of you who are now reading this edition of Dharma Eye are people who have entered the gate of zen and found refuge there. Many have gone further, and founded temples or centers, or joined practice groups, large or small, old or brand new, and entered the gate of practicing with a sangha.

This year our individual sanghas, as well as our Maha sangha, the great sangha of all of Zen in North America, continue to reverberate with the Black Lives Matter movement, as well as with the injustices facing refugees arriving at the borders of the US.

Zen is the universal door, open to everyone, and Black Lives Matter (BLM) has opened the eyes of many zen practitioners, allowing us to clearly observe the nature of our sanghas, for example, the membership within each sangha, and whether it is truly open to everyone. We are living in an important era once again, when the history of racism and oppression in the US is being openly discussed. We have an opportunity to shape and even to lead the discussions, to demonstrate Liberation Dharma, with wisdom,

compassion, and love.

Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji taught that all beings are Buddha Nature. How are our zen centers exploring the subtle roots of that teaching, especially the hidden difficulties or even reluctance to embrace that teaching? How are zen centers opening members' awareness to the racist imprint that all individuals have received that cause them to doubt that Black Lives Matter? I am pleased to report that zen groups all over the country have dived into this exploration. Whole-hearted study is underway at many centers, and a number of centers are engaged in appropriate responses outside the centers, appropriate responses to the challenges of our time.

The urgency of BLM has engaged many centers in racial justice work for the first time. Other centers have been engaged in anti-racist work for many years, with the hope to extend refuge to more people, and to address the oppression in the large community, and to provide the teachings of zen.

The following descriptions of current work to address this particular form of delusion and suffering were provided by zen teachers within each of the centers, and have been edited in order to include as many as possible. We at Dharma Eye applaud the efforts of creative zen practitioners, and look forward to hearing about more responses to our shared situation.

### **Working Within to Open the Mind**

#### **Ancient Dragon Zen Gate**

<https://www.ancientdragon.org/>

Rev. Taigen Leighton, Chicago, Illinois. Chicago is one of the historically important terminus points of the Great Migration (read *The Warmth of Other Suns*, by Isabel Wilkerson). Rev. Taigen Leighton reported that there have been study groups for years at the Center on the historical roots of race conflict in Chicago. The ADZG website provides links to seven years of talks specifically on racism. The talks sparked lively conversation among sangha members.

In addition, starting soon after George Floyd's murder, Friday morning zazen became a weekly meditation in mourning for Black lives taken and imprisoned, including reading of a selection from a Black writer to open community discussion.

### **Berkeley Zen Center, Shogakuji**

<https://berkeleyzencenter.org/>

Vice-Abbot Hozan Senauke, Berkeley, CA, reported that he is personally inspired by the continuing lessons of Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Buddhist movement in India. He also reported that a group of senior students have already completed a six-month "White Awake" self-training, based on a curriculum developed in the Vipassana community and at Dharma Rain. Dharma lectures on racial justice and related issues take place frequently and are made available on the website.

The BZC board is moving towards education and training for the whole on issues of equity, justice, diversity, white supremacy, and implicit bias. BZC is consulting with skilled people outside the immediate sangha, to, in the long term move towards models of sangha leadership and authority that embrace principles of "liberty, equality, and fraternity," as articulated by Dr. Ambedkar's vision of a new Buddhism for

India's most oppressed peoples.

### **Buddha Eye Temple**

<https://www.buddhaeye.org/>

Abbot Ejo McMullen, Eugene, OR, reported that a few racial justice reading groups meet and dharma talks concerning racial justice take place. In the fall, a lecture series on Race and Yogacara is planned, as well as several Inquiry Circles.

### **Cedar Rapids Zen Center, Jikyoji**

<https://www.cedarrapidszencenter.org/>

Abbot Zuiko Redding, Cedar Rapids, IA, reported that CRZC is located in the middle of a heavily Black neighborhood and the neighbors know the Center is a safe and welcoming place. People from the neighborhood are in relationship with the Center, and the Center stands ready to help the neighbors. CRZC works with their city council member, to deal with predatory landlords in the neighborhood, and to try to maintain affordability for the largely poor neighbors.

Rev. Redding continues to mentor neighborhood children, and intends to initiate work with the local elementary school, one of the poorest in the city, to help get the resources they need to educate our kids and give them the tools they need to deal with institutionalized racism as they grow.

### **Central Valley Zen Foundation**

Abbess Grace Shireson, Palo Alto, CA, reported that Central Valley Zen/Shogaku Zen Institute will offer a class with David Loy and Kritee Kanko on EcoDharma/Buddhist Ecology, climate change and Racism.

**Chapel Hill Zen Center** <https://www.chzc.org/>

Abbess Josho Phelan reported that six members are participating in the “Unpacking the Whiteness of Leadership” workshop with Crystal Johnson from the East Bay Dharma Group. In addition, a study group has begun reading and discussing *White Fragility*, from a Buddhist point of view. Abbess Phelan and others have attended Moral Mondays with Rev. Barber, beginning in 2013. They also attend an annual march in February for social justice.

### **Confluence Zen Community**

<https://www.confluencezen.org/>

Rev. Daigaku Rumme, reports from St. Louis, MO, a major terminus city during the Great Migration, that he has participated in the SZBA’s Unpacking Whiteness webinar, and continues to read widely. The Board has formally embraced diversity at the Center.

### **Green Gulch Farm Green Dragon Temple, Soryuji**

<https://www.sfzc.org/>

Rev. Eijun Linda Cutts, Muir Beach, CA, reported that the Board of San Francisco Zen Center has a very active Diversity Equity Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) committee, and there are smaller DEIA groups at each temple. Branching Streams (affiliates of SFZC) offered an Unpacking Whiteness training for leaders of Branching Streams sangha. In addition Black Lives Matter sittings have taken place at GGF. There are numerous discussion groups, and teachings from the dharma seat.

### **Houston Zen Center** <https://houstonzen.org>

HZC has a Dharma Inquiry into Race in America – Black Lives Matter, which meets every two weeks. Members recently completed

the Unpacking Whiteness training, and a second series is planned for the Fall. Current actions are focused on voting. Members of the group, including leadership, is actively engaged in voter registration, poll supervision, and get-out-the-vote drives. These actions stem from the understanding that in the South especially, the act of voting has been discouraged and outright blocked by racist policies.

### **Long Beach Buddhist Church**

<https://www.lbbuddhistchurch.com/>

Rev. Gyokei Yokoyama, Long Beach, CA, reported that LBBC is taking part in a transformative justice forum within the City of Long Beach. The primary focus is on how to avoid criminalizing the suffering due to over dependence on policing by providing alternate solutions through faith communities representing diverse ethnic communities in the city.

### **Milwaukee Zen Center, Kokyo-an**

<http://mkzen.org/>

Resident Priest Rev. Reiren Gumbel, Milwaukee, WI, has been active in everything from protest marches to meetings of community groups. She occasionally reports on local anti-racism events in her blog on the MZC web site, and gives dharma talks on anti-Racism.

Retired Resident Priest Rev. Tonen O’Connor reported that she represents the local Buddhist Peace Fellowship group on the Board of MICAH (Milwaukee Inner City Churches Allied for Hope), which is one of the most active anti-racism groups in the city. It not only spearheads initiatives and distributes information, but collaborates with many other city organizations that focus on specific manifestations of racism.

BPF Milwaukee is very active, as well as the prison outreach group.

### **Ocean Gate Zen Center**

<https://www.oceangatezen.org/>

Rev. Doyo Kinst, Santa Cruz, CA, reported that the sangha has a reading/discussion/study group on racism and anti-racism. Rev. Kinst and Rev. Roberts encourage practice with this in daily life and action. The issues are addressed regularly in dharma talks.

### **Ryo-koan Olympia Zen Center**

<https://www.olympiazencenter.org/>

Abbot Eido Carney, Olympia, WA, reported that OZC has been holding Zoom discussions of white privilege and racism. An on-going study group has met for more than 15 years, and explored issues such as the costs of racism and how white people avoid responsibility for racism. Several students took part in #BlackLivesMatter street demonstrations in Olympia and Seattle until they became violent. The newsletters include relevant articles and books for reading on racism.

Olympia Zen Center housed, for six months, a 70-year-old African American gay man and sex offender coming out of prison, and assisted him in reentering daily life in society after 27 years in prison. His presence in practice in an all-white community was an important teaching for the Sangha as well as the neighborhood although there was no obvious resistance to his being here after people were educated in recognizing their initial hesitations. He had been denied housing in various places and OZC opened the door for him to be able to be released and begin a new life. He continues practice with OZC

having transitioned to his own apartment in the downtown area.

### **Vallejo Zen Center** <https://vallejozencenter.org/>

Abess Zenki Mary Mocine, Vallejo, CA, reported that the Center has a book group, and that the law dharma group works actively with white privilege. In addition, the dharma lectures have focused on racial justice and, during some months, have been based on teachings by Black teachers.

### **Zen Fields** <https://zenfields.org/>

Rev. Daishin McCabe, Ames, IA, reported that Zen Fields has dedicated the 4th Monday of the month to anti-Racism work. This is an ongoing study and will continue into the indefinite future. They have invited guest teachers - two in particular - people of color, to be their guides through this work.

### **Austin Zen Center** <https://austinzencenter.org/>

Rev. Unzan Voelkel, Austin, TX, reported that AZC started a study group in the new year based on the WAIC-UP! curriculum developed at Spirit Rock. Now that the group has completed that curriculum, a few study modules in 2-month long segments are underway.

### **Brooklyn Zen Center** <https://brooklynzen.org/>

Kosen Greg Snyder, Brooklyn, NY, reported that BZC has been involved in anti-racism work for the past seven years. The formal Undoing Whiteness and Oppression Group, is going into its seventh year. Anti-racist efforts also involve monitoring leadership structures and practices, including board representation, and creating religious structures that allow for an equal

balance of down-power perspectives in positions of authority. This involved creating new nexuses like a sangha council that have input on who moves into positions of religious authority, offering perspectives that might not be available to the traditional leadership. Other adaptations have been POC-specific scholarship funds, POC teaching support, and a study group for more senior POC students with the two dharma teachers that allow for a trusting space for POC students.

### **Dharma Heart Zen**

<https://www.dharmaheartzen.com/>

Hoka Chris Fortin, Sebastopol, CA, has co-led a racial literacy and dharma inquiry group into race in America for more than two years and has just initiated a white supremacy/ building capacity group.

### **Dharma Rain Zen Center**

<https://dharma-rain.org/>

Abbot Kakumyo Lowe-Charde, Portland, OR, reported that a cohort of 25 people completed one 6-month “Awakening to Whiteness” program, and a second program begins soon. The DEI team is very active, and equity-focused dharma talks take place frequently. Dharma Rain is preparing to offer a mindfulness-based support group for folks traumatized by police violence at the ongoing protests. DRZC has had numerous cohort groups focused on equity themes recently, including the resident’s cohort, the ordained, a senior practitioner group, the Wednesday night discussion group, and more. They also engage strategic partnerships with other groups in the area.

### **Minnesota Zen Meditation Center, Ganshoji**

<https://www.mnzencenter.org/>

Rev. Ben Connelly, Minneapolis, MN, reported that MZMC has done white awake series trainings and brought in outside anti-racism trainers for several full-day workshops, required for senior leadership, over the last several years. Several members and priests have been attending and supporting Black Lives Matter actions since 2015 after the murder of Jamar Clark in Minneapolis. Several local and national Buddhist teachers of color have been hosted at MZMC in the last several years. The center has made various efforts to equip and support POC in leadership at the Zen center. Racism is a common theme in dharma teachings there. They follow the template provided to SZBA for promoting DEIA by Thomas Bruner. Rev. Connelly reports that MZMC remains a very white organization with a lot of work to do in order to create an actually inclusive, diverse, and equitable sangha.

### **Prairie Mountain Zen Center**

<https://www.prairiemountain.org/>

Rev. Jodo Clusin, Boulder, CO, reported that the sangha is in the middle of a 6-week class on white privilege, white fragility and anti-racism. He has given dharma talks on racism. The Center supports a web page tab with anti-racism resources.

### **Santa Cruz Zen Center** <https://sczc.org/>

Rev. Gene Bush and Rev. Patrick Teverbaugh, Santa Cruz, CA, and Arcata, CA, reported that a study group explores anti-racist texts as well as eco-Dharma readings by David Loy.

### **Stone Creek Zen Center, Sekisen-an**

<https://stonecreekzencentral.org/>

Rev. Dojin Emerson, Sebastopol, CA, reported that a book group focused on Racial Literacy and Dharma Inquiry has been working together for nearly 3 years. From this group, a smaller satellite group began, particularly for white-identified people: Challenging White Conditioning and Developing Capacity. Stone Creek received a \$10,000 grant from Hemera Foundation, through their Healthy Buddhist Communities program, to work with Rev. Liên Shutt's Four Engaged Noble Truths curriculum to have collaborations between sanghas, and to support Stone Creek's co-leaders, as white Dharma Teachers, in building skills around teaching about race and Dharma in ways that are inclusive and conscious of historical racial harm in predominantly white American sanghas. The grant provides funds to make a documentary of the process to share with other Dharma teachers and sanghas to support development of similar programs.

SCZC also sponsored a community demonstration each Friday for an hour on a busy intersection of Sebastopol in solidarity with BLM. SCZC supports an Anti-racist Resources page on its website with different resources and actions in the community.

### **Tassajara Zen Mountain Center, Zenshinji**

<https://www.sfzc.org/>

Rev. Zenshin Fain, Carmel Valley, CA, reported that the monastery is currently under evacuation orders but that a regular book group has explored anti-racist writings for many years. There is an active local DEIA committee, when not under evacuation orders.

### **Upaya Zen Center** <https://www.upaya.org/>

Abbot Joan Jiko Halifax, Santa Fe, New Mexico, reported that Rhonda Magee, Ayo Yetunde, Heather McTeer Toney, were currently teaching on race, climate, and poverty at Upaya. After George Floyd was murdered, Upaya put strong statements on all social media platforms reflecting their position. Upaya can and will do more to address bias, direct/indirect racism, structural violence, and white privilege, yet knows that it is not enough.

### **Zen Center North Shore,**

<https://zencenternorthshore.org/>

Rev. Myozen Joan Amaral, Beverly, MA, reported that ZCNS started a Social Justice Group in the Fall of 2014 after Michael Brown was murdered. The group has continued to meet, but the work isn't limited to that group. Rev. Amaral is active in immigration justice and accompaniment in ICE prison, as well as with family members of ICE prisoners. The center's leadership is beginning to reflect this more - on the board and staff level. In addition to formal practice, the group is increasingly active in their City, working closely with the mayor, Human Rights Committee, City Council, and school board to raise up racial justice. They have organized protests, marches, rallies, and walks throughout North Shore towns as part of a multi-faith coalition. The Monday night group is involved in establishing a Department on Racial Justice and Equity through the mayor's office, which allocated \$200,000 to it this year.

### **Zen Heart Sangha**

Rev. Kakushin Kaplan, Mountain View, CA, reported that the sangha has a reading/discussion

group that meets twice/month on dharma and racial justice. The teachers give dharma talks concerned with practicing with issues around diversity, climate injustice, and systemic bias.

The information provided in this list is meant to encourage everyone and to inspire more creativity. We look forward to hearing more of your creative teachings and actions.

## **The Status of Teaching Activities at Soto Temples at the Four International Regional Area Under the Circumstances of the Spread of the Pandemic**

### **Soto Zen Buddhism International Center**

We would first like to extend our deepest sympathies to those who have been affected by the novel coronavirus infection. Since the first infected person was identified in the northern part of Wuhan City in the People's Republic of China on Dec. 22, 2019, the novel coronavirus infection is still spreading all over the world.

Since March 11th, we, at the Soto Zen Buddhism International Office, have been computing the status of the infected persons in the four international districts of Sotozen: Hawaii, North America, South America, and Europe. Since we began this compilation on March 11th, there have been a combined number of 24,000 infected persons within these four districts with approximately 1,000 deaths. As of Sept. 25, the number of infected persons in each district's jurisdiction has increased to 19,403,213, with 730,439 number of deaths. In each area, there have been orders not to go out of one's home as well as to show self-restraint in one's activities. Also, economic activity has been temporarily suspended, and even now there are areas where deregulation has not taken place.

In this situation, the special overseas temples and Zen centers within the jurisdiction of each teach activity district, while searching for activities they can do within such restrictions are overcoming this challenging time. They are also conducting new teaching activities that will be a



stepping stone for a new era.

### **Region of Hawaii**

(9 Kokusaifukyoshi, 9 registered temples)

While the spread of the coronavirus infection in Hawaii has been relatively suppressed compared with the other international districts, the activities at the various Soto Zen temples have basically been reduced. At Taishoji in Hilo, they are currently active mainly by using Facebook and YouTube live streaming. The zazen group has reopened. A person's temperature is taken on entering the temple, they must wear face masks and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and they are also asked to take the precaution of social distancing. For the time being, they do not drink tea and have conversation with each other following zazen. After zazen, they disband and overall they try to make the contact time between people as short as possible. Also, regarding ceremonial events, they are maintaining social distancing and permitting up to ten people to attend at any one time. If there is a request, they live broadcast the event on zoom. Also, at the Hawaii Ryodai Honzan Betsuin Shoboji in Honolulu, they restarted their regular activities in June while keeping social distancing and wearing masks. However, in mid-August, there was another request to refrain from activities. Consequently, all activities are currently taking place only online.

### **Region of North America**

(61 Kokusaifukyoshi, 27 registered temples)

While the United States is the country that currently has the most novel coronavirus infections in the world, nearly all Soto Zen temples and zen centers have switched to online activi-

ties and are actively carrying out activities for their members and zen practitioners that way. We have had many reports that since these activities have gone online that in addition to the regular members, people from around the world have joined them. Furthermore, a big opening has been made for those people who have never had an opportunity to practice zen even though they have had an interest in doing so. At Hosshinji, San Francisco, all activities have been switched to online formats. All communication between residents at Hosshiji take place either by email or SNS. On the homepage of their website, we can see that they have made an online program page, there are online study groups, Dharma talks, zazen groups, and so forth. They are creating ingenious ways so that people can participate in different parts of their online programs. Also at Soryuji, Green Gulch Farm steps have been taken so that residents can avoid contact with each other. Each event within the temple is performed according to the sound coming from speakers on the premise.



### **Region of South America**

(12 Kokusaifukyoshi, 8 registered temples)

In the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, since the government order was issued regulating all unnecessary and non-urgent economic activities





## A Commentary on Dogen Zenji's *Bendowa* "Talk on Pursuing the Way" (1)

**Rev. Kenshu Sugawara**  
Associate Professor at  
Aichi Gakuin University

### 1. *Bendowa* Review of the subject (1)

While it is one of Dogen Zenji's earliest works, *Bendowa* is known for being a work with its systematic content.

Furthermore, if we consider the timing of his creative words and place them side by side, we can see the following:

Works during Dogen Zenji's time practicing in China:

- "Hokyoki"
- "Verses of Praise" (Dogen Zenji's Extensive Record, Vol. 10)

Works written after Dogen Zenji's return to Japan:

- 1227 Karoku Era version of *Fukan zazengi* (no longer extant)
- 1231 *Bendowa*
- 1233 "Maka Hannya Haramitsu" and "Genjokoan" chapters of the *Shobogenzo* ("The Treasury of the True Dharma Eye")
- 1234 *Gakudo Yojinshu* ("Guidelines for Studying the Way")
- 1235 *Shinji Shobogenzo* (A collection of 300 koans)
- 1235-38 *Shobogenzo Zuimonki*
- 1236 The first of Dogen Zenji's Dharma hall discourses (Extensive Record, Vol. 1)

From this list, it is understood that *Bendowa*

is a work from Dogen Zenji's early period. And, of these works listed above, *Bendowa* and *Gakudo Yojinshu* ("Guidelines for Studying the Way") are the two in which his systematic thought is shown most clearly. In the case of *Bendowa*, this is a teaching about practice and the pursuit of the Way. *Gakudo Yojinshu* ("*Gakudo*" means to "study the Buddha-Way"), on the other hand, is a work which shows Dogen Zenji's method and philosophic principles.

Dogen Zenji had returned to Japan from China in 1227. Until that time in Japan, the "true transmission of the Buddhadharmā" that Dogen Zenji transmitted had not existed as a Buddhist teaching or principle. It can be said that it was for this reason it was necessary for Dogen Zenji to explain any number of times in easy to understand words about Buddhism that was centered on practice or training.

Preceding Dogen Zenji was Myoan Eisai Zenji (1141-1215), a Japanese priest who had founded *Kenninji* Temple in Kyoto and who had transmitted the Oryu lineage of the Rinzai sect to Japan. Dogen Zenji was ordained at the age of fourteen at *Enryakuji*, a Tendai sect temple on Mt. Hiei. At the age of eighteen, he moved to *Kenninji* where he became a disciple of Butsu-jubo Myozen Osho (1184-1225), who was a disciple of Eisai Zenji. Myozen Osho died at Tien-tung Monastery in China. However, Dogen Zenji received transmission from Tendo Nyoho Zenji and subsequently transmitted the Dharma lineage of the Soto school to Japan.

Following his return to Japan, it seems that Dogen Zenji stayed at *Kenninji* for one to three years. However, in comparison with the condition of practice while Eisai Zenji was still alive,

the degradation of the Rinzai sect tradition was so obvious to Dogen Zenji (Dogen Zenji's "Instructions for the Monastery Cook", etc.) that *Bendowa* became the work which claimed that Dogen Zenji was the legitimate transmitter of the true Dharma.

## 2. *Bendowa* Review of the subject (2)

There are two main versions of the *Bendowa* text.

The first was a copy of *Bendowa* written in Dogen Zenji's own hand that was stored with the Kikutei family who were part of the Kyoto aristocracy. This version was transcribed and given to *Tokuunji* Temple in Tamba. This was again transcribed by Gesshu Soko Zenji (1618-1696), the 26th abbot of *Daijōji* Temple in Kaga. This transcription was stored at *Daijōji*. Then, Gesshu Zenji's Dharma successor, Manzan Dohaku Zenji (1636-1715), the 27th abbot of *Daijōji*, added *Bendowa* as one chapter to the *Shobogenzo*. In addition, Gento Sokuchu Zenji (1729-1807) added an introduction to a single volume edition of *Bendowa* that was printed by *Butsugenji* Temple in Hyogo Prefecture. These versions all had the same origin and are considered to be the "popular version."

The other main version of *Bendowa*, a copy found at *Shōboji* Temple in Iwate Prefecture, is generally thought to have been the first draft. This same manuscript was originally copied by a monk named Shikoku on November 7th, 1332 and stored at *Yokoji* Temple on the Noto Peninsula. In 1515, the seventh abbot of *Shōboji*, Juun Ryochin Zenji (?-1516) copied this text to commemorate the 263rd anniversary of Dogen Zenji's death.

The contents of the popular version and the first draft version are nearly the same. However, they are different in that in the question and answer section dealing with Soto doctrine, the popular version has eighteen mondo and the draft version has nineteen mondo.

## 3. *Bendowa* Review of the subject (3)

In order to understand *Bendowa*, I would like to address two questions. The first is about the location of where it was written.

The other is the relationship of *Bendowa* to the *Shobogenzo*.

As for the first question, *Bendowa* is thought to have been written at *An'yoin*, a temple located in present-day Kyoto City. This was the assertion made by Menzan Zuiho Zenji (1683-1769), a scholar priest of the Edo Period. He based this assertion on one of Dogen Zenji's Dharma discourses that is stored at *Kasuisai* Monastery in Shizuoka Prefecture and the time this discourse was written. Since this discourse was written at *An'yoin* and this was near the time *Bendowa* was written, Menzan Zenji thought that *Bendowa* was also written at *An'yoin*. However, in the popular version of *Bendowa*, Dogen Zenji only wrote "written by Dogen, the sramana who entered the Song and transmitted the Dharma." Thus, we don't know where *Bendowa* was written. Since nothing is mentioned in the text of *Bendowa* about the location of where it was written, it is difficult to believe in the opinion that it was written at *An'yoin*.

Regarding the second question, as I mentioned earlier, it was Menzan Dohaku Zenji who first included *Bendowa* as a chapter in the *Shobogenzo*. Originally, the oldest editing format

of the *Shobogenzo* started with the “*Genjokoan*” chapter and concluded with “*Shukke*” (“Leaving the Household”) chapter for a total of 75 chapters. The twelve chapters added later began with “*Shukke Kudoku*” (“The Virtue of Leaving Home”) and concluded with the “Eight Awakenings of Great Beings.” In addition, while there are some unclear points about the editing process, there is also a 60-chapter version of the *Shobogenzo* that begins with “*Genjokoan*” and concludes with “Taking Refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.” *Bendowa* is not included in these editions of the *Shobogenzo*. Afterwards, in the fifteenth century, Taiyo Bonsei Zenji (?-1427) edited an 84-chapter edition which centered around the 75-chapter version plus nine more chapters that he added. Manzan Zenji then added more chapters to make an 89-chapter version. It was at this point that *Bendowa* was added. Also, the 35th abbot of *Eiheiji*, Hanjo Kozen Zenji (1627-1693), edited a 95-chapter version in which *Bendowa* was included. Furthermore, at the beginning of the Edo Period, Gento Sokuchu, the 50th abbot of *Eiheiji*, published the complete “Head Temple Edition” of the *Shobogenzo* with 95 chapters and *Bendowa* was included in this version.

For this reason, since most publications of the *Shobogenzo* in the Meiji Period and following include *Bendowa* at the beginning of the book, we think of *Bendowa* as one chapter in the *Shobogenzo*. However, by understanding that it was originally not included in the first editions of the *Shobogenzo*, we can see that it should be treated as an independent work.

#### 4. The response to *Bendowa*

From the Edo Period onwards when *Bendowa*

was first included as one chapter of the *Shobogenzo*, it has been studied by many scholar priests. For example, the following annotations and commentaries are well known:

- Manzan Zuiho Zenji’s *Shobogenzo Monge* (“Listening to and Understanding the *Shobogenzo*”)
- Katsudo Honko Zenji’s *Shobogenzo Kyakutai Ichijisan* (“The *Shobogenzo*: Retreating and Studying One Character”)
- Zakke Zokai Zenji’s *Shobogenzo Shiki* (“The *Shobogenzo*: A Private Record”)

In subsequent articles, I plan to refer to these commentaries when we read *Bendowa*.

Also, in those times before the Edo Period, we find very few partial treatments of *Bendowa*. In fact, we cannot find any cases where it is cited in other works.

However, if we look at “A Dharma Talk by Priest Keizan, Founder of *Yokoji* Temple,” a talk that has been passed down at *Shoboji* Temple in Iwate Prefecture, we can understand that Keizan Zenji, the author of this talk, was clearly influenced by *Bendowa*.

Therefore, even though we don’t clearly understand the route in which *Bendowa* was passed down, this means that the zazen of the Soto school was correctly inherited since it was studied within the early Soto priesthood.

This is the same even today. If you want to know correctly about zazen as taught in the Soto school, it is necessary to study *Bendowa*.

#### 5. Regarding the word “*Bendo*”

Regarding the word “*Bendo*”, if we look at *Bendowa*, it is possible to see phrases such as “concentrated effort,” “the pursuit of the Way by the beginner,” and “to pursue the Way in seated

meditation [zazen].” In each of these cases, the word “*bendo*” has the meaning of “practice.” While the character for “*ben*” means “to discriminate” or “to negotiate”, since discriminating or negotiating the Way of Buddha is “*bendo*,” the discrimination of the actions we make is practice, and through this practice the Way of Buddha is revealed.

Especially in *Bendowa*, the distinctive views of practice and realization such as “practice and verification are one” and “the original verification of wondrous practice” are taught. This is the idea that practice is not a means to attain enlightenment, but that practice itself is enlightenment. Also, regarding “the original verification of wondrous practice,” an idea that has especially been spoken of in Japanese Soto studies since the Meiji Period and afterwards, this is the way of thinking that because we are naturally born with the enlightenment of the Buddha, we proceed in practice while being enlightened by that enlightenment. In either case, it is said that it is important to inherit practice in every respect.

Note that Dogen Zenji, who founded *Daibutsuji* Temple (later, *Eiheiji*) in 1245, wrote *Bendoho* (“The Model for Practicing the Way”) in which he taught about the setup for practice in a monastery centered on the practice of zazen. The very first words of that work are “All buddhas and ancestors are within the Way and practice it; without the Way they would not practice it.” In this way, he is explicit about the relationship between the Way of Buddha and the practice of it.

## 6. Regarding the contents of *Bendowa*

It is possible to roughly divide the contents of *Bendowa* into the following four categories:

- A. Dogen Zenji’s practice and study, and “the true transmission of the Buddhadharma”;
- B. Regarding the “samadhi of self-enjoyment”;
- C. Eighteen mondo about Soto doctrine; and
- D. Dogen Zenji’s intention for writing *Bendowa*.

Since this is the first installment of this series, I would now like to comment on the first part of *Bendowa*.

The buddhas, the tathagatas, all have a wondrous skill, supreme and unconditioned, for singly transmitting the wondrous dharma and verifying *anuttara-bodhi*. That it is bestowed only from buddha to buddha without error is because the samadhi of self-enjoyment is its standard.<sup>1</sup> To disport oneself in this samadhi, studying Zen in upright sitting, is considered, the main gateway.<sup>2</sup>  
[Translation by Dr. Carl Bielefeldt]

Dogen Zenji says that all buddha-tathagatas have a wonderful means to transmit the wondrous Dharma. They have a truly supreme method to reveal enlightenment. That this has been passed down from buddha to buddha without deviation is certainly due to the standard of their actions and judgment. The touchstone that the buddhas should clarify about enlightenment is the samadhi of self-enjoyment. So, the meaning of the samadhi of self-enjoyment is that while enjoying the enlightenment that they have revealed, they live the true Dharma as it is, in a state of enjoying the samadhi of self-enjoyment. For Dogen Zenji, the practice of zazen is the enlightenment of the buddhas as the samadhi of self-enjoyment. Japan at the time of Dogen Zenji

was influenced by the belief that Buddhism was in the final age of degeneration (*mappo*). In terms of the expectations people had in the “other power” of Amida Buddha, it is fine to see Dogen Zenji’s insistence on the samadhi of self-enjoyment as “parting from or saying farewell to ‘other power’.” Then, in order to disport oneself in this samadhi (to become one with this samadhi), he says that the right entrance is zazen itself.

At this time in Japan, the value of the practice of zazen was being rethought because Eisai Zenji and others had transmitted the teachings of the Zen sect. Nevertheless, because of the influence of this belief in the last age of the Dharma (*mappo*), the practice of reciting Amida Buddha’s name (*nembutsu*) had, in most cases, become included in the practice of Tendai, Shingon, as well as other Buddhist sects in Japan at this time. However, Dogen Zenji’s own experience studying zen in China and through the fact of having received certification of realization (*inka-shomei*) from Tendo Nyojo Zenji, he emphasized the value of zazen in disporting oneself in the samadhi of self-enjoyment.

In the next installment of this series, I would like, while examining the Bendowa text, to study the meaning of zazen in the Soto school.

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**1. samadhi of self-enjoyment is its standard** (*ji juyu zanmai, sono hyojun nari* 自受用三昧、その標準なり): I.e., the concentration in which the buddhas experience their own awakening is the standard by which is measured the transmission of their “wondrous dharma.”

**2. main gateway** (*shomon* 正門): Or “the correct, or primary, approach”; a term treated below, sections 17 and 18, but not otherwise common in the *Shobogenzo*.



## The 18th Chapter of *Shobogenzo Kannon* (Avalokiteshvara) Lecture (2)

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### 5. Four versions of Yunyan and Daowu’s conversation

It’s said seventeen hundred *koans* exist, and this is also the number of Chinese zen Masters who’s lives are recorded in *Jingde Chuandeng lu* (景德伝灯録、*Keitoku-Dento-roku*, *Record of the Transmission of the Lamp of the Jingde era*). It would appear the conversations and stories in the *koans* actually took place at a certain time, in this case, between two zen masters. But when we read the stories in various zen texts in chronological order, we can see how they grow over time. To me, this is an important point in understanding the nature of *koans*. Rather than being historical records of conversations, *koans* were created by people of later times to express their own understanding of the Dharma; in other words, they are fictions.

I found five versions of this *koan* that presents Yunyan and Daowu’s dialogue about Avalokiteshvara. The first and oldest is from *Zutanji* (祖堂集, *Sodoshu*, *Anthology of the Ancestral Hall*), a text compiled in 952 CE by two Yunmen School monks that was lost in China and preserved only in Korea until the 20th century. The second is from *Jingde Chuandeng lu*, a text compiled in 1004 that became famous and authoritative. Since the Song Dynasty, the history of Chinese zen is

understood based on this text. The image of the Tang Dynasty as the “Golden Age of Zen” was created in the Song dynasty and recorded in *Jingde Chuandeng lu*. In reality, we don’t actually know much about the historical events of the Tang dynasty.

The third version of the *koan* is case 89 of *The Blue Cliff Record* (碧巖録, *Hekiganroku*), the fourth is case 54 of *The Book of Serenity* (従容録, *Shoyoroku*), and the fifth is Dogen’s version that appears in this chapter of *Shobogenzo*. The latest three versions developed in *koan* collections of the Song Dynasty are almost identical. These contain some minor differences such as variations in the usage of certain Chinese characters, but these differences do not affect their translation into English. However, there are a few interesting variations between the first two versions and the last three, and I would like to introduce these.

## 6. Avalokiteshvara With a Thousand Hands and Eyes

Avalokitesvara With a Thousand Hands and Eyes is one of the many forms of Avalokiteshvara. Knowing this is helpful in understanding Yunyan and Daowu’s dialogue and its different interpretations in *the Blue Cliff Record*, *Book of Serenity* and *Shobogenzo*.

The Avalokiteshvara statues enshrined at *Toshodaiji* in Nara, Japan, really do have a thousand hands. (See the photo.) *Toshodaiji* was founded by Ganjin (鑑真, Ch. Jianzhen, 688-763) who, along with many of his disciples, traveled from China to transmit the Vinaya Precepts and authentically ordain

Japanese monks for the first time in Japanese Buddhist history. On each of the thousand hands of this Avalokiteshvara there is an eye representing wisdom, and the hands represent skillful actions. To help suffering living beings, Avalokiteshvara needs many skillful hands and eyes of wisdom. Unless one has seen such a statue, it is difficult to imagine what Yunyan and Daowu were talking about. This bodhisattva of great compassion has so many hands and eyes; what does he/she do them?



### Zutangji, vol. 5, Daowu’s section

師問雲巖、「千手千眼如何。」（道吾、雲巖に問う、「千手千眼は如何。」）

巖云、「如無燈夜把着枕头。」（雲巖云く、「無燈の夜に枕头を把著するが如し。」）

云、「汝還知不。」（云く、「汝、還た知るや不や。」）

師云、「我会也。我会也。」（師云く、「我会せり。我会せり。」）

雲巖却問、「作麼生会。」（雲巖却て問う、「作麼生か会す。」）

師云、「通身是眼。」（師云く、「通身是れ眼なり。」）

神山云、「渾身是眼。」（神山云く、「渾身れは眼なり。」）

The master (Daowu) asked Yunyan, “What is [the bodhisattva with] a thousand hands and eyes like?”

Yunyan said, “It is like grabbing a pillow in the night without light.”

[Yunyan] asked, “Do you also know it?”

The master said, “I understand! I understand!”

Yunyan asked, “How do you understand it?”

Daowu said, “The entire body is an eye.”

[Later] Shenshan said, “The whole body is an eye.”<sup>1</sup>

The first difference between the two older versions and the Song Dynasty *koan* versions concerns who asked the first question. In the older versions, Daowu asks the first question and Yunyan replies about Avalokiteshvara, saying his/her actions to help living beings with his/her thousand hands and eyes is like grabbing a pillow in the darkness of night. When Yunyan asks Daowu to express his understanding, Daowu says Avalokiteshvara’s entire body (通身, *tsushin*) is eyes, and the dialogue ends. At a later time, Yunyan’s disciple, Shenshan Sengmi (神山僧密, Shinzan Somitsu,?-?), who is well known for having been the dharma brother of Dongshan (洞山, Tozan) and for traveling and practicing with him for many years, added a comment using another word for “whole body” (渾身, *konshin*). But in the original conversation between Yunyan and Daowu, Yunyan simply

says the bodhisattva is like grabbing a pillow in the dark, and Daowu says the entire body is an eye. So there is no way to compare their statements or discuss which is superior.

### **Jingde chuandeng lu, vol.14, Yunyan’s section**

道吾問、「大悲千手眼那箇是正眼。」（道吾問、「大悲千手眼那箇か是れ正眼。」）

師曰「如無燈時把得枕头怎麼生。」（師曰、「燈無き時、枕子を把得するが如きは怎麼生。」）

道吾曰「我會也。我會也。」（道吾曰、「我會せり。我會せり。」）

師曰「怎麼生會」（師曰「怎麼生か會す」）

道吾曰「通身是眼。」（道吾曰「通身是れ眼なり。」）

Daowu asked, “The Great Compassion [Bodhisattva] has a thousand hands and eyes. Which of them is the true eye?”

The master (Yunyan) said, “What about grabbing a pillow when there is no light?”

Daowu said, “I understand! I understand!”

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

Daowu said, “The entire body is an eye.”<sup>2</sup>

In this version Daowu again asks the question, “which eye is the true eye of Avalokiteshvara?”, and Yunyan answers, “What about grabbing a pillow when there is no light?”, again using “grabbing” rather than “groping for” as he does in later versions. So the person is sleeping in the complete darkness of a night without light. Sometimes we also may experience this; while sleeping our pillow gets out of place, and we try to get it underneath our head again. Even though we are half asleep, it’s completely dark,

and we cannot see, somehow we manage to do it by using our hand as if it has an eye. This is how the bodhisattva uses his/her many hands and eyes to help living beings without discriminating. In this version too, there is no comparison between Dowu's and Yunyan's words.

Anyway, in both Zutangji and Jingde chuan-deng lu this conversation is shorter and simpler than in later versions. When we read the same *koan* stories in different texts and find that one version is longer, more meaningful and interesting, we can almost always judge that the longer version was devised in the Song dynasty during the process of producing *koan* collections.

Since the three versions of this *koan* found in *The Blue Cliff Record*, *The Book of Serenity*, and *Shobogenzo Kannon* are almost the same, I will now introduce my translation of the version in Dogen's *Shobogenzo Kannon*.

### **Shobogenzo Kannon (Avalokiteshvara)**

雲巖無住大師、問道吾山修一大師、「大悲菩薩、用許多手眼作麼。」（雲巖無住大師、道吾山修一大師に問う、「大悲菩薩、許多の手眼を用いて作麼。」）

道吾云、「人夜間背手摸枕头。」（道吾云く、「人の夜間に手を背にして枕子を摸するが如し。」）

雲巖曰、「我會也、我會也。」（雲巖曰く、「我れ會せり、我れ會せり。」）

道吾云、「汝作麼生會。」（道吾云く、「汝作麼生か會せる。」）

雲巖曰、「徧身是手眼。」（雲巖曰く、「徧身是れ手眼。」）

道吾云、「道也太殺道、祇道得八九成。」（道吾云く、「道うことは太殺道へり、祇だ道得すること八九成なり。」）

雲巖曰、「某甲祇如此、師兄作麼生。」（雲巖曰く、「某甲は祇だ此の如し、師兄作麼生。」）  
道吾云、「通身是手眼。」（道吾云く、「通身是れ手眼。」）

Great Master Yunyan Wuzhu (Ungan Muju) asked Great Master Daowu Xiuyi (Dogo Shu-itsu), “What does the Great Compassion Bodhisattva do with innumerable hands and eyes?”

Daowu said, “[The bodhisattva] is like a person who is reaching his hand behind, groping for a pillow in the night.”

Yunyan said, “I understand! I understand!”

Daowu said, “How do you understand?”

Yunyan said, “Throughout the body, there are hands and eyes.”

Daowu said, “You spoke quite well. But only eighty or ninety percent was achieved.”

Yunyan said, “I am just like this. What about you, dharma brother?”

Daowu said, “The entire body is hands and eyes.”<sup>3</sup>

## **7. The Avalokiteshvara Koan in Rinzai Zen and Chinese Soto Zen**

This is a well-known *koan* and it appears both in *The Blue Cliff Record* and *The Book of Serenity*. Both texts are collections of 100 *koans*. *The Blue Cliff Record* is considered to be the most important text in the Rinzai (Linji) Zen tradition, and *The Book of Serenity* was produced and now used in the Soto (Caodong) Zen tradition. Whenever I find the same *koan* story in both of these *koan* collections, I try to compare them to better understand the similarities and differences between the Rinzai and Chinese Soto approach. If Dogen has recorded com-

ments on the *koan*, it's also interesting to compare Dogen's unique perspective. Historically, Japanese Soto Zen considered Dogen's teaching to be exactly the same as Chinese Soto Zen teachings. But these days, for the last twenty years or so, scholars think at least some parts of Dogen's teaching is different from the Chinese Soto tradition referred to as "Silent Illumination" Zen.

Rinzai Zen is referred to as *Kanna Zen* (看話禪). Often it is called *Koan Zen* (公案禪), but this is misleading since both the Rinzai and Soto traditions use *koans*. But how the *koans* are used in these traditions is different. *Kanna Zen* is the more accurate way to describe Rinzai *koan* practice. *Kan* (看) means "to see," and *na* (話, *wa*) is "a story." In the Rinzai Zen practice of "seeing a story" during *zazen* practice, practitioners are instructed to focus on, contemplate, and "become one with" the essential point of a *koan* given by their teacher. The *koan* is used in their *zazen* practice as an object of meditation.

But in Soto Zen, studying *koans* is the same as studying sutras or other Buddhist texts. Soto Zen in China was called *Mokusho Zen* (默照禪). *Moku* (默) means "silent" and *sho*(照) is "illumination." *Mokusho* was originally used by a Soto Zen master, Hongzhi Zhenjue (宏智正覺, Wanshi Shogaku, 1091-1157) to express his insight into *zazen* practice. Later, the Rinzai master Dahui Zonggao (大慧宗杲, Dai-e Soko, 1089-1163) used this expression to criticize the style of practice of contemporary Soto Zen masters, calling it *Mokusho-ja Zen*. *Ja* means "evil", and Dahui's criticism stemmed from

Soto's lack of emphasis on the attainment of enlightenment, *satori*, or *kensho*. In the Soto Zen tradition, practitioners sit silently, without doing anything. We can see the difference when we compare *koans* that appear in both *The Blue Cliff Record* and *The Book of Serenity*.

## 8. "Throughout the body (*henshin*)" and "entire body (*tsushin*)"

In Dogen's version of the conversation, Yunyan and Daowu make almost identical statements about the body of Avalokiteshvara. Yunyan said, "Throughout the body, there are hands and eyes." (徧身是手眼; *hen shin ze shu gen*) and Daowu said, "The entire body is hands and eyes (通身是手眼; *tsu shin ze shu gen*)." These two sayings are almost identical, yet Daowu said Yunyan's saying was pretty good but expressed only eighty percent. So in this conversation there is a comparison: Yunyan expressed eighty percent, and Daowu expressed one hundred percent. The point of this *koan* seems to be the difference between these two sayings.

I think the person or people who made this story into a *koan* used the traditional images of Daowu as sharp-witted and Yunyan as rather dull-witted. The images of these two zen masters was created in various ancient stories, as in those I introduced in the last issue of *Dharma Eye*.

Before I begin to examine Dogen's *Shobogenzo Kannon* and consider how his unique approach was different from the Chinese Zen traditions, I'd like to discuss this conversation as it appears in *The Blue Cliff Record* and *The Book of Serenity*

## 9. The Blue Cliff Record

The hundred *koans* in *the Blue Cliff Record* were originally collected by a Yunmen School Zen Master, Xuedou Chongxian (雪竇重顯, Seccho Juken, 980-1052). He composed a verse which expresses the essential meaning of each *koan*. Later the Rinzai Zen master Yuanwu Keqing (圓悟克勤, Engo Kokugon, 1063-1135) gave lectures (*teisho*) on each of the hundred *koans* and Xuedou's verses. The record of Yuanwu's lectures became *The Blue Cliff Record*. This *koan*, "The Hands and Eyes of the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion", is case 89.

### Yuanwu's introduction

The first part of each *koan* is called the "Pointer" or Introduction, and in this one Yuanwu comments as follows:

If your whole body were an eye, you still wouldn't be able to see it. If your whole body were an ear, you still wouldn't be able to hear it. If your whole body were a mouth, you still wouldn't be able to speak of it. If your whole body were mind, you still wouldn't be able to perceive it. Now leaving aside "whole body" for a moment, if suddenly you have no eyes, how would you see? Without ears, how would you hear? Without a mouth, how would you speak? Without a mind, how would you perceive? Here, if you can unfurl a single pathway, then you'd be a fellow student with the ancient Buddhas. But leaving aside "studying" for the moment, under whom would you study?<sup>4</sup>

Yuanwu paraphrased Daowu's, "The whole body is hands and eyes." He indicates "hands

and eyes" is an abbreviation representing all of the six sense organs and says, "If your whole body were an eye, you still wouldn't be able to see it." Because I don't know much about how this saying has been understood in the Rinzai tradition, what I write here is only my personal interpretation. I think Yuanwu understood "whole body" as the entire network of interdependent origination, having the same meaning as "the ten-direction world is a single eye of the sramana." He's saying when we see that the whole body is "the ten-direction world as one single eye," there is no separation between self and other or the eye (subject) and other things (object), so "seeing" is not possible.

When considering the karmic, conditioned "self" that is a collection of five aggregates (body and mind), we say our six sense organs interact with their respective objects, and we say we see a form, or we hear a sound, etc. Our common sense tells us there is an eye that is seeing and there is the object that is seen. Buddhist teachings tell us that when the six sense organs contact their objects, the six consciousnesses arise, and all of these make up the eighteen elements of our life: the eye sees color, the ears hears sound, the nose smells fragrance, and so on—this is the process that enables us to live. If we had no eyes, no ears, and so on as the Heart Sutra says, we would also have no contact between subject and object.

When I teach, I sometimes use a formula to express the reality of our lives. We can represent the individual self, a collection of numberless elements, as the number one (1); since this self is nothing other than a collection of elements,

this conditioned self does not really exist as independent entity separate from others, and it is therefore zero (0), i.e. empty (*sunyata*). Because this self is empty, this self is one with all beings within the Network of Interdependent Origination ( $\infty$ ). The reality of our life can be expressed as the formula,  $1 = 0 = \infty$ .

If true reality is thus, how can we make such a separation between subject and object? This happens because we analyze, categorize, conceptualize and create separations between things. We do this using our minds when we believe in a subject, an object and a connection or relationship between them. But if we see our life in this structure of interconnectedness, there's no such separation between self and others because we are all connected as one whole body. How can we live out this reality of  $1 = 0 = \infty$ ? This is the question Yuanwu asks his students to penetrate.

Within this reality of no separation, we need to find a path to walk. If we can do it, we are a "fellow student," a friend of all buddhas and ancestors. Is there a teacher who can show us this reality? Of course, the answer is "no". There's no teacher who can show you this reality. We have to awaken to and see this reality by ourselves. And yet, even though there is no separation between ourselves and other beings and things, and the subject/object relationship we experience is a kind of illusion, we have to study, practice, and live 24 hours a day, seven days a week, using our eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. This is a very strange, seemingly contradictory thing. The question becomes, "What is this strange thing called

human life?" Or we could ask, as Yuanwu finally says, "Under whom would you study?" "Whom" is a translation of 什麼人, literally "what person." Actually, this "what person" is the self that is  $1 = 0 = \infty$ .

### Yuanwu's commentary

After the main case, Yuanwu gives a commentary on the conversation between Yunyan and Daowu:

Yun Yen (Yunyan) and Tao Wu (Daowu) were fellow students under Yao Shan (Yaoshan). For forty years Yun's side did not touch his mat. Yao Shan produced the whole Ts'ao-Tung (Caodong) school. There were three men with whom the Path of Dharma flourished: Descended from Yun Yen was Tung Shan; descended from Tao Wu was Shih Shuang; and descended from Ch'uan Tzu was Chia Shan.

Yuanwu says that the riverhead of the Chinese Soto School was Yaoshan and his three disciples, Yunyan, Daowu, and Chuanzi Desheng (船子德誠, Sensu Tokujo, ?-?). Each of these masters and their disciples are important ancestors in our tradition. Among them, Yunyan practiced very hard without "putting his side on the floor", that is, he sat even when he slept. Then Yuanwu starts to talk about Avalokiteshvara:

The Bodhisattva of Great Compassion (Avalokiteshvara) has eighty-four thousand symbolic arms. Great Compassion has this many hands and eyes – do all of you?" Pai Chang said, "All sayings and writings return

to one's self. ”

Rather than a thousand, Yuanwu says Avalokiteshvara has eighty-four thousand arms. This means they are innumerable. The expression “eighty-four thousand dharma gates” is related to this. “Dharma gates” refers to dharma teachings, and because we living beings have eighty-four thousand delusions causing us innumerable problems, we need eighty-four thousand kinds of medicine. This is why Avalokiteshvara needs numberless hands and eyes.

Yuanwu also asks his students if they have the same numbers of hands and eyes. He is asking them if they are themselves the bodhisattva of great compassion. Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva is not something outside of us, like a god or goddess beyond this world. Rather, each one of us is Avalokiteshvara as the infinite ( $\infty$ ) self. The point is to ask how each one of us as a conditioned self (1) can function as one of the thousand hands and eyes of compassion.

Yuanwu then quotes another Zen master, Pai Chang (Baizhang Huaihai, 百丈懷海, Hyakujo Ekai, 720-814), who said all of the sayings and expressions in Buddhist teachings are about ourselves, no one else. Yuanwu is saying we should apply this expression of Avalokiteshvara's hands and eyes to ourselves.

Then Yuanwu starts to talk about the conversation between Yunyan and Daowu:

Yun Yen often followed Tao Wu, to study and ask questions to settle his discernment with certainty. One day he asked him, “What

does the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion use so many hands and eyes for?” Right at the start Tao Wu should have given him a blow of the staff across his back, to avoid so many complications appearing later. But Tao Wu was compassionate – he couldn't be like this. Instead, he gave Yun Yen an explanation of the reason, meaning to make him understand immediately. Instead (of hitting him) Tao Wu said, “It's like someone reaching back groping for a pillow in the middle of the night.” Groping for a pillow in the depth of the night without any lamplight – tell me, where are the eyes?

It seems Yuanwu considered Daowu to be sharp-witted and superior to Yunyan, saying Yunyan followed Daowu and relied heavily on him to answer any questions he had about the dharma. Again, this image comes from the stories I introduced previously.

Next Yuanwu shows us an example of the difference between the Rinzai and Soto approach. In keeping with the Rinzai style, he says instead of giving a metaphorical answer, Daowu should have beaten Yunyan without saying anything. Yuanwu tells us this would have been a more straightforward and kind teaching method. But because Daowu answered using the metaphor of groping for a pillow, the conversation became more complicated, and Yunyan continued to use delusive thinking.

Yuanwu was critical of both Daowu and Yunyan because they had a conversation using words and concepts rather than using hitting or shouting to express the dharma. From the Rinzai

point of view, conversations are something extra. Yuanwu said Daowu gave an explanation out of compassion for his dharma brother, but this compassion is a problem according to this approach.

It is not only in the Rinzai tradition that this compassionate use of language to share the dharma is seen as a problem, as a “sickness” of the bodhisattva. In the very beginning of the second chapter of the Lotus Sutra, for example, the Buddha said the true reality of all beings cannot be reached by human discriminative thinking, and only a buddha together with a buddha can penetrate it. But somehow the Buddha went on to speak of the true reality of all beings anyway. So this is not only the sickness of bodhisattvas, it is also Buddha’s sickness. And after Shakyamuni attained awakening under the Bodhi tree, he hesitated to teach, thinking, “The truth I awakened to is too subtle and profound. Even if I try to explain it, no one will understand.” Yet somehow he stood up and walked to Deer Park where he began to teach the five monks.

This was the beginning of Buddhism; Buddhism began based on this sickness. I think from the very beginning there has been this contradiction, that truth or reality is beyond the reach of the thinking mind, but in order to share this truth we have to use language as an expression of our compassion. This has been the cause of complications in the entirety of Buddhism, not just in this conversation between Yunyan and Daowu. Because Buddha started to teach, all Buddhists become far from the reality beyond thinking since we need to use thinking to con-

sider and understand what Buddha taught. And during the course of Buddhist history, many scholar monks created lofty systems of philosophy such as the *Abhidharma*. All of these systems are explanations of the reality beyond language, but their creation has become a disaster. No one can read this huge collection of Buddhist philosophical texts. Trying to find the truth in the written scriptures is really a waste of time and energy from the zen point of view. So Daowu is creating the same kind of a waste. But without this compassion that causes problems, we cannot really share the dharma. This is a very basic problem when we are aspired to study and practice Buddha-dharma.

Anyway, Daowu couldn’t bring himself to just hit Yunyan, but instead he said something using his thinking mind. This is the criticism from Yuanwu as a Rinzai master. From this point of view, the sayings of both Yunyan and Daowu were just words and concepts; both are off the mark. This is what Yuanwu means when he says their statements are the same. From his point of view, a zen master should use hitting and shouting to allow a practitioner to actually wake up to the reality beyond thinking.

But say, is “all over the body” right, or is “throughout the body” right? Although they seem covered with mud, nevertheless they are bright and clean. People these days often make up emotional interpretations and say that “all over the body” is wrong, while “throughout the body” is right – they’re merely chewing over the Ancients’ words and phrases. They have died in the Ancients’ words, far from realizing that the Ancients’

meaning isn't in the words, and that all talk is used as something that can't be avoided. People these days add footnotes and set up patterns, saying that if one can penetrate this case, then this can be considered understanding enough to put an end to study. Groping with their hands over their bodies and over the lamp and the pillar, they all make a literal understanding of "throughout the body." If you understand this way, you degrade those Ancients quite a bit.

Thus it is said, "He studied the living phrase; he doesn't study the dead phrase." You must cut off emotional defilements and conceptual thinking, become clean and naked, free and unbound – only then will you be able to see this saying about Great Compassion.

Yuanwu goes on to criticize the later generations of students in the Song Dynasty. He says they interpreted the dialogue in this way or that way, using their thinking minds, and this is like washing muddy hands with muddy water; it's trying to be free from the thinking mind using the thinking mind. According to him they are deluded within delusion, using language to discuss the reality beyond language.

Yuanwu expressed his understanding as his style of practice. He saw speaking about the dharma as "emotional interpretation", *joge* (情解). *Jo* can mean "emotion" or "sentiment" and *ge* is "understanding." As a Buddhist term this is a synonym of *joshiki* (情識). *Shiki* is "consciousness", and *joshiki* is the combination of consciousness and emotion, or "karmic consciousness." When our sense organs contact an object, we experience a sensation and a perception, in our

mind we think about the sensation and perception, and then we define them as good or bad, valuable or useless, beneficial or harmful, etc. etc. At the same time emotions arise such as attraction or aversion, love or hate, etc. The combination of thinking and emotion constitutes *joge* or *joshiki*. Then we take action based on these experiences and create karma resulting in wholesome or unwholesome results. Yuanwu is saying when we study this kind of *koan* or dialogue between zen masters, we often try to understand them with our karmic consciousness, using self-centered logic or reasoning that is always accompanied by emotions such as attraction or aversion. According to him we are only "chewing words" such as "entire body", "throughout the body" or "all over the body", and we don't truly see reality.

He says people who do this are dead; their way of thinking has no life because it's just the conceptual analyzation of ancient words. For him these people are just talking about the reality beyond words and letters using words and letters.

But we should recognize that because the Buddha couldn't avoid teaching, he explained the Dharma using words and letters. In a sense, the Buddha translated his experience into language for several weeks before standing up to walk to Deer Park. When we study and practice, we need to translate what we study using language into our experience.

At the time of Yuanwu, zen practitioners thought this *koan* was very difficult and if they came to understand it they could say, "My prac-

tice is complete.” Yuanwu criticizes these common zen practitioners who understood this conversation using thinking.

“Groping with their hands over their bodies and over the lamp and the pillar, they all make a literal understanding of “throughout the body” refers to people expressing their understanding to their teachers, trying to show they are free from language; they just “grope things with their hands”. A “lamp and pillar” are things in front of the master when he/she gives a discourse in the Dharma Hall.

This is how zen practitioners were studying or practicing with this *koan* at the time. But Yuanwu says this is no good at all. He asks instead for his students to study the “living phrase,” *kakku* (活句), not the “dead phrase,” *shiku* (死句). This “living phrase” and “dead phrase” are important terms in the Rinzai tradition. *Katsu* literally means “living” or “lively” or “vivid”, and *shi* is “dead.” In terms of Rinzai Zen practice, *kakku* means any phrase that allows us to stop thinking. For example, “*mu*” in the case of the koan in which Zhaozhou was asked, “Does a dog have Buddha nature?” In response Joshu said “*mu*”, and that’s the end of the conversation. According to *Mumonkan*, this *mu* is not the opposite of *wu* or “being”. Rather *mu* is absolute nothingness, and there’s no way to conceptualize it. That kind of phrase is called a *kkaku* or “living phrase.” Other phrases which allow us to think conceptually are called “dead phrases.” According to this approach we should study some phrase or expression like *mu* – many *koans* used in Rinzai are almost

nonsense. This means we cannot understand or grasp them using our intellects and they allow us to stop thinking and open our eyes to the reality beyond thinking.

This kind of practice – stopping thinking and opening our eyes to see the reality with direct and pure experience beyond concepts – emphasizes enlightenment or *kensho* experiences. To have such an experience, according to this approach, we must cut off the discriminative, thinking mind. Then we become clean and naked because we are free from thinking and not bound by our concepts and discrimination.

Next Yuanwu introduces another similar *koan* story about Ts’ao-shan (Caoshan Benji, 曹山本寂, Sozan Honjaku, 980-10520), the disciple of Dongshan (Tozan) and Yunyan’s dharma grandson. This conversation sounds similar to that of Yunyan and Daowu:

Haven’t you heard how Ts’ao Shan asked a monk, “How is it when the dharmakaya, the body of the true reality, is manifesting form in accordance with being, like the moon reflected in the water?”

The monk said, “Like an ass looking at a well.”

Shan said, “You have said quite a lot, but you’ve only said eighty percent of it.”

The monk said, “What do you say, Teacher?”

Shan said, “It’s like the well looking at the ass.”

This is the same meaning as the main case. If you go to their words to see, you’ll never be able to get out of Tao Wu’s and Yun Yen’s trap.

In this case the moon represents absolute reality, and we see it's reflection on the water. This water is our mind. The reflection is not the moon itself, but the moon makes itself manifest within the water.

In response to Ts'ao-shan's question, the monk says, "Like an ass looking at a well." So there is a well with water in it, and as an ass looks in the well, it's face is of course reflected on the water. So the monk said when the *dharma* manifests in form it is like a donkey looking at a reflection of its face on the water, without thinking. Then Caoshan said, "You have said quite a lot, but you've only said 80 percent." This is exactly the same as what Daowu said. But Caoshan's expression is the opposite of the monk's. He says, "It's like the well looking at the ass."

### Xuedou's verse

遍身是。(遍身是か。)  
通身是。(通身是か。)  
拈來猶較十萬里。(拈じ來れば猶を十萬里を較つ。)  
展翅鵬騰六合雲。(翅を展げて鵬騰す六合の雲。)  
搏風鼓蕩四溟水。(風を搏って鼓蕩す四溟の水。)  
是何埃壒兮忽生。(是れ何の埃壒ぞ、忽ちに生ず。)  
那箇毫釐兮未止。(那箇の毫釐ぞ、未まだ止まざる。)  
君不見、(君見ずや、)  
網珠垂範影重重。(網珠、範を垂れて影重重たるを、)  
棒頭手眼從何起。(棒頭の手眼何よりか起る。)  
咄。(咄。)

"All over the body" is right -

"Throughout the body" is right -

Bringing it up is still a hundred thousand miles away.

Spreading its wings, the Roc soars over the clouds of the six compounds -

It propels the wind to beat against the waters of the four oceans.

What speck of dust suddenly arises?

What wisp of hair hasn't stopped?

You don't see?

The net of jewels hanging down in patterns; reflections upon reflections.

Where do the hands and eyes on the staff come from?

Bah!

In the beginning of the verse, Xuedou says both Yunyan and Daowu were right but their words were still far away from reality. The next two lines are about the image of *Avalokiteshvara* with a thousand hands and eyes. The statue of the bodhisattva looks like a big bird, with the hands and eyes appearing to be wings. Xuedou uses the image of the big bird Peng (鵬) that appears in the very beginning of the first chapter of the *Chuangtsu*, an ancient Taoist text. When this bird spread its wings, it rose above the clouds and made waves on the four oceans. However, the verse indicates the real *Avalokiteshvara* is immeasurably larger than such a limited image. It is the entirety of Indra's Net, in which all jewels of the net reflect each other. Finally, Xuedou says Indra's net is the hands and eyes on Deshan's (Tokusan's) staff, used for hitting his disciples to release them from the realm of thinking. It is clear Xuedou does not appreciate Yunyan and Daowu's conversation so much. In the last line, he says methods such as Linji's (Rinzai's)

shouting and Deshan's hitting with his staff are more straightforward.

Xuedou was a Yunmen School monk, and Deshan was Yunmen's dharma grandfather. In the end of *Shobogenzo Mujouseppo* (The Dharma-expounding of Insentient Beings), Dogen stresses the importance of expounding the dharma, and he says the followers of Linji and Deshan did not know this. It is clear that even though he respects Xuedou and Yuanwu, Dogen does not agree with them on this point.

It is interesting to me that in his commentary on Xuedou's verse, Yuanwu introduces the teaching of the four dharma realms (*datsu*) from the system of the Fayuan (Kegyen) School of philosophy: the Dharma realm of principle (理法界), the Dharma realm of phenomena (事法界), the Dharma realm of principle and phenomena unobstructed (理事無礙法界), and the Dharma realm of no obstruction among phenomena (事事無礙法界). This teaching can be another pitfall into conceptual thinking. Probably that was one reason Yuanwu's disciple, Dahui, burned *The Blue Cliff Record*.

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<sup>1</sup> Okumura's unpublished translation.

<sup>2</sup> Okumura's unpublished translation.

<sup>3</sup> Okumura's unpublished translation.

<sup>4</sup> The Translation of *the Blue Cliff Record* used in this article is by Thomas Clearly & J.C. Clearly in *The Blue Cliff Record* (Shambhala, 1992), p.489 -495.

## One Bright Pearl

### *Ikka myōju*

Translated by  
The Soto Zen Text Project

#### *Introduction*

This chapter, written at Dōgen's *Kōshōji* monastery near Kyoto in the early summer of 1238, marks the beginning of its author's serious work on the *Shōbōgenzō* texts. It occurs as number 7 in both the sixty- and seventy-five-chapter early *Shōbōgenzō* compilations, and as number 4 in the twentieth-century Honzan edition published by *Eiheiji*.

"One Bright Pearl" is devoted entirely to a single saying of the Tang-dynasty monk Xuansha Shibe: "All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl." The pearl has a rich metaphorical life in Buddhist literature: as the luminous consciousness on the floor of the ocean of the mind, as the wish-fulfilling gem held by the dragon, as the sign of majesty in the king's topknot, as the perfect self rolling freely round the bowl of the world. Here, in Dōgen's telling, everything everywhere is such a pearl. Hence, he can say toward the end of his essay that merely to know this is itself the bright pearl, even to doubt this is the bright pearl.

#### Treasury of the True Dharma Eye

#### Number 7

#### One Bright Pearl

Great Master Zongyi of Mount Xuansha Cloister, in Fuzhou, Land of the Great Song, in the Saha world: his dharma name was Shibe;

his lay surname was Xie.<sup>1</sup> As a householder, he loved fishing and went out in a boat on the Nantai River with the fishermen.<sup>2</sup> It seems he did not wait for the golden-scaled one that rises of itself without being caught.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of the Xiantong era of the Tang, he suddenly felt the desire to leave the dusty world.<sup>4</sup> Abandoning his boat, he entered the mountains.<sup>5</sup> He was thirty years of age. He understood the perils of the floating world and knew the great worth of the way of the buddhas. Eventually, he climbed Mount Xuefeng and, studying with Great Master Zhenjue, pursued the way day and night.<sup>6</sup>

One time, in order widely to study [under masters in] all quarters, he was leaving the ridge with his bag in his hand when he stubbed his toe on a rock.<sup>7</sup> Bleeding and in pain, he suddenly reflected earnestly, saying, “If this body doesn’t really exist, where does the pain come from?” Thereupon, he returned to Xuefeng.

Feng asked, “What is this Bei Dhūta?”

Xuansha said, “I would never fool anyone.”<sup>8</sup>

These words, Xuefeng especially liked and said, “Who does not possess these words? Yet

who could say these words?”<sup>9</sup>

Xuefeng further asked, “Bei Dhūta, why don’t you go on extensive study?”<sup>10</sup>

The Master said, “Dharma didn’t come to the Eastern Land; the Second Ancestor didn’t go to Sindh in the West.”<sup>11</sup>

When he said this, Xuefeng praised him even more.

Since he had always been a fisherman, [Xuansha] had never seen books even in his dreams; yet because he made depth of

commitment his priority, he displayed a determination beyond that of his peers. Xuefeng, too, thought that he stood out in his assembly and praised him as pre-eminent among his followers. For his robe, he used plant fibers and, since he did not change it for another, he patched and re-patched it. Against his skin, he used a paper garment or wore mugwort fiber. Apart from studying with Xuefeng, he visited no other wise friends. And yet he certainly acquired the authority to inherit the dharma of his master.

After he eventually attained the way, in instructing people he would say, “All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Once, a monk asked him, “I’ve heard that you say, ‘All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl.’ How is your student to understand it?”<sup>12</sup>

The Master said, “All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl. What’s the use of understanding it?”

The next day the Master in his turn asked the monk, “All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl. How do you understand it?”

The monk said, “All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl. What’s the use of understanding it?”

The Master said, “Now I know that you make your living inside the ghost cave at the Black Mountains.”<sup>13</sup>

The words spoken here, “All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl,” originate with Xuansha. Their essential point is

that “all the worlds in the ten directions” are not vast, are not minute, are not square or round, are not centered and upright, are not brisk and lively, are not everywhere exposed.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, because they are not birth and death, coming and going, they are birth and death, coming and going.<sup>15</sup> This being so, “Once, in the past, he left from this”; now, he comes through this.<sup>16</sup> When we exhaustively examine them, who would discern that they are in pieces? Who would propose that they are firmly fixed?<sup>17</sup>

“All the worlds in the ten directions” means that pursuing things as the self and pursuing the self as a thing are without rest.<sup>18</sup> The “blockage” spoken of “when feelings arise and wisdom is blocked” — this is turning the head and changing the face; it is divulging the matter and achieving accord.<sup>19</sup> Because they are “pursuing things as the self,” they are “all ten directions” “without rest.” Because they are a principle before their functioning, they can exceed our control of the essence of their functioning.<sup>20</sup>

“This one pearl” though not a name, is a saying, and this has sometimes been recognized as a name.<sup>21</sup> “One pearl” is “it would surely take ten thousand years.”<sup>22</sup> It is “the past throughout is not yet over when the present throughout has already arrived.”<sup>23</sup> While there is a present of the body and a present of the mind, they are the “bright pearl.”<sup>24</sup> It is not the grasses and trees of here and there; it is not the mountains and rivers of heaven and earth: it is the “bright pearl.”<sup>25</sup>

“How is your student to understand it?” This saying, though it resembles the monk’s playing with karmic consciousness, is “the manifestation of the great function” is the great rule.<sup>26</sup> Going further, “one foot of water”

should thrust up one foot of wave: that is, ten feet of pearl is ten feet of bright.<sup>27</sup>

In making his statement, Xuansha’s words are, “All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl. What’s the use of understanding it?” This saying is a statement that buddhas inherit from buddhas, ancestors inherit from ancestors, Xuansha inherits from Xuansha. When he tries to avoid inheriting it, although it is not that it could not be avoided, even if for the moment he does clearly avoid it, this saying is present in all time right before us.<sup>28</sup>

The next day Xuansha asked the monk, “All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl. How do you understand it?”

This says, “Yesterday, I preached a fixed dharma”; today, I’m borrowing the pair to exhale.<sup>29</sup>

It is, “Today, I’m preaching an indeterminate dharma”; it is, overturning yesterday, I’m nodding and laughing.<sup>30</sup>

The monk said, “All the worlds in the ten directions are one bright pearl. What’s the use of understanding it?”

We should say this is riding the bandit’s horse to chase the bandit.<sup>31</sup> When the old buddha preaches for your sake, “he moves among different types.”<sup>32</sup> You should for a bit turn the light around and shine it back: how many instances are there of “what’s the use of understanding it?”<sup>33</sup> To try to say something, while it might be seven milk cakes and five vegetable cakes, would be a teaching and practice “south of Xiang and north of Tan.”<sup>34</sup>

Xuansha said, “Now I know that you make your living inside the ghost cave at the Black Mountains.”

We should understand that, since ancient

times, the face of the sun and the face of the moon have never been switched. The face of the sun emerges together with the face of the sun; the face of the moon emerges together with the face of the moon.<sup>35</sup> Hence, “If I say in the sixth month that it’s just this time, you shouldn’t say that my surname is ‘Hot.’”<sup>36</sup>

Thus, the suchness and beginninglessness of this bright pearl is limitless.<sup>37</sup> It is the one bright pearl of all the worlds in the ten directions; it is not described as “two” or “three.” Its whole body is a single true dharma eye; its whole body is the true body; its whole body is a single phrase; its whole body is radiance; its whole body is the whole mind.<sup>38</sup> When it is the whole body, it is not obstructed by the whole body.<sup>39</sup> It is round, round; it rolls round and round.<sup>40</sup> Since the virtues of the bright pearl appear like this, there are the present Avalokitesvara and Maitreya, seeing forms and hearing sounds, there are old buddhas and new buddhas, manifesting their bodies and preaching the dharma.<sup>41</sup>

At this very moment, hanging in empty space or hanging inside a garment, tucked under the chin or tucked in the topknot — these are all the one bright pearl of all the worlds in the ten directions.<sup>42</sup> To be hanging inside your garment represents the standard; do not say, “Let’s hang it outside.” To be in the topknot or under the chin represents the standard; do not think to play with them in front of the topknot or in front of the chin. There is a close friend who gives a pearl when one is drunk; he always gives the pearl to his close friend. When the pearl is hung, he is always drunk. “Since you are such” is the one bright pearl of all the worlds in the ten directions.<sup>43</sup>

Therefore, although it seems to change its appearance as it spins or does not spin, it is the bright pearl. To know that there truly is a pearl like this — this itself is the bright pearl. The bright pearl has sound and form that is perceived like this. When they “have got such,” those who confusedly think, “we are not the bright pearl,” should be without doubts about not being the pearl.<sup>44</sup> The actions and non-actions of being confused and doubting, accepting and rejecting — these are just temporary small views; going further, they are just making it resemble something small.<sup>45</sup>

Can you not but love it? The colorful lights like this of the bright pearl are boundless. Each bit and each ray of each color and each light is a virtue of all the worlds in the ten directions. Who could seize them? In the market, there is no one who would toss out a tile.<sup>46</sup> Do not worry about falling or not falling into the cause and effect of the six paths.<sup>47</sup> Our not being in the dark about the fundamental is true from head to tail; the bright pearl is its face; the bright pearl is its eye.<sup>48</sup>

Nevertheless, while neither you nor I knows what is the bright pearl and what is not the bright pearl, a hundred thinkings and a hundred not-thinkings have bundled the perfectly clear fodder.<sup>49</sup> But, thanks to the dharma words of Xuansha, we have heard about and clarified the status of body and mind as the bright pearl; therefore, the mind is not our own, and exactly as whom its arising and ceasing is the bright pearl or is not the bright pearl — the taking and rejecting of this might well worry us.<sup>50</sup> Even being confused and worrying is not not the bright pearl. Since there exists neither action nor thought brought about by what is not the

bright pearl. Since there exists neither action nor thought brought about by what is not the bright pearl, stepping forward and stepping back in the ghost cave at the Black Mountains — this is nothing but one bright pearl.<sup>51</sup>

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye  
One Bright Pearl  
Number 7

[Tōunji MS:]52

Presented to the assembly at Kannon Dōri  
Kōshō Hōrin Monastery, Uji District, Yōshū;  
eighteenth day, fourth month, fourth year of  
Katei [2 June 1238]

Copied at the residence of the head of cloister,  
Kippo Monastery, Shibi Estate, Yoshida District,  
Esshū; twenty-third day, intercalary seventh  
month of the junior water year of the rabbit, the  
first year of Kangen [8 September 1243]. The  
acolyte, Bhik u Ejō

Copied this as a memorial offering in the  
common quarters of Eihei Monastery; third day,  
second month, third year of Kakyō [1 March  
1389]. Sogō53



## Notes

1. **Great Master Zongyi of Mount Xuansha Cloister, in Fuzhou, Land of the Great Song, in the Sahā:** I.e., Xuansha Shibe (835-908). “The Saha World” (*J. Shaba sekai; S. saha-loka-dhatu*) is our world, “the realm to be endured,” in which the Buddha Sakyamuni teaches. Fuzhou is in present-day Fujian.

2. **As a householder, he loved fishing:** The biographical description in this section seems to be drawn from Xuansha’s notice in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T.2076.51:343c25-26). Dōgen discusses Xuansha’s own reference to his fishing in the “Henzan” chapter of the *Shōbōgenzō*.

**Nantai River:** The name given to the Min River at the point where it runs beneath Mount Diaotai in Fujian.

3. **golden-scaled one that rises of itself without being caught:** The mysterious golden-scaled fish is a common topic of Chan conversations. “To rise of itself without being caught” may reflect the words of Dōgen’s teacher, Tiantong Rujing (1162-1227) (*Rujing hoshang yulu*, T.2002A.48:127a17):

People of all the whole earth rise of themselves without being caught.

Dōgen uses the same image, “rising of itself before being caught,” in his discussion of Xuansha in “Henzan.”

4. **Xiantong era of the Tang:** The Xiantong era covers the years 860-875.

5. **entered the mountains:** I.e., joined the monastic community.

6. **Great Master Zhenjue:** I.e., Xuefeng Yicun (822-908). Mount Xuefeng is located near Fuzhou in present-day Fujian.

7. **One time, in order widely to study [under masters in] all quarters:** This anecdote represents a Japanese retelling of a passage appearing in the *Liandeng huiyao* (ZZ.136.818b3-6).

8. **“What is this Bei Dhūta?”:** The Chinese *toutuo* (J. zuda) transliterates Sanskrit *dhuta*, used in reference to the practice of austerities. According to his biography, Xuansha earned this sobriquet for his strict practice. Xuefeng is expressing surprise at Xuansha’s comings and goings. Some readers take Xuansha’s response here as a passive: “I would never be deceived by anyone.”

9. **“Who does not possess these words?”:** Xuefeng’s words, given here in Japanese, do not appear in the standard accounts of this episode, and Dōgen’s source for them is uncertain.

10. **Xuefeng further asked:** A continuation of the preceding quotation (from ZZ.136.818b8-6).

11. **“Dharma”:** I.e., Bodhidharma, said to have brought the Zen lineage from India (“Sindh in the West”) to China (“the Eastern Land”) and to have transmitted it there to the Second Ancestor, Huike (487-593).

12. **Once, a monk asked him:** Dōgen here switches into Chinese to quote the following conversation, which can be found, e.g., at *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T.2076.51:346c16-21), as well as in Dōgen’s *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:132, case 15).

13. **the ghost cave at the Black Mountains:** A common image in Chan literature for the confines of fixed intellectual or spiritual positions; based on the Buddhist tradition that there are mountain ranges to the north of Jambudvīpa inhabited by phantoms. Some readers take Xuansha’s words here as ironic praise.

14. **brisk and lively:** A loose rendering of a common Chinese idiom expressing the quick, powerful movements of a fish.

**everywhere exposed:** Rendering a term that can mean either “clearly visible” or “visible far and wide.”

15. **birth and death, coming and going:** An expression appearing often in Chan texts and in the *Shōbōgenzō* for the process of reincarnation, as in the saying used several times by Dōgen, “birth and death, coming and going, are the true human body.”

16. **“Once, in the past, he left from this”; now, he comes through this:** Dōgen here mixes Japanese and Chinese syntax in a sentence likely reflecting the words of Rujing (*Rujing hoshang yulu* 如淨和尚語錄, T.2002A.48:126a12-13). In his second tenure as abbot of Jingci Monastery, pointing to the gate of the monastery (and referring to himself by his monastery name), Rujing said,

Once, in the past, Jingci left from this;

Once again, Jingci has come back through this. Dōgen’s own sentence here may represent an explanation of why he has said that “all the worlds” both do and do not “come and go”: i.e., because they are “all the worlds,” all the “coming

and going” takes place within them.

17. **in pieces; firmly fixed:** The former is a common term seen perhaps most often in the expression “the bare mind in pieces”; the latter is a term associated especially with both the posture and mental state of seated meditation.

18. **pursuing things as the self and pursuing the self as a thing:** Dōgen here switches to Chinese, as if quoting a saying, but there is no known source; possibly reflecting a common saying found in the Chan corpus (see, e.g., the words of Jingqing Daofu (864-937), *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T.2076.51:349c13-14); *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:270, case 286): Living beings are perverse: losing sight of themselves, they pursue things.

19. **“when feelings arise and wisdom is blocked”:** After the saying discussed in a conversation between an unnamed monk and Baoci Zangxu (dates unknown), (*Liandeng huiyao*, ZZ.136:853b8-9):

A monk asked, “I’ve heard the ancients had a saying, ‘When feelings arise, wisdom is blocked; when thoughts change, the substance is isolated.’ How about when feelings have not yet arisen?”

The Master said, “Blocked.”

**turning the head and changing the face:** A common expression in Chan literature that seems to be interpreted along two lines: (a) “turning the head and face,” used to express a spiritual turning, or “conversion”; (b) “turning the head is turning the face,” to express the inseparability or interdependence of two things.  
**divulging the matter and achieving accord:** Two

terms regularly occurring together in Chan literature, the former used for expressions of what one really thinks; the latter, for matching the understanding of one’s interlocutor (often the master).

20. **Because they are a principle before their functioning, they can exceed our control of the essence of their functioning:** Perhaps meaning that, because “all the worlds in the ten directions” precede their phenomenal activity, their essential nature cannot be fully understood through that activity. (The translation strains to preserve the lexical parallel between “before to their functioning” and “essence of their functioning”.)

21. **“This one pearl,” though not a name, is a saying:** Reading the copula of Xuansha’s “is one pearl” as the pronoun “this.” The sense of “name” here is uncertain; perhaps the point is that “one pearl” is not a technical term, but its use in this saying has led to its treatment as such.

22. **“it would surely take ten thousand years”:** Perhaps reflecting a saying attributed to Shishuang Chingzhu (807-888) appearing elsewhere in the *Shōbōgenzō* and recorded in the *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:166, case 85):

Shishuang was once asked by the Senior Seat Quanming of Xuzhou, “What about when a single hair pierces multiple holes?”

The Master answered, “It would surely take ten thousand years.”

23. **“the past throughout is not yet over when the present throughout has already arrived”:**

From the expression “throughout the past and throughout the present,” a common idiom for extension through all history.

24. **There is a present of the body and a present of the mind:** Perhaps merely a playful way of saying “the present body and mind,” this could also be parsed, “the body exists in the present; the mind exists in the present.”

25. **it is the “bright pearl”:** The subject is not expressed; the translation takes it as “this one pearl.”

26. **playing with karmic consciousness:** A common expression in Chan literature for being caught up in deluded thoughts.

**“the manifestation of the great function” is the great rule:** Perhaps suggesting that the monk’s seemingly routine question is expressing “the great function.” Likely a play on the saying of Yunmen Wenyan (864-949) (see, e.g., *Yunmen Kuangzhen chanshi guanglu*, T.1998.47:554c2): The manifestation of the great function is not in the rule.

27. **“one foot of water” should thrust up one foot of wave:** Perhaps suggesting that the monk’s question, while shallow, is complete. This and the following clause are likely playing on a line of verse found in the *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu* (T.2001.48:19a25): One foot of water and ten feet of wave.

28. **this saying is present in all time right before us:** A tentative translation of a sentence difficult to interpret. Perhaps the sense is that, while Xuansha might have spoken otherwise

(and thus “avoided inheriting” the saying), the fact that he did say it is always before us.

29. **“Yesterday, I preached a fixed dharma”; “Today, I’m preaching an indeterminate dharma”:** After words attributed to the Buddha Sākyamuni in the *Liandeng huiyao* (ZZ. 136. 443b9-11):

The World-Honored One was once asked by a follower of another path, “What dharma did you preach yesterday?”

He said, “I preached a fixed dharma.”

The follower said, “What dharma do you preach today?”

He said, “I’m preaching an indeterminate dharma.”

The follower said, “Yesterday, you preached a fixed dharma. Why are you preaching an indeterminate dharma today?”

He said, “Yesterday was fixed. Today is not fixed.”

**I’m borrowing the pair to:** “The pair” here likely refers to the lips and “exhale,” to speaking. The construction parallels the expression, found in the “*Shōbōgenzō shinjin gakudō*,” “to borrow the nostrils of the buddhas and ancestors and breathe through them” (*busso no bikū o karite shukki seshime* 佛祖の鼻孔をかりて出氣せしめ).

30. **I’m nodding and laughing:** A common fixed idiom, more often in reverse order, “laughing and nodding.”

31. **riding the bandit’s horse to chase the bandit:** A common idiom (occurring with various verbs for “pursue”) for turning a statement back on the interlocutor.

32. **When the old buddha preaches for your sake, “he moves among different types”:** The translation takes “you” here to refer to the monk in the story and, though the comments could be read otherwise, treats this entire section as Dōgen’s direct address to him. “He moves among different types” is a fixed expression, occurring often in Dōgen’s writings, that derives from a saying of Nanchuan Puyuan (748-834); typically used to indicate the salvific activities of the buddhas and bodhisattvas among the various forms of living beings.

33. **turn the light around and shine it back:** A common idiom in Chan texts used in reference to Buddhist practice as the study of the self, rather than of the external world.

34. **seven milk cakes and five vegetable cakes:** Perhaps suggesting “standard fare,” “humble food.” Possibly reflecting a line in the *Rujing hoshang yulu*, T.2002A.48:125a22-23:

At the noon meal, three milk cakes and seven vegetable cakes.

**“south of Xiang and north of Tan”:** From a verse by Yingzhen (dates unknown), on Huizhong’s seamless pagoda (*Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.2076.51:245a12):

South of Xiang and north of Tan: Between, there’s gold to fill a kingdom.

There are diverse views of the exact geographical locations of “south of Xiang” and “north of Tan” (place names most often said to refer to Xiangzhou and Tanzhou in present-day Hunan Province), but the sense is generally held to be “anywhere.” On such a reading, Dōgen’s point here would seem to be that, although the monk’s question may seem prosaic, it has

universal significance.

35. **The face of the sun emerges together with the face of the sun:** I.e., the sun is just the sun (and the moon is just the moon). “Sun face” and “moon face” may also allude to two buddhas of those names given in the *Foming jing* (T.441.14:253b6-9). Here, no doubt the reference is to Xuansha and the monk: Xuansha’s question is his question; the monk’s question is the monk’s question.

36. **“If I say in the sixth month that it’s just this time, you shouldn’t say that my surname is ‘Hot’”:** The words of Yaoshan Weiyan (751-834), found in a story recorded at *Jiatai pudeng lu* (ZZ.137.110b10-13):

Once, there was an official who asked Yaoshan, “What is the Reverend’s surname?”

Yaoshan said, “Just this time.”

The official, not knowing what to make of it, went and asked a steward, “Just now, when I asked the Elder his surname, he said, ‘Just this time.’ Really, what is this surname?”

The steward said, “It’s just that his surname is Han [homophonous with ‘cold’].”

Hearing about this, Yaoshan said, “If I say in the sixth month that it’s just this time, you shouldn’t say my surname is Re [‘hot’].”

37. **the suchness and beginninglessness of this bright pearl is limitless:** A tentative translation. The unusual phrase rendered here “suchness and beginninglessness” could be read “having such beginninglessness”; that Dōgen takes the four glyphs of the phrase as two pairs is suggested by their recurrence in reverse order at *Eihei kōroku* 1 (DZZ.3:44, lecture 67). The term

rendered “limitless” can mean both “without origin” and “without reason.”

38. **a single true dharma eye:** Perhaps recalling the words of the ninth-century figure Changsha Jingcen (dates unknown) (see, e.g., *Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.2076.51:274a12-15):

All the worlds in the ten directions are the single eye of the sramana.

**true body:** Perhaps recalling Xuansha’s own words (e.g., at *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, DZZ.5:196, case 131):

All the worlds in the ten directions are this true human body.

**radiance:** A term regularly used for the nimbus surrounding the body of a buddha.

39. **not obstructed by the whole body:** Literally, “there is no obstruction of the whole body,” perhaps meaning that it is not limited to, or by, its totality.

40. **It is round, round; it rolls round and round:** Loose translation of two idiomatic expressions with the repetitive sounds *dada* and *rokuroku*, the former expressing perfect roundness, the latter free rotation.

41. **the present Avalokitesvara and Maitreya, seeing forms and hearing sounds:** A characterization of these two bodhisattvas perhaps inspired by the fact that the former’s name means “perceiver of sound (i.e., the voices of his supplicants).”

**manifesting their bodies and preaching the dharma:** Recalling a famous passage in the *Pumen* chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, T.262.9:57a20ff), in

which the Buddha describes the thirty-three manifestations through which the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara preaches the dharma and delivers beings.

42. **hanging in empty space:** Perhaps an allusion to the scene in the (T.656.16:1b24-25), in which priceless gems illumine the space above the Buddha and his assembly.

**hanging inside a garment:** Reference to the famous parable in the *Lotus Sutra*, in which a friend sews a priceless gem into the lining of the garment of a man in a drunken sleep (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T.262.9:29a6-16).

**tucked under the chin:** Allusion to the black dragon of Chinese lore that has a gem beneath its chin (see, e.g., *Zhuangzi*, Miscellaneous Chapters, Lie Yukou, 14).

**tucked in the topknot:** Reference to the *Lotus Sutra* metaphor of the sūtra as the pearl in the king’s topknot (*Miaofa lianhua jing*, T.262.9:38c28-29).

43. **“Since you are such”:** Likely an allusion, repeated below, to the famous saying attributed to Yunju Daoying (d. 902) (*Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.2076.51:335c19-20):

If you want to get such a thing,  
You should be such a person;  
Since you are such a person,  
Why worry about such a thing?

44. **“have got such”:** Variation on Yunju’s verse cited above, Note 43.

45. **going further, they are just making it resemble something small:** The object of the causative here is unstated; presumably, “the bright pearl.”

46. **Who could seize them? In the market, there is no one who would toss out a tile:** Taking the verb of the first clause here in the sense “to take by force” (or, perhaps, “to have one’s way with”); in his immediately following reference to the “market,” Dōgen seems to be recalling the phrase, occurring several times in the *Shōbōgenzō*, “to dominate the market” (perhaps in the sense “to control prices”) — as in the saying of Xuansha Shibeī recorded in Dōgen’s *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:146, case 38):

Great Master Zhenjue of Mount Xuefeng, Fuzhou (succeeded Deshan, named Yicun), pointed to the stove and said to Xuansha, “The buddhas of the three times are all inside here turning the great dharma wheel.”

Sha said, “These days the king’s orders are rather strict.”

The Master said, “How so?”

Sha said, “They don’t permit people to dominate the market.”

“Toss out a tile” translates Dōgen’s Japanese rendering of a Chinese expression from the idiom, “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, and by extension, as typically in Chan dialogues, to get back more than you offered.

47. **falling or not falling into the cause and effect of the six paths:** Allusion to the famous tale of Baizhang Huaihai (749-814) and the teacher who was reborn as a fox for saying that the person of great practice “does not fall into cause and effect.” (See, e.g., *Liandeng huiyao*, ZZ.136:495a9-b2; *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, DZZ.5:178, case 102).

48. **Our not being in the dark about the fundamental is true from head to tail:** A tentative translation of a difficult clause subject to varied readings. The phrase rendered “not being in the dark about the fundamental” might also be read “the fundamental that is not in the dark.”

49. **a hundred thinkings and a hundred not-thinkings have bundled the perfectly clear fodder:** A complicated play with the expression “perfectly clear, the tips of the hundred grasses” (also sometimes read “perfectly clear, the hundred grasses”) — as well as, perhaps, with the expression “think not-thinking.” Dōgen has here replaced “tips of the grasses” with “fodder,” a term regularly used for the subject of Chan discussion, somewhat as we might say “food for thought.”

50. **exactly as whom its arising and ceasing is the bright pearl or is not the bright pearl — the taking and rejecting of this might well worry us:** I.e., if the mind is not our own, we might well wonder whose mind is being identified with the bright pearl.

51. **stepping forward and stepping back:** A term appearing several times in the *Shōbōgenzō*; it can indicate movement forward and back but also all activities, motion and rest, etc.

52. These three colophons are from the *Tōunji* MS of the sixty-chapter *Shōbōgenzō*. The MSS of the seventy-five-chapter compilation lack colophons for this chapter.

53. **Sōgo:** 1343-1406, ninth abbot of *Eiheiji*.



## My Footnotes on Zazen (19) “The question of ‘thinking’ in zazen”(1)

Rev. Issho Fujita

When Dogen Zenji discussed zazen, he often used expressions such as “thinking of not thinking” or “nonthinking” that appear, for example, in works such as *Fukan zazengi* (“Universally Recommended Instructions for Zazen”), *Shobogenzo Zazengi* (“Rules for Zazen”), *Shobogenzo Zazenshin* (“The Needle Point of Zazen”), Dharma Hall discourses in the *Eihei Koroku* (“Dogen Zenji’s Extensive Record”), and other places. In *Dogen’s Manuals of Zen Meditation*, an outstanding study in English by Stanford University scholar Carl Bielefeldt, these various phrases are translated as “I’m thinking of not thinking” and “beyond thinking.” Although the meanings of these words are studied in detail in Carl’s book, I think that most people in English-speaking countries, on only reading these words, first of all understand “not” or “beyond” literally or superficially as a negation. That is, they understand these words to mean that zazen is to deny, reject, or transcend thought. In fact, many people think that the aim of zazen is a psychological state where there is no thought. In the so-called popular sense, this is the realization of a state referred to in Japanese as *munen muso* which can be translated as “free from worthless or worldly thoughts.” Based on this misunderstanding, most people who practice zazen have an interest coming from a way of thinking such as “I’m troubled because the

thoughts in my head are out of control. If I do zazen, then somehow it will work out. So, let’s try it and see what happens.” They want to attain a state which is like clear, blue sky where muddled, unclear thoughts – a cloud of thoughts – is completely blown away. I was a good example of this when I first began to practice zazen. I thought it would indeed be convenient if I could turn my thoughts on and off with a switch as I pleased. I thought that if this were possible it would be much easier to live.

In brief, I first learned the Rinzai practice of counting breaths (*susokkan*). This is the method of counting one’s breaths, “One breathe...” “Two breathe...” I worked with this method thinking this was to “be absorbed in” or “to focus the mind” so that thoughts would not arise. The priest who actually taught me this told me that if I became suddenly distracted from this task of counting my breaths – that is, if I noticed I was being drawn to other thoughts – I should once again start from the beginning with “One breathe...” “Two breathe...” This was just like a tug of war between counting and thinking. I thought that the relationship between these two activities was that I couldn’t satisfy both sides, so I was at a loss as to what to do. (I was damned if I did and damned if I didn’t). This is a method of zazen where it isn’t possible to think as long as you are counting numbers. It was likely to happen that as I tended to be pulled by thoughts, I would encourage myself to turn around and count rather than think. The instructions given were to focus will all my might on the counting. At the beginning before I was accustomed to counting breaths, thinking inevitably won the tug of war. But even so, as I

continued with great perseverance, I gradually became able to do it, and so I was told to not give up and do my best. Finally, I was supposed to be able to go for a long time (be one with) counting so there was no room for thoughts to arise. And so, after I was doing this for some time, I was surely able to count without it leaving [my] mind. As I am a person who tends to think, I was pleased with this progress.

Also, in America, I had several opportunities to experience ten-day meditation retreats in the Southeastern Buddhist style. While paying attention to the bodily sensations that appear and disappear in various parts of the body from the top of the head to the tips of the toes, I wondered “Is this a method of systematically scanning the entire body (body scanning/ body sweep)? Or, is it a way to label each event that occurs in the body and mind with words (labeling/mental noting)?” There are differences in each of these methods, but by practicing to absorb yourself in such a task, you will to some extent be able to experience the condition of thought not arising. The feeling is quite similar to the taste I had long ago with the counting practice where I was winning the tug of war with thoughts.

Nevertheless, whether it is the Zen method of counting breaths or Theravada Buddhism’s

body scan or labeling, this sort of cultivation of concentration is the first floor; it is only the entrance. We must not overlook the point that in either case the objective is to acquire the indispensable, fundamental ability needed to successfully carry out the authentic practice that is waiting after that. I became a practitioner of shikantaza, so I really wasn’t able to go beyond the entry to those other methods. But in the case of the Rinzai sect, after the practice of counting breaths, one enters the main menu which is working with *koans*. In the case of Theravada Buddhism, after cultivating the power of *shamata* (stopping) through body scanning and labeling, one enters the main menu of their practice called *vipassana* (viewing) which is the practice of systematic observation. These are both larger and deeper training systems. I have experienced only a small part of those forms of practice. In any case, simply because I was able to attain a state where random, disorganized thoughts (the monkey mind) keep spreading at will had calmed down, that doesn’t mean it is the end. With that as the foundation, Buddhism is to proceed further by cultivating wisdom. And so, isn’t the viewpoint that zazen and meditation is only the task of eliminating thoughts like the rashness of judging the whole building by looking only at the entrance?

(To be continued)

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## NEWS

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**May 30, 2020**

Hawaii Soto Zen Conference was held at Zoom.

**Jun 17, 2020**

South America Soto Zen Conference was held at Zoom.

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