

ENLIGHTENED AUTHORSHIP: THE CASE OF DŌGEN KIGEN

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Dōgen as author: modern and medieval conditions

This article is concerned with questions of authorship in texts related to Dōgen 道元, a Japanese monk who lived between 1200 and 1253, at the dawn of the Japanese Medieval period. The Japanese Sōtō School of Zen Buddhism reveres Dōgen as its founder. This has secured him a place in the intellectual and religious history of Japan. Furthermore, his extensive doctrinal writings in the then new scriptural format of *wakan konkōbun* 和漢混淆文, a form of writing that combines Chinese characters and lexemes with indigenous syllabic script and grammar, by their rhetorical and poetical force make him a classic of Japanese literature.

Scholarly research on Dōgen and his works originated in the 18th century as part of a reform movement within the Sōtō School.¹ In the early 1920s, Dōgen became part of a broader agenda: The influential philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō liberated him from the confines of sectarian concern and treated him as a source of universally valid philosophical insight.² Ever since, philosophical discussions on Dōgen have partly been spurred by a demand for the self-assertion of the Japanese spirit, as in Tanabe Hajime's "A personal, philosophical view of the *Shōbō genzō*".³ The agenda, here, was to find, or construct, a philosophical author who lived well before the advent of the Western imperialist powers, and even before those authors who formulated the groundwork of a modernity that was perceived, in Japan as much as in Europe, in the 1920s and 1930s, as intrinsically "Western". One may see some parallels here to the process of appro-

¹ David Riggs, "Meditation for Laymen and Laywomen: The 'Buddha Samadhi' ('Jijuyu Zanmai') of Menzan Zuiho", in: *Zen Classics: Formative Texts in the History of Zen Buddhism*, ed. Dale S. Wright and Steven Heine. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2006: 247-74.

² Watsuji Tetsurō 和辻哲郎, *Nihon seishinshi kenkyū* 日本精神史研究, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992.

³As apparent in the following quote: "I feel exalted by the depth and precision of Dōgen's speculative thought, and this encourages me to believe more strongly in the powers of thought of the Japanese." (originally Japanese, Tanabe Hajime 田邊元, *Shōbō genzō no tetsugaku shikan* 正法眼藏の哲学私観, Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1939: 11.

prying the “Kongmudoha-ka” for the sake of creating an early origin of Korean literature that is described in detail by Marion Eggert in this volume.

However, there has also, especially since the post-war era, been a more demure, historiographical and philological approach to Dōgen⁴, which took some twenty to thirty years to take its roots in the Western academy.⁵ While their perspectives, methodological and ideological outlook may differ widely, the work of these and numerous other clerics, academics and cleric-academics has firmly established Dōgen as a canonical author – an author that is present in both the literary and philosophical canons.⁶ As part of this process, the “Dōgen Canon” itself, as one of the leading western Dōgen scholars called it, has also come under scrutiny⁷ and various editions of his “Collected works” have been published; the most recent one is still under way. And even the waves of post-structuralist critique have reached the Dōgen discourse. Since the late 1980s, scholars highlighted issues such as divergences between Dōgen’s own ideas and practices and those established within the Sōtō School or the relative obscurity of Dōgen during the later middle ages. Moreover, they increasingly questioned the ideology behind the almost exclusive focus on Dōgen and other founder figures that was, and to a

⁴ Exemplified by Ōkubo’s work on Dōgen’s hagiographies: Ōkubo Dōshū 大久保道舟, *Dōgen Zenji den no kenkyū* 道元禪師伝の研究, Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1953 or Kagamishima’s study of Dōgen’s sources: Kagamishima Genryū 鏡島元隆, *Dōgen Zenji no in’yō kyōten, goroku no kenkyū* 道元禪師の引用経典・語の研究, Tōkyō: Mokujisha, 1965.

⁵ Starting with Bielefeldt’s seminal study *Dōgen’s manuals of Zen meditation*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

⁶ As evidenced by two volumes dedicated to his writings in the “Canon of Japanese Thought” (Terada Tōru 寺田透 and Mizuno Yaoko 水野弥穂子, ed., *Dōgen Jō* 道元 上, *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 12, Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1970; Terada Tōru 寺田透 and Mizuno Yaoko 水野弥穂子, ed., *Dōgen Ge* 道元 下, *Nihon Shisō Taikei* 13, Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1972) and one volume in the “Canon of Japanese Classical Literature” (Nishio Minoru 西尾實, *Shōbō genzō* 正法眼藏, *Nihon koten bungaku taikai* 日本古典文学大系 81, Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1965).

⁷ Steven Heine, “The Dōgen Canon. Dōgen’s Pre-Shōbōgenzō Writings and the Question of Change in His Later Works”, in: *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 24, No. 1 (1997): 39–85 is the source of this term and sums up the most important issues concerning this subject.

large extent still is, typical of much of the history of Japanese religion.⁸

In a way, the ground thus seems well prepared for reflections on the concept and reality of authorship in Dōgen. One might even say it is high time that we question the basis of our counting him among the canonical figures in Japanese literary and religio-philosophical history. We need to inquire as to how the “author function” is realised and distributed in those texts categorised under his name. In Dōgen studies as much as in other fields, traditional hermeneutics has too often taken to the author as a kind of given, a fixed star guiding us through the unsafe seas of the texts, a source of unity and order in categorising, analysing and interpreting what are on many accounts hugely divergent materials.⁹ An analysis of the author constellation and the author figuration in works catalogued under his name will reveal that this assumption of unity is highly problematic in his case.

In the following, I will follow the path that is sketched out in the introduction and begin with a brief analysis of the author constellation in some of the most famous parts of the Dōgen canon. I shall then proceed to analyse the various types (and distributions) of the author figuration in these works. Finally, I will discuss in some detail the way Dōgen stages himself as an author in some of his texts, and draw conclusions concerning his own ideas (or his ideology) of authorship. The focus of this contribution will thus be the author-function as observed in the sources attributed to Dōgen. I

shall leave aside for the moment the issues surrounding the ex-post construction of him as a patriarchal, literary, or philosophical author, especially in the early modern and modern periods, because I believe that we can better establish what happens there in terms of a re-configuration of authorship when we have a clear picture of the author-constellations and -figurations of the historical sources in question.

⁸ Riggs, “Meditation for Laymen and Laywomen: The ‘Buddha Samadhi’ (‘Jijuyu Zanmai’) of Menzan Zuiho”; Bernard Faure, “The Daruma-shū, Dōgen and Sōtō Zen”, in: *Monumenta Nipponica* 42, No. 1 (1987): 25–55; William Bodiford, “Remembering Dōgen: Eiheiji and Dōgen Hagiography”, in: *The Journal of Japanese studies* 32, No. 1 (2006): 1–22.

⁹ Exemplified in our case by Hee-Jin Kim’s classical monograph *Dōgen Kigen, mystical realist*, rev. ed., Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975.

Some introductory notes on the relevant fields of operation are in place. Michel Foucault has alerted us to the fact that the classical modern concept of the author is tied to a specific social structure.¹⁰ The institution of property, the technology of printing, the existence of a publishing industry and a market for books as well as political regulation of the intellectual sphere (both as a sphere of intellectual goods and a sphere of private and national interests) are essential features of this structure.¹¹ Needless to say, these features are in operation in modern Japan as much as in other industrialised countries, and they do shape the modern to contemporary reception of Dōgen as an author: His works are published and sold as commodities. Most editions add annotation, and they often include a translation into modern Japanese. In this manner, Dōgen's works are made accessible to a public audience of educated readers. As mentioned earlier, he is canonised as a representative of the Japanese history of thought and of classical Japanese literature, in short, of the Japanese nation's cultural heritage. He is praised for the originality of his thought, his distinctively personal style, and the depth of his insights.

The situation was quite different in his own time. It is true that the first use of printing for the reproduction of texts is documented in Japan for as early as 770.¹² However, at that time, and for some centuries, the technology exclusively served to reproduce Buddhist texts for ritual purposes. From the 11th century onward, Buddhist temples started to print canonical (Chinese) texts for reading.¹³

The fact that printing was, in a manner of speaking, a “Buddhist technology” in ancient and early medieval Japan did *not* mean that a Japanese author in the early medieval period could or would aspire to have his or her works printed, or distributed to the general pub-

¹⁰ Michel Foucault, “What Is an Author”, in: *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern*, ed. Seán Burke, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995: 233–46.

¹¹ Molly Nesbit, “What Was an Author?”, in: *Yale French Studies* 73 (1987): 229–57. However, Roger Chartier (*The Order of Books*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994) has done much to elucidate the continuities of this concept with preceding figures of authorship in European literature.

¹² See Nakane Katsu 中根勝, *Nihon Insatsu Gijutsushi* 日本印刷技術史, 3rd ed., Tōkyō: Yagi Shoten, 2000: 46–55 for a partial reproduction and description of the printed document and a discussion of the technology used.

¹³ Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century*, Leiden: Brill, 1998: 118–19.

lic. The first book in Japanese, a collection of the sayings of the Pure Land Buddhist Hōnen, was printed only in 1321, a century after Hōnen's, and seven decades after Dōgen's demise.¹⁴ And, as Kornicki notes in his standard monograph on the book in Japan, “scribal culture continued to dominate book production until the seventeenth century.”¹⁵ This meant that there was no mass reproduction of Japanese texts in Dōgen's time. There was also no public market for books, let alone learned doctrinal compositions.

Moreover, to a Buddhist teacher like Dōgen, the mass reproduction and distribution of essential doctrinal works composed by contemporary authors may not have even appeared desirable. In a tradition that emphasised direct contact between teacher and disciples, it was often feared that reading without proper instruction would foster misunderstanding rather than insight, and lead to heresies and false claims to authority. The postscript by Rennyō (1433–1499) to the famous *Tannishō*, a posthumous collection of Shinran's sayings, is the most telling in this respect: “This holy teaching is the most essential sacred scripture of our school. It is not to be allowed that people who have not collected good merit would touch upon it.”¹⁶ Dōgen himself repeatedly stressed that the independent, scholarly study of books in itself was useless; it became significant only if embedded in communication with a true Buddhist teacher.¹⁷

In other words, the larger part of newly composed Buddhist works were not written with a reading public in mind. For the most part, they were composed for, and copied by, a community of adepts who would jealously guard them from outsiders. Possession of such texts documented a close link to their author, granting prestige to the holder that was in dimension with the directness of the link and the importance of the author.

¹⁴ Ibid.: 121.

¹⁵ Ibid.: 87.

¹⁶ Shinshū shōgyō zensho hensanjo 真宗聖教全書編纂所, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho 真宗聖教全書*, Saihan, Kyōto: Ōyagi Kōbundō, 1998, Vol. 2: 795.

¹⁷ See e.g. his injunction in *Bendōwa*: “Don't rely on the skillfulness with words. ... In the transmission of the Buddha Dharma, you need to turn towards a person who gives true testimony as your teacher. A letter-counting scholar will not do.” Dōgen 道元, *Dōgen Zenji Zenshū Genbun Taishō Gendaigoyaku 道元禪師全集 原文対照現代語訳*, ed. Kagamishima Genryū 鏡島元隆 et al., Tōkyō: Shunjūsha, 1999, Vol. 1: 17.

The exception to this rule were “public” works composed in formal Sino-Japanese style. One group of these works, often labelled *ron* 論 (“thesis”), was written to argue the legitimacy of a doctrine in order to gain the support of the supreme political authorities for the establishment of a new school. This was necessary in order to become part of the officially recognised, and state-sponsored web of Buddhist institutions. Dōgen authored such a work, called *Gokoku shōbōgi* 護国正法義 (“The meaning of the right *dharma* for the protection of the realm”; now lost)¹⁸ and submitted it to the court between 1242 and 1243. Its propositions were contested by the much more powerful Tendai school. The court ordered a high-ranking cleric in the state-sponsored hierarchy to function as arbiter in the dispute, who apparently refuted Dōgen's teaching as “adversarial to the teaching of Mahāyāna and detrimental to the protection of the realm.”¹⁹ Pressure on the new school mounted accordingly, but Dōgen evaded formal sanction by relocating his community to a relatively remote area in Echizen (now Fukui prefecture). Such treatment was by no means exceptional: submitting a formal thesis to the authorities carried both the promise of state sponsorship and the risk of sanctions based on the unfriendly reading of an expert who might follow a political agenda.²⁰ Therefore, such works would heavily rely on reference to established scriptural authority, and

¹⁸ Famous extant works of this Genre are the *Jūjūshinron*, by Kūkai, or Eisai's *Kōzen gokoku ron* (“Promoting Zen for the Protection of the Realm”). In Eisai's and Dōgen's titles, the direct relation to the “protection of the realm” emphasises the political character of the work. See Ryūichi Abe, *The weaving of mantra: Kūkai and the construction of esoteric Buddhist discourse*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. Albert Welter, “Eisai's promotion of zen for the protection of the country”, in: *Religions of Japan in practice*, ed. George J. Tanabe, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999: 63–70.

¹⁹ Imaeda Aishin 今枝愛真, *Dōgen: Zazen hitosuji no shamon* 道元 : 坐禪ひとすじの沙門, Tōkyō: Nihon hōsō shuppan kyōkai, 1976: 139.

²⁰ However, even works whose authors had been castigated were not censored, and their reproduction was not penalised. Kornicki specifically mentions the notorious Nichiren's *Risshō ankoku ron* as a case in point. Its author had been exiled to the remote Noto peninsula, “but copies survived and were later printed without any further action being taken.” The book in Japan: A cultural history from the beginnings to the nineteenth century, 323.

the mass of quoted material would customarily outweigh that of originally composed text.²¹

Another genre of “public” works were the “recorded sayings” (*goroku* 語録) produced by a teacher's disciples as a record of his accomplishments.²² While these were catalogued under his name, he would not be the person to compose them. Compilation of such recorded sayings was a sign that the teacher in question was accepted as a true master in his community. If accepted in the larger context of a school, they might be used as a scriptural authority, and become eligible for printing at a later time. As formal documentation, the recorded sayings were written in Sino-Japanese style. In Dōgen's case, his closest adepts compiled a record of his ritualised sermons over two decades.²³ A condensed version was later edited by two of his fellow Chinese disciples, and received in the Song Chan community.²⁴

Both types of “official” works were not geared towards a general audience, but rather towards specific groups of experts from outside (“theses”) or inside (“recorded sayings”) of the pertinent school. The “capital” to be gained by them was mainly prestige and political support.

To sum up, the most widely read works of the “modern” author Dōgen were not meant for publication in his own time. They were written for a circle of close adepts. They were reproduced as tokens of such intimacy as much as for their content. As a result, the copy might vary to some extent from the original in content while, on the other hand, it might strive to reproduce not only the text, but

²¹ Shinran's *Kyōgyōshinshō* 教行信証 (“On teaching, practice, faith and enlightenment”) is a good case in point: It is often difficult to locate the originally composed passages among the textual mass of scriptural authorities adduced to prove his theses. The ratio is somewhere around 1:10. Shinran 親鸞, Shinran 親鸞, *Nihon shisō taikai* 11, Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1971; Shinran, *Kyōgyōshinsho: On Teaching, Practice, Faith, And Enlightenment*, Numata Center for Buddhist, 2006.

²² The genre is of Chinese origin. See Christian Wittern, *Das Yulu des Chan-Buddhismus: die Entwicklung vom 8.-11. Jahrhundert am Beispiel des 28. Kapitels des Jingde Chuandenglu (1004)*, Bern, Berlin: Lang, 1998.

²³ Vol. 1–6 of the *Eihei kōroku*, which also included some informal teachings and letters, plus poetry in Chinese. See the discussion of the work below.

²⁴ Kagamishima Genryū 鏡島元隆, ed., *Dōgen Zenji goroku* 道元禪師語, Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 1990: 213–14.

also the calligraphic style of the original.²⁵ Writing for outsiders in the strict sense was an exception rather than the rule. It carried promise as well as risks, and the structure of the religious field encouraged a strong dependence on precedence and massive quotations of scriptural authorities to downplay the originality of the thoughts presented. Success would make the author a part of the officially recognised structure of Buddhist institutions, to be called upon for public duties. Failure to convince would mean to be perceived as an impostor, and might mean sanctions such as being exiled. However, the written work was usually not censored, nor was its reproduction prohibited.

Origination Function: Author constellations in the Dōgen Canon

Once he had set about establishing himself as a Buddhist master and spreading his teaching, Dōgen remained an active writer throughout his career. In addition, his most trusted adepts collected his words and manuscripts during his lifetime and after his demise. Editorial work continued for some decades after his death, and was resumed in the Edo period. As the result of the industrious labour of many generations, an extensive oeuvre under his name is transmitted today.

Table 1 gives a list of important writings associated with Dōgen, ranked approximately according to the degree of his involvement in the production of the text. This ranking can partly be derived from the characterisations of his originating activity given by the works themselves, which also provide us with part of the taxonomy of writing and editing used in his time: his original compositions are designated as having been “written” (*sho* 書, *kakite* かきて) or “recorded/taken down” (*ki* 記) by him. The latter term, however, is both used to indicate that someone’s own thoughts and/or the spoken words of a third party had been committed to writing by the person performing the activity of *ki*. Although *jishū* 示衆 (“lectured to the community”) primarily refers to the performative activity of verbally delivering a text, the fact that these texts are recorded to

²⁵ A mere copy of the text (*shasho* 写書) was distinguished from a more literal reproduction of “the layout, orthographical usages and even calligraphy (*mosho* 模書). Kornicki, *The book in Japan: A cultural history from the beginnings to the nineteenth century*, 83.

have been “copied” (*shosha* 書写) by Ejō and others seems to indicate that a written draft also existed. In contrast, in the case of the formal sermons collected in *Eihei kōroku* and the informal talks recorded in *Shōbō genzō zuimonki*, it is noted that Dōgen “spoke” (*iwaku* 云く) what was “recorded” (*ki*) and/or “compiled” (*hen* 編) by someone else.

All titles listed are included in the most recent collection of his works²⁶, and only the last one, *Shōbō genzō zuimonki*, is more generally catalogued under another author’s name, i.e. that of Ejō, as the text states at the beginning of each chapter that he “compiled” it (*hen* 編).²⁷

Even though the works listed are thus generally accepted as authentic, only the first three are preserved in a shape that was given to them by Dōgen himself²⁸, and of these, *Hōkyōki* is classified by its first copyist, Ejō, as a fragment.²⁹ The *Shōbō genzō*, which since the 18th century has become Dōgen’s most famous and influential work, exists in several redactions comprising different numbers of fascicles in varying order.³⁰ Only the so-called 12 fascicle-*Shōbō genzō*, was probably edited by Dōgen himself. Paradoxically enough, this text was downplayed as a minor text by modern scholars.³¹ The 75-fascicle redaction, which has achieved classical status, was put

²⁶ Dōgen 道元, *Dōgen Zenji Zenshū Genbun Taishō Gendaigoyaku* 道元禪師全集 原文対照現代語訳. *Hōkyōki*: DZZ 16; *Gakudō yōjin shū*: DZZ 14; *Shōbōgenzō*: DZZ 1–4; *Shōbōgenzō sanbyakusoku*: DZZ 14; *Eihei kōroku*: DZZ 1–4; *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*: DZZ 16.

²⁷ Dōgen 道元 et al., *Shōbōgenzō*; *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* 正法眼藏; 正法眼藏随聞記, transl. Nishio Minoru 西尾實, *Nihon koten bungaku taikai* 81, Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1965: 317; 332; 356; 381; 394; 411.

²⁸ Concerning *Gakudō yōjin shū*, some presume that the compilation of the 10 chapters was effected by Ejō, but current scholarship believes that Dōgen is responsible for the whole work, see: Tsunoda Tairyū 角田泰隆, “*Eihei shōso Gakudō yōjinshū* 永平初祖学道用心集”, in: DZZ 14, Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2007: 417–29.

²⁹ DZZ 16, 100.

³⁰ Synopsis in Heine, “The Dōgen Canon. Dōgen’s Pre-*Shōbōgenzō* Writings and the Question of Change in His Later Works.”; Ryōsuke Ōhashi and Rolf Elberfeld, *Shōbōgenzō : ausgewählte Schriften anders philosophieren aus dem Zen*, Tokyo: Keiō University Press, 2006.

³¹ A view strongly criticized in the 1990s by the “Critical Buddhists”, see Hakamaya Noriaki 袴谷憲昭, *Dōgen to Bukkyō* 道元と仏教, Tōkyō: Daizō Shuppan, 1992.

together by Ejō,³² who may have consulted with his master. Thus, while Dōgen is the undisputed author of the *Shōbō genzō*'s single text units, he is not the originator of the work as it stands before us now. The *Shōbō genzō sanbyakusoku* is a collection of 300 *kōan*, mostly drawn from the Song-Era *Zongmen liang deng hui yao*.³³ While Dōgen has after some debate generally been accepted as its author, the only text originally composed by him in this work is the foreword.³⁴

The *Eihei kōroku* is a classic collection of recorded sayings in the style of Chinese *wulu* (j. *goroku* 語錄). Its first seven volumes present formal sermons that Dōgen delivered in the Dharma Hall (*hattō* 法堂) of his temples Kōshō hōrin-ji 興聖法輪寺 in Fukakusa (vol. 1) and Eihei-ji 永平寺 in Echizen province (today: Fukui prefecture; vol. 2-7). Volume 8 is a collection of informal sermons and so-called "Dharma Words", which may have been given in writing to some of Dōgen's adepts. Volume 9 contains verse commentary on *kōan*, and volume 10 doctrinal poetry. All parts of the *Eihei kōroku* are written in Sino-Japanese style (*kanbun* 漢文). Concerning Dōgen's authorship, the situation with vol. 9-10 and parts of vol. 8 is similar to that of the *Shōbō genzō*: while the single parts were written by Dōgen, each volume as a whole was edited by one of his pupils (vol. 8: Ejō; vol. 9 and 10: Sen'ne). For the larger part of the *Eihei kōroku*, however, the situation is more complicated: While vol. 1-7 are presented as records of what Dōgen said (and did) during his formal sermons, they are not collections of his writings. The compilers may have been able to draw on Dōgen's notes. However, as a formal sermon was an opportunity to perform the power of an enlightened master to spontaneously express his insight, drawing on his superior command of Zen lore as much as on his spiritual capacities, it is improbable that Dōgen ascended the high seat in the Dharma hall with lecture notes in hand, and that every word and action had been planned before. It seems more realistic to assume that Ejō, Sen'ne and Gien, the trusted disciples who recorded his sayings, reported what they heard and saw from memory, possibly consulting with the master himself and with his sources in the many instances where he drew on the tradition. If that is correct, we have to as-

³² Imaeda, *Dōgen*, 175.

³³ Ishii Shūdō 石井修道, "Shinji Shōbō genzō 真字「正法眼藏」." In: DZZ 14, Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2007: 431-42.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

sume, apart from possible memory gaps, a language gap between what he said and what was committed to writing, because *kanbun* (Sino-Japanese writing style) is not a spoken language and would have been all but unintelligible to his audience. Thus, the actual role and intellectual responsibility for the text is to some part obscured by a genre-specific tendency to present it as an immediate report of teachings seen and heard.

The *Shōbō genzō zuimonki* is purportedly a personal record of Ejō's of informal sermons, evening talks and dialogues with his master. If that were true, it would bring us even closer to Dōgen's diction and intentions than the *Eihei kōroku*. However, like the *Hōkyō-ki*, in which Dōgen recollected his encounters with his teacher Rujing, this work is strongly coloured by the interests and the personality of its writer(s).³⁵ Some contradictions between Dōgen's words in this work and in his own *Shōbō genzō* have been noticed, and linguistic evidence seems to suggest that the received text was not written in Dōgen's or Ejō's time, but 50 to 100 years later, between the end of the Kamakura and the middle of the Nanbokuchō period.³⁶ This would make the notion of Dōgen's authorship appear even more remote.

Author figuration in the Dōgen Canon

Since we find that most works in the Dōgen Canon are the result of a distribution of labour, with various constellations involved, intellectual responsibilities for the shape and content of the text in question are also distributed to varying degrees. *Table 2* shows an overview of the various responsibilities as they are attributed by the texts, and the overall image of the authorial figure they respectively convey.

As it indicates, *Bendōwa* and *Gakudō yōjinshū* are the only texts listed where all the aspects coincide. In terms of the attributed re-

³⁵ Azuma Ryūshin 東隆真 et al., "Shōbōgenzō Zuimonki 正法眼藏 隨聞記", in DZZ 16, Tōkyō: Shunjūsha, 2003: 223.

³⁶ Imaeda, *Dōgen*: 178–182. Azuma does not mention these problems. He follows tradition in assuming that the text is based on Ejō's notes, being edited by his disciples (possibly Keizan Jōkin or Tettsu Gikai) before 1300 (this date being derived from references to the *Shōbō genzō zuimonki* in the *Denkōroku*. Azuma, "Shōbōgenzō Zuimonki", 223–25).

sponsibilities for the production of the text, Dōgen here appears almost as an author in the classical modern sense. Still, we should take note that he was operating under medieval circumstances, and that his own conceptualisation of his role is quite different from our modern understanding (see next paragraph).

Technically speaking, *Hōkyōki* might also be considered as a work “authored” by Dōgen, but it is a text that ardently strives to present not its writer, but his master Rujing as the real source of insight, judgement and, for the most part, knowledge and meaning. If it were not for his posthumous fame, and the same standards being applied as in the case of *Shōbō genzō zuimonki*, this work would have to be catalogued under the heading of Rujing and not of Dōgen.

In the case of Dōgen’s *opus magnum*, the *Kana Shōbō genzō*, we find that responsibility for the text on the level of each fascicle resides with him (although some fascicles contain extensive quotes from Zen lore); but the overall organisation of the work and the selection of fascicles in each extant edition originated with Ejō, Gien and the other redactors.

The *kōan*-collection *Shōbō genzō sanbyakusoku* is a typical case of medieval authorship, insofar as it is a compilation that contains only a very small part of original composition by Dōgen. His function as an author lies mainly in providing knowledge of the sources, selecting the parts and their sequence and expressing his command and judgement of the tradition in this manner. With *Eihei kōroku* (Vol. 1–7), responsibility for the organisation, shape and wording of the text remains clearly with the “compilers” (Ejō and Sen’ne), who also have a testimonial function, vouching for the truthfulness of their record of Dōgen’s words and deeds. The knowledge function is fulfilled by Dōgen, with whom also resides the authority of insight, judgement and meaning.

Finally, and from a positivistic point of view, all (internal) functions of authorship in *Shōbō genzō zuimonki* rest with its unnamed writers. Still, the text itself delegates responsibility for its shape, organisation and wording to Ejō, who figures as “editor” or “compiler”, while Dōgen is treated as the ultimate source of knowledge, insight, judgement and even verbal formulation. This, then, could be regarded as a case of masked or obscured authorship: an author figuration in which, for strategic reasons, responsibility for the form and content of the written text is delegated to an established authority.

Indicators of authorial presence

To further corroborate our analysis, let us examine the indicators of authorship that the texts display. To sum up what has been explained in more detail in the introduction, there are a number of such indicators. If the author's name appears in the text or paratext, in association with the title or attestations of origination such as “wrote” or “compiled”, we may infer that the text itself presents the person so named as its originator. Similarly, the use of a first-person pronoun or instances of self-referencing of the writer can be counted as explicit expressions of authorship. It is not important here as to whether these references are correct – in any case, they explicitly connect the text to someone who appears as its creator and is meant to *function* as its author. Addressing the reader e.g. by second person pronouns, appellations or exhortations may also be seen as fairly direct presentations of the author. More implicit signs of authorship are deictic adverbs like “here” and “now”, which indicate a specific spatio-temporal position. Moral positions are expressed by evaluative, polemic or emotional terms. Explanations, unless referenced to a third party, indicate a source of knowledge and insight.

Obviously, the factors mentioned above cannot serve as objective criteria, which is why I prefer to use the term “indicators of authorial presence.” There are two implications. Firstly, their indicative power depends on the context. Secondly, and more importantly, they do not prove authorship in the sense of what we called the “origination function”. Instead, they convey the distribution of responsibilities expressed in the text itself, that is, its author figuration.

It is not possible here to present a full analysis of all the texts concerning these indicators. *Table 3* gives representative samples from each of the works mentioned before. Not surprisingly, it shows that Dōgen the author is present in distinctly divergent ways. I shall put aside *Bendōwa* for the moment, because this text will be treated in extenso in the next paragraph.

Gakudō yōjinshū is a tract that informs disciples about the essential moral and spiritual points in monastic training. Authorship is explicitly attested to, and the text is clearly positioned in space and

time.³⁷ It addresses³⁸ and exhorts³⁹ the reader and contains a polemic against unwelcome attitudes and behaviour.⁴⁰ The author clearly presents himself as a source of knowledge, insight and judgement. However, there is no expression of personal experiences, feelings or reflections.⁴¹

In contrast, *Hōkyōki* is a personal record of Dōgen's meetings with his master. The copyist notes that it was found among his writings after his death.⁴² The author testifies to what he saw and heard; and, in doing this, he relates his own questions, opinions⁴³ and feelings⁴⁴. As mentioned above, the authority of judgement and insight is clearly deferred to Rujing.

The *Kana Shōbō genzō* texts convey the most vivid feeling of authorial presence, in the sense of an author who is both tangible as a person, a writer and a source of insight, knowledge and judgement. The fascicle *Busshō*⁴⁵, which I take up here as an example, contains episodes of personal experience, attested to by the use of the first person pronoun.⁴⁶ Dōgen also directly addresses his readers with challenging remarks, exhortations and questions.⁴⁷ He passes on judgement, including ill-tempered polemic, he takes up and explains appropriate quotations from the tradition, and he exhibits his superior insight by correcting the words of past masters.⁴⁸

³⁷ *Tenpuku kōgo ninen sangatsu kyūnichi ni sho-su*. 天福甲午二年三月九日書 “written in the second (yang-wood-horse) year of Tenpuku, on the ninth day of the third month [30.3.1234]”, DZZ 14, 92. *Wagachō* 我朝 “our dynasty [country]”, DZZ 14, 93.

³⁸ *nanji* 汝 “you”, DZZ 14, 92.

³⁹ *igyō wo kokorozasu koto nakare* 莫志易行 “don't strive after a simple practice”, DZZ 14, 61; 94.

⁴⁰ *ima, guro no tomogara aruiwa bunseki wo utsushi* 今愚魯輩或記文籍 “these days, stupid people copy scriptures or ...”, DZZ 14, 64; 94.

⁴¹ All samples in the table taken from DZZ 14, 92–94.

⁴² DZZ 16, 100.

⁴³ DZZ 16, 92.

⁴⁴ DZZ 16, 91.

⁴⁵ DZZ 1, 75–137.

⁴⁶ Cf. the paragraph starting *yo, un'yū no sono kami* 予、雲遊のそのかみ “in my time as a traveling monk”, DZZ 1, 111–113.

⁴⁷ DZZ 1, 135.

⁴⁸ See the discussion of Gueishan Lingyou's sentence: “Sentient beings have no buddha-nature”, DZZ 1, 116–119.

Moreover, by giving translations, creative readings and by critically arguing his own interpretation of the Chinese sources⁴⁹, he demonstrates his ability to adapt the traditional literature to his own idiom, helping to develop a Japanese style of discursive writing.⁵⁰

Quite to the contrary, in *Shōbō genzō sanbyakusoku* the author appears only in the short preface. Dōgen denotes his position as the “Buddhist monk Dōgen who entered the [Empire of] Song and transmits the Dharma” by collecting and presenting, “some 2,180 years” after the Buddha, “the beauty of old”, that is, expressions of past master’s insight. While the selection of these cases presents a distinct view of the tradition, no further indications of the author are to be found in the main part of the text.⁵¹

If we accept Dōgen as the author of the formal sermons recorded in *Eihei kōroku* (which is what the text wants us to believe, since its editors figure not as authors but rather as compilers [*hen* 編]), we find again a rather strong presence indicated by the text. Vol. 1, which is taken up here as an example, displays numerous instances of self-referencing, usually through the term *sansō* 山僧, “this mountain monk”.⁵² In keeping with the genre of sermon, there are localising terms, polemic evaluations⁵³, emotional expressions⁵⁴ and exhortations⁵⁵, all of which work together to give the reader a strong feeling of encounter with the “master” (*shi* 師). The same is true for *Shōbō genzō zuimonki*, which in addition has Dōgen speaking in the first person.⁵⁶ Both texts thus employ many elements reinforcing the notion that, ultimately, the responsibility for their content and much of their shape resides with the revered master himself. To synthesise, the analysis of our material suggests that works categorised under the name of Dōgen were not necessarily written by him or under his supervision. His intellectual responsibility and his in-

⁴⁹ See especially the beginning of *Busshō*, DZZ 1, 75–79.

⁵⁰ Hisamatsu Sen’ichi 久松 潜一, *Nihon bungakushi: Chūsei* 日本文学史：中世, Tōkyō: Shibundō, 1968: 244.

⁵¹ DZZ 14, 351.

⁵² *Eihei kōroku* I, 32, DZZ 16, 35.

⁵³ *Kyōke sansha no hai* 教家算砂輩 “the sand-counting scholastics”, *Eihei kōroku* I: 31, DZZ 10, 33.

⁵⁴ *Kintoku* 忻得 “bliss!”, *Eihei kōroku* I, 116, DZZ 10, 88.

⁵⁵ *Kōin wo oshimubeshi* 光陰可惜 “you should dread the passing of time”, *Eihei kōroku* I: 12, *Ibid.*, Vol. 10, 13.

⁵⁶ *Yo* 予, DZZ 16, 105; *ware* 我, DZZ 16, 235.

volvement in their production varied to a great degree. Obviously, in the eyes of the tradition, the fact that a text was written and edited based on expressions and ideas presented by him (e.g. in orally delivered sermons and talks) legitimated attribution. In these cases, intellectual responsibility definitely outweighed the responsibility for the selection of contents, ordering, choice of written style, wording etc. It may thus seem that the role of the writer in medieval Japanese Zen-Buddhism was more of a scribe than that of an author. However, it should be noted that this role may often have been assumed in order to employ the authority of an established master for the sake of the scribe's agenda. This seems to be the case in *Shōbō genzō zuimonki*. Secondly, there are also many works actually composed by Dōgen, such as *Gakudō yōjinshū* or the *Shōbō genzō* tracts. These display a strong combination of personal experience and insight, consciousness of style, power of expression and authoritative judgement. This, then, sounds very close to the classical European model of authorship.

Among Dōgen's original compositions, there is one which displays an explicit attempt of the writer (stated to be Dōgen) to elucidate his own position. It may serve to show how he wanted his readers to understand his role and responsibilities in writing.

The Self-staging of the enlightened author

The text, *Bendōwa*⁵⁷, was initially conceived as an independent tract. The colophon comes with a *sphragis*,⁵⁸ which states it was “written in the autumn of Kanki-yin-metal-hare [1231] by the Buddhist monk Dōgen who went to the Song [empire] and transmitted the Dharma”⁵⁹. It is Dōgen's first major work, in which he establishes himself as an independent teacher. As the text is in mixed Japanese-Chinese style (*wakan konkōbun*), it has, after its re-discovery in the

⁵⁷ DZZ 1, 1–43.

⁵⁸ On this term, and a typology in reference to ancient Chinese poetry, see the contribution of Alexander Beecroft in this volume.

⁵⁹ *Kanki shinbō chū shūnichi nyū sō denbō shamon Dōgen ki* 寛喜辛卯中秋日 入宋伝法沙門道元記, DZZ 1, 43.

18th century⁶⁰, been sometimes subsumed under the *Shōbō genzō*.⁶¹ The general features of its author figuration are listed in table 4. As it indicates, *Bendōwa* is a text with an almost salient visibility of its author. This is especially so in a section at the beginning, where Dōgen, having exposed the main thesis, gives his credentials and motivations in writing.

In the following, slightly revised translation of Nishijima and Cross⁶², the passage⁶³ reads:

After I established the will to pursue the Dharma, I visited [good] counselors in every quarter of our land. I met Myōzen of Kennin [temple]. Nine seasons of frosts and of flowers swiftly passed while I followed him, learning a little of the customs of the Rinzai lineage. Only Myōzen had received the authentic transmission of the supreme Buddha-Dharma, as the most excellent disciple of the founding master, Master Eisai – the other students could never compare with him. I then went to the great Kingdom of Song, visiting [good] counselors in the east and west of Zhejiang and hearing of the tradition through the gates of the five lineages. At last I visited Zen Master Rujing of Dabai mountain, and there I was able to complete the great task of a lifetime of practice. After that, at the beginning of the great Song era of Shaoding, I came home determined to spread the Dharma and to save living beings – it was as if a heavy burden had been placed on my shoulders. Nevertheless, in order to wait for an upsurge during which I might discharge my sense of mission, I thought I would spend some time wandering like a cloud, calling here and there like a water weed, in the style of the ancient sages. Yet if there were any true practitioners who put the will to the truth first, being naturally unconcerned with fame and profit, they might be fruitlessly misled by false teachers and might needlessly throw a veil over right understanding. They might idly become drunk with self-deception, and sink forever into

⁶⁰ See Mizuno Yaoko 水野弥穗子, “‘Shōbō genzō’ no shohon sono ta ni tsuite 「正法眼蔵」の諸本その他について”, in: *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 日本古典文学大系 81. Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1965: 34–56, 50–51 for the history of the text.

⁶¹ In the 95-fascicle edition, *Bendōwa* is fascicle 1; see Ohashi Ryōsuke and Rolf Elberfeld, *Shōbōgenzō: ausgewählte Schriften: anders philosophieren aus dem Zen*. Tokyo: Keiō University Press, 2006: 257. In many editions, the text is given alongside with the *Shōbō genzō*, as in DZZ 1 or Ōkubo’s edition of the collected works, which also contains an alternate version. (Ōkubo Dōshu 大久保道舟, Ed. by, Dōgen Zenji zenshū 道元禪師全集, Tōkyō: Chikuma Shobō, 1969: 729–746; 747–764).

⁶² Gudō Nishijima and Chodo Cross, *Master Dogen's Shobogenzo* (Vol. 1), Vol. 1, London: Windbell Publications, 1994: 2–3; transcription of Japanese and Chinese names altered to Hepburn/Pinyin style.

⁶³ DZZ 1, 4–6.

the state of delusion. How would they be able to promote the right seeds of *prajñā*, or have the opportunity to attain the truth? If I were absorbed in drifting like a cloud or a water weed, which mountains and rivers ought they to visit? Feeling that this would be a pitiful situation, I decided to compile a record of the customs and standards that I experienced first-hand in the Zen monasteries of the great Kingdom of Song, together with a record of profound instruction which I have received and maintained. I will leave this record to people who learn in practice and are easy in the truth, so that they can know the right Dharma of the Buddha's lineage. This should not fail its true essence.⁶⁴

Obviously, this passage establishes the author's legitimacy by substantiating his claim for competence and sincerity of motivation. The emphasis on his solitary lifestyle is important in the latter regard: it is a well-established and stable pattern indicating that the author is acting out of a higher purpose and has no immediate political ambitions for himself.⁶⁵ In relating his travels within the realm and to the Song Empire, the author underlines his earnest search for insight and testifies that what he writes is based on first-hand experience. He also names the source of his knowledge, claiming to have had access to all the major lineages of the Chan (Zen) school in China. Furthermore, he indicates his status as a master who has achieved and completed "the great task of a lifetime of practice" and is thus able to transmit the correct teaching of Buddha. This status is enhanced by the following paragraph, which elucidates the "true essence" through the story of direct, authentic transmission from the historical Buddha through Bodhidharma, the Indian patriarch who purportedly brought it to China, to the five lineages that developed there. Two propositions in this paragraph are of special importance: Firstly, Dōgen states that the different traditions within the Zen school "are of the one Buddha-mind-seal".⁶⁶ This statement is elaborated in other parts of *Bendōwa*. Time and again, Dōgen insists that the Buddhas and patriarchs share and transmit among

⁶⁴ The last sentence *kore shinketsu naramukamo* これ真訣ならむかも。 (Ibid., Vol. 1, 6.) is translated by Nishijima and Cross somewhat idiosyncratically as "This may be a true mission.". The *Kokugo daijiten* defines *shinketsu* in direct reference to this passage as *makoto no michi* ("the true way"), *makoto no satori* ("true enlightenment"), *shinri* ("truth"), *goku'i* ("ultimate meaning"). Nihon Daijiten Kankōkai 日本大辞典刊行会, *Nihon kokugo daijiten* : 11 : *shiyota-sekon*, Tōkyō: Shōgakukan, 1974: 152.

⁶⁵ Cf. the pertinent remarks of Roland Altenburger in respect to Jin Shentangs edition of the *Water Margin* text in this volume.

⁶⁶ *Tada ichi busshin-in nari* ただ一仏心印なり。DZZ 1, 7.

them the very same realisation and practice of supreme enlightenment.⁶⁷ Secondly, Dōgen reiterates the Zen Buddhist conviction that this enlightenment and, therefore, the one and only authentic teaching, was transmitted to China only with Bodhidharma, and that it spread successfully after this momentous event. Characteristically, he adds: “We should hope that it will be the same in our country.”⁶⁸ Read in the light of his underwriting *Bendōwa* as “the Buddhist monk Dōgen, who traveled to the Song and transmitted the Dharma”, this remark suggests that his return to Japan was analogous to Bodhidharma’s advent to China.

The claim for unity with Bodhidharma, and ultimately, Buddha, is corroborated by a theory of the “wondrous method” (*myōjutsu* 妙術) of seated meditation. At any instance of such practice, Dōgen says, the whole world of experience is mysteriously joined with all the Buddhas and patriarchs of the past, present and future in realisation of the “rightful awakening” (*shōgaku* 正覺).⁶⁹

Whatever we may think of the validity of such a conceptualisation of meditative practice, it surely supplies a rationale for Dōgen’s aspiration to the rank of superior source of insight. In other words, it enables him to claim, with some credibility, to be not only the truthful recipient of an honourable and unique tradition, but, by the same token, to also have achieved a status on a par with previous patriarchs and the Buddha himself. As such, his judgements are authoritative, and his expressions exemplary models for study. By presenting himself as an author with immediate access to the Buddha’s “mind-seal” itself, Dōgen sets the stage for his own canonisation.

In a sense, this is a model of “strong” authorship. Its special feature is that it combines a depersonalisation of the author with the integration of his personal life record. The ultimate spiritual authority rests on the claim to oneness with all the Buddhas and patriarchs. Insofar as he is enlightened, Dōgen does not speak as an individual; he reiterates and perhaps reformulates what all Buddhas and patriarchs have said before him. He can do that because of the claim that, through his practice, he has direct access to their insight and

⁶⁷ DZZ 1, 3; 6-7; 8; 11.

⁶⁸ *Waga kuni mo mata shika aramu koto wo koinegau beshi.* わがくにも又しかあらむ事をこひねがふべし。DZZ 1, 7.

⁶⁹ DZZ 1, 8.

he continuously receives their spiritual support in a way transcending temporal and spatial boundaries. However, he is also an expert, someone who can report on the down-to-earth details of everyday practice in the Song monasteries, since he has been there and seen it with his own eyes. Both sides are united by his theory of enlightenment, which posits that there is a oneness of essential insight which can only present itself when actualised at a given point in time and space; and it is actualised not by spontaneous actions flowing from enlightened intuition, but rather by constantly and reflectively following the precedent that is set forth by previous masters.

Conclusions

What does “authorship” mean with respect to a medieval Buddhist writer/teacher like Dōgen?

Dōgen was involved, to widely varying degrees, in the production of those works catalogued under his name, and figures as different authorial types – from the truthful disciple recording his master’s words in *Hōkyōki* to the converse role of authoritative master, whose words are truthfully recorded by his own adepts (*Eihei kōroku*). Attribution of the “author function”, that is, alleged intellectual and spiritual responsibility, was often deduced from Dōgen’s status as an enlightened master, and did override other writers’ actual involvement in the production of a work. The classification of authorship was thus partly a question of the relation between the actual writer and the person whose utterances were recorded in the document in question. Whatever actual and intellectual responsibility a writer had, without the appropriate credentials, he would figure as a compiler or scribe, and not as the actual source of the text’s content. On the other hand, self-figuration in such a subservient role could be a convenient tool to borrow the hand, and the authority, of an acclaimed master. In a contested field where structural incentives encouraged that new texts produced for reading by outsiders employed a strictly formal style and relied heavily on quotations from accepted scriptural authorities, the author function was often disguised in the figure of a scribe or compiler. This, however, should not be interpreted as a lack of consciousness regarding the character of authorship, but rather as a conscious and variable choice with

regard to genre expectations as well as the pragmatic possibilities and risks at hand.

Dōgen's original compositions were mostly addressed to a trusted audience of close adepts, and not widely distributed. In these informal works, we can find an almost salient presence of him as an author – addressing his disciples, exhorting them, passing on judgement, relating autobiographical experience, and the like. However, this self-conscious presentation was ideologically backed up by a fusion with previous masters and even transcendent Buddhas. Thus, the pertinent concept of enlightened authorship conveyed in *Bendōwa* entails conceptional specifics that differentiate it from the modern notion of an “author.” Such qualifications and Buddhist proclamations of “non-ego” notwithstanding, medieval Japanese Buddhist literature is not a literature without authors – quite to the contrary, it is a literature where the various elements of the author function are carefully and craftily controlled and configured.

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