

THE CLASSIC INTRODUCTION TO
DŌGEN'S LIFE AND TEACHING

EIHEI
DŌGEN
MYSTICAL
REALIST

HEE-JIN KIM

foreword by TAIGEN DAN LEIGHTON
editor and co-translator of *Dōgen's Extensive Record*



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To those friends
who helped me understand Dōgen

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FOREWORD TO THE WISDOM EDITION

BY TAIGEN DAN LEIGHTON

HEE-JIN KIM'S LANDMARK BOOK *Eihei Dōgen: Mystical Realist* (formerly titled *Dōgen Kigen: Mystical Realist*) is a valuable, highly insightful commentary on the work of the thirteenth-century founder of the Sōtō branch of Japanese Zen. This book is an excellent comprehensive introduction to Dōgen's massive corpus of intricate writings as well as to his elegantly simple yet profound practice. Kim clarifies that Dōgen's philosophy was at the service of his spiritual guidance of his students, and reveals the way Dōgen incorporated study and philosophy into his religious practice.

Since this book was first published in 1975, and even more since the revised edition in 1987, a large volume of reliable English-language translations and commentaries on Dōgen have been published. And a widening circle of varied meditation communities dedicated to the practice espoused by Dōgen has developed in the West, with practitioners eager to study and absorb his teachings.

I have been privileged to contribute to the new body of Dōgen translations and scholarship. Other translators such as Shohaku Okumura, Kazuaki Tanahashi, Thomas Cleary, and Francis Cook have all made Dōgen's writings much more available to English readers, and now we even have a serviceable translation of the entirety of Dōgen's masterwork *Shōbōgenzō*, thanks to Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross. These new translations supplement the excellent early translations of Norman Waddell and Masao Abe that predate Kim's book, but have only recently become more accessible in book

form. Furthermore, excellent commentaries on specific areas of Dōgen's life and teaching by such fine scholars as Steven Heine, Carl Bielefeldt, William Bodiford, Griffith Foulk, and James Kōdera, to name a few, have created a thriving field of Dōgen studies in English. Nevertheless, after all this good work and a few years into the twenty-first century, this book by Hee-Jin Kim from the early years of English Dōgen studies easily still stands as the best overall general introduction to Dōgen's teaching, both for students of Buddhist teachings and for Zen practitioners.

Even beyond the realm of Dōgen studies, this book remains a valuable contribution to all of modern Zen commentary, with Kim's accessible presentation of thorough scholarship that does not reduce itself to dry intellectual analysis of doctrines or historical argumentation. Kim provides a subtle and clear discussion of Dōgen's work as a practical religious thinker and guide, showing that Dōgen was not merely a promulgator of philosophy, and never considered his work in such terms.

Kim unerringly zeroes in on key principles in Dōgen's teaching. The organization of this book is extraordinarily astute. After first providing background on Dōgen's biography and historical context, Kim discusses with subtlety Dōgen's *zazen* (seated meditation) as a mode of activity and expression. Kim then focuses on the centrality of the teaching of Buddha-nature to Dōgen's teaching and practice. Finally, Kim elaborates the importance of monastic life to Dōgen's teaching and training of his disciples.

In explicating the purpose of *zazen* for Dōgen, Kim enumerates the meaning and function of key terms that provide the texture of Dōgen's teaching and practice: the *samādhi* of self-fulfilling activity (*jijuyū-zammai*), the oneness of practice-enlightenment (*shushō-ittō*), casting off of body and mind (*shinjin-datsuraku*), non-thinking (*hishiryō*), total exertion (*gūjin*), and abiding in one's Dharma-position (*jū-hōi*).

With all the confusion about meditation in Zen, historically and today, we must be grateful at the acuity of the introduction to Dōgen's *zazen* that Kim has provided. Unlike other forms of Buddhism and even other Zen lineages, Dōgen emphatically does not see his meditation as a method aimed at achieving some future awakening or enlightenment. *Zazen* is not waiting for enlightenment. There is no enlightenment if it is not actualized in the present practice. And there is no true practice that is not an expression of underlying enlightenment and the mind of the Way. Certainly many of the *kōans* on which Dōgen frequently and extensively comments in his writings culminate in opening experiences for students in encounter with teachers.

And the actuality of the zazen practice still carried on by followers of Dōgen may often include glimpses, sometimes deeply profound, of the awareness of awakening. But such experiences are just the crest of the waves of everyday practice, and attachment to or grasping for these experiences are a harmful Zen sickness. The Buddha's awakening was just the beginning of Buddhism, not its end. Dōgen frequently emphasizes sustaining a practice of ongoing awakening, which he describes as Buddha going beyond Buddha.

Although current meditators may appreciate the therapeutic and stress-reducing side-effects of zazen, for Dōgen, as Kim clarifies, zazen is primarily a creative mode of expression instead of a means to some personal benefit. In one of the *hōgo* (Dharma words) in *Dōgen's Extensive Record (Eihei Kōroku)*, Dōgen speaks of the oneness not only of practice-enlightenment, but the deep oneness of practice-enlightenment-expression. Just as zazen is not waiting for enlightenment, expounding the Dharma—the expression of awareness—does not wait only until enlightenment's aftermath. There is no practice-enlightenment that is not expressed; there is no practice-expression of Buddha-dharma that is not informed with enlightenment; and there is no enlightenment-expression unless it is practiced. We might say that Dōgen's zazen is a performance art in which its upright posture and every gesture expresses one's present enlightenment-practice. Kim explicates how such creative practice-expression is not a matter of some refined understanding, but of deep trust in the activity of Buddha-nature: "Zazen-only cannot be fully understood apart from consideration of faith."

Kim skillfully describes how this unity of practice-enlightenment-expression is true not only for zazen, but also for Dōgen's study of the sutras and kōans as well: "Our philosophic and hermeneutical activities are no longer a means to enlightenment but identical with enlightenment, for to be is to understand, that is, one is what one understands. Thus the activity of philosophizing, like any other expressive activity, is restated in the context of our total participation in the self-creative process of Buddha-nature."

The expression of practice is a dynamic, creative activity. While Dōgen's teachings are complex, we can find his focus in untiring expression of the radical non-duality of Buddha-nature, as he emphasizes not fleeing or fearing the realm of everyday experience, but full-hearted creative engagement in it. As Kim states, "Dōgen's emphasis is not on how to transcend language but on how to radically use it."

Dōgen is extremely playful in freely overturning classic teachings to bring forth the inner dynamic of nondual liberation, in which forms are

revealed as already empty and open from the outset. The most famous example is when Dōgen transposes the sutra statement that “All beings without exception have Buddha-nature” to “All beings completely are Buddha-nature.” But again and again in diverse contexts, we see, as Kim says, “Dōgen’s creative and dynamic interpretation of the Buddhist doctrine of means in which the means in question is not transcendence of duality but realization of it.”

Kim’s work provides us with the background to enjoy and play along with Dōgen’s teachings for ourselves, in the light of the universal liberation of Buddha-nature.

Kim discusses how Dōgen enacted his practice-expression and trained a fine group of disciples in his monastic retreat, Eiheiiji, in the deep mountains far north of the capital during his last decade. Dōgen cannot be understood aside from his aesthetic sense of wonder as it informs communal practice in the world of nature amid the mountains and rivers. There in the mountains Dōgen trained an excellent group of monk disciples who, along with their successors in the next few generations, would spread the tradition of Sōtō Zen introduced by Dōgen throughout much of the Japanese countryside, so that it became one of the most popular sects of Japanese Buddhism. Paradoxically, Dōgen’s emphasis on care for everyday activities in the monastery provides a forum for practice that may readily be translated to predominately lay practice in the world, the primary mode of current Zen practice in the West. Kim conveys how Dōgen’s teaching serves as a basis for popular expression, stating: “However lowly one’s symbols and practices as we see in, say, a peasant’s religion, one is entitled to enlightenment if and when one uses them authentically. Here is the egalitarian basis for a claim that Dōgen’s religion is a religion of the people.”

I might quibble with Kim’s fine treatment of Dōgen only inasmuch as he does not bring into discussion the important later work *Eihei Kōroku* (Dōgen’s *Extensive Record*), which contains most of what we know about Dōgen’s later teachings at Eiheiiji, and his actual training of his great disciples. I have had the pleasure and privilege of recently completing a translation of this massive work together with Shohaku Okumura. Overshadowed by Dōgen’s more celebrated writing *Shōbōgenzō*, *Eihei Kōroku* has only recently received the attention it deserves. But impressively, Kim notes even this work, and its comparative neglect, in his excellent appendices, which include a very thorough account of Dōgen’s many writings, and a good chronology of his life.

Kim has given us not only an excellent and reliable reference for Dōgen's writings, but also an entry into how to play with Dōgen in going beyond Buddha. Students of Dōgen's teaching and thought must now be grateful to have this fine guidebook to Dōgen's world again available in print.

TAIGEN DAN LEIGHTON *is a Zen priest and Dharma heir in the lineage of Suzuki Roshi. He has trained in Japan as well as America, and is the author of Faces of Compassion, and translator of numerous works by Dōgen, including Dōgen's Pure Standards for the Zen Community, The Wholehearted Way, Dōgen's Extensive Record, and Enlightenment Unfolds. He teaches at the Graduate Theological Union, and leads the Mountain Source Sangha meditation groups in the San Francisco Bay Area.*

PREFACE TO THE WISDOM EDITION

THE PRESENT WORK was originally published in 1975 under the title *Dōgen Kigen—Mystical Realist* by the University of Arizona Press, as Monograph No. XXIX of the Association for Asian Studies. The book was reissued in 1987 as *Dōgen Kigen: Mystical Realist*, with Robert Aitken Roshi's foreward, and went out of print in the summer of 1999. The present edition has undergone a considerable amount of minor changes and corrections, largely in the translations of Dōgen's works. However, the fundamental thrust of my methodology and interpretation regarding Dōgen's Zen remains intact. Considering shortcomings in my reading of and approach to Dōgen, as well as enormous developments that have taken place in Dōgen studies for nearly thirty years since my book's original publication, I should have undertaken an extensive revision. In fact, the editor of Wisdom Publications kindly suggested some updating. But I chose not to for a variety of reasons—above all was my wish to retain the integrity of the original work, for better or worse. This wish has nothing to do with my imperviousness to recent advances in the field. Indeed, to fill this lacuna to a certain extent, I have opted to present a very brief sketch of some of the developments and issues in Dōgen scholarship, with a special emphasis on those in the United States.

Translating Dōgen's writings, especially his *Shōbōgenzō*, is a daunting task for any and all translators. Yet in the past three decades or so, there have appeared a spate of translations in Western languages, the overwhelming numbers of which are in English and are published in the United States. In

his writings, Dōgen treated language with the utmost care; scrupulously constructed and crafted, his language was intimately entwined with the scope and precision of his thought. For this reason, every translator of Dōgen must address questions not only on how to be attuned to the intricacies and subtleties of Dōgen's linguistic and religio-philosophical world, but furthermore how to render them cogently in his/her chosen language with full justice. From this perspective, of many translations, Norman Waddell's and Masao Abe's *The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*;¹ Francis Dōjun H. Cook's *How to Raise an Ox: Zen Practice As Taught in Zen Master Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō, Including Ten Newly Translated Essays and Sounds of Valley Streams: Enlightenment in Dōgen's Zen, Translation of Nine Essays from Shōbōgenzō*;² Carl Bielefeldt's translations of the *Shōbōgenzō* "Sansuikyō," "Zazenshin" fascicles and others;³ Kazuaki Tanahashi's *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen* and *Enlightenment Unfolds: The Essential Teachings of Zen Master Dōgen*;⁴ Yūhō Yokoi's (with Daizen Victoria) *Zen Master Dōgen: An Introduction with Selected Writings*;⁵ and a few others are notable.⁶ Although they are to be commended for their worthy contributions, there is still a long and treacherous road for translation in this field, in terms of quantity and quality alike. Just as Dōgen struggled eight centuries ago to find new expressions for his times with the Sino-Buddhist and medieval Japanese languages, so the translator today constantly seeks a new language for the present-day audience through his/her encounter and dialogue with Dōgen. Inasmuch as his thought is elusive and his language difficult, Dōgen will never be an easy read, even with the help of those reliable translations.

Beyond the foundational work of translation, critical scholarship has also made substantial growth in diversified areas, subjects, issues, and methods. I would like to briefly review Dōgen scholarship in North America, and for the sake of convenience, despite the risk of oversimplification, I will approach this review in terms of three areas: textual-historical, comparative-philosophical, and methodological-hermeneutical. In the broadly textual-historical area, the following works are noteworthy: Takashi James Kōdera's *Dōgen's Formative Years in China: An Historical Study and Annotated Translation of the Hōkyō-ki*;⁷ William M. Bodiford's *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan*;⁸ and Carl Bielefeldt's essay "Recarving the Dragon: History and Dogma in the Study of Dōgen" and his *Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation*.⁹ Bielefeldt, particularly in his essay, sets the tone of current textual-historical criticism well. He not only challenges the Sōtō Zen sect's hagiographic image of Dōgen as the sole legitimate inheritor in the transmission of Buddhism from

the Buddha through Bodhidharma and Ju-ching, Dōgen's Chinese mentor, but also highlights shifts and contradictions within Dōgen's statements in his *Shōbōgenzō*, particularly between his writings in the early and later periods. In Bielefeldt's view, Dōgen's "new sectarianism" is manifested in his later-period writings, revealing "more about Zen in Japan than in China," e.g., Dōgen's relation to the Nihon Daruma-shū of Dainichibō Nōnin and his disciples, a large number of whom joined Dōgen's group after their master's demise. Charitable or not, Bielefeldt forcefully repudiates a sterilized image of Dōgen, as well as a single unified message in the *Shōbōgenzō*. This is salutary indeed, to the extent that Bielefeldt's revisionist historiography contributes to liberating Dōgen from orthodox captivity and leads us to a better understanding of Dōgen without obscuring other aspects of his multifaceted religion. It goes without saying that the nature and significance of discrepancies between the early and later Dōgen are still issues of intense debate among scholars.

In the comparative-philosophical area of Dōgen scholarship, Nishitani Keiji's *Religion and Nothingness*;¹⁰ Masao Abe's *Zen and Western Thought and A Study of Dōgen: His Philosophy and Religion*;¹¹ T. P. Kasulis's *Zen Action/Zen Person*;¹² Joan Stambaugh's *Impermanence Is Buddha-Nature: Dōgen's Understanding of Temporality*;¹³ Steven Heine's *Existential and Ontological Dimensions of Time in Heidegger and Dōgen*;¹⁴ and Carl Olson's *Zen and the Art of Postmodern Philosophy: Two Paths of Liberation from the Representational Mode of Thinking*¹⁵ are representative works. Dōgen is compared particularly with Martin Heidegger and Jacques Derrida among Western philosophers; many comparativists' articles have appeared in *Philosophy East and West* and other philosophical journals. Affinity between Dōgen and postmodern thinkers has been highlighted in terms of their emphasis on the nonsubstantiality and radical relatedness of all things, their nonrepresentational view of language and thinking, self-subversion, and so on.

The discovery of Dōgen as a philosophical thinker, however, was strictly a modern phenomenon in Japan; although an unmistakable and captivating philosophical streak exists in his thought, to regard him as a dharmalogian in its full-fledged sense is problematic. This is precisely because his overriding concern is religious and soteriological. And yet, the comparative-philosophical approach, by and large, tends to lift Dōgen's thought from its religious and historical moorings. For this reason, Dōgen would have frowned upon any attempt to ahistoricize or atemporalize his religio-philosophical thought. Of those comparative-philosophical interpreters of Dōgen, Abe

has been by far the most active and influential in the West by explicating a number of key notions, such as Buddha-nature, the oneness of practice and attainment, time and space, and death. He is also regarded as the leading exponent of Zen in the West today, just as D. T. Suzuki was a generation ago, and has a philosophical inclination akin to Nishida Kataro's Kyoto school of Japanese philosophy. Thus, some critics point out a subtly veiled cultural/spiritual nationalism in his universalistic, suprahistorical interpretation of Zen, which he is said to harbor in his *Zen and Western Thought*.¹⁶ This same critique holds true of Nishitani, as well as Abe's mentor Hisamatsu Shin'ichi. Even so, we should not forget that genuine critique is one in which critique of the other is always self-critique.¹⁷

In contrast to the textual-historical and comparative-philosophical approaches, my essay "'The Reason of Words and Letters': Dōgen and Kōan Language"¹⁸ further pursues what I extensively discuss in this book regarding how Dōgen *does* his religion, especially his way of appropriating language and symbols soteriologically. In this essay, I delineate Dōgen's method under the seven principles, demonstrating how he explores and experiments with semantic possibilities of Buddhist concepts and images, such as "dreams," "entwined vines," "the flowers of emptiness," and numerous others. Dōgen does this by shifting syntaxes, changing word order, appropriating polysemous potentialities of words, creating neologisms, resuscitating some forgotten symbols, and so forth. These hermeneutical moves demonstrate Dōgen's view of realization—that is, that language and thinking constitute the core of Zen praxis. In a similar methodological-hermeneutical vein, Steven Heine, in his *Dōgen and the Kōan Tradition: A Tale of Two Shōbōgenzō Texts*,¹⁹ deftly interweaves recent textual-historical findings of Dōgen/Zen studies in Japan with the method that he calls "discourse analysis," which is heavily couched in postmodern literary criticism, and thus elucidates the historical and literary continuity between Dōgen's writings and the kōan tradition of China. The two key texts in his analysis are the *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (or *Shōbōgenzō sambyakusoku*, Dōgen's own collection of three hundred kōan cases in Chinese without commentary) and the *Kana Shōbōgenzō* (the one we usually refer to by the name *Shōbōgenzō*, written in Japanese). Although long considered apocryphal, the authenticity of the Chinese *Shōbōgenzō* has been established in recent studies. Dōgen seems to have used this kōan collection as the basis for his writings and presentation, especially in relation to the Japanese *Shōbōgenzō*. Heine locates these two texts in the context of the rich and complex kōan tradition of Chinese Zen

and concludes that Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō* was “an offshoot or subdivision of the kōan-collection genre” (which flourished in the eleventh through thirteenth centuries) that could be traced to “encounter dialogues,” the root of all Zen literary genres. Dōgen's texts were thus firmly embedded in the Chinese kōan tradition; in turn, Dōgen enriched this tradition with his own innovative hermeneutical principles and religio-philosophical reflections. Heine, with Dale S. Wright, also coedited *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, a significant addition to the study of the kōan.²⁰ Speaking of the kōan in Dōgen's Zen, we should remember that Dōgen, throughout his career, endeavored to revise and refine his meditation manuals such as the *Fukan zazengi*, as Bielefeldt presents in his aforementioned book. Dōgen's view of zazen, along with that of the kōan, evolved throughout the different periods of his life.

As the foregoing outline of the textual-historical, comparative-philosophical, and methodological-hermeneutical approaches/areas shows, all the issues, problems, and methods revolve around the central question: What was Dōgen's Zen (or religion)? To put it differently: What were the origins, evolution, and nature of Dōgen's Zen? All other questions radiate from this central concern in an open-ended, fluid fashion. What was the significance of discrepancies between Dōgen's early and later writings? Was there continuity and/or discontinuity between the early and later Dōgen? What was the relation between zazen and the kōan? Between meditation and thinking? How Japanese was Dōgen's Zen? What was the nature of his originality? A host of other questions arises—yet in the final analysis, every question has to do with the identity of Dōgen.

Having said this, let me briefly touch upon the recent controversy of Critical Buddhism (Hihan Bukkyō) that originated in Japan but has stirred heated debates among scholars in Dōgen and Buddhist studies alike on both sides of the Pacific in the past two decades or so. Hakamaya Noriaki and Matsumoto Shirō, two of the most vocal proponents at Komazawa University (Sōtō Zen), hold that Tendai *hongaku* (original enlightenment) thought—closely connected with the notions of *tathāgata-garbha* and Buddha-nature, and ubiquitous in Japanese history from medieval times to the present day—is heretical because of its substantialist view of an inherently pure mind/original enlightenment and its uncritical affirmation of the phenomenal world as absolute (including delusions, desires, and passions). From this perspective, the proponents of Critical Buddhism criticize the absolutization of a given world and the blind acceptance of the status quo as contrary to the original Buddhist philosophy that, according to them,

espoused the critical spirit, nonself/emptiness, dependent origination/causation, impermanence/time, difference, and so forth. More directly related to Dōgen studies is Hakamaya's controversial study of the ("old") seventy-five-fascicle text and the ("new") twelve-fascicle text—the two most important among many versions of the *Shōbōgenzō*—which contends that the latter be given normative status over the former. Reversing the conventional interpretation of the two texts, Hakamaya insists on the primacy of the twelve-fascicle text as reflecting Dōgen's "decisive viewpoint" of his anti-*hongaku* stance and his mature thinking regarding nonsubstantiality, causation, and impermanence. He contends that Dōgen's entire writings should be reexamined from this perspective. Critical Buddhism seems to have served some wholesome functions that (a) heightened Buddhist awareness in Japan of some pressing contemporary social issues, (b) intensified debates regarding the extent to which Dōgen's Zen is continuous and/or discontinuous with Tendai *hongaku* thought, (c) called scholarly attention to the relationship between the "old" and "new" texts of the *Shōbōgenzō* with renewed sensitivities, and (d) shook Sōtō Zen orthodoxy to its core.²¹

I would like to make the following comments on Critical Buddhism: (1) Dōgen was critical, if not directly and explicitly, of Tendai *hongaku* thought as both doctrine and ethos because of (a) the dangers of its latent substantialist interpretation and (b) the disastrous ethical implications of antinomianism, fideism, and skepticism that resulted from its potential misuses and abuses. Dōgen, however, did not reject *hongaku* thought entirely on the grounds that it was antithetical to Buddhism, as the Critical Buddhists do; his praxis-orientation was inspired and informed by, as well as within, the *hongaku* doctrine/ethos. (2) From this standpoint, Dōgen deeply imbibed *hongaku* discourse as radical phenomenism, which became the crux of his soteriological vision. In fact, his entire religion may be safely described as the exploration and explication of this radical phenomenism in terms of its linguistic, rational, and temporal dimensions, as well as the endeavor to overcome its ever-threatening religio-ethical perils. And (3) in his religio-philosophical imagination and discourse, Dōgen boldly, yet judiciously, employed *hongaku*-related concepts and symbols in his search for "the reason of words and letters" (*monji no dori*). In doing so, he strove throughout his life to clarify and refine his expressions as consistent with his praxis-orientation and the critical spirit of emptiness.

In the auxiliary areas of Dōgen studies, the following works are significant: John R. McRae's *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an*

Buddhism,²² Bernard Faure's *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism*, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition*, and *The Will to Orthodoxy: A Critical Genealogy of Northern Chan Buddhism*,²³ James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo, eds., *Rude Awakening: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism*,²⁴ Donald S. Lopez, Jr., ed., *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*,²⁵ Charles Wei-hsun Fu and Steven Heine, eds., *Japan in Traditional and Postmodern Perspectives*,²⁶ and Jacqueline I. Stone's *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*.²⁷ McRae's book advances a view of the formation of early Chinese Zen that is far more complex than conventionally thought—one in which the ancestral transmission of Dharma from Bodhidharma to Hui-nêng, respectively the first and sixth ancestors of the orthodox Zen lineage, is now construed as largely the product of the Southern school's sudden enlightenment ideology and propaganda. Thus, McRae asserts that the old distinctions between gradual enlightenment and sudden enlightenment, between the Southern and Northern schools, and so forth, must be fundamentally reassessed. Stone in her work presents Tendai *hongaku* thought as "a new paradigm of liberation" that affirmed the phenomenal world as the expression of inherent enlightenment, and as the "transsectarian" discourse that was shared by all the Buddhist schools of medieval Japan. Her investigation of *hongaku* discourse conclusively demonstrates the inadequacy of the traditional tension between the "old" ("decadent" Tendai) and the "new" (reformist Kamakura) Buddhism that privileges the latter over the former, and thus calls for a reevaluation of the nature and significance of Kamakura Buddhism.²⁸ In view of Stone's study, Critical Buddhism's anti-*hongaku* thesis, especially in relation to Dōgen studies, seems reductionistic and elitist due to its failure to take the historical aspects of *hongaku* thought into consideration. Robert H. Sharf's article, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism" in Lopez's book,²⁹ exposes cultural biases in past Zen scholarship that were initially planted by Japanese Zen apologists in the West, such as D. T. Suzuki. These cultural biases subsequently influenced the Western view of Zen—namely, a view of Zen as "pure experience" that is unmediated and ahistorical, the quintessential expression of Japanese spirituality (through the way of the samurai, Japanese art, the tea ceremony, etc.), "the essence of Buddhism," and even the basis for the polemics of Japanese uniqueness (*nihon-jinron*). This is contrary to the West's "orientalism" (Edward Said), or what Faure dubs "Zen orientalism" or "reverse orientalism."³⁰

I would like to point out that Dōgen scholarship is constantly challenged by, and is in no way immune to, the competing realities of multiple orientalisms. Perhaps it is fair to say that scholars today are more acutely aware than ever before of the historical situatedness and conditionedness of not only the immediacy and purity of Zen experience but also of scholarly activity itself, with its hidden biases, limitations, needs, and vulnerabilities. For both practitioners who pride themselves on the *sui generis* character of their Zen spirituality and academics who are content with the alleged objectivity of their professional practice, it is sobering to think that practitioners and scholars alike are ultimately in the same boat with respect to “the loss of *our* innocence.” Despite his insistence on nonduality, or precisely *because* of it, Dōgen would have welcomed such sensibilities and reflections.

That said, nothing is fixed; everything is temporary and temporal. For all the diversity and sophistication of methodologies and interpretations in recent Dōgen scholarship, everything still remains uncertain, and yet, this should not lead us to conclude that everything is arbitrary or absurd. Admittedly, although we have abandoned our search for the essential, rarefied Dōgen, only now can it possibly dawn upon us that we can at last genuinely encounter “the naked flesh-mass” (*shakunikudan*) of Dōgen which bares his whole being inside out, just as it is. That Dōgen, who continues to lure, intrigue, and challenge us to this day, is in constant making.

With respect to this new edition, I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to those authors and works cited in the text and notes of this new preface for challenging and stimulating my understanding of Dōgen, including many more not cited here because of a lack of space. My special thanks goes to people at Wisdom Publications for their efforts to make this publication possible; especially to my editor at Wisdom, Josh Bartok, who in 2002 initiated the project and guided me throughout its progress with his enthusiasm and kindness. I also thank my daughter, Pearl Kim-Kregel, for her editing and word processing work during her pregnancy, and her husband, Mark Kregel, for his computer expertise. And lastly, but not least, I am ever grateful to my wife Jung-Sun, for her support, care, and patience.

Hee-Jin Kim
Eugene, Oregon
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FOREWORD TO THE PREVIOUS EDITION

BY ROBERT AITKEN

THE WAY OF DŌGEN ZENJI

Hee-Jin Kim's *Dōgen Kigen—Mystical Realist* [as the first edition was titled] was the first comprehensive study in English of Dōgen Zenji's writings, and for the past twelve years, it has served as the principal English language reference for those Dōgen scholars who work from his thirteenth-century Japanese, and for Western Zen students reading translations of his writings. This revised edition appears in a scholarly setting that now includes many new translations and studies of Dōgen, and thus it is most welcome.

Dōgen wrote at the outermost edge of human communication, touching with every sentence such mysteries as self and other, self and non-self, meditation and realization, the temporal and the timeless, forms and the void. He moved freely from the acceptance of a particular mode as complete in itself to an acknowledgment of its complementarity with others, to a presentation of its unity with all things—and back again. He wrote of the attitude necessary for understanding, of the practice required, of the various insights that emerge, and of the many pitfalls. He did not generally write for beginners—most of his points require very careful study, and a few of them elude almost everybody. These challenges are compounded by his creative use of the Japanese language of his time. It has been said that he wrote in “Dōgenese,” for he made verbs of nouns, nouns of verbs, created new metaphors, and manipulated old sayings to present his particular understanding.

Thus the writings of Dōgen are an immense challenge to anyone seeking to explicate them in English, but Dr. Kim does a masterful job. In this Foreword, I do not presume to explicate Dr. Kim's words, but offer a personal

perspective of Dōgen in the hope that it might serve as access to Dr. Kim's incisive scholarship.

I choose as my theme a key passage in the "Genjō Kōan," the essay that Dōgen placed at the head of his great collection of talks and essays, the *Shōbōgenzō*, using Dr. Kim's translation:

To study the Way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be enlightened by all things of the universe. To be enlightened by all things of the universe is to cast off the body and mind of the self as well as those of others. Even the traces of enlightenment are wiped out, and life with traceless enlightenment goes on forever and ever.

To study the Way is to study the self. Asian languages offer the same options as English for the meaning of the word "study." "A Study of Whitehead" would be the presentation of an understanding of Whitehead. Thus the first sentence of the passage quoted also means, "To understand the Way is to understand the self."

The term "Way" is a translation of *Dō* in Japanese, *Tao* in Chinese. It is the ideograph used to identify the central doctrine of Taoism and its basic text, the *Tao te ching*. Kumarajiva and his colleagues in the early fifth century selected *Tao* as a translation of Dharma, a key Sanskrit Buddhist term meaning "law," or "way of the universe and its phenomena," or simply "phenomena." In Dōgen's view, all phenomena are the Buddha Dharma—the way of the universe as understood through Buddhist practice.

Indeed, for Dōgen, to study and understand the Buddha Way is to practice the Buddha Way, and to practice the Buddha Way is to have the self practice. It is important to understand that practice, like study, is both action and attainment. Modes of practice: zazen (Zen meditation), realization, and the careful works that transcend realization—all these are complete in themselves, and they are also means for further completion. They are aspects of a single act at any particular moment, and they are also stages that appear in the course of time.

As to the self, it has no abiding nature, and "kisses the joy as it flies." It is the Buddha coming forth now as a woman, now as a youth, now as a child, now as an old man, now as an animal, a plant, or a cloud. However, animals and plants and clouds cannot "study" in Dōgen's sense, so in this context, Dōgen intends the human being that can focus the self and make personal the vast and fathomless void, the infinitely varied beings, and their marvelous harmony.

To study the self is to forget the self. Here Dōgen sets forth the nature of practice. My teacher, Yamada Kōun Rōshi, has said, “Zen practice is a matter of forgetting the self in the act of uniting with something.” To unite with something is to find it altogether vivid, like the thrush, say, singing in the guava grove. There is just that song, a point of no dimension—of cosmic dimension. The “sole self” is forgotten. This is something like the athlete who is completely involved in catching the ball, freed of self-doubt and thoughts of attainment, at the same time aware of the other players and their positions. Using this same human ability on one’s meditation cushion is the great Way of realization. It must be distinguished from thinking *about* something. When you are occupied in thinking, you are shrouded by your thoughts, and the universe is shut out.

There are other analogies for gathering oneself in a single act of religious practice, freeing oneself of doubt and attainment. Simone Weil sets forth the academic analogy:

Contemplating an object fixedly with the mind, asking myself “What is it?” without thinking of any other object relating to it or to anything else, for hours on end.¹

Dōgen often uses the phrase, “mustering the body and mind” to understand oneself and the world. Using Dr. Kim’s translation of a later passage in the “Genjō Kōan”:

Mustering our bodies and minds we see things, and mustering our bodies and minds we hear sounds, thereby we understand them intimately. However, it is not like a reflection dwelling in the mirror, nor is it like the moon and the water. As one side is illumined, the other is darkened.

This mustering is *zazen*—and also the activity of the Zen student who is grounded in *zazen*. Dr. Kim quotes Dōgen writing elsewhere in the *Shōbōgenzō*:

The Buddhas and Tathāgatas have an ancient way—unequaled and natural—to transmit the wondrous Dharma through personal encounter and to realize supreme enlightenment. As it is imparted impeccably from Buddha to Buddha, its criterion is the *samādhi* of self-fulfilling activity.

For playing joyfully in such a *samādhi*, the upright sitting in meditation is the right gate.

With the practice of zazen, mustering body and mind, we understand a thing intimately by seeing or hearing, and the self is forgotten. This kind of understanding is not by simile, it is not a representation, like the moon in the water, but is a brilliant presentation of the thing itself, and a complete personal acceptance. One side is illumined. There is only that thrush. At the same time, the universe is present in the shadow. The other players are still there.

To forget the self is to be enlightened by all things of the universe. The term “enlightened” is *shō*, the same *shō* found in *inka shōmei*, the document given to a senior student by a master confirming him or her as a teacher. The thrush confirms you, enlightens you, but be careful not to give “enlightenment” anything more than provisional status. It is likely to be just a peep into the nature of things. Nonetheless, “One impulse from a vernal wood” or the Morning Star shining over the Bodhi tree is a communication. It works the other way, from the self to the object, but the result is different, as Dōgen makes clear earlier in the “Genjō Kōan”:

That the self advances and confirms the myriad things is called delusion;
that the myriad things advance and confirm the self is enlightenment.²

The way of research and analysis is “called” delusion. Don’t condemn it, Dōgen is saying. By advancing and confirming and throwing light upon all things of the universe, you reach intellectual understanding. However, when you forget yourself in mustering body and mind in the act of practice, there is only that particular act, in that particular breath-moment. Then, as Dr. Kim says, the whole universe is created in and through that act. With this you experience the things of the universe. They are your confirmation, your enlightenment.

To be enlightened by all things of the universe is to cast off the body and mind of the self as well as those of others. When you focus body and mind with all your inquiring spirit upon a single matter, the self is forgotten. The myriad things communicate their wisdom with their forms and sounds, and the emptiness, harmony, and uniqueness of the ephemeral self and the world are understood clearly. This is reminiscent of Paul’s “putting off the old man”—not merely forgetting but dying to the self.

Casting off body and mind should not be confused with self-denial. Many people suppose that they must get rid of the self. The Buddha too went through a phase of asceticism, avoiding food and sleep in an effort to overcome his desires. Such a path has a dead end, as the Buddha and others have

found. We need food and sleep in order to cast off body and mind. The Way is gnostic rather than ascetic.

Finally, as Dōgen says, when you cast off body and mind, all other beings have the same experience. One version of the Buddha's exclamation under the Bodhi tree reads, "I and all beings have at this moment entered the Way!" This does not mean, "All beings can now come along." Rather, at the Buddha's experience, all beings simultaneously cast off body and mind.

When Hsüeh-fêng and Yen-t'ou were on pilgrimage together, they became snowbound in the village of Wushantien. This gave them time for an extended dialogue, during which Hsüeh-fêng recounted his various spiritual experiences. Yen-t'ou exclaimed, "Haven't you heard the old saying, 'What enters from the gate [that is, by intellection] cannot be the family treasure'?" Hsüeh-fêng suddenly had deep realization and exclaimed, "At this moment, Wushantien has become enlightened!"³

With his exclamation, Yen-t'ou cast off body and mind. Simultaneously, Hsüeh-fêng did the same. The whole village was likewise affected, proving Bell's theorem a thousand years and more before Bell.

Even traces of enlightenment are wiped out, and life with traceless enlightenment goes on for ever and ever. Wiping away the intimations of pride that come with a realization experience are the ultimate steps of Zen practice, steps that never end. They form the Way of the Bodhisattva, polishing the mind of compassion, engaging in the travail of the world, "entering the marketplace with bliss-bestowing hands." Over and over in kōan practice, the Zen student works through the lesson of casting off, casting off.

A monk said to Chao-chou, "I have just entered this monastery. Please teach me."

Chao-chou said, "Have you eaten your rice gruel?"

The monk said, "Yes, I have."

Chao-chou said, "Wash your bowl."⁴

"Have you eaten your essential food?" "Yes, I have." "If so, wipe that idea of attainment away!" For our limited purposes this would be an explication of Chao-chou's meaning. What is left after body and mind are cast off? Endlessly casting off—ongoing practice. The "Genjō Kōan" ends with the story:

When the Zen teacher Pao-chê of Ma-ku was fanning himself, a monk asked him, “The nature of wind is constant, and there is no place it does not reach. Why then do you fan yourself?”

Pao-chê said, “You only know that the nature of wind is constant. You don’t yet know the meaning of its reaching every place.”

The monk asked, “What is the meaning of its reaching every place?”

Pao-chê only fanned himself. The monk bowed deeply.

The nature of the wind is Buddha nature, “pervading the whole universe.” The monk’s question is an old one. If all beings by nature are Buddha, why should one strive for enlightenment? Dōgen himself asked such a question in his youth, and his doubts fueled his search for a true teacher. Pao-chê takes the monk’s words “reaching every place” as a figure of speech for Zen Buddhist practice that brings forth what is already there. As Dōgen says in his comment to this story—the final words of the “Genjō Kōan”:

Confirmation of the Buddha Dharma, the correct transmission of the vital Way, is like this. If you say that one should not use a fan because the wind is constant, that there will be a wind even when one does not use a fan, then you fail to understand either constancy or the nature of the wind. It is because the nature of the wind is constant that the wind of the Buddha House brings forth the gold of the earth and ripens the kefir of the long river.

The wind of the Buddha house, the practice of zazen, realization, and going beyond realization, is altogether in accord with the wind of the universe, the Buddha Mind. As Dōgen says elsewhere, “The Dharma wheel turns from the beginning. There is neither surplus nor lack. The whole universe is moistened with nectar, and the truth is ready to harvest.”⁵ The harvesting of truth, the practice of forgetting the self, the practice of realizing forms and sounds intimately, the practice of polishing our mind of compassion—this is our joyous task.

Robert Aitken
Koko An Zendo, Honolulu
1987

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

FOR NEARLY HALF A CENTURY since D. T. Suzuki published his first series of *Essays in Zen Buddhism* in 1927, Zen has been taking firm root in Western culture and has continued to grow steadily, both in its dissemination and its depth of understanding. Indeed Suzuki's introduction of Zen to the West was one of the epoch-making events in Western cultural history, and it rightfully became the beginning of a great experiment that has been ongoing ever since—although not without some whimsical and misguided by-products in the course of its evolutionary process.

If Zen has a universal element that transcends historical and cultural bounds, it should be nurtured here in the West with its own distinctive marks and imprints. Just as Zen has evolved differently in the different countries of East Asia and Vietnam, so has it transformed itself into “Western Zen,” (or “American Zen” for that matter) which is on the verge of emergence. Based on the sheer number of publications in this field, the mushrooming growth of meditation centers across Western countries, and its impact upon such fields as art, philosophy, psychology, religion, and folk culture, we can readily witness the intensity and fervor of this cultural experiment.

Despite all this, systematic study of Dōgen in the West today is virtually nonexistent. As a result, Western knowledge of Zen is painfully fragmentary, not only in quantity, but more important, in quality. In recent years, some sporadic attempts have been made to acquaint the West with Dōgen, but these cover only a tiny portion of the entire corpus of his religion and

philosophy. It is my hope that the study of Dōgen's Zen will remedy the situation and will lead to a more complete understanding of Zen.

On the other hand, I am of the opinion that it is high time for Western students to deal with Zen as a historical religion in its concrete historical, philosophical, moral, and cultural context—not to isolate it from that context. After all, Zen is a cultural and historical product. I feel strongly that such an approach to Zen is imperative to the maturity of Western Zen (or any Zen for that matter), and my work endeavors to apply it seriously to the study of Dōgen. It might surprise many readers that such a historical consciousness is actually in accord with Dōgen's belief that maintaining a fidelity to history was the way to transcend it.

The present work draws heavily upon, and is greatly indebted to, Japanese scholarship in Dōgen studies, which has diversified so much in recent years that materials and findings are indeed bewildering to the beginning Dōgen student. With this book, I endeavor to add to this scholarship by systematically elucidating Dōgen's life and thought, while paying acute attention to those issues that are relevant and vital to current thinking in religion and philosophy. In this respect, Dōgen's thought sheds light on some vitally important issues in a surprisingly modern way. I am not implying here that Dōgen fully or completely anticipated what we now know. Yet, despite his remoteness from us in terms of time and culture, his messages are infinitely richer and more complex than we might at first think.

It has been my persistent conviction that we can avoid making either a strict philosopher or a pious religionist of Dōgen; rather, we can understand him totally in a humanistic context. Be that as it may, it is my sincere hope that the present work will stimulate students to delve further into Dōgen.

Throughout this study, I used *Dōgen zenji zenshū* (edited by Ōkubo Dōshū) as the basis of my research and translation. In view of the current Western acquaintance with Dōgen, I have attempted to render as many translations of his writings as possible. Most of these appear here for the first time in English. In an introductory work such as this, translations are by necessity highly selective and fragmentary, and one cannot avoid but lay primary, if not sole, emphasis upon the *Shōbōgenzō*.

The Japanese reading of Buddhist terms is extremely confusing, even among Buddhist scholars. In order to avoid unnecessary chaos, I adopted the customary Sōtō way of reading them, rather than the one suggested in Ōkubo's aforementioned *Zenshū*. Thus for example, I used *uji* instead of *yūji*, *datsuraku* instead of *totsuraku*, *konshin* instead of *unjin*, *gato* instead of

wazu, and so forth. I consulted frequently with *Shōbōgenzō yōgo sakuin* (edited by Katō Shūkō) and *Zengaku jiten* (edited by Jimbo Nyoten and Andō Bun'ei) for the reading of important terms used in this work.

I wish to extend my gratitude to John A. Hutchison for his unfailing assistance and encouragement; to Floyd H. Ross, Herbert W. Schneider, Margaret Dornish, and Katō Kazumitsu for their invaluable comments and suggestions; to Yamada Reirin, the former abbot of the Los Angeles Zenshūji temple, who initially guided me to Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*; and to Nakamura Hajime, Masunaga Reihō, and Abe Masao in Japan for their kind assistance through correspondence.

The Blaisdell Institute, Claremont Graduate School, and the School of Theology were generous enough to invite me to Claremont to teach and do research on Dōgen from 1970 to 1972. I am deeply grateful to these three institutions for providing necessary funds. I should also mention the moral support I received from the members of the Department of Religious Studies and the Asian Studies Committee at the University of Oregon, when this work was in its final stage of preparation. My gratitude extends to them.

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Hee-Jin Kim

1975

EIHEI DŌGEN
MYSTICAL REALIST

TOWARD A TOTAL UNDERSTANDING OF ZEN

1

DURING THE PAST several decades, the significance of Dōgen's thought—not only for the history of Buddhist thought but also for the history of ideas at large—has been increasingly recognized, albeit belatedly, by a growing number of students both inside and outside the Sōtō sectarian circle in Japan. Masunaga Reihō, a leading Dōgen scholar in the Sōtō sect, for example, characterizes Dōgen as “the unique religious personality” with “incomparable depth of thought.”¹ Among those singing his praises outside the sect is Tanabe Hajime, one of the most prominent Japanese philosophers, who exalts Dōgen almost ecstatically, calling him “a great metaphysical thinker” and appraising his thought in the *Shōbōgenzō* (*Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*), Dōgen's magnum opus, as “the culmination of dialectical thinking” and “the precursor of Japanese philosophy.” “Indeed,” says Tanabe, “his thought seems to have already had an insight into, and to have made a declaration of, the direction to which the systematic thought of today's philosophy should move.”² Even a foreign student of Zen Buddhism concurs with these claims in observing that Dōgen “belongs among the great creative figures of humankind.”³ It is not difficult for us to glean such praises and eulogies from various sources—they are perhaps more frequent than criticisms of Dōgen. A sudden rise in Dōgen studies in scholarly circles and an unprecedented enthusiasm among intellectuals for the past several decades seem to indicate that, after the initial shock of the discovery of a virtually unknown thinker, the “popularity” of Dōgen has been steadily growing in the post–World War II period.

Credit for causing the “initial shock” in Dōgen studies should go to Watsuji Tetsurō, a leading cultural historian, who brought Dōgen to light from his cloistered confinement in the Sōtō sect. In his now famous essay, “Shamon Dōgen” (“Dōgen, a Monk”) written in 1926, Watsuji declared:

I am not here insisting that my own interpretation is the only one on the truth of Dōgen itself, in the understanding of which I am least confident. I can safely say, however, that a new path of interpretation has been opened up here, to say the least. Henceforth Dōgen is no longer “Dōgen, the founder of the sect,” but, our Dōgen. The reason I dare make such an arrogant statement is that I know Dōgen has been killed thus far in the Sōtō sect.⁴

Deceptively meager as it may have been in its size, Watsuji’s essay was a bombshell, openly revolting against sectarian injustice to Dōgen and challenging many younger minds to engage in Dōgen studies without being fettered by sectarian concerns. This revolt, in the spirit of making Dōgen “our Dōgen,” was cheered and welcomed even by some insiders of the Sōtō sect, although there was also much sectarian resistance and indifference. This was the beginning of Dōgen studies in the genuinely modern sense.

For some seven hundred years prior to 1926, Dōgen studies were pursued by sectarian scholars who approached his work with apologetic concerns and confessional hermeneutics. These scholars lacked any kind of modern methodologies and philosophical reflections, and as a result, Dōgen was venerated pietistically, but never studied critically. For the sake of convenience, we can divide the history of Dōgen studies into the following periods: (1) the period of institutional expansion (1253–1660), (2) the period of sectarian studies (1660–1868), (3) the period of continued stagnation (1868–1926), (4) the period of awakening (1926–1945), and (5) the period of steady maturity (1945–present). Let us briefly examine these stages.⁵

The first period, which began immediately after Dōgen’s death and lasted until approximately 1660, is characterized by the institutional expansion of the Sōtō sect. It started modestly in the Hokuriku regions and gradually extended throughout the country due to the shrewd accommodation policies of Keizan Jōkin (1268–1325) and his two most able disciples, Gasan Jōseki (1275–1365) and Meihō Sotetsu (1277–1350). These men adopted certain aspects of esoteric Buddhism and folk tradition, such as a syncretistic mountain religion called *shugendō*, endeavoring in this way to come into close

contact with the people. These accommodative and popularizing policies were certainly not in accord with Dōgen's style of Zen, which focused on the training of monastics in a "puristic" and "puritanic" spirit as we shall see later. On the other hand, after the death of Dōgen, Sōtō Zen shunned the aristocratic and bureaucratic Gozan Zen in Kyoto and Kamakura and thrived primarily among farmers, the common people, and powerful clans in the regions and provinces remote from the centers of the Gozan Zen establishment. During this period, three different editions of Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō* appeared: Ejō's seventy-five-chapter edition, Giun's sixty-chapter edition (1329), and Bonsei's eighty-four-chapter edition (1419). Kenzei wrote his famous *Kenzeiki* (*The Record of Kenzei*), a biography of Dōgen that influenced all other biographies in subsequent years. *Kikigaki* (*The Record of Dōgen's Expositions*) by Senne, and *Shō* (*Selected Commentaries*; 1303–1308) by Kyōgō, both of which were commentaries on the *Shōbōgenzō*, were of great importance since they were based on the two disciples' direct acquaintance with Dōgen. Generally speaking, however, sectarian scholars in this period relegated the *Shōbōgenzō* to oblivion in favor of studying Chinese Zen Buddhism (such as the doctrine of Five Ranks). It was undoubtedly a dark age in sectarian studies.⁶

The second period, which began sometime in the middle of the seventeenth century, witnessed the emergence (or resurgence) of the so-called sectarian studies (*shūgaku*) and the rise of the "sectarian restoration movement" (*shūtō fukko undō*). This development was led by such leaders as Gesshū Sōko (1618–1696), Manzan Dōhaku (1636–1715), Tenkei Denson (1648–1735), and Menzan Zuihō (1683–1769), who attempted to rescue the sect from confusion and corruption and restore the rigor and purity of Dōgen Zen. During this time, Dōgen's works were printed, the monastic rules of Dōgen and Keizan published, and a fresh enthusiasm for scholarly studies encouraged. For the first time, the *Shōbōgenzō* was rigorously studied by sectarian scholars, although Dōgen's minor works had previously been studied. Several commentaries on the *Shōbōgenzō* were written: Tenkei's *Benchū* (*A Commentary with Critical Notes*) in 1730, Menzan's *Monge* (*Menzan's Lectures*) in the 1760s and *Shōtenroku* (*A Study on the Sources of Terms, Names and Events in the Shōbōgenzō*) in 1759, Honkō's *Sanchū* (*A Commentary*) in 1793, Zōkai's *Shiki* (*Personal Comments*) in circa 1779, and so on. Kōzen edited the ninety-five-chapter edition (Kōzen-bon) of the *Shōbōgenzō* in 1690. Nevertheless, sectarian studies in Sōtō Zen, like other sectarian studies of Buddhist sects at that time, were severely limited by the governmental control and supervision

of the Tokugawa regime, which was interested in nothing but the utilization and exploitation of religion to maintain the status quo of the feudalistic order. No freedom of thought existed—rather, sectarian orthodoxies were articulated, stereotyped, and unchallenged.⁷

The third period was marked by the advent of the Meiji Restoration (1868), during which Japan broke away from feudalism and became infatuated—at least temporarily—with anything Western.⁸ As Kagamishima Hiroyuki observes, Sōtō sectarian scholarship at that time was largely moved by “the inertia of the Tokugawa period.”⁹ Dōgen (unlike Shinran and Nichiren) was relatively unknown to the general Japanese populace.¹⁰ The only works of great importance produced during this period were *Keiteki* (*A Guide on the Right Path*), an authoritative commentary on the *Shōbōgenzō* by Nishiari Bokusan (1821–1910),¹¹ and the *Sōtō kyōkai shushōgi* (*The Principles of Practice and Enlightenment of the Sōtō Order*; 1890), an anthology of selected passages from the *Shōbōgenzō* for the believers of Sōtō Zen.¹²

The fourth period began in the 1920s with Watsuji's aforementioned essay. As I have noted, this essay freed Dōgen from the monopoly of sectarian studies, awakened scholars from their dogmatic slumber, and incited enthusiasm and passion for Dōgen as a spiritual mentor of humankind. In 1935, nine years after the publication of Watsuji's essay, Akiyama Hanji published *Dōgen no kenkyū* (*A Study on Dōgen*) in which he systematically addressed Dōgen's thought with special emphasis on ontology as it related to Western philosophical traditions. (His essay remains the most comprehensive study of Dōgen's thought to this day.)¹³ A few years later in 1939, Tanabe Hajime, as cited before, wrote a short book entitled *Shōbōgenzō no tetsugaku-shikan* (*The Philosophy of the Shōbōgenzō: A Personal View*) in which he described his awakening to the intellectual capacity of the Japanese through Dōgen's philosophical tenacity and exactitude.¹⁴ Watsuji, Akiyama, and Tanabe were primarily interested in Dōgen as a thinker, and therefore his philosophical contributions. However, Hashida Kunihiko, who was a physiologist at Tokyo University, approached Dōgen as the advocate of religious practice, rather than as philosopher, in his *Shōbōgenzō shakui* (*A Commentary on the Shōbōgenzō*), the first volume of which appeared in 1939.¹⁵ His impact was to liberate Dōgen further from his sectarian restraints.

As a result of this awakening, two distinctive camps of sectarian and non-sectarian studies formed. The impact of the latter upon the former was evident, though there were many rebuttals and countercriticisms. Tension between the two factions persists to this day, although by and large, the

creative interaction between the two camps until the end of World War II has benefited Dōgen studies overall. The major controversies can be summarized as follows:¹⁶ (1) Nonsectarian students saw Dōgen as an independent thinker in the history of thought and the *Shōbōgenzō* as his spiritual and intellectual testimony, rather than as sectarian writings. Sectarian students, on the other hand, vigorously defended a special form of religious tradition (nurtured in the sect as an invaluable heritage), saw Dōgen as the founder of the Sōtō sect (*shūso*), and construed the *Shōbōgenzō* as the sect's authoritative religious text rather than as philosophical treatise. (2) Nonsectarian students studied Dōgen primarily from the standpoint of the *Shōbōgenzō*; their sectarian friends rejected this position, feeling that the *Shōbōgenzō* was by no means Dōgen's only important work. Related to this difference was the fact that nonsectarians tended to emphasize philosophical ideas, whereas sectarians emphasized religious faith and monastic/lay life. And finally, (3) nonsectarian students were primarily concerned with the contemporary significance of Dōgen in relation to the changing world situation, although they often read their own philosophical views into Dōgen, largely as a result of neglecting the historico-social context in which his thought had evolved. By contrast, sectarians insisted on the importance of their community, religion, and history.

It was also during the fourth period that a number of critical editions of Dōgen's writings were produced; among others, Ōkubo Dōshū's *Teihon Dōgen zenji zenshū* (*A Definitive Collection of Dōgen's Complete Works*; 1944) and Etō Sokuō's *Shōbōgenzō* in three volumes (1939–43) were important. The latter, published in a popular edition, especially appealed to a wide audience. In addition, one of the most authoritative works of the sectarians, in response to the nonsectarian interpretation of Dōgen, was Etō Sokuō's *Shūso to shitenō Dōgen zenji* (*Dōgen Zenji As the Founder of the Sōtō Sect*), published in 1944. As the title suggests, Dōgen was interpreted as the founder of the sect whose Zen emphasized enlightenment *and* faith (quite a new emphasis in the Zen tradition).¹⁷

The post-war fifth period (which continues to the present day) has marked a new maturity in Dōgen studies. Previous distinctions between the two camps still persist but have become less significant as their differences are increasingly seen as matters of emphasis, rather than principle, in their shared search for understanding. More important, both sectarian and nonsectarian students of Dōgen have been confronted with an entirely new world situation in which traditional values and methodologies have been

radically challenged. Dōgen studies have now reached a new phase in which both parties are compelled to cooperate and transform one another, in order to contribute to the common task of furthering self-understanding in an emerging world community. Thus, recent studies demonstrate intensified efforts to place Dōgen in the historical, social, and cultural contexts in which his thought was formed, rather than to study his thought in the abstract—although philosophical treatments of Dōgen still continue. Ienaga Saburō's "Dōgen no shūkyō no rekishiteki seikaku" ("A Historical Character of Dōgen's Religion") in his *Chūsei Bukkyō shisōshi kenkyū* (*Studies in the History of Medieval Japanese Buddhist Thought*; 1955), Takeuchi Michio's *Dōgen* (1962), Takahashi Masanobu's *Dōgen no jissentetsugaku kōzō* (*The Structure of Dōgen's Practical Philosophy*; 1967), Etō Sokuō's *Shōbōgenzō josetsu: Bendōwa gikai* (*Prolegomena to the Shōbōgenzō: An Exposition of Bendōwa*; 1959), Ōkubo Dōshū's monumental collection of Dōgen's entire works, *Dōgen zenji zenshū* (*The Complete Works of Dōgen Zenji*; 1969–70), which reflects the findings and results of recent Dōgen studies, and a legion of other important works and articles have been written in this period.¹⁸ In addition to the study of the *Shōbōgenzō* that characterized the pre-war period, Dōgen's other writings have been investigated and probed for linguistic, textual, and literary data.¹⁹ Furthermore, there have appeared several different translations of Dōgen's works in colloquial Japanese that have disseminated Dōgen's thought rapidly among the Japanese populace. In short, Dōgen studies have diversified, broadened, and improved considerably in their scope, precision, and methodology in the post-war period. The quantity and quality of scholarly output in this area is highly promising.

Once we turn our eyes from Japan to the Western scene, we find that virtually nothing has been introduced concerning Dōgen²⁰—this is unfortunate indeed, given that ignorance of Sōtō Zen is tantamount to ignorance of Dōgen, its founder. Masunaga is justified in saying: "Western knowledge of Zen seldom extends to the Sōtō style—the style of the larger Zen sect in Japan."²¹ The scholarship of Zen Buddhism in the West has chiefly relied upon D. T. Suzuki's brilliant introduction and interpretation of many invaluable texts, based primarily on Rinzai Zen in which Suzuki was nurtured. Overshadowed by Suzuki's brilliance and reputation, the Sōtō tradition has been treated like a stepchild of Zen in the West. Perhaps this situation has been aggravated by the extreme difficulty of presenting Dōgen's thought in a form intelligible to the Western mind. His language and thought are forbiddingly difficult and subtle, yet irresistibly intriguing, and more often

than not, exasperating for students of Dōgen who alternate between hope and despair in their efforts to understand. Nevertheless East-West cooperative efforts to translate and disseminate Dōgen's works are continuing.²²

Having established the historical background of Dōgen studies, albeit in the barest of outlines, I would like to articulate my basic assumptions on the present investigation before continuing further.

First, Zen Buddhism is not a monolithic religion with a mystical slant, as it might appear superficially from the reading of Suzuki's works. Although it has an unmistakable "family resemblance" to other East Asian religions, it also contains elements and traits diverse and rich enough to surprise even those initiated into Zen. Furthermore, Zen is still in the making. The belief that Zen embodies a mystical extremism characterized by irrationality, eccentricity, and obscurantism is a flagrant error.²³ Many of these alleged Zen qualities are exaggerations or misinterpretations that have helped create a distorted image of Zen. Dōgen, as we shall see later, conceived of Zen quite differently—his style of Zen was "rational," "analytic," and "exact," though these adjectives should not be understood in the sense of the Western philosophical tradition. A total understanding of Zen is urgently needed today and Dōgen studies are an integral part of such a task—this means that Zen must be studied in the total context of Buddhism, as well as in the context of the general history of religions.²⁴

Second, Dōgen was a religious thinker, not merely or even primarily a philosopher. As I mentioned previously, nonsectarian students of Dōgen are often mistaken in viewing him as a philosopher who attempted to build a philosophical system. On the contrary, even Dōgen's most philosophic moments were permeated by his practical, religious concern, against the background of which his philosophic activities stand out most clearly in their truest significance. What Dōgen presents to us is not a well-defined, well-knit philosophical system, but rather a loose nexus of exquisite mythopoeic imaginings and profound philosophic visions, in the flowing style of medieval Japanese, studded sparsely with classical Chinese prose and verse. A rare combination of vision and analysis in Dōgen's thought has dazzled many a student, so much so that many have lost sight of its deeper matrix—that is, his religious and especially cultic concern, which was a passionate search for liberation through concrete activities and expressions. Thus, philosophy for Dōgen was an integral part of religion and ritual.

Third, religion as examined from the phenomenological standpoint, is our nonrational activity in search of the ultimate meaning of existence. I do

not wish to enter an elaborate discussion of recent investigations of religious phenomena at this point, but merely to draw on the general agreement with which historians of religions, social scientists, and religious thinkers concur regarding the nature and function of religion.²⁵ Religion, then, is not something reducible to purely intellectual worldviews, utilitarian functions, and the like, nor is it something explainable in terms of the needs of immediate existence and survival. At its most serious and creative level, it is our attempt to free ourselves in favor of a symbolic reality, through mythopoeic visions and cultic activities. Human nature is most fruitfully understood in terms of *animal symbolicum* and *homo ludens*.²⁶ Religion is intimately related to myth-making and playful activities—thus, it is nonintellectual, nonutilitarian, and nonethical at its core. The modern proclivity to view religion strictly from scientific, theological, and ethical standpoints misses the deeper psychometaphysical forces operating in religious aspirations. The moral, intellectual, and utilitarian values of religion can only be adequately appreciated in this broader context. Let us keep this fundamental insight in mind as we begin our investigation of Dōgen.

Fourth, religious thought, like any other intellectual endeavor, employs concepts and symbols bequeathed from particular religious and cultural traditions created by our inner aspirations and the cultural and socioeconomic conditions of a given age. Religious thought cannot ignore the interaction of metaphysical visions and historical forces that are mutually limiting, conditioning, and transforming. Thus historico-cultural and philosophico-phenomenological conditions cannot be divorced from one another in any adequate intellectual history. In our present study of Dōgen's thought, we should not only be concerned with the historical forces within which Dōgen's thought evolved, but also with the structure of his experience and thought with its own subtle logic. While thought is not reducible to history, it cannot be isolated from it either—it is radically conditioned and relative to history at its core. Even the phenomenology of emptiness, however ahistorical one may allege it to be, has a history. Thus, the history of any religious thought must do full justice to the fact that irreducible character and radical conditionality are paradoxically paired in the structure of the object of investigation. We must come to terms with such peculiarities of religious thought and history, and once doing so will we be able to probe the philosophical and experiential aspects of Dōgen's thought.²⁷

Fifth, Dōgen was obviously a child of the age (i.e., medieval Japan) and of the Buddhist tradition, and his intellectual horizon was limited to the

catholic Buddhism that he envisioned. Traditionally-minded as he may have been, Dōgen has attracted many contemporary philosophers and religious thinkers who regard him as surprisingly “modern,” as I illustrated in the case of Tanabe Hajime. Philosophically-minded students of Dōgen, however, often make the mistake of seeing significance divorced from history, which results in mere subjectivity rather than an objective understanding of Dōgen’s thought. Thus, our assumption in this study, though it may sound platitudinous, is that significance and history must continually be in creative tension.

Lastly, and related to the preceding assumption, is the fact that my approach does not attempt to be exhaustive, but rather presents a perspective with which to systematically illuminate the character of Dōgen’s thought. I am not hoping to present a system by which to study Dōgen—there is none. As a result, our study will be highly selective and subjective, but at the same time will be supported by textual and historical evidence. I shall attempt to expound the two fundamental structural elements of Dōgen’s thought, namely meditation and wisdom, and to explore the nature of them and their functions in their total contexts. The meanings of these two terms will gradually become clear in the course of our study. Moreover, these terms are associated in Dōgen’s thought with the ideas of activity (*gyōji*) and expression (*dōtoku*), both of which are central throughout my work.

With these assumptions in mind, let us begin our study of Dōgen as a human being—not as the founder of the sect or as the philosopher—but rather, as one who struggled to seek a mode of existence and freedom for himself and others, amidst his personal yearnings, frustrations, fears, and hopes in chaotic Kamakura Japan. By so doing, I hope to show a Dōgen who, although confined to his particular religious and cultural tradition, nevertheless envisioned ideas and values germane to the evolution of humanity.

2 DŌGEN'S LIFE

RELIGION IS A SYMBOLIC MODEL with symbols, values, beliefs, and practices that enable us, individually and collectively, to attain spiritual liberation and to grasp the meaning of existence. These elements of religion, in turn, are intricately interwoven with the conditions of our biological and psychological makeup, as well as with socio-cultural and historical conditions. Thus, the net result is a unique fabric of an individual's symbolic reality.

Dōgen inherited the symbolic model of Buddhism through his upbringing, studies, and training in Japan and China, and accordingly his thought moved within the framework of this model. Some basic values of Buddhism, especially of Zen, were evident in his life and thought, yet were modified by his personal life as well as by the social and cultural conditions of the early Kamakura period of Japan in which he lived. In what follows, I shall attempt to review and understand some significant features of Dōgen's life so as to pave the way to understanding his thought.¹

Dōgen's life can be studied according to the following periods: early childhood (1200–1212); apprenticeship in Buddhism (1212–27), which may be subdivided into his spiritual struggle at Hiei and Kenninji (1212–23) and his study in China (1223–27); and the creative period in Japan, which began after his return from China in 1227 and lasted until his death in 1253, and that can be divided into the Yamashiro and Echizen periods. Before we embark on the account of Dōgen's spiritual pilgrimage, we shall briefly observe the social background of the age in which Dōgen's life and thought occurred.

THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF EARLY KAMAKURA JAPAN

The first half of the thirteenth century, namely the early Kamakura period in which Dōgen lived and died, and its immediately preceding phase of the Heian period, had several important features relevant to our investigation of Dōgen's life and thought. They can be explained in terms of the nobility-warrior power struggle, the corrupted state of Buddhism, and the traditional folk movements of the masses.

There were two opposing social forces in Japan in those days: the court nobility in Kyoto and the military class in Kamakura. The court aristocracy (the imperial-Fujiwara complex) had already been advancing toward its breakdown by the end of the Heian period. Far removed from the erstwhile "glory and splendor" (*eiga*) of Fujiwara no Michinaga, they desperately clung to whatever vestiges were left of their declining power, which was formally ended by their demise in the Jōkyū War of 1221. Their life was very similar to that of the Heian aristocracy described in *Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*). Their activities centered exclusively around political pursuits, amorous adventures, and poetic and artistic indulgences—contingent on the wealth derived from enormous holdings of tax-free estates (*shōen*). Perhaps no society in human history emphasized aesthetic refinement and sensibility more than the Japanese court nobility in those days. As Ivan Morris aptly observes, "Upper-class Heian life was punctuated with poetry from beginning to end, and no important event was complete without it."² With this aestheticism were associated two fundamentally related sentiments of the age—the sense of the affective quality of life and the world (*mono no aware*), and the sense of impermanence (*mujo*). Despite its outward pomposity, the aristocratic way of life was permeated by an awareness of beauty shadowed by a sense of sorrow due to beauty's inherently ephemeral character. The court nobles grasped something religious in the beautiful and vice versa. Beauty inspired in them a religious feeling, a sense of the ultimate limits of life, of impermanence and death. Religion, likewise, appealed to them for aesthetic, rather than ethical, reasons.³ The aristocratic lot in life was interpreted as resulting from karma or fate (*sukuse* or *suguse*) to which they resigned themselves. They were indifferent to the masses, as if their ethical sensibilities were incompatible with their aesthetic sensibilities.⁴ Dōgen's life and thought can be adequately understood only against this decadent, overly refined aristocratic tradition into which he was born.

After a decisive victory over the Tairas at the battle of Dannoura in 1185, the Minamoto family established hegemony over Japan with the creation of its feudal government (*bakufu*) in 1192. This set the stage for the rise of the samurai class and its gradually emerging way of life known as “the way of warriors” (*bushidō*). (In its early stage, “the way of warriors” centered strictly on greedy, predatory, and calculating business dealings with little or no sense of loyalty or sacrifice—it was a far cry from the romanticized way of life that later developed in the Tokugawa period.)⁵ Although warriors were culturally “provincial” and looked down upon by aristocrats, their economic, military, and political powers steadily grew and consolidated—they were gradually emerging as a class separate from the aristocrats, farmers, merchants, and artisans. The martial arts were their profession, and they were acutely aware of the ultimate meaning of their profession—the destruction of human lives.⁶

The Minamotos operated basically within the old political framework; they enforced powers delegated to them by the imperial house but were the de facto rulers of Japan without attempting to displace the imperial house. In this respect, they followed precedents that had been set by the Fujiwaras, who had created an incredibly complex political situation in which both aristocratic and military classes were helplessly enmeshed. A historian aptly described it as follows:

One finds in thirteenth-century Japan an emperor who was a mere puppet in the hands of a retired emperor and a great court family, the Fujiwaras, who together controlled a government, completely dominated by the private government of the Shōgun—who in turn was a puppet in the hands of the Hōjō regent. The man behind the throne had become a series of men, each in turn controlled by the man behind himself.⁷

In addition to this chaotic political situation were the infinitely complicated transactions involving tax-free estates—perhaps the most significant economic institution to mold Japanese life from the latter part of the eighth century to the end of the sixteenth century.⁸ By the end of the Heian era, some 80 percent of rice-producing lands in the country belonged to the manorial system,⁹ which was fought over by court nobles and samurai warriors.

Conspicuous in this power struggle were also the religious orders. During the Heian period, religious institutions accumulated huge tax-free estates that had to be protected by an oxymoronic Japanese institution, the armed monastics (*sōhei*). Since the middle of the tenth century, major Buddhist

monasteries such as the Enryakuji temple on Mt. Hiei, the Onjōji temple in Miidera, and the Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji temples in Nara had standing armies to solve their conflicts with other religious institutions and with the government. They destroyed rival monasteries, demonstrated in the streets of the capital, presented petitions to the imperial court by force (*gōso*), and engaged in many other flagrant militant actions.¹⁰ Although the wealth, prestige, and power of some established monasteries undoubtedly increased, their moral, intellectual, and religious life was dangerously disintegrating. Armed monastics were very active during Dōgen's lifetime, and their entanglements in this grim situation had many sordid psychological and social ramifications.

Another characteristic of Buddhism in this period was its inseparable association with the Heian aristocracy. One of the most conspicuous examples of this was the monopolization of important posts in the monastic centers by members of the imperial house and the Fujiwara family. This resulted in the formation of clerical cliques (*monzeki*) that excluded non-Fujiwara aspirants. As political careers at court became exceedingly elusive due to the growing numbers of the Fujiwara clan, some saw the monastic profession as the next surest way to wealth and power, regardless of their religious motivation. In addition, the activities at many monastic centers revolved around magico-religious rites and prayers (*kaji-kitō*) of esoteric Buddhism that were designed for the protection of the nation and the welfare of the court aristocracy. The complete secularization (i.e., aristocratization) of Buddhism, with no distinction between Buddha-law (*buppō*) and secular law (*ōbō*), was firmly established when Dōgen entered Mt. Hiei for study in his youth.¹¹

In this period, the Buddhist doctrine of the Three Ages (*shō-zō-matsu no sanjitsetsu*) was widely accepted. The Three Ages were the Age of Right Law (*shōbō*) in which the genuinely authentic Dharma (universal truth and righteousness) prevailed, the Age of Imitative Law (*zōbō*) in which mere forms of Dharma dominated, and the Age of Degenerate Law (*mappō*) in which Dharma was entirely decayed. In the first age, teaching, practice, and attainment of enlightenment prevailed; in the second, teaching and practice alone; and in the third, there was only teaching. The Age of Degenerate Law, as interpreted by some circles of Buddhism in Japan, was believed to have begun in 1052.¹² This calculation was accepted by both the aristocrats and the general populace; the Buddhist leaders of the time based their diagnosis of the current religious situation upon this doctrine.¹³ This belief was reinforced by incessant earthquakes, fires, murders, epidemics, and famines in the late Heian and early Kamakura periods. Thus, a historical

consciousness developed that was based on a sense of “apocalyptic crisis” and a conviction in the utter wretchedness and helplessness of humankind, along with a concomitant spiritual exigency that led to faith in the unfailing compassion and grace of Amida Buddha.¹⁴

Dōgen, while utilizing the scheme of the Three Ages, rejected such romantic pessimism toward human nature and history, for to him human nature possessed the elements of both greatness and wretchedness, regardless of time and place. Thus he remarked:

The ancient sages were not necessarily of sturdy build, nor were all the forebears richly endowed. It had not been long since the death of Śākya-muni Buddha, and when we consider Buddha's lifetime, not all people were superior: there were both sheep and goats. Among monastics some were unimaginable villains and others were of the lowest character.¹⁵

Whether human beings were great or wretched was determined not by external conditions, but by our manner of dealing with one another.¹⁶ This doctrine was relevant to Dōgen to the extent that it diagnosed the mass spiritual crisis of his time and aided individuals in confronting this crisis. Otherwise, it was nothing but a symptom of human failure to deal with life and the world.¹⁷

As we turn our attention from the affairs of nobles, warriors, and religionists to those of the masses, we see that the farmers, merchants, and artisans at that time were in a downtrodden state, though they had gained social and economic power. The corruption and indifference of the ruling classes, chaotic social and political conditions, and omnipresent sufferings and miseries led these disinherited people toward something radically new that promised to revitalize their spiritual life. Their primitive yearnings had been, more often than not, associated with various folk-traditional undercurrents that were deeper than Buddhist and Confucian religious ideologies.¹⁸ In particular, the so-called holy men (*hijiri*)—with shamanistic, magico-religious practices and beliefs—were active among the masses from the latter part of the tenth century on, disseminating “the essential importance of individual faith and unworldliness”¹⁹ that was at odds with institutional Buddhism. As Hori emphasizes, the *hijiri* movement was essentially folk-traditional, anti-authoritarian, and anti-secular; it paved the way for a new Kamakura Buddhism, particularly Pure Realm Buddhism. Lay monastics (*shami*) also increased in number and quietly engaged in a spiritual revitalization of the common people.²⁰ In a very real sense, these holy men and

lay monastics were the predecessors of Kamakura Buddhism, which could be regarded as the cultic and intellectual purification and crystallization of the passionate personal faith that they advocated.

Dōgen's Zen Buddhism was no exception in that it also was a part of this general movement taking place in medieval Japan.²¹ In addition, the folk tradition of Japan had many other features relevant to our subject matter—especially the tradition of *dōzoku* (a kind of kinship system) in the social structure of Japan, and the tradition of mountain asceticism and purification that was deeply rooted in the Japanese folk mentality.²² Perhaps no Kamakura Buddhist would appear more remote from folk tradition than Dōgen—anti-magical, elitist, eremitic—and yet, his was a religion of the people that came into being and sustained itself by drawing its creativity and vitality from a source deeper and more indigenous than the enfeebled ideologies and adventures of the aristocratic tradition.

EARLY CHILDHOOD:

INITIATION INTO IMPERMANENCE

Dōgen was born in Kyoto in the first month of 1200, perhaps as an illegitimate son of Koga Michichika and the daughter of Fujiwara Motofusa. He was among eleven sons and three daughters of Michichika. The Koga (or Minamoto) family was descended from Prince Tomohira, son of Emperor Murakami (r. 946–57). During the lifetime of Michichika, then the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, the family was at the height of its power and prosperity and controlled both the dominating power of the Fujiwara family and the pro-shōgun force within the courtly circle in Kyoto. In addition, Michichika stood unparalleled in the literary circle (the Murakami Genji's literary fame was well known) and was unfailingly devoted to the imperial family (the Murakami Genji had the tradition of fighting for the restoration of the imperial rule). His mother was a beautiful, yet ill-fated woman who, according to one account, was married to and separated from Kiso Yoshinaka and subsequently married to Koga Michichika.²³

Michichika died suddenly in 1202, when Dōgen was only two years of age. After the death of his father, Dōgen was raised by his mother and half-brother, Michitomo, in a culturally over-refined atmosphere. Many of his brothers and sisters occupied eminent positions in the imperial court and were well versed in poetry and the classics. It is not difficult to imagine that Dōgen must have been systematically educated in the Chinese and Japanese

classics, and well trained in literary skills and techniques that were the *sine qua non* of aristocratic life. Dōgen recalled later: "In my boyhood I studied history and literature enthusiastically."²⁴ He also wrote:

As a result of my predilection for study from childhood, I am prone even now to examine the rhetorical expressions of non-Buddhist classics and to consult the *Wên-hsüan* [an anthology of classical prose and verses]. But I believe that such a thing is irrelevant and should be discarded once and for all.²⁵

Dōgen urged his disciples to pay attention not so much to the rhetoric, however notable it might be, as to the content of the writing under study. However, his sensitivity to language was cultivated in a refined literary environment, as evidenced by his poetic excellence, his fondness of the use of a flowing medieval Japanese style rather than a Chinese style, his instruction on "loving speech" (*aigo*), and his deep insight into the nature of language and symbols in human thought. Dōgen eschewed vainglorious aestheticism, but never relinquished his poetic sensibility.

At the age of seven, in 1207, Dōgen lost his mother, who at her death earnestly requested him to become a monastic to seek the truth of Buddhism and strive to relieve the tragic sufferings of humanity.²⁶ Unlike his father's death, which took place when he was only two, his mother's death must have been a serious blow to Dōgen's fragile and sensitive mind. We are told that in the midst of profound grief, Dōgen experienced the impermanence of all things as he watched the ascending incense at his mother's funeral service.²⁷

This experience left an indelible impression upon Dōgen, which no doubt determined the direction of his subsequent spiritual journey. Later, Dōgen would emphasize, time and again, the intimate relationship between the desire for enlightenment (*bodai shin*) and the awareness of impermanence (*mujō*) and death.²⁸ To Dōgen, the lucid understanding of life and the thorough penetration of death (*ryōshō-tasshi*), that is a total understanding of the meaning (*dōri*) of impermanence and death, were the alpha and omega of religion. Dōgen understood the impermanent character of life in religious and metaphysical terms rather than in psychological or aesthetic ones, and he lived out this understanding in his monastic life. Dōgen's way of life was not a sentimental flight from, but a compassionate understanding of, the intolerable reality of existence.

Five years after his mother's death, Dōgen was confronted by another crisis. After he was orphaned, Dōgen was adopted by Fujiwara Moroie, his mother's younger brother, who at over forty years of age did not yet have an heir and consequently wanted to train Dōgen for this honor.²⁹ This meant the promise of a brilliant career for Dōgen in the tradition of the Fujiwara hegemony, even though the Fujiwara hegemony was in decline during this time. In the spring of 1212, Moroie planned to have a *gempuku* ceremony for Dōgen to mark his initiation into aristocratic manhood. At this juncture, Dōgen was forced to choose either to become a monastic or follow his uncle's desire. Dōgen decided to become a monastic, and visited Ryōkan,³⁰ another uncle on his mother's side, in the Onjōji temple at the foot of Mt. Hiei, for an intelligent discussion of the matter. Deeply moved by Dōgen's determination and motivation, Ryōkan recommended that he study at the Senkōbō at Yokawa-Hannyadani on Mt. Hiei, one of the most renowned centers of Buddhist studies at that time. Upon hearing the news of Dōgen's decision to become a monastic, Moroie was greatly disappointed.

To Dōgen there was no conflict between his decision and his filial piety to Moroie. As he saw it, to study Buddhism was to fulfill his duty to Moroie. He wrote that filial piety should not be limited to one's parents alone but extended to all sentient beings, and further said: "To follow the Way obediently in our living from day to day and in our study from moment to moment—that is the truest filial piety."³¹ In a more revealing statement indicative of his unique style of Zen, Dōgen wrote:

Even the Buddhas and ancestors are not without tender feelings and affections (*on'ai*) but they have thrown them away. The Buddhas and ancestors, too, are not lacking various bonds, yet they have renounced them. Even though you hold them dear, the direct and indirect conditions of self and other are not to be clung to; therefore, if you do not forsake the bonds of affection, they in turn shall desert you. If you must care for tender feelings, treat them with compassion; to treat them with compassion means to resolutely relinquish them.³²

Thus: "The students of Buddhism should not study Dharma for their own profit but only for the sake of Dharma."³³ The Way, for the sake of the Way, heartless as it may have sounded, was the core of Dōgen's spiritual search from beginning to end.

APPRENTICESHIP IN BUDDHISM

In the fourth month of 1213, Dōgen's ordination ceremony was administered by Kōen, abbot of the Enryakuji temple on Mt. Hiei.³⁴ Thereafter Dōgen delved deeply into a systematic study of Buddhist sūtras at the Senkōbō. A more favorable educational environment could not have been found in those days than at Hiei. Dōgen devoured these studies with his gifted mind. His earnest search for truth at that time and thereafter can be seen in the emphasis he placed on the need to live seriously. Some twenty years later, Dōgen repeatedly maintained in his *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*: "The arising and decaying of all things occur swiftly; birth-and-death is gravely important" (*mujō-jinsoku shōji-jidai*). The impermanence of existence did not lead him to fatalism or to the pessimism that pervaded the age; on the contrary it led him to heightened vitality in the search for the Way. Dōgen admonished: "Having a transient life, you should not engage in anything other than the Way."³⁵ He further wrote:

In a Chinese classic it is said: "I shall be content even to die in the evening if only I hear the Way in the morning." Even if you were to die by starvation or by cold, you ought to follow the Way even a day or even an hour. How many times might we be born again and die again in an infinitude of aeons and rebirths? Such a hope is nothing but a blind attachment to worldly conditions. Die of starvation in following the Way once and for all in this very life, and you shall attain eternal peace and tranquility.... If you do not seek enlightenment here and now on the pretext of the Age of Degenerate Law or wretchedness, in what birth are you to attain it?³⁶

And: "At each moment do not rely upon tomorrow. Think of this day and this hour only, and of being faithful to the Way while given a life even just for today, for the next moment is uncertain and unknown."³⁷ Elsewhere Dōgen stated:

The student of Buddhism should think of the inevitability of dying. While the truth is too obvious to be thought in those words, you should not waste your precious time by doing useless things, but instead do worthwhile things. Of many worthwhile things, just one—indeed all else is futile—is vitally important: the way of life of the Buddhas and ancestors (*busso no anri*).³⁸

“Today’s life does not guarantee tomorrow’s. The possibility and danger of dying are always at hand.”³⁹ These statements, though written much later in his life, unmistakably reflected the seriousness of the religious enterprise Dōgen undertook at the Senkōbō after his initiation into Buddhism.

While he was studying the sūtras at the Senkōbō, Dōgen was confronted with an apparently insoluble question that, according to the biographies of Dōgen,⁴⁰ was as follows:

As I study both the exoteric and the esoteric schools of Buddhism, they maintain that human beings are endowed with Dharma-nature by birth. If this is the case, why did the Buddhas of all ages—undoubtedly in possession of enlightenment—find it necessary to seek enlightenment and engage in spiritual practice?

No one on Mt. Hiei could give a satisfactory answer to this spiritual problem. The question itself, however, was of such magnitude in Dōgen’s religious struggle that he was thereafter restless until he finally found an answer in 1225 from Ju-ching at the T’ien-t’ung monastery.

Dōgen’s question was concerned with the time-honored Mahāyāna doctrines of original enlightenment (*hongaku*) and acquired enlightenment (*shikaku*). The doctrine of original enlightenment was propounded primarily by Tendai Buddhism, which was responsible for the synthesis of diverse currents of Buddhist thought, such as Tendai, Keron, Shingon, and Zen. Although the doctrine itself was as old as the early history of Mahāyāna Buddhism,⁴¹ its most radical interpretation was formulated in Japan during the Heian and Kamakura periods, for the most part by Tendai thinkers, who pressed the doctrine to its logical extremity.⁴² Several aspects of the doctrine were as follows: Original enlightenment was eternal in that it was not a temporal occurrence that had a beginning and an end in time. Opposites, such as enlightenment and delusion, life and death, being and nonbeing, one and many, were dialectically negated and in turn affirmed, without minimizing their respective absolute status. Related to this was the unity of enlightenment and practice, in which emphasis was placed not so much on special forms of religious discipline as it was on activities of daily life. The metaphysical status of phenomenon (*ji*) was now construed as primary, in contrast to that of principle (*ri*); accordingly, the existential actualities of a given situation acquired supreme importance. Things, events, and values as they existed in actuality were eternalized not as the manifestations of principle,

but precisely by virtue of the intrinsic status of the phenomena themselves. Doctrinal studies were held in disrepute, and instead, an instantaneous liberation here and now through faith in original enlightenment was assured.⁴³

In addition, the doctrine of original enlightenment was accompanied by a cognate doctrine of “this body itself is Buddha” (*sokushin-jōbutsu*), which was likewise radicalized by Japanese Buddhism. This tenet accepted the immediate enlightenment of the psycho-physical existence with all its particularities, which were not, as Zen Buddhists would say, “a finger pointing to the moon,” but the moon itself, or to put it differently, not the accommodative manifestations of the Body of Law (*dharmakāya*; *hosshin*), but the Body of Law itself. This doctrine of esoteric Buddhism, both the Shingon and Tendai versions, influenced the ethos of the time. Mundane existence was sanctified, as it was by the doctrine of original enlightenment.⁴⁴

The doctrines of original enlightenment and of “this-body-itself-is-Buddha” went hand-in-hand in reinforcing the efficacy of faith, the absolutization of phenomena, and the instantaneous attainment of liberation. When one denied any metaphysical hiatus between principle and phenomenon, however, even the profoundest Mahāyāna doctrines became dangerously indistinguishable from a crude and irresponsible acceptance of whatever existed in the world, at the sacrifice of spiritual exertions. In fact, a number of dangerous misinterpretations of these doctrines were rampant toward the close of the Heian period, and were especially flagrant among worldly minded Buddhist monastics who attempted to rationalize the pursuit of their selfish interests. Furthermore, an exclusive claim of faith, which required no strenuous religious or moral exertion, became readily associated with the antinomian cynicism inspired by the Age of Degenerate Law.

It is worth noting that this moral, intellectual, and religious crisis coincided with the popularity of the doctrines of original enlightenment and “this-body-itself-is-Buddha.” The latter unwittingly served to rationalize the apathetic state of affairs. The significance of Dōgen’s original question at Mt. Hiei and his endeavors thereafter can only be properly understood in light of his acute sense of this crisis of the age in which he lived.

If we are primordially enlightened and consequently liberated here and now within this body-mind existence, then why do we have to exert ourselves at all? What is the significance of intellectual, moral, cultic, and religious activities and endeavors? Dōgen did not question the truth of original enlightenment, but believed it with his whole heart and mind. However, he did question the significance of the activities that constituted

human existence, which amounted to asking, “What is the meaning of existence?”

With his question unanswered, Dōgen finally left Hiei when Kōen resigned as abbot.⁴⁵ He brought the question to Kōin (1145–1216) at the Onjōji temple in Mii-dera in the province of Ōmi. However, Kōin was unable to answer his question; instead, the latter referred the young man to Eisai (1141–1215), who had returned from China to found Rinzai Zen and who resided at the Kenninji temple in Kyoto.⁴⁶ Dōgen later wrote:

As a result of the desire for enlightenment which was first aroused in my mind through the awareness of the impermanence of existence, I traveled extensively to various places and, finally having descended Mt. Hiei to practice the Way, settled at the Kenninji temple. Until then I had met neither a right teacher nor a good friend and consequently had gone astray and had erroneous thoughts.⁴⁷

Dōgen apparently visited Eisai at the Kenninji temple in 1214.⁴⁸ Founded by Eisai in 1202, the Kenninji temple was at the time not only the center of Zen, but was also the center of studies for Tendai, Shingon, and other schools of Buddhism. Indeed, Kenninji was a rival of Hiei and visiting Eisai under such circumstances was a bold venture for a young man of only fourteen. At any rate, “Dōgen entered Eisai’s school and heard Rinzai Zen Buddhism for the first time.”⁴⁹ Despite the fact that there was an extremely short length of time between Dōgen’s visit in 1214 and Eisai’s death in 1215, and that Dōgen probably could not have had frequent and intimate personal contact with Eisai, given the latter’s constant travel between Kyoto and Kamakura to propagate Zen, Eisai’s lasting influence on Dōgen cannot be denied.⁵⁰ However, the Kenninji visit was only one stop among many in Dōgen’s extensive traveling.⁵¹ His willingness to learn from a variety of sources was indicative of his moral courage and intellectual openness, and revealed his “intersecarian” approach to Buddhism, which would later revitalize the religion in his time.

After three years’ wandering, Dōgen again settled at the Kenninji temple in 1217 to receive the instructions of Myōzen (1184–1225) and stayed there until 1223, when he left to study in China. During this period, Dōgen studied Rinzai Zen systematically; at the same time a warm relationship between Myōzen and Dōgen developed as they studied together as teacher and disciple. It may be fair to say that Dōgen’s knowledge about Zen Buddhism was

acquired from Myōzen, who was the highest-ranking disciple of Eisai and his successor. Some ten years later, Dōgen wrote about Myōzen with respect and affection: "Myōzen Zenji, the chief disciple of the founder Eisai—he alone transmitted the supreme Dharma rightly. None of the others could equal him in this respect."⁵² Undoubtedly, Dōgen's six years of study under Myōzen, during which he was constantly encouraged and assisted by his teacher, must have been as momentous as the study he had had at Hiei.

Yet still, Dōgen could not erase a feeling of dissatisfaction. He reminisced later:

Although my teachers were just as distinguished as any others in the world of Buddhist scholarship, they taught me to become famous in the nation and to bring honor to the whole country. Thus in my study of Buddhism, I thought, above all, to become equal to ancient wise ones of this country and to those who held the title of Great Teacher (*daishi*). As I read in this connection [Hui-chao's] *Kao-sêng ch'uan* (*Biographies of Eminent Buddhist Monastics*) and [Tao-hsüan's] *Hsü kao-sêng ch'uan* (*Further Biographies of Eminent Buddhist Monastics*) and others, and studied eminent Buddhist monastics and scholars of the great T'ang dynasty, I came to realize that they differed from what my teachers taught. What is more, I realized that thoughts such as mine, according to their treatises and biographies, were loathed by these people. Having contemplated the nature of the matter at last, I thought to myself I should have rather felt humbled by ancient sages and future good men and women instead of elated by the praise of despicable contemporaries. As for an aspiration for greatness, I wished to emulate the greatness of Indian and Chinese monastics and scholars rather than my country-folk. Also I should have aspired to be equal to the gods of heavens and invisible worlds, Buddhas and bodhisattvas. In view of such a realization, the holders of the title of Great Teacher in this country seemed to me worthless, like earthen tiles, and my whole life was changed completely.⁵³

This passage summarized Dōgen's ten-plus years of spiritual struggle at Hiei and Kenninji. His original question remained unanswered; he could not find a right teacher, and the general circumstances of Japanese Buddhism at the time were unfavorable to him. Regarding his failure to find a right teacher (*shōshi*), Dōgen wrote:

Right teachers have not appeared in our country since olden times. How can we tell this? Observe their utterances. They are like those who try to fathom the source of a stream by scooping up a handful of water. Although the ancient teachers of this country wrote books, taught disciples, and expounded teachings to humans and gods, their speeches were green and their expression yet immature. They did not attain the summit of an intellectual grasp of doctrines, much less the neighborhood of enlightenment. They merely transmitted words and letters, while their disciples recited names and sounds. Day and night they counted others' riches for nothing. Herein lies my charge against the ancient teachers. Some led people to seek enlightenment outside the conditions of mind, while still others led them to desire rebirth in other lands. Confusions arise from and delusions originate in this.... Alas, Buddhism has not yet been disseminated in this tiny remote country, and right teachers have not yet appeared. If you want to study the best of Buddhism, you should consult the scholarship of China far away and reflect thoroughly on the living path that transcends the deluded mind. When you don't meet a right teacher, it is better not to study Buddhism at all.⁵⁴

Uttered by a man with an essentially conservative frame of mind, these words were a startling attack on the immaturity of contemporary Japanese Buddhism.

Perhaps as a result of this disillusionment, the possibility (or more appropriately the necessity) of study in China, which had been originally suggested by Kōin, might have emerged in Dōgen's mind as the next step necessary for the fulfillment of his search for truth. Or as Takeuchi surmises, the Jōkyū (or Shōkyū) War in 1221 with all its miseries and sufferings—especially the banishment of three ex-emperors (all of whom were related to Dōgen's family), countless bloody executions, and the involvement of armed monastics—may have prompted Dōgen's decision to study in China.⁵⁵ Dōgen brought the matter to Myōzen, and both began preparing to study abroad immediately after the Jōkyū War.⁵⁶ In the second month of 1223, after due formalities, a party of Myōzen, Dōgen, and others left the Kenninji temple and toward the end of the third month set sail for China from Hakata in Chikuzen.

The group's voyage on the East China Sea was not always smooth. Particularly for Dōgen—a man of frail physical frame who probably had not

had any previous experience on a ship, the voyage must have been a tough one.⁵⁷ Early in the fourth month, the ship arrived at Ch'ing-yüan-fu in Ming-chou (now the province of Chekiang). While Myōzen immediately entered the Ching-tê-ssū temple on Mt. T'ien-t'ung, Dōgen lived on the ship, visited various other temples, and observed the Chinese customs until early in the seventh month, when he was able to enroll at the Ching-tê-ssū temple.⁵⁸

While Dōgen was living on the ship, an old Chinese monk who was sixty-one years of age came on board to get Japanese *shiitake* (a kind of mushroom for soup). He was the chief cook at the monastery on Mt. A-yü-wang (Yü-wang), situated some eighty-five miles from where the ship was anchored. In the course of a lively conversation, Dōgen, paying courtesy to the old man, asked him to stay overnight and talk some more. The old man, however, declined and insisted on returning to the monastery immediately after he bought the *shiitake*. Dōgen apparently could not understand why this man had to return in such a hurry, despite the fact that the monastic food, in Dōgen's view, could readily be prepared by other cooks without him. In response to Dōgen's puzzlement, the old man said: "The reason for my being the chief cook at such an old age is that I regard this duty as the practice of the Way (*bendō*) for the rest of my life. How can I leave my practice to other persons? Besides I did not obtain permission for staying out." Then Dōgen asked: "Why are you, a person of advanced age, engaged in such a troublesome task as the chief cook rather than in practicing zazen or reading the *kōans* of old masters? Is there any worthwhile thing in your work?" To this question, the old monk laughed loudly and said: "You, a good man from a foreign country, perhaps do not understand what the practice of the Way is, nor what words and letters (*monji*) are." Upon hearing this old man's remark, Dōgen was "all of a sudden shocked and ashamed profoundly." Promising Dōgen that he would discuss the matter some day in the future, the old man disappeared hurriedly into the gathering dusk.⁵⁹

In the seventh month of 1223, Dōgen at last left the ship and enrolled at the Ching-tê-ssū temple on Mt. T'ien-t'ung where Wu-chi Liao-p'ai (d. 1224) was abbot. This was the same temple where Eisai had studied and as one of the "Five Mountains," was a leading center of Zen Buddhism in China. It was supported by the Chinese royal court and had a population of monastics that was reportedly never fewer than one thousand.⁶⁰

One day in the seventh month, soon after Dōgen's enrollment at the Ching-tê-ssū temple, a second meeting took place between Dōgen and the old chief cook.⁶¹ The old man was about to retire from his post at the A-yü-wang

monastery and was going to leave for his native village. The two picked up their discussion where they had left off previously. Dōgen asked: “What are words and letters?” The answer came: “One, two, three, four, five.” “What is the practice of the Way, then?” asked Dōgen. “Nothing throughout the entire universe is concealed” (*henkai-fuzōzō*) was the old man’s reply. Their lively discussion continued without their knowing where to end it. Dōgen wrote later:

Just as the words and letters I have seen thus far are one, two, three, four, and five, so the words and letters I see now are also six, seven, eight, nine, and ten. The monastics of future generations will be able to understand a nondiscriminative Zen (*ichimizen*) based on words and letters, if they devote efforts to spiritual practice by seeing the universe through words and letters, and words and letters through the universe.⁶²

Dōgen’s encounters with the old chief cook on these two occasions were decisive events in his subsequent life and thought. It was during these discussions that he realized he had been pondering the relationship between practice and language, between deeds and words, between activities and expressions—specifically with respect to the place of words and letters (*monji*) in the scheme of things. Unlike other Zen Buddhists of the time, Dōgen recognized the limits and dangers of language as well as, and more important, the possibility of using it for spiritual liberation by understanding the “reason of words and letters” (*monji no dōri*). To him, language and symbols held the potential of opening, rather than circumscribing, reality; consequently, they needed to be reinstated in their legitimate place within the total context of human spiritual endeavors.

At this juncture it is worthwhile to review the place of Buddhism in general, and Zen (Ch’an) in particular, during the Sung period. When Dōgen visited China, it was nearly a century after the establishment of Southern Sung (1127–1279) with its capital in Hangchow (Lin-an), which governed central and southern China. (Northern China was controlled by the Chin.) China suffered constant threats of foreign invasion, internal political factionalism, and military weakness, while at the same time it enjoyed unprecedented economic, technological, and cultural advances. Neo-Confucianism was the predominant ideology of the day and was destined to become the official learning of China. Buddhism had been steadily declining in those days in contrast to its golden age during the Sui-T’ang period (581–907).

This was due to several factors, as observed by Ch'en:⁶³ (1) the moral degeneration of monastic communities due to the sale of monasterial certificates and honorary clerical titles by the Chinese government in order to cope with its severe financial difficulties; (2) the rise of Neo-Confucianism to intellectual eminence; (3) the civil service examination system that lured many able men to the study of the Confucian classics for prestige and power; (4) the popularity of the Zen and Pure Realm schools of Buddhism, which tended to be anti-textual and anti-scholastic and did not produce great thinkers comparable to those of the T'ang period; and (5) the decline of Buddhism in India during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which resulted in the end of cultural exchange between Indian and Chinese Buddhists. Despite all this, the Zen and Pure Realm schools were still active, and Zen in particular was held in the highest esteem.⁶⁴ Although Neo-Confucianists rejected Zen, their thought contained Buddhist and Zen elements, and the culture of the period owed as much to Zen Buddhism as to Neo-Confucianism.⁶⁵ Yet although Zen communities were expanding physically and their economic activities were vigorous, Zen lacked the rigor, authenticity, and brilliance it had had in the previous period and showed its inner impoverishment and decay.⁶⁶ Moreover, Zen teachers began to meddle with politics, and Zen monasteries soon became centers of social and political life.⁶⁷

On various occasions, Dōgen himself wrote about the state of affairs of Zen Buddhism, which he witnessed during his stay in China. For example:

Those who allegedly study vinaya today in the great country of Sung drink heavily and are intoxicated, in contradiction to the name of śrāvaka—yet they neither are ashamed of, nor have regret for, nor are aware of, the fact that they are transmitting a family heritage entirely foreign to their own tradition.⁶⁸

Although there are in China a great number of those who proclaim themselves to be the descendants of the Buddhas and ancestors, there are few who study the truth and accordingly there are few who teach the truth.... Thus those people who have not the slightest idea of what the great Way of the Buddhas and ancestors is now become the teachers of monastics.⁶⁹

...In the country of Sung lately there are those who call themselves Zen teachers. However, they do not understand the wealth and depth

of Dharma and are inexperienced. Reciting a few words of Lin-chi and Yün-mên, they take them for the whole truth of Buddhism. If Buddhism had been exhausted by a few words of Lin-chi and Yün-mên, it would not have survived until today.... These people, stupid and foolish, cannot comprehend the spirit of the sūtras, slander them arbitrarily, and neglect to study them. They are truly a group of non-Buddhists.⁷⁰

These forthright criticisms were made as a result of Dōgen's keen observations of Zen Buddhism in China. As these quotations amply show, the religious situation in China was not too far from what Dōgen had experienced in his own country.

Another aspect of contemporary Buddhism and Zen criticized by Dōgen was a theory of "the unity of three religions" (*sankyō-itchi*) of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. This theory was advocated not only outside, but even within, the Buddhist circle, probably because the survival of Buddhism was guaranteed only by its coming to terms with Confucianism and Taoism under extremely unfavorable conditions. Dōgen witnessed a number of those who held this popular view:

Lately, a number of the shallow-minded in the country of Sung do not understand the purport and substance [of the doctrine of "All things themselves are ultimate reality" (*shohō-jissō*)] and regard the statements of ultimate reality (*jissō*) as false. Furthermore, they study the doctrines of Lao-tzū and Chuang-tzū, maintaining that they are the same as the Way of the Buddhas and ancestors. Also, there is a view of the unity of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Some say that the three are just like the three legs of a tripod kettle which cannot stand upright if it lacks even one leg. There is nothing comparable to the foolishness of such a view.⁷¹

Apart from the general state of Buddhism and Zen, Dōgen's criticism was directed primarily at the Lin-chi (Rinzai) sect popular at the time. As Dōgen wrote, "In the country of Sung today the Lin-chi sect alone prevails everywhere."⁷² Of the two separate lines of transmission in the sect, the line of Huang-lung Hui-nan (1002–1069) and the line of Yang-ch'i Fang-hui (992–1049), the latter brought forth the highest development in Chinese Zen Buddhism. Although Dōgen was already familiar with the Huang-lung line transmitted by Eisai, which he had studied at the Kenninji temple, what he encountered in China was the Yang-ch'i tradition, whose best-known

representative was Ta-hui Tsung-kao (1089–1163). Dōgen denounced him and his followers relentlessly; he may have been prejudiced to some degree, yet his primary reason seems to have been their involvement with political and other secular interests and concerns, and their transcendentalistic interpretation of Zen which we shall have an occasion to investigate later.⁷³

It is easy to understand Dōgen's great disappointment with the general condition of Buddhism and especially that of Zen in China. Although he stayed at the Ching-tê-ssū temple for nearly two years under Wu-chi Liao-p'ai, Dōgen's spiritual needs were not fully satisfied. Thus, while he was at the Ching-tê-ssū temple, Dōgen seems to have visited various nearby Zen monasteries.⁷⁴ Upon Wu-chi's death toward the end of 1224, Dōgen left Mt. T'ien-t'ung and began traveling extensively, visiting the various temples and monasteries of the "Five Mountains" and studying the characteristics of the "Five Houses" of Chinese Zen Buddhism. As a result of this wandering, Dōgen gained firsthand acquaintance with Chinese Buddhism but still did not find a right teacher.⁷⁵

With a thoroughly discontented heart, Dōgen decided to return home after realizing the futility of staying in China any longer, and set out to pay his last visit to Mt. T'ien-t'ung where Myōzen had been ill for some time.⁷⁶ On the way to T'ien-t'ung, Dōgen learned of the death of his former teacher, Wu-chi Liao-p'ai, and his heart was greatly saddened. While revisiting the Ching-shan Wan-shou-ssū temple, Dōgen met an old monk who informed him of Ju-ching (1163–1228), well known as a peerless master in Zen Buddhism, who had been appointed abbot of the Mt. T'ien-t'ung monastery by the Chinese royal court and whom the old monk urged Dōgen to see as soon as possible.

It was early in the fifth month of 1225 when Dōgen met Ju-ching at long last at Miao-kao-t'ai, the latter's private quarters.⁷⁷ "I met Master Ju-ching face to face. This was an encounter between a man and a man," Dōgen later wrote.⁷⁸ Ju-ching's warm reception of Dōgen was that of a loving father welcoming his beloved son; he told Dōgen to visit him and freely ask questions at his own private quarters at any time without the slightest ceremony. This availability of the great teacher rekindled in the young inquiring mind a burning desire for truth.⁷⁹ How earnestly Dōgen had longed for such a meeting! As we have observed before, Dōgen once went so far as to say: "When you don't meet a right teacher, it is better not to study Buddhism at all."⁸⁰ He also wrote: "Without meeting a right teacher, you do not hear the right Dharma."⁸¹ Dōgen was convinced that the actualization or perfection of

Dharma largely depended upon the ability and competence of a teacher to shape the disciple as an artisan shapes raw material.⁸²

More important, however, the personal encounter was absolutely necessary in Dōgen's view, for Dharma did not emerge in a vacuum, but invariably emerged in a concrete social context, in which persons were significantly related to one another.⁸³ "When a person meets a person, intimate words are heard and deciphered."⁸⁴ The season was ripe for the mystery of Dharma to decisively unfold itself in the meeting between Ju-ching and Dōgen on Mt. T'ien-t'ung.

Let me digress a little at this point. Ju-ching, a native of Yüeh-chou, left there at the age of nineteen, traveled all over China, visited Zen temples and monasteries, and studied Buddhism under various teachers. Later he became a disciple of Tsu-an (or Chih-chien) on Mt. Hsüeh-t'ou and attained enlightenment. Then he went on a pilgrimage throughout the country for nearly forty years and presided over various famous monasteries such as Ch'ing-liang in Chien-k'ang, Shui-yen in T'ai-chou, Ching-tz'ü in Lin-an, Shui-yen in Ming-chou, Ching-tz'ü again, and lastly T'ien-t'ung. Although the T'ien-t'ung monastery was traditionally presided over by abbots of the Lin-chi sect, Ju-ching belonged to the tradition of the Ts'ao-tung (Sōtō) sect, and more specifically, to the Chen-hsieh line of that sect in China.⁸⁵

We are told that during this period, Ju-ching never failed, even for a single day, to practice zazen, the traditional form of Buddhist meditation that emphasized the upright lotus posture, steady breathing, and mental freedom from all attachments, desires, concepts, and judgments. Ju-ching devoted so much time to zazen that the flesh of his buttocks repeatedly broke out in sores; yet when this happened, he would practice it more earnestly.⁸⁶ Ju-ching's educational method reflected this disciplinary rigorism and monastic asceticism. As Dōgen wrote:

When I stayed once at the T'ien-t'ung monastery, I saw that Ju-ching, accompanied by other elders in the monastics' hall, used to practice zazen until eleven o'clock in the evening and begin at dawn as early as two-thirty or three; he never failed to practice this even a single night.⁸⁷

This uncompromising rigor, whether toward himself or his disciples, was combined with utter sincerity and personal warmth. Dōgen recounted the following moving episode:

Ju-ching, my former teacher and abbot of the T'ien-t'ung monastery, admonished those who had fallen asleep during zazen practice in the monastics' hall, striking them with his shoe and scolding them with harsh words. Nevertheless monks rejoiced in being struck by the teacher and admired him.

Once he spoke to the congregation in the hall: "At such an advanced age, I should now retire from the monastic community, seclude myself in a cottage, and care for my remaining days. However, I am in the office of abbot as your leader in order to help each of you break delusions and find the Way. For this reason I sometimes utter scolding words and strike with a bamboo rod, although I do this very carefully. It is a method to educate people in the place of Buddha. So brothers, forgive me with compassion." Thereupon all the monks wept.⁸⁸

Thus, Dōgen had an unreservedly high regard for his teacher who advocated "zazen-only" (*shikan-taza*), which later became the heart of Dōgen's religion and philosophy:

There are throughout the country of great Sung not merely a hundred or two, but thousands, of those who allegedly advocate the practice of meditation and thereby profess to be remote descendants of the ancestors. However, I hear of none who exhort zazen-only. Throughout China, only Master Ju-ching [is an exception].⁸⁹

The central religious and philosophical idea of Ju-ching's zazen-only was the "body-mind cast off" (*shinjin-datsuraku*)—the phrase repeated tirelessly by Dōgen throughout his works.

Ju-ching was also famous for his rare uninterest in worldly fame and gain, which had corrupted Buddhism of the time to the marrow. Dōgen observed:

My former teacher neither approached an emperor nor met one. No intimate acquaintance with ministers and governmental officials was made. Not only did he decline the purple robe and the title of Great Teacher but he also did not wear colorful robes—instead, he always wore a black robe or a simple one-piece gown, whether during lectures or private sessions.⁹⁰

Ju-ching was utterly indifferent to pecuniary gains; Dōgen professed to witness this quality in his teacher alone and in no one else.⁹¹

During the Sung period, the so-called Five Houses of Zen were feuding, although the Lin-chi sect dominated over all others. Ju-ching, although nurtured in the Ts'ao-tung tradition, detested sectarian biases and divisions and even disliked using the name of Zen, as opposed to other Buddhist sects and schools. He aimed at the catholicity of Buddhism at large. We can glimpse Ju-ching's thought from the following descriptions of Dōgen:

My former teacher, Ju-ching, once gave a sermon to monastics: "In recent times people assert seriously that there are distinct traditions of Yün-mên, Fa-yen, Wei-yang, Lin-chi, and Ts'ao-tung. This is neither Buddhism, nor the teaching of the Buddhas and ancestors.

Such a realization of the Way can be found not even once in a millennium, but Teacher alone comprehends it. Nor is it heard in the ten directions of the universe, but Teacher alone hears it."⁹²

And then:

It ought to be clear that nothing could be more seriously mistaken than to call it "a school of Zen." Foolish persons lament as if they failed in Buddhist scholarship on account of not having the designation of a school or a sect after the fashion of the "school of realism," the "school of nihilism," etc. Such is not the Way of Buddhism. No one ever called it "the school of Zen."

Nevertheless, mediocre persons in recent times are foolish enough to disregard the old tradition and, having no instructions from Buddhas, maintain erroneously that there are five distinct traditions in [Zen] Buddhism. This shows its natural decline. And no one has yet come to save this situation except my teacher, Ju-ching, who was the first one to be greatly concerned with it. Thus humanity has been fortunate; Dharma has deepened.⁹³

Ju-ching also opposed the popular view of the unity of three religions. Its syncretistic tendencies must have been quite unpalatable to his purist religious principles.⁹⁴

What emerges from our examination of Dōgen's *Hōkyōki*, *Shōbōgenzō*, and other works concerning Ju-ching's character and thought is clear. He was

a strong, dynamic, charismatic personality who had an uncompromising passion for the monastic asceticism of zazen-only as the *sine qua non* of Buddhism. For him, Buddhism was subservient to neither worldly power nor glory; it was content with the virtue of poverty and lived quietly deep in the mountains. Dharma was sought for the sake of Dharma. He strongly opposed the prevalent sectarianism of Buddhism in general and Zen in particular. Ju-ching sought a catholic Buddhism free from sectarian divisions. In brief, he was the embodiment of the idealism and purity of Zen monasticism that was the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma (*shōden no buppō*). These tenets (though no doubt selected and emphasized by Dōgen) were very likely Ju-ching's, and Dōgen enthusiastically accepted and faithfully transmitted them, transforming them through his own distinctively Japanese ethos.⁹⁵

Dōgen deemed Ju-ching the right teacher he had been seeking. Accordingly to Dōgen, a right teacher was described as follows:

A right teacher is one who, regardless of old age or stature, comprehends the right Dharma clearly and receives the certification of a true teacher. He/she gives no precedence to words and letters or to intellectual understanding. With an unusual ability and an extraordinary will power, he/she neither clings to selfishness nor indulges in sentimentality. He/she is the individual in whom living and understanding complement one another (*gyōge-sōō*).⁹⁶

Dōgen must have recollected his mentor's character and thought as he wrote these statements some ten years later. True, Ju-ching fitted the foregoing criteria for the right teacher, or perhaps vice versa. In any case, Dōgen exalted and adored his teacher—with tears of gratitude and joy—so much so that his rhetoric may have superseded any factual descriptions of Ju-ching.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, we cannot but acknowledge the picture of a towering personality who decisively shaped the destiny of Dōgen's subsequent life.

What is significant is Dōgen's absolute devotion to the person whom he considered the right teacher, and consequently the authority and tradition the teacher represented. Such was the case in spite of Dōgen's equally indomitable defiance of political power and authority, and his respect for intellectual independence.⁹⁸

In turn, Ju-ching admired his Japanese disciple and once asked him to become his assistant, saying: "In spite of being a foreigner, you, Dōgen, are a man of superior character." Dōgen, however, "positively declined the offer."⁹⁹

As such, the teacher and disciple studied and practiced together for two years (1225–27) in almost ideal rapport. This, however, should not suggest that there was a complete absence of conflicts between them. Dōgen later acknowledged that conflicts between teacher and disciple were a necessary condition for the right transmission of Dharma. He wrote: “The common endeavor of teacher and disciple in practice and understanding constitute the entwined vines of the Buddhas and ancestors (*busso no kattō*), that is, the life force of the skin-flesh-bones-marrow of Dharma (*hiniku-kotsuzui no meimyaku*).”¹⁰⁰ “Entwined vines” in the traditional Zen parlance referred to doctrinal sophistries, intellectual entanglements, and conflicts. Dōgen saw, contrary to the Zen tradition, the positive values of such conflicts in the personal encounter of teacher and disciple. Both teacher and disciple grew together through such entwined vines.

Under Ju-ching, Dōgen studied and practiced meditation without sparing himself. Dōgen later recalled:

After hearing this truth [the sole importance of *zazen*] from the instruction of my former teacher of T’ien-t’ung, I practiced *zazen* day and night. When other monastics gave up *zazen* temporarily for fear that they might fall ill at the time of extreme heat or cold, I thought to myself: “I should still devote myself to *zazen* even to the point of death from disease. If I do not practice *zazen* even without illness, what is the use of taking care of my body? I shall be quite satisfied to die of a disease. What good fortune it is to practice *zazen* under such a great teacher of the great country of Sung, to end my life, and to be disposed by good monastics . . .” Thinking thus continually, I resolutely sat in *zazen* day and night, and no illness came at all.¹⁰¹

Dōgen’s apprenticeship matured daily in such an uncompromising asceticism.

In 1225, a decisive moment of enlightenment in Dōgen’s life came at long last during an early morning *zazen* session at *geango* (i.e., the three-month intensive meditational retreat).¹⁰² In the course of meditation, a monk next to Dōgen inadvertently had fallen asleep. Upon noticing the monk, Ju-ching thundered at him: “In *zazen* it is imperative to cast off the body and mind. How could you indulge in sleeping?” This remark shook Dōgen’s whole being to its very core, and then an inexpressible, ecstatic joy engulfed his heart. In Ju-ching’s private quarters that same morning, Dōgen offered incense and worshiped Buddha. This unusual action of Dōgen prompted

Ju-ching to ask: "What is the incense-burning for?" The disciple exuberantly answered: "My body and mind are cast off!" "The body and mind are cast off" (*shinjin-datsuraku*), joined the teacher, "cast off are the body and mind" (*datsuraku-shinjin*). Thus, Ju-ching acknowledged the authenticity of Dōgen's enlightenment.¹⁰³

This event, sudden and transformative, was not an isolated one but the necessary fruition of Dōgen's long spiritual struggle. What Dōgen's mind had consciously and unconsciously groped for and reflected upon finally took shape dramatically in these unique circumstances. It was at this moment that Dōgen's question, with which he had lived since his residence on Mt. Hiei, was finally resolved.¹⁰⁴ The significance of the key notion of "casting off the body-mind" in the context of Dōgen's life and thought was that *zazen*-only, as the mythic-cultic archetype, symbolized the totality of the self and the world and represented that in which Buddha-nature became embodied. To cast off the body-mind did not nullify historical and social existence so much as to put it into action so that it could be the self-creative and self-expressive embodiment of Buddha-nature. In being "cast off," however, concrete human existence was fashioned in the mode of radical freedom—purposeless, goalless, objectless, and meaningless. Buddha-nature was not to be enfolded in, but was to unfold through, human activities and expressions. The meaning of existence was finally freed from and authenticated by its all-too-human conditions only if, and when, it lived co-eternally with ultimate meaninglessness.

What was taking place then in Dōgen's mind was a radical demythologizing and in turn, remythologizing of the whole Buddhist symbol-complex of original enlightenment, Buddha-nature, emptiness, and other related ideas and practices. The crux of his vision lay in a realistic affirmation and transformation of what was relative, finite, and temporal in a nondualistic vision of the self and the world. To understand duality lucidly and to penetrate it thoroughly within a nondualistic mode of existence was Dōgen's final solution. His remaining life consisted of his intellectual, moral, and cultic efforts to enact and elucidate this vision in the specific historical and social conditions of his time.

In the ninth month of 1225, Ju-ching conferred upon Dōgen the official certificate of the ancestral succession to the Chen-hsieh line of the Ts'ao-tung sect. On this day, the sect saw the succession of a Japanese monk for the first time in the history of Chinese Buddhism.

One day in 1227, Dōgen told Ju-ching his intention to return to Japan;

the latter gave him the sacerdotal robe transmitted from the time of Fuyung Tao-chiai (1043–1118), the genealogical document of ancestral succession,¹⁰⁵ his own portrait,¹⁰⁶ and other precious objects. Except for these objects that he received from Ju-ching, Dōgen returned to Japan “empty handed” (*kūshu-genkyō*). Unlike other Buddhists who had previously studied in China, Dōgen brought home with him no sūtras, images, or documents. His sole “souvenir” presented to his countrymen was his body, mind, and total existence, now completely liberated and transformed. He himself was the surest evidence of Dharma and as such, Dōgen transmitted the Chen-hsieh line of Sōtō Zen to Japan. The date of Dōgen’s return to Japan was probably sometime in the fall of 1227. Ju-ching died a year later in 1228.

Meanwhile, Myōzen, who had been studying at the T’ien-t’ung monastery ever since his arrival in China, died in 1225, soon after Dōgen met Ju-ching. Dōgen brought Myōzen’s remains to Japan with him and very soon thereafter wrote the *Sharisōdenki* (*Account of the Death of Myōzen Zenji*).

Dōgen concluded the period of his apprenticeship with the following:

Further, I went to great Sung, visited good teachers throughout the province of Chekiang, and investigated the various traditions of the Five Houses. Finally, I became the disciple of Ju-ching on T’ai-pai fêng [the Ching-tê-ssū temple on Mt. T’ien-t’ung], and the great matter of my entire life (*isshō sangaku no daiji*) was thus resolved.¹⁰⁷

TRANSMISSION AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE WAY IN JAPAN

Upon his arrival in Japan, Dōgen immediately returned to the Kenninji temple after a four-year absence. The chaotic situation he had witnessed before had not changed much. In fact, it had worsened in every respect.¹⁰⁸ Dōgen, however, expressed his sense of mission this way: “In the first year of the Shao-ting era [1228–1233] of the Sung dynasty I returned to my native place [Kyoto] and vowed to propagate Dharma and save all beings of the world. I felt then that a heavy load was on my shoulders.”¹⁰⁹ In the fall of the same year, Dōgen wrote the *Fukan zazengi* (*General Advice on the Principles of Zazen*), which might have been regarded as the manifesto of Dōgen’s “new” Buddhism vis-à-vis the established Buddhism of Japan. At the beginning of the book, Dōgen proclaimed:

If the Way is originally perfect and ubiquitous, why do we distinguish between practice and enlightenment? If the supreme Dharma is free, why do we need our efforts to attain it? Inasmuch as the whole truth has nothing to do with the world's dust, why do we believe in the means of wiping it away? The Way is not separate from here and now; so what is the use of getting a foothold in practice? However, when there is even the slightest gap between two opposites, they are poles asunder like heaven and earth. When "for" and "against" are differentiated, even unconsciously, we are doomed to lose the Buddha-mind. It should be perfectly clear that infinite recurrences of rebirth is due to our mental discrimination, while delusions of this world arise from an incessant persistence of selfish deliberation. If you wish to surpass even the pinnacle of spiritual advancement, you should understand clearly the here-and-now as it is (*jikige no jōtō*). Even if you boast of your understanding of Dharma and are richly gifted in enlightenment, even if you attain the Way and illuminate your mind, even if you are about to enter the realm of enlightenment with a soaring spirit, you are still short of the total freedom in which enlightenment itself is transcended (*shusshin no ro*). Although Buddha was endowed with natural knowledge, he sat in zazen for six years. Bodhidharma bequeathed us the legacy of the Buddha-mind, yet still sat facing a wall for nine years. Such were the ancient sages. Why can we not practice like them? Therefore, desist from pursuing words and letters intellectually and reflect upon your self inwardly (*ekō-henshō*). Thus your body and mind shall be cast off naturally and your original nature (*honrai no memmoku*) shall be realized. If you wish to attain it, be diligent in zazen at once.¹¹⁰

The above statement indicated the direction and character of Dōgen's thought and activity in the subsequent period of his life. In the simplest and purest form of zazen-only, Dōgen found the essence and prototype of Buddhist *cultus* as well as *mythos*, and the crystallization of practice and enlightenment.

Dōgen stayed at the Kenninji temple for three years. In the meantime, as the peculiarities of his Zen manifested themselves in his teaching and education of disciples, and his name became evermore famous, enmity from both Hiei and Kenninji seems to have been aggravated. It was perhaps this antagonism that led Dōgen eventually to move in 1230 to an abandoned temple called An'yōin in Fukakusa.¹¹¹ While at An'yōin, Dōgen wrote the

Shōbōgenzō, “Bendōwa,” which expounded his basic tenets in the form of eighteen questions and answers. Expanding the basic thought of the *Fukan zazengi*, Dōgen clarified the purpose of writing this chapter, which also applied to all his subsequent writings:

In our country, principles of zazen practice have not yet been transmitted. This is a sad situation for those who try to understand zazen. For this reason I have endeavored to organize what I learned in China, to transcribe some wise teachers’ teachings, and thereby to impart them to those who wish to practice and understand zazen.¹¹²

Thus with the *Fukan zazengi* and the “Bendōwa” chapter, Dōgen laid the cornerstone of his religious and philosophical citadel. Upon this foundation Dōgen’s Zen Buddhism, though initially transplanted from China, gradually developed into a distinctively Japanese form that was the product of the symbolic model Dōgen had inherited from Buddhist traditions (which will be greatly elaborated later on), his own idiosyncracies, and the social and historical peculiarities of thirteenth-century Japan. The Way was transmitted and transformed.

As the number of his followers had increased steadily, Dōgen moved again in 1233, this time to the Kannon-dōriin temple in Fukakusa which had been built as the Gokurakuji temple and maintained by the Fujiwara family for generations. Dōgen’s life at Kannon-dōriin for the following ten years (1233–43) was his most creative period, literarily and otherwise: he expanded the original Kannon-dōriin into the Kōshō-hōrinji temple, accepted Koun Ejō (1198–1280) as his disciple and the head monk (*shuso*) of the temple,¹¹³ and wrote forty-four chapters of the *Shōbōgenzō*, including such crucially important chapters as “Genjō-kōan” and “Busshō,” and the *Eihei shoso gakudō yōjin-shū*, and the *Tenzo kyōkun*. These events were intimately interconnected with one another.

In the winter of 1234, Ejō became a disciple of Dōgen. From the age of seventeen Ejō had studied such schools of Buddhism as Tendai, Shingon, Kusha (Abhidharmakośa), Jōjitsu (Satyasiddhi), and Hossō (Yogācāra), on Mt. Hiei, and later the Pure Realm school from Shōkū (1147–1247),¹¹⁴ and Zen Buddhism from Kakuan of Tōnomine. Thus Ejō was already well versed in Buddhism in general. He probably met Dōgen for the first time immediately after the latter returned from China. Although Ejō was two years older than Dōgen, he must have been impressed by Dōgen’s fresh interpretation of

Buddhism in general and Zen in particular. Two years after this first meeting, Ejō became Dōgen's disciple. For nearly twenty years thereafter, until Dōgen's death, teacher and disciple worked together to found Sōtō Zen in Japan. The timing of Ejō's discipleship was crucially important as Dōgen needed an able co-worker for the education of disciples, administration of the temple, and also for the impending founding of the Kōshōji temple.

In the twelfth month of 1235, Dōgen started a fund-raising campaign for the building of a new monastics' hall (*sōdō*), the center of monastic activities. In light of the calamitous circumstances of the time, this drive must have been far from easy; yet the completion of the monastics' hall was accomplished in the fall of the following year. In the *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*, Ejō reported the following remarks made by Dōgen:

It should not be thought to be necessarily for the growth of Buddhism that we now campaign for the building fund of the monastics' hall and take pains with that project. At present the number of students is still small, so, instead of doing nothing and wasting time, I want to offer an opportunity for those who have gone astray to get acquainted with Buddhism and, at the same time, to provide a place for monastics to practice zazen. Also there should be no regret even if the original project is not completed. I will not be distressed even if people in the future, seeing just one pillar built, think that despite my intentions, I failed to finish it.¹¹⁵

In the tenth month of 1236, the opening ceremony of the monastics' hall was successfully held and the temple was officially named Kōshō-hōrinji temple. As we shall see, this was an epoch-making event in the history of Japanese Zen Buddhism, because it was the realization of Po-chang's envisionment in which the monastics' hall was the center of Zen monastic life. In the twelfth month, Dōgen appointed Ejō as head monk whose function was to assist the abbot in all educational and religious matters in the monastic community. At the same time, Ejō delivered his first sermon in place of Dōgen.¹¹⁶ About a year later, the Dharma hall (*hattō*) was added to the temple through the efforts of Shōgaku Zenni. This, combined with the Buddha hall (*butsuden*) that had existed from the beginning, marked the realization of Dōgen's dream in which the monastics' hall, the Dharma hall, and the Buddha hall became the three most important buildings of a monastic community.¹¹⁷ The Kōshō-hōrinji temple was gradually shaping up as one of the most powerful centers of Buddhism in Japan.

Dōgen opened his monastic community for everyone, regardless of intelligence, social status, sex, or profession. His religion was through and through the religion of the people, as were other “new” Kamakura Buddhist sects. His logic of universalism was thorough, if not always consistent. Dōgen wrote: “In their excess of mercy the Buddhas and ancestors have opened the boundless gate of compassion (*kōdai no jimon*) so that all sentient beings may be led into enlightenment. Who in the heavens and on earth cannot enter it?”¹¹⁸ Dōgen, like Shinran, proclaimed: “There is a very easy way to become a Buddha,”¹¹⁹ and “Zazen-only is of the foremost importance for the growth of a Zen monastic. Through the practice of zazen, irrespective of intelligence, one will mature naturally.”¹²⁰ He also said:

The true learning of the Way is not dependent on one’s native intelligence or acquired learning, nor on cleverness or quickness. This should not be construed as an exhortation to become like the blind, the deaf, or the fool. Truth does not employ erudition and high intelligence; so do not despair of being endowed with slowness and inferior intelligence. For the true learning of the Way should be easy.¹²¹

Similar statements are replete in Dōgen’s works. Despite his aristocratic origin and philosophical erudition, nothing was more alien to his thought than social condescension or intellectual arrogance.

Dōgen’s religion abolished the separation between monastics and lay persons. “Those who regard mundane activity as an obstacle to the Buddha-dharma know only that there is no Buddha-dharma in the mundane life; they do not yet know that there is no mundane life in the Buddha-dharma.”¹²² Monastics and laity are in essence one and the same. “It [enlightenment] depends,” wrote Dōgen, “solely upon whether you have a sincere desire to seek it, not upon whether you live in a monastery or in the secular world.”¹²³

Nevertheless Dōgen also stated:

Of all the Buddhas in the three periods and ten directions, not a single Buddha attained Buddhahood through the secular life. Because of those Buddhas of the past, monasticism and ordination have their merits. Sentient beings’ attainment of the Way necessarily depends upon entering into the monastic’s life and receiving the precepts. Indeed the monastic’s life and the vow to observe the precepts, being the unchanging law of Buddhas, are possessed of boundless merits. Although in the holy

teachings there is the view that advocates the attainment of Buddhahood through the secular life, it is not the rightly transmitted teaching.... What the Buddhas and ancestors have rightly transmitted is to become a Buddha through the monastic's life.¹²⁴

Dōgen went so far as to say that “even if a monastic violates the precepts, he/she is superior to a lay person who does not break his/her precepts.”¹²⁵ Herein lies one of the thorniest problems in Dōgen studies—his view on monasticism and laity. However, as we shall see in more detail later, Dōgen held from beginning to end that “homelessness” was the ideal possibility or model of rightly transmitted Buddhism and transcended both the monastic's and the layperson's lives in their ordinary senses. Dōgen's universalism was envisioned in terms of this monastic elitism,¹²⁶ that is to say, Dōgen held up the monastic life as a challenge to his Buddhist contemporaries as well as to the secularists of the time. The monastic life was not a withdrawal from the world, but a protest, an invitation, a recommendation to the world. It is in this light that we understand Dōgen's idealization of monasticism and his relentless demand that his disciples pursue the Way for the sake of the Way, without accommodating themselves to worldly interests and concerns. Fundamentally speaking, the ideal of monasticism was the ideal of every human being—to be born was one's initiation into monastic life. He wrote:

Therefore, whether you are a heavenly being, human, ruler, or public official, whether you are a layperson, monastic, servant, or brute, you should uphold the Buddhist precepts and rightly transmit the monastics' robes in order to become a child of Buddha. Indeed this is the shortest way to rightly enter the rank of Buddha.¹²⁷

This was quite different from approaches taken by his contemporaries such as Shinran and Nichiren, who while equally anti-secular and anti-authoritarian, approached the matter of liberation by adapting the Way to the levels of the common people (*taiki-seppō*) who were living in the Age of Degenerate Law. The easy path (*igyō*), which called for the recitation of “Namu-Amida-Butsu” (*myōgō*) and “Namu-Myōhō-Rengekyō” (*daimoku*), was “superior” to other methods precisely because it was superlatively adapted to the religious situation of the age. It was the means by which these leaders involved themselves in human existence.

On the other hand, accommodating himself to inferior and mediocre minds appealed little to Dōgen. In this respect, Dōgen retained his aristocratic elitism while at the same time detesting any flattering association with power and authority. It must be remembered that at this time incessant earthquakes, epidemics, fires, famines, social unrest, and so forth, had brought incalculable suffering upon the entire populace. Yet, unlike Shinran and Nichiren, Dōgen seems to have been impervious to this, not because he lacked compassion but because his compassion was modulated in a different key, although some may undoubtedly interpret it as misplaced and inhumane.

Dōgen repudiated, at least in principle, religious discrimination between the sexes. Regarding the question of whether zazen can be practiced by men and women in the secular life or only practiced by monks, Dōgen answered: “The understanding of Dharma, as the ancestors taught, does not depend on differences in sex and in rank.”¹²⁸ His case for the equality of sexes was most eloquently stated in the following:

Some people, foolish to the extreme, think of a woman as nothing but the object of sensual pleasures, and see her in this way without ever correcting their view. A Buddhist should not do so. If a man detests a woman as a sexual object, she must detest him for the same reason. Both man and woman become objects, and thus become equally involved in defilement.¹²⁹

Dōgen continues:

What charge is there against woman? What virtue is there in man? There are wicked men in the world; there are virtuous women in the world. The desire to hear Dharma and the search for enlightenment do not necessarily rely on the difference in sex.¹³⁰

Thus, Dōgen ridicules the Buddhist practice of “no admittance to women” (*nyonin-kinzei*) as “a laughable matter in Japan.”¹³¹

The rapid expansion of Dōgen’s Buddhism can be seen in the fact that an annex (*jūundō*) soon had to be added to the monastics’ hall in 1239. In commemoration of this event, Dōgen wrote twenty-one instructions on life in the annex in his *Kannon-dōri Kōshō-gokokuji jūundōshiki*, which begins with the statement: “Those who have believing minds and give up desire for worldly fame and gain shall enter. Those who lack sincerity shall not join;

entering mistakenly, they shall depart after due deliberation.” And: “The congregation in the hall should be in harmony with one another just like milk and water, and endeavor to live by the Way.” The book ends with this remark: “The foregoing instructions are the body and mind of the Buddhas and ancestors: revere and follow them.”¹³²

In 1241, such able disciples as Ekan, Gikai (1219–1309), Giin, Gien, Gijun, and others (who had been the disciples of Dainichibō Nōnin) joined Dōgen's community. It is significant to note that Dainichibō Nōnin was the favorite among Japanese Buddhists to establish a “pure Zen” (*junsui-zen*) in the country over the traditional “mixed Zen” (*kenju-zen*)—this task, however, came to be fulfilled by Dōgen and his disciples.

Thus the primitive order of the Sōtō sect in Japan was formed with a deep commitment to pure Zen. As we shall see, Dōgen wished to establish an unadulterated, full-fledged Zen Buddhism that was clearly distinguished from all non-Zen schools of Buddhism as well as from those Zen schools that had blended with esoteric Buddhism. Dōgen, like Dainichibō Nōnin, was passionately puristic in this respect and indomitably independent of all Buddhist schools.

We should also note that Hatano Yoshishige, a well-known member of the supreme court of the shogunate in Rokuhara, became a devout follower of Dōgen and himself entered into monkhood eventually. Hatano would play an important role in the future development of Dōgen's religion.

The founding of the Kōshō-hōrinji temple and Ejō's assistance gave Dōgen a favorable opportunity for the unfolding of his creative literary activity, which I referred to previously. The core of Dōgen's thought matured during this period.

As time went on, Dōgen himself felt compelled to articulate his position more definitively, in order to distinguish it from other schools of Buddhism. As I have noted already, he criticized both established and new Buddhism unflinchingly. Early in his career, he criticized Pure Realm Buddhism in the following:

Do you know the merits attained by the reading of the sūtras and the practice of nembutsu? It is most pitiful that some believe in the virtue of just moving the tongue or of raising the voice. Taking them for Dharma, they become more and more remote from it.... To try to realize the Way by way of nembutsu—moving the mouth foolishly ten million times—can be compared to the attempt to leave for Yüeh [south]

by orienting the wheel of your cart towards the north.... Lifting the voice incessantly is just like a frog croaking day and night in a rice pad in the springtime. It is, after all, futile.¹³³

In the context of his criticism of such schools as Hokke, Kegon, and Shin-gon, Dōgen wrote: “A Buddhist should neither argue superiority or inferiority of doctrines, nor settle disputes over depth or shallowness of teachings, but only know authenticity or inauthenticity of practice.”¹³⁴ Dōgen relentlessly criticized the Buddhists of these schools, calling them “the scholars who count words and letters” (*monji o kazouru gakusha*). Dōgen sharply set himself apart from scholastically oriented Buddhism by characterizing his own religion as intent on the authenticity of practice, for which he had a burning sense of mission and a stubborn purism.

Coupled with his rising popularity, this stubbornness and sense of mission did not fail to irritate the traditionally-minded Buddhists, especially those on Mt. Hiei. Dōgen’s position at the Kōshō-hōrinji temple became increasingly threatened by these traditionalists. At the same time, however, Dōgen was offered an attractive invitation by Hōjō Yasutoki to visit Kamakura although he flatly refused it, perhaps because his anti-authoritarian spirit would not allow him to accept.¹³⁵

Despite this, Dōgen dedicated the *Gokoku shōbōgi* (*Significance of the Right Dharma for the Protection of the Nation*) to the imperial authority, which sparked Hiei’s furies against him. In doing so, Dōgen followed the footsteps of other Japanese Buddhists and/or the loyal family tradition of the Murakami Genji, which revealed his deep involvement with other religionists, nobles, and warriors—the well-known tripartite camps of the upper echelon of Kamakura Japan.

A proposal to move the monastic headquarters to the province of Echizen was made by Hatano Yoshishige, who offered his own property in the province for the site of a new monastery. Dōgen’s acceptance of this offer seems to have been hastened by several factors: (1) As we have seen, the pressures of established Buddhism led Dōgen to the realization that the original vision of his monastic ideal was insurmountably difficult to carry out in his current surroundings.¹³⁶ (2) As Furuta contends, his sense of rivalry with the Rinzai sect, particularly with Enni Ben’en (1202–1280) of the Tōfukuji temple—Dōgen’s most powerful contemporary—might have driven him to a more self-conscious effort to establish Sōtō Zen, as opposed to Rinzai Zen, despite his advocacy of a catholic Buddhism. Significantly enough, his anti-Rinzai remarks

became especially frequent around 1243 and thereafter.¹³⁷ (3) Dōgen was increasingly mindful of Ju-ching's instruction: "Do not stay in the center of cities or towns. Do not be friendly with rulers and state ministers. Dwell in the deep mountains and valleys to realize the true nature of humanity."¹³⁸ (4) Dōgen's unquenchable yearnings for nature rather than urban commotion grew in this period as expressed in his exaltation of mountains and waters (*sansui*): "From the timeless beginning have mountains been the habitat of great sages. Wise ones and sages have all made mountains their secret chambers and their bodies and minds; by them mountains are realized."¹³⁹ And finally: (5) These circumstances and factors reinforced his original belief in monastic Buddhism (*shukke-Bukkyō*), rather than lay Buddhism (*zaike-Bukkyō*). Monastic Buddhism had consistently been the model of Buddhism for Dōgen from the very beginning. Sadly, Dōgen must have realized the impracticability of his ideal of universal monasticism in the mundane world. Perhaps a bit pessimistically, he was increasingly attracted to the community of a select few in order to achieve his utopian vision.

This shift in emphasis, although not in principle, contrasted significantly with his earlier position, namely the widest possible dissemination and popularization of zazen in Japan. Nevertheless, his new stress on elitism, rather than universalism, did not imply in the slightest the abandonment of his mission to change the world as much as the self. We must not minimize the social significance of monastic asceticism in this respect.

In the seventh month of 1243, Dōgen left the care of the Kōshōji temple to his disciple Gijun and arrived in the province of Echizen. He immediately entered a small temple called Kippōji, which had long been in a state of disrepair. Dōgen stayed at Kippōji and occasionally went to Yamashibu to preach. Although the Kippōji period lasted only about a year, Dōgen, secluded from the world by heavy snow, preached and worked as energetically as ever and produced twenty-nine chapters of the *Shōbōgenzō*. He was unquestionably still at the height of his literary productivity.

In the meantime, Hatano Yoshishige and other lay disciples had been engaged in the construction of the Daibutsuji temple, to which Dōgen moved in the seventh month of 1244. The Dharma hall and the monastics' hall were built in rapid succession, and in 1245, Dōgen announced the observance of the *geango* period for the first time in the history of the new headquarters.

In 1246, Dōgen changed the name of the Daibutsuji to the Eiheiji temple. "Eihei" means "eternal peace" and was the name of the era in the Later Han dynasty during which Buddhism was said to have been introduced to

China. With this naming, Dōgen signaled the introduction of the eternal peace of Buddhism in Japan. He had finally realized his long-cherished dream—the establishment of an ideal monastic community, as envisioned by Po-chang Huai-hai (720–814), in the bosom of the mountains and waters. Echizen was an ideal place for such a community, for it was physically remote from Kyoto and Kamakura and therefore free from the established Buddhism, the imperial-Fujiwara power complex, and the warrior class. The Eiheiji temple became the symbol of the “center of the world” (*axis mundi*) in the religion of Dōgen and his followers.¹⁴⁰

In the Daibutsuji-Eiheiji period (1244–53), Dōgen wrote only eight chapters of the *Shōbōgenzō*. He directed his efforts primarily to the formulation and guidance of moral precepts and disciplinary rules for the monastic community, rather than the exposition of his thought. This period was characterized by his concentration on the ritualization of every aspect of monastic life. He wrote, for example, the *Taidaiko goge jarihō* (1244), which established the sixty-two rules of behavior for junior members of the monastic community (as opposed to senior members who received training for five years or more); the *Nihonkoku Echizen Eiheiji chiji shingi* (1246), in which the six administrative leaders were instructed in their treatment of inferiors (in contrast to the *Taidaiko goge jarihō*, which was written for monastic leaders); the *Bendōhō* (circa 1244–46), containing minute instructions on early morning, morning, early evening, and evening zazen, all aspects of daily life in the monastics’ hall such as washing the face, wearing the robe, and sleeping; the *Eiheiji jikuimmon* (1246), in which Dōgen exalted the spiritual significance of preparing and taking a meal (his instructions were permeated by his belief that eating itself was a spiritual matter); the *Fushuku hampō* (circa 1246–53), which specified in minute detail mealtime manners and rules following Dōgen’s metaphysics of eating, in which food and Dharma were non-dually one; the *Kichijōzan Eiheiji shuryō shingi* (1249), in which Dōgen formulated the code of conduct for the monastic library, which he regarded as the center of intellectual life;¹⁴¹ and the *Eiheiji jūryo seiki* (1249) in which he admonished disciples to not involve themselves in or cater to political and religious powers. Such moral and cultic formulations were derived directly from his conception of the sanctity of every aspect of life; they were regarded as free expressions of Buddha-nature and not just rules and codes that bound the lives of ordinary monastics.

Thus the Eiheiji monastery was an exclusive religious and educational community of the very best seekers who had an unflinching determination

to grow in the wisdom and compassion of the bodhisattva way and therein become members of the family tradition of the Buddhas and ancestors (*busso no kafū*).¹⁴² This community was also designated as the community of truth (*shinjitsu-sō*), the community of peace and harmony (*wagō-sō*), and the community of purity (*shōjō-sō*).

For about seven months between the eighth month of 1247 and the third month of 1248, Dōgen preached before Hōjō Tokiyori of the Kamakura government, but declined his offer of property in the Echizen province.¹⁴³ In light of his rejection of Yasutoki's invitation, Dōgen's Kamakura visit could have been construed as self-contradictory; his compliance was most likely due to a request from Hatano Yoshishige.¹⁴⁴ There are different speculations as to what Dōgen recommended to or discussed with Tokiyori during his stay in Kamakura; the question is still open to further investigation.¹⁴⁵

In 1250, the ex-emperor Gosaga sent an offer to Dōgen to bestow a purple robe upon him. Dōgen declined more than once, but finally accepted on imperial insistence. However, Dōgen did not wear the robe until the end of his life.¹⁴⁶ From about 1250 on, he suffered from ill health, and his participation in monastic activities was greatly hampered. His condition worsened around the summer of 1252. Nevertheless in the first month of 1253, Dōgen wrote the *Shōbōgenzō*, "Hachi-dainingaku," which was his last message to his disciples in anticipation of his approaching death. According to remarks by Gien and Ejō, inserted at the end of this chapter, Dōgen wanted to compose a total of one hundred chapters for the *Shōbōgenzō*, but was unable to. Ejō wrote: "Unfortunately we cannot see a one-hundred-chapter version. This is a matter for deep regret."¹⁴⁷

In the seventh month, Dōgen appointed Ejō his successor as the head of the Eiheiji monastery. Following Hatano Yoshishige's advice, Dōgen reluctantly left Echizen for Kyoto in the following month to seek medical care, accompanied by Ejō and several other disciples. He was treated at the home of his lay disciple Kakunen in Kyoto; however, his illness, perhaps aggravated by the journey, was already too advanced to be cured by any medical treatment.

In the eighth month of 1253, Dōgen bade farewell to his grieving disciples and died in the posture of zazen.

ACTIVITY, EXPRESSION, AND UNDERSTANDING

3

IT IS OFTEN SAID that meditation and wisdom are the foot and eye of Buddhism. Wisdom is never conceived apart from meditation and vice versa. This inseparability is clearly stated in such statements as: “There is no meditation for one who is without wisdom, no wisdom for one without meditation; one in whom there are meditation and wisdom, one indeed is close to nirvāṇa,”¹ and “When meditation and wisdom are equal, one sees all things.”² No matter what the precise meanings of the two are, and no matter what their relationship is, their mutual inseparability seems to differentiate Buddhism from the general traditions of Western philosophy and religious thought. In fact, we may even say at the risk of oversimplification that the history of Buddhist thought consists of various interpretations of meditation and wisdom and their relationship. Thus the two serve as the primary structural elements of the Buddhist symbolic model.³

Dōgen was no exception to this tradition. Although his thought was enormously complex, subtle, and elusive, meditation and wisdom still remained the fundamental structural elements of his thought. It is for this reason that our analysis of these two polar concepts in the total context of Dōgen’s thought is imperative for elucidation and understanding. In this chapter, therefore, it will be our purpose to examine this problem.

THE RIGHTLY TRANSMITTED BUDDHA-DHARMA

As we have seen before, Dōgen studied Sōtō Zen for two years under Ju-ching, who belonged to the Chen-hsieh line of that tradition, and he was proud of

his truthful transmission of Ju-ching's teachings to Japan. Despite his frequent harsh, sectarian attacks on Rinzai Zen, particularly Ta-hui Tsung-kao and his followers, and moreover despite his criticisms of other Buddhist sects and schools, we can reasonably maintain that Dōgen's intention was not to establish any particular sect or school of Buddhism or Zen but to disseminate what he called the "rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma" (*shōden no buppō*), which transcended all sectarian divisions and divisiveness. The Buddha-dharma that was rightly transmitted was neither the body of creeds, the content of certain experiences, any Absolute, nor a return to the letter of Buddha's teachings; it was the symbolic expression of the spirit of Śākya-muni the Buddha, which opened up the mysteries and horizons of Buddha-nature and that was the rationale for sectarian differentiations.

Thus, he rejected fashionable distinctions between Zen and other Buddhist schools, that is, between the school of the Buddha-mind (*bushin-shū*) and the school of the Buddha-word (*butsugo-shū*),⁴ between Tathāgata Zen (*nyorai-shōjō-zen* or *nyorai-zen*) and Ancestral Zen (*soshi-zen*),⁵ between "Kōan-introspection" Zen (*kanna-zen*) and "Silent-illumination" Zen (*mokushō-zen*),⁶ and so on.

His views on these matters were amply discussed and expounded in a number of chapters of the *Shōbōgenzō* and other writings. First of all, Dōgen severely criticized designations such as "Zen sect" (*zenshū*), "Zen ancestors" (*zenso*), "Zen students" (*zensu*), "Bodhidharma sect" (*daruma-shū*), and the like. They were said to be the "violations of the Way" and the "enemies of the Buddhas and ancestors."⁷ Moreover, Dōgen denounced the so-called "Five Houses" of Chinese Zen Buddhism and repudiated Lin-chi's "Three Mysteries and Three Essentials" (*sangen-san'yō*), "Four Arrangements of Subject and Object" (*shiryōken*), and "Fourfold Precedence and Subsequence of Light and Activity" (*shishōyū*). Yün-mên's "Three Phrases" (*sanku*), Tung-shan's "Five Ranks" (*goi*), and similar doctrines of various Zen traditions were described as "mad expressions." He leveled criticism at each of the Five Houses, not excepting his own Sōtō sect.⁸ Analogously, he considered the designation of the school of the Buddha-mind, in contrast to the school of the Buddha-word, preposterous and false. All these sectarian distinctions were a "grave offence" that brought "impiety" and "disgrace" to the Buddhas and ancestors, and could ultimately be traced to a lack of "seeking the Way to its roots" and of the spirit of "holding the ancients in reverence," as well as to the "confused state of the worldly mind."⁹

When Dōgen visited China during the Southern Sung period, it was the heyday of Ancestral Zen and the method of kōan introspection under the leadership of the followers of Ta-hui Tsung-kao. Dōgen witnessed a number of Zen Buddhists who categorically denounced scriptural and doctrinal studies. Ancestral Zen reached an extreme at the time of Lin-chi I-hsüan (d. 866), Tê-shan Hsüan-chien (780–865), and Yang-shan Hui-chi (814–890), and its extremity was still quite flagrant during Dōgen's stay in China.¹⁰

Under such circumstances, Dōgen endeavored to go beyond an arbitrary distinction between Ancestral Zen and Tathāgata Zen in order to revitalize the spirit of Buddha himself, and advocated the necessity of studying both traditional scriptures and records of Zen ancestors. This stand was taken in opposition to the traditional Zen principle of “a special tradition outside the scriptures” (*kyōge-betsuden*), which set apart Ancestral Zen from Tathāgata Zen. At one point Dōgen wrote: “Do not misunderstand Buddhism by believing the erroneous principle ‘a special tradition outside the scriptures.’”¹¹ He further noted:

The view that the sūtras are not Dharma takes into account neither the time when the Buddhas and ancestors used the sūtras nor the time when they left them behind as a result of their study. It fails to recognize the degree of intimacy between the Buddhas, ancestors, and the sūtras.¹²

You should tell them [those who reject the sūtras]: “If the sūtras are to be discarded as you advocate, you should abandon the Buddha-mind and the Buddha-body as well; if you are to throw Buddha's body-mind away, you should do so with the offspring of Buddha [all sentient beings], and in turn with the Buddha-way. In repudiating the Buddha-way, can you avoid rejecting the ancestral way?”¹³

“A special tradition outside the scriptures,” in Dōgen's view, did not exclude that tradition expounded in the scriptures. Both scriptural tradition and a special tradition were legitimate parts of his rightly transmitted Buddhism. In a similar fashion, he placed strictures on other Zen tenets such as “no dependence upon words and letters” (*furyū-monji*), “direct pointing at the human mind” (*jikishi-ninshin*), and “seeing into one's own nature and the attainment of Buddhahood” (*kenshō-jōbutsu*).¹⁴

It is necessary for us to distinguish between Kōan-introspection Zen and Silent-illumination Zen at this point. As we are going to see in more detail

later, Dōgen's "zazen-only" (*shikan-taza*) was closer to the Silent-illumination Zen of Sōtō Zen than to the Kōan-introspection Zen of Rinzai Zen; his criticisms of the latter were more frequent and devastating than those of the former. However, the reasons for such criticisms were based on his conception of the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma. This fact was demonstrated by his alteration of Hung-chih Chêng-chüeh's *Tso-ch'an chên* (*Admonitions for Zazen*)—despite his whole-hearted admiration for this great teacher of Silent-illumination Zen in Sung China.¹⁵ As Etō's comparative analysis shows, Dōgen's position was clearly differentiated from Hung-chih's in that the former emphasized actional realization in contrast to the latter's intuitionistic illumination.¹⁶ In short, both Kōan-introspection Zen and Silent-illumination Zen were criticized by Dōgen on the basis of his criterion, the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma, which will be discussed shortly.

In the same vein, Dōgen viewed both Mahāyāna Buddhism and Theravāda Buddhism from this vantage point, though he was not altogether free of scornful remarks about the latter. However, he was remarkably free of the complacency and wishful thinking typical of Mahāyānist thinkers. For example, the Four Fruits (of the Theravāda path, i.e., stream-winner, once-returner, never-returner, and arahat), according to Dōgen, were not stages of spiritual progress, but enlightenment itself.¹⁷ Likewise the Thirty-seven Stages to Enlightenment (*saptatrimśad bodhipākṣikā dharmāḥ; sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō*) were reinterpreted by Dōgen in such a way that they became the thirty-seven qualities of enlightenment—in Dōgen's own words, "the eyeballs, nostrils, skin-flesh-bones-marrow, hands, feet, and faces of the Buddhas and ancestors."¹⁸ The arahat ideal was said to be identical in its soteriological intention with the ideal of Buddhas and bodhisattvas, that is, supreme enlightenment (*anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*).¹⁹ All in all, "There is neither Mahāyāna nor Hīnayāna in the activities of a monastic."²⁰

In the foregoing observations, we have seen Dōgen's endeavor, through his notion of the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma, to vindicate what he deemed the spirit of Śākyamuni Buddha himself, whom Dōgen thought was not only the historical Buddha but the cosmic Buddha who subsumed and transcended all Buddhas. What Dōgen attempted was not a mere return to or recapitulation of Buddha's teachings but a radical reexpression and reenactment of them. As such, his notion of the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma involved a thorough demythologizing and remythologizing.

The question that then arises is "What is the criterion of the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma?" Dōgen stated:

The Buddhas and Tathāgatas have an excellent way—unequalled and natural—to transmit the wondrous Dharma through personal encounter and to realize supreme enlightenment. As it is imparted impeccably from Buddha to Buddha, its criterion is the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity (*jijuyū-zammai*).

For playing joyfully in such a samādhi (*kono zammai ni yuke suruni*), the upright sitting position in meditation is the right gate.²¹

The samādhi of self-fulfilling activity is often used in Buddhism in contrast to the samādhi of other-fulfilling activity (*tajuyū-zammai*). The former refers to that samādhi which is concerned with the self-enjoyment of the Body of Law (*dharmakāya*; *hosshin*) without relating itself to other sentient beings, whereas the latter refers to that samādhi which is concerned with the enjoyment and fulfillment of others through the accommodation of the Body of Law to the needs and states of sentient beings in myriad forms, such as through the Body of Enjoyment (*sambhogakāya*; *hōjin*) and the Body of Transformations (*nirmāṇakāya*; *ōjin*). (Briefly, the Body of Law refers to the transcendental Buddha, beyond time and space; the Body of Enjoyment, the mythic bodhisattvas; and the Body of Transformations, the physical existence lived by the Buddha. This will be further discussed at a later time.)

In the context of Dōgen's thought, the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity signified the samādhi that at once negates and subsumes self and other—the Body of Law (or essence) on the one hand, and the Body of Enjoyment and the Body of Transformations (or accommodation) on the other. It referred to a total freedom of self-realization without any dualism of antitheses. The crucially important point to note is that in Dōgen, opposites or dualities were not obliterated or even blurred; they were not so much transcended as they were realized. The total freedom in question here was that freedom which realized itself in duality, not apart from it.

The criterion of the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity was not an abstract principle but a mode of activity itself. Thus Dōgen wrote, as noted previously: "A Buddhist should neither argue superiority or inferiority of doctrines, nor settle disputes over depth or shallowness of teachings, but only know authenticity or inauthenticity of practice."²² The significance of this statement can be adequately appreciated if seen in the context of the evolutionary classification of Buddhist teachings (*kyōsō-hanjaku*) during Dōgen's time, or in the then-prevalent devolutionary view of history, that is, the doctrine of the Age of Degenerate Law (*mappō*). Dōgen rejected both,

contending that the former was based on an arbitrary and complacent scheme of developmental stages of doctrines, and the latter on a faulty interpretation of human nature and historical process. Instead, Dōgen found the criterion of truth and authenticity in a special quality of experience, or more accurately, of activity, that was epitomized in the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity.

The idea of the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity was inseparable from Dōgen's other fundamental thoughts. His conception of the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma linked this idea with the unity of practice and enlightenment (*shushō-ittō* or *shushō-ichinyō*), the casting-off of body and mind (*shinjin-datsuraku*), nonthinking (*hishiryō*), total exertion (*gūjin*), abiding in a Dharma-position (*jū-hōi*), and so forth.

From this perspective, Dōgen interpreted the entire history of Buddhism as follows:

Śākyamuni Buddha and Mahākāśyapa lived by practice based on enlightenment (*shōjō no shu*); Bodhidharma and Hui-nēng were likewise guided by practice based on enlightenment. There is no exception in the way Dharma has been kept alive.²³

One might wonder whether Dōgen was historically accurate with respect to the Indian teachers in whose view meditation seems to have been primarily, if not exclusively, a means to attain enlightenment. However, concerning Chinese Buddhism, Dōgen rightly understood the general tenor of Hui-nēng (638–713), who is often said to have reformed Chinese Zen thought. Hui-nēng maintained the unity of meditation (*ting*) and wisdom (*hui*), comparing them to “substance” and “function” or to a “lamp” and “light,” respectively.²⁴ He rejected the contemplative and instrumental view of meditation and the intellectualistic and substantialistic view of wisdom, wherein the unity of meditation and wisdom was understood in terms of activity.

Dōgen seriously considered thoughts such as these that were implied by Hui-nēng's teachings. Yet he severely criticized the idea of “seeing into one's own nature” (*kenshō*) and went so far as to regard the *Platform Sūtra* as a spurious work and not the words of the sixth ancestor.²⁵ We can safely conjecture that Dōgen must have read an unknown Sung edition of this work that might have been highly idealistically oriented (as compared with the Tun-huang text, which Dōgen was unfamiliar with) and opposed to elements associated with the view (of Kōan-introspection Zen of the time) that dualistically interpreted “seeing” and “one's own nature” in the phrase “seeing

into one's own nature." From Dōgen's standpoint, the activity of seeing was itself one's own nature.²⁶ Be that as it may, Dōgen, an ardent admirer of Hui-nêng, selected certain elements consistent with his conception of the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma and was clearly intent on restoring those that according to him constituted the spirit of Hui-nêng and the essence of Buddhism.

Furthermore, Dōgen believed that the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma was most authentically transmitted by and in Ju-ching's life and thought. That is, Dōgen generalized an interpretation of the history and essence of Buddhism in such a way that the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma was bequeathed from Śākyamuni Buddha through Bodhidharma, Hui-nêng and his followers, to Ju-ching, and finally to Dōgen himself. This genealogy could be traced back even to the primordial time of the Seven Past Buddhas. To Dōgen, the search for reason (*dōri*) consisted, to a considerable extent, in holding the ancients in reverence (*bōko*). He once said: "To practice and understand the way of ancient Buddhas is to realize it [in ourselves]. They [abide] from generation to generation. Although the 'ancient Buddha' in question is synonymous with the 'old' in [the duality of] new and old, it also transcends, yet is faithful to, the ancient and the modern."²⁷ Fidelity to history was the way to transcend it. Here we see Dōgen's sense of mission in the history of transmission of the Way, and in the traditionalism, purism, and classicism that were dominant elements of his thought.

Dōgen's conception of the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma has posed many complicated problems for students of the history of Buddhist thought, particularly regarding the relationship of his idea to Japanese Tendai Buddhism of the late Heian and early Kamakura periods and to Chinese Zen Buddhism of the Sung period. I am inclined to agree with Kagamishima Genryū that Dōgen was critical of both the view of Japanese Tendai "fideism," which maintained the belief in original enlightenment but denied the necessity of practice, and the view of Sung Chinese Zen, which in principle accepted practice based on original enlightenment yet retained (even with Ju-ching, according to Kagamishima) vestiges of the dualistic view of acquired enlightenment.²⁸ Thus Dōgen endeavored to overcome the difficulties and inconsistencies of both Japanese and Chinese Buddhist and Zen traditions by advancing the view of practice based on original enlightenment—not only in principle but in fact. This was a radicalization of the nonduality of practice and enlightenment in his own version of mystical realism, which shall be elucidated throughout this work.

ZAZEN-ONLY: THE PROTOTYPE OF ULTIMATE MEANINGLESSNESS

The crucial importance of meditation in Buddhist tradition has been increasingly acknowledged by many Buddhist students in recent times. Quotations from various sources demonstrate this point: “Meditational practices constitute the very core of the Buddhist approach to life.”²⁹ “Meditation is the alpha and the omega of Buddhism.”³⁰ “This acceptance of meditation as central to Buddhist practices is a common bond through which it may be possible for Theravāda and Mahāyāna to grow closer together in the future.”³¹ Although meditation is the common core of Buddhism, there are nevertheless many different conceptions and interpretations of it, and these differences have pervaded the history of Buddhism.³²

Meditation or zazen, as a structural element of Dōgen’s symbolic model, has an absolute simplicity in its form, yet is in its content impregnated with psycho-metaphysical and ethico-religious values and meanings—the crystallization of the creative possibilities of emptiness. More important for our purpose, however, is the idea that to Dōgen, meditation was the prototype of religious thought and action—prototypical in the sense that it was, in its form and content, the compendium and paradigm of all activities (*gyōji*) and expressions (*dōtoku*). Dōgen’s zazen-only (*shikan-taza*) epitomized the whole body of his religio-philosophical and cultic-moral visions and enactments. In this respect, Dōgen’s whole works—written or otherwise—might be seen simply as footnotes on zazen-only.³³

When Dōgen returned from China in 1227, he immediately promulgated the *Fukan zazengi* in which he attempted to correct what he felt were errors made by Ch’ang-lu Tsung-che in his *Ch’an-yüan ch’ing-kuei* (*Zen Monastic Rules*) and thereby restore the spirit of the monastic ideal envisioned by Po-chang Huai-hai (720–814).³⁴ The central theme of the *Fukan zazengi* was zazen-only. Physically, this is no more than sitting upright in the cross-legged posture and meditating with a relaxed disposition. Dōgen instructed as follows:

For the practice of zazen a quiet room is recommended, while food and drink must be taken in moderation. Free yourself from all attachments, and bring to rest the ten thousand things. Think of neither good nor evil and judge not right or wrong. Stop the operation of mind, will, and consciousness (*shin-i-shiki*); bring to an end all desires, all concepts and judgments. To sit in zazen, put down a thick pillow and on top of this

a second one. Thereafter one may choose either a full or half cross-legged position. In the full position (*kekka-fuza*), one places the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh. In the half position (*hanka-fuza*), only the left foot is placed upon the right thigh. Robe and belt should be worn loosely, but in order. Next, the right hand rests on the left foot, while the back of the left hand rests in the palm of the right.

The two thumbs are placed in juxtaposition. The body must be maintained upright in *zazen*, without inclining to the left or right, forward or backward. Ears and shoulders, and nose and navel must be aligned. The tongue should be kept against the palate and lips and teeth firmly closed, while the eyes should always be open. After the bodily position is in order, regulate your breathing. If a thought arises, take note of it and then dismiss it. When you forget all attachments steadfastly, you will naturally become *zazen* itself. This is the art of *zazen*. *Zazen* is the Dharma-gate of great repose and joy.³⁵

The physical aspects of Dōgen's *zazen* were almost identical with Tsung-che's.³⁶ However, in Dōgen's thought, such a physical form was identified with the "whole truth of Buddhism" (*buppō no zendō*) or with the "right gate of Buddhism" (*buppō no shōmon*). *Zazen* for Dōgen was not one among many spiritual practices, but the very best of all practices; accordingly, incense burning, worship, *nembutsu*, confession, and recitation of the sūtras were unnecessary.³⁷ Dōgen's exaltation of *zazen* and its virtues was almost ecstatic, as we can see in the following:

[A meditator] passes beyond the entire universe at full speed and is greatly honored in the abode of the Buddhas and ancestors—[this is due to] *zazen* in the full cross-legged position (*kekka-fuza*). Treading upon the heads of the non-Buddhists and demons, [one] becomes an initiate (*kochūnin*) in the secret chamber of the Buddhas and ancestors—[because of] *zazen* in the full position. This one method alone [enables the individual] to transcend the furthest bounds of the Buddhas and ancestors. This is why they are engrossed in it and nothing else.³⁸

Thus, *zazen*-only is called "the *samādhi* of *samādhis*" (*ōzammai*).

Dōgen justified *zazen*-only by observing the undeniable historical fact that all the Buddhas and ancestors attained enlightenment through this common method alone.³⁹ Regarding the question of why sitting alone, among

the “four postures” of standing, walking, sitting, and lying down, was the preferred posture for spiritual practice, Dōgen argued:

We cannot fully comprehend how all the Buddhas since olden times have practiced and attained enlightenment one after another. Looking for reasons [for adopting the sitting posture of zazen], you should know that it has been universally applied by Buddhists; beyond this, no further [reasons] should be required. The ancestors have spoken highly of zazen as the Dharma-gate of repose and joy. Perhaps sitting is the most restful and balanced of the four postures. Indeed, not only one or two Buddhas, but all the Buddhas and ancestors have followed the practice.⁴⁰

For Dōgen, the historical reason that all the Buddhas and ancestors have practiced zazen, in addition to the psycho-physical reason that it is a form of asceticism best suited for “repose and joy” (*anraku*), constituted justification enough to practice zazen. Repose and joy, in this connection, were not idle sitting, but rather heightened awareness and aliveness.⁴¹

In connection with this justification, Dōgen contended that zazen was neither one of the Threefold Way of morality, meditation, and wisdom, nor one of the Six Perfections (*pāramitās*) of bodhisattvahood of almsgiving, morality, patience, vigor, meditation, and wisdom.⁴² Zazen in Dōgen’s rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma was zazen-only—the primordial form of Buddhist spiritual life bound to no particular school, yet from which all schools and sects were derived. The corollary of this position was to reject any practice of zazen mixed with other practices or disciplines such as Shingon *mantra* or Tendai *śamatha-vipaśyanā* (*sikan*): “Indeed, unless one concentrates on one thing, one cannot attain the one wisdom [of Buddha],”⁴³ admonished Dōgen.

Despite such arguments, Dōgen’s justification is incomplete unless the content of zazen-only is fully expounded. As I have noted earlier, the external form of Dōgen’s zazen was not much different from Tsung-che’s; their interpretations, however, differed markedly. Dōgen carefully scrutinized those portions of Tsung-che’s document that were inconsistent with his view—for Tsung-che, those magical and instrumental views of zazen promoted the idea that zazen was a means to attain magical yogic powers.⁴⁴ Furthermore, Dōgen continually refined his principles of zazen over the years so as to make them more internally consistent.⁴⁵ Dōgen also benefited from Hung-chih’s *Tso-ch’an chên*, whereby, as we have discussed before, he shifted

from the latter's quietistic and contemplative orientation to his own actional and realizational orientation. Dōgen's most mature thought on zazen was presented in the popular edition of the *Fukan zazengi*, "Zazengi" and "Zazenshin" of the *Shōbōgenzō*, and the *Bendōhō*.⁴⁶

Dōgen's conception of zazen-only was a reinterpretation of Chinese Zen of the Sung period (along with other forms of Buddhist meditation that he studied), which had rooted out "impure" and inconsistent elements and reinforced others germane to his view. The net result was a radically different conception of zazen in its content and significance. In brief, the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity, as the criterion of the rightly transmitted Buddhadharma, meant that the matter of supreme importance in religion was not abstract doctrines and theories, but rather lived experience and activity, which was crystallized in zazen-only.

The content of zazen-only can be considered from various standpoints. In the first place, zazen-only should be construed neither as obliterating experiences at the conscious level nor as advocating absorption in an undifferentiated realm. Dōgen said:

Free yourself from all attachments, and bring to rest the ten thousand things. Think of neither good nor evil and judge not right or wrong. Stop the operation of mind, will, and consciousness (*shin-i-shiki*); bring to an end all desires, concepts, and judgments.⁴⁷

It is a pity that they [those who tried to formulate the rules and principles of zazen] spent their whole lives visiting and staying in monasteries all over the country, yet failed to work out a single sitting, and that their sitting was altogether alienated from their true selves and their efforts no longer realized their true selves. The reason is not that meditators necessarily feel averse to their body-mind but that these individuals do not truly endeavor in zazen, hence they are precipitously intoxicated by delusion. Their formulations are examples of merely "returning to the origin, back to the source" (*gengen-hempon*) and are attempts at vainly "stopping thoughts in abysmal quietude" (*sokuryo-gyōjaku*).⁴⁸

Needless to say, zazen differs from mere dreams, fantasies, reveries, or compensatory projections, though Dōgen had something to say about these aspects of human experience, as we shall see on a later occasion. "Dispersion" at the conscious level and "dark sinking" at the subconscious level were to be avoided,

since common to both were confusion and chaos. In short, the confusion and chaos of differentiation and undifferentiation were redeemed, by which we became liberated from the tyranny of the two for a new mode of thinking.

The problem was further expounded in Dōgen's treatment of "thinking" (*shiryō*), "not-thinking" (*fu-shiryō*), and "nonthinking" (*hi-shiryō*) in the story of Yüeh-shan Wēi-yen (745–828).⁴⁹ Dōgen wrote:

Although he is not the only one who taught thinking in the resolute state of sitting (*gotsu-gotchi no shiryō*), Yüeh-shan's way is incomparably superior. It refers to "thinking of not-thinking." Thinking is the skin-flesh-bones-marrow [of zazen]; not-thinking is the skin-flesh-bones-marrow [of zazen].

The monastic said: "How do you think of not-thinking?" Not-thinking, though indeed time-honored, can be restated as "How's Thinking" (*ikan-shiryō*). Can there be no thinking in the resolute sitting? When you advance in the resolute sitting, how can you fail to understand it? Unless you are extremely short-sighted, you should be able to scrutinize and have some thought on the resolute state of sitting.

Great Teacher [Yüeh-shan] said: "Nonthinking."

One uses nonthinking unmistakably, and yet, to think of not-thinking is necessarily realized in and through nonthinking. There is "someone" in nonthinking; this someone maintains the one [who sits in zazen]. Even though it is one's self that sits resolutely in zazen, it is not just thinking but none other than the totality of the resolute state of sitting itself. If the resolute state of sitting is what it is, how can it think of itself [as its object]?

Therefore, the resolute state of sitting cannot be measured by Buddhas, dharmas, enlightenment, or any human comprehension.⁵⁰

Here, Dōgen spoke of the thought of resolute sitting in meditation (*gotsu-gotchi*), through which "thinking of not-thinking" was said to be realized. The function of nonthinking was not just to transcend both thinking and not-thinking, but to realize both, in the absolutely simple and singular act of resolute sitting itself. Ultimately, there was nothing but the act of resolute sitting in meditation, which itself was the thought of resolute sitting in meditation. In other words, nonthinking was beyond thinking and not-thinking; nonetheless it was the form—a very special form of thinking beyond thinking and not-thinking, that is, thinking of not-thinking. Thus in Dōgen's conception

of zazen-only, nonthinking was used not transcendently so much as realizationally; it was objectless, subjectless, formless, goalless, and purposeless. But it was not void of intellectual content as in a vacuum. What zazen-only did was to not eliminate reason and intellect, but to realize them. Furthermore, what reason and intellect did in zazen-only was to unfold, rather than circumscribe, the mysteries of existence. Dōgen called this “How’s Thinking.”⁵¹

In this connection, the following points must be kept in mind. First, as we have said regarding Dōgen’s reservation about Hung-chih, nonthinking should not be identified with mystical contemplation or illumination. For that matter, it is neither a philosophical contemplation of eidetic forms, nor the experience of mystical union, nor a pantheistic apprehension of the self and the world. As Dōgen untiringly emphasized, the Way is realized in and through the body.⁵² Nonthinking has its roots firmly fixed in the most concrete physical matrix. Secondly, nonthinking is the essence of the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity—the bliss of enlightenment that Buddha himself enjoys (*jiju-hōraku*) and is often referred to as joyous play (*yuke* or *yuge*). It is the activity of *homo ludens* par excellence in absolute inner freedom, being prototypical of the truth that whatever exists itself is its own *raison d’être*. Thirdly, thinking and not-thinking are said to be realized through emptiness,⁵³ and nonthinking is said to be right thought (*shōshiyui* or *shōshiryō*).⁵⁴ Thus emptiness, nonthinking, and right thought were interchangeably used by Dōgen. However, right thought here is post-logical. When, and only when, nonthinking is realized, is the authenticity of thought established. Finally, a characteristic of Dōgen’s thought was that he used a number of interrogatives in the Sung colloquial language in order to express his profound metaphysical ideas such as *shimo* or *somo* (what, how, why) and other related expressions. “How’s Thinking” in the previous quotation is an example. As I shall examine more fully later, these interrogatives, along with the idea of emptiness and nonthinking, are significant in indicating that zazen for Dōgen was ultimately the expression of an eternal quest for the meaning of existence, which was, paradoxically enough, meaningless—it was living the meaning of ultimate meaninglessness. This is Zen.⁵⁵

In the second place, the content of zazen-only can be considered in terms of the unity of practice and enlightenment (*shushō-ichinyō*, *shushō-ittō*, or *honshō-myōshu*). This principle is succinctly stated as follows:

To think that practice and enlightenment are not one is a non-Buddhist view. In the Buddha-dharma they are one. Inasmuch as practice now is

based on enlightenment, the practice of a beginner is itself the whole of original enlightenment. Therefore, in giving the instruction for practice, a Zen teacher advises his/her disciples not to seek enlightenment apart from practice, for practice points directly to original enlightenment. Because it is the very enlightenment of practice, there is no end to enlightenment; because it is the very practice of enlightenment, there is no beginning to practice.⁵⁶

Thus, zazen-only is called “practice based on enlightenment” (*shōjō no shu*) in contrast to “practice prior to enlightenment” (*shōzen no shu*). In other words, practice is said to be “pure” and “undefiled” (*fuzenna no*), when it is not defiled by the dualism of practice and enlightenment in the means-end relationship. This is equivalent to the casting-off of the body-mind (*shinjin-datsuraku*). The act of sitting in meditation seeks no longer to attain a special state of consciousness, nor to become a Buddha, and consequently is called the “kōan realized in life” (*genjō-kōan* or *kōan-genjō*).⁵⁷ The attempt to attain enlightenment through zazen, or through the introspection of kōan, is the “meditation of awaiting enlightenment” (*taigo-zen*) or “step-by-step meditation” (*shūzen*).

The unity of practice and enlightenment does not wipe out the distinction between the two; tension between them always exists, yet remains pure. Dōgen often approvingly quoted Nan-yüeh Huai-jiang’s (677–744) answer to Hui-nêng (638–713), “Practice and enlightenment are not obliterated but undefiled.”⁵⁸ Here we need to exercise utmost care in understanding this statement, which epitomizes the crux of Dōgen’s way of thinking. In Dōgen’s view, the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity in its absolute purity was such that our daily activities are undefiled by and unattached to the dualistic categories, events, and things that our perceptions and intellect create, all the while living with and using those dualities. The dualistic world remains real, not dissolved. Therefore, the unity in question does not replace dualities but is unobstructed by them; it is post-critical, not pre-critical. Confronted with thought and reality, the mind is ever vigilant, deconceptualizing and deontologizing them as circumstances demand, and thereby attaining a state of spiritual freedom and purity.

In the third place, zazen-only cannot be fully understood apart from the consideration of faith—the element fundamentally important in Dōgen’s thought. If enlightenment is realized at the moment one sits in meditation, does this allow some latitude for intellectual depth and spiritual progress,

given infinite individual variations and differences? Dōgen's answer was affirmative and provided faith for enlightenment's deep secret. Previously, I have noted Dōgen's view that even the practice of a beginner was entirely made up of original enlightenment because practice was based on enlightenment, and that what matters most in religion was the authenticity of practice. Supporting such a view were statements like the following: "The Way is the Way, all the same, whether at the time of the initial desire for enlightenment or at the time of the final culmination of enlightenment. At the beginning, the middle, and the end of it is equally the Way."⁵⁹ "The practice of a beginner is itself the whole of original enlightenment."⁶⁰ In stating this, Dōgen did not imply that faith precedes enlightenment or is eventually replaced by enlightenment. Throughout the ongoing advance in enlightenment (*bukkōjōji*), faith and enlightenment are the twin companions of emptiness and Buddha-nature.

From Dōgen's standpoint, the psychological distinction between "once-born" and "twice-born" religious experiences (per William James) was less important; instead, he was concerned with the logical structure of the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity, which was the criterion for spiritual authenticity. For Dōgen faith lay in original enlightenment, and enlightenment came from original faith. He wrote:

It is imperative for those who practice the Way to believe in it. Those who have faith in the Way should know for certain that they are unfailingly in the Way from the very beginning—and are thus free from confusions, delusions, and disarray, as well as from additions, subtractions, and errors. Believing in this manner and penetrating the Way thusly, practice it accordingly. Such is fundamental to learning the Way.⁶¹

The virtue of faith [in the exposition of the "Five Virtues" of faith, vigor, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom] is engendered neither by the self nor by others. Because it is [generated] neither by forcing oneself nor by one's contrivance, neither by being coerced by others nor by fitting in a self-made norm, faith has been imparted intimately through the ancestors in India and China. Faith is so called when the entire body becomes faith itself (*konshin-jishin*). Faith is one with the fruit of enlightenment; the fruit of enlightenment is one with faith. If it is not the fruit of enlightenment, faith is not realized. On account of this, it is said [in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā śāstra* by Nāgārjuna] that

faith is the entrance to the ocean of Dharma. Indeed where faith is attained, there is the realization of the Buddhas and ancestors.⁶²

Faith and enlightenment are often regarded as two antithetical ideas, so much so that Zen Buddhism can be mistakenly thought to be exclusively the religion of enlightenment, while faith is an inferior or foreign element, or at best a preliminary step to enlightenment.⁶³ But in Dōgen's thought, faith and enlightenment interpenetrated one another so that without one, the other could not be fully meaningful. The inferior status of faith was repudiated once and for all by Dōgen; it now became for him the very core of enlightenment.⁶⁴

In the fourth and last place, zazen-only as the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity was intimately related to the principle of "the total exertion of a single thing" (*ippō-gūjin*), expressed in such favorite statements of Dōgen as "as one side is illumined, the other is darkened" (*ippō o shōsuru toki wa ippō wa kurashi*) and "the total experience of a single thing is one with that of all things" (*ippōtsū kore mambōtsū nari*). This principle was also inseparably associated with another cognate principle—"to abide in a Dharma-position" (*jū-hōi*)—which became crucially important, especially in connection with Dōgen's view of time. Dōgen succinctly explained "the total experience of a single thing" (*ippōtsū*) as follows:

"The total experience of a single thing" does not deprive a thing of its own unique particularity. It places a thing neither against others nor against none. To place a thing against none is another form of dualistic obstruction. When total experience is realized unobstructedly (*tsū o shite tsū no ge nakarashimuruni*), the total experience of a single thing is the same as the total experience of all things. A single total experience is a single thing in its totality. The total experience of a single thing is one with that of all things.⁶⁵

An action, event, thing, or being was not chosen dualistically as an action among actions, an event among events, and so forth, in a causal, hierarchical, evolutionary, or means-end model, but rather nondualistically as the ultimate action or the ultimate event, abiding in the Dharma-position of the realized now that was discrete from before and after. There was nothing but that particular event, which consumed the whole universe, and ultimately even the universe was emptied. Throughout this investigation, I shall

endeavor to demonstrate how important this idea was in Dōgen's thought. Suffice it to say for now that *zazen-only* was prototypical of a *nondualistic choice* for existence at a given moment. Choice and nondualism were not a contradiction in terms. Herein lies the crux of Dōgen's mystical realism, which was neither transcendental nor immanent in the conventional fashion but realizational. Furthermore, as the model of *zazen-only* itself indicates, Dōgen's solution was intellectual as well as cultic and actional.

The content of *zazen-only*, as we have observed thus far in its diverse aspects, is what distinguished Dōgen's meditation from other forms of meditation. Dōgen simplified, purified, enriched, and radicalized the content of *zazen*—methodologically, metaphysically, and religiously—though his view was greatly influenced by Chinese and Japanese Buddhist traditions, especially those of Zen and Tendai. Indeed, to Dōgen *zazen-only* was at once metaphor and reality.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

The prototype of *zazen-only* has two aspects: activities (*gyōji*) and expressions (*dōtoku*). As will become clearer, both are interchangeably used in Dōgen's thought, although we shall use, purely for convenience's sake, "activities" in connection with cultic and moral activities, and "expressions" in relation to intellectual and philosophic endeavors. Nevertheless, expressions are expressive activities, and activities are active expressions. Both are the self-activities and self-expressions (*jidōshu*) of Buddha-nature.

The necessity of activities was shown by Dōgen's analyses and interpretations of some traditional *kōan* stories. There was a famous story of Nan-yüeh's polishing a tile to make a mirror. The story runs something like this: Ma-tsu Tao-i (709–788) was practicing meditation every day. The teacher Nan-yüeh Huai-jang (677–744) happened to see him and asked: "What is your aim in practicing *zazen*?" "My aim is to become a Buddha," he answered. Then the teacher picked up a tile and began to polish it on a stone in front of the hermitage where Ma-tsu had been meditating. Bewildered by this strange act, Ma-tsu asked: "What is Teacher doing?" "I am polishing this tile to make a mirror." "How can you make a mirror by polishing a tile?" The teacher's reply was: "Likewise, how can you become a Buddha by practicing *zazen*?"⁶⁶

Commenting on this story, Dōgen gave an unconventional interpretation that was characteristic of his treatment of other *kōan* stories as well. He contended that the story advocated not only the Zen dictum "Do not

attempt to become a Buddha” (*fuzu-sabutsu*) but more important, the necessity of zazen undefiled. He wrote:

Indeed we do know that when a tile, as it is being polished, becomes a mirror, Ma-tsu becomes a Buddha. When Ma-tsu becomes a Buddha, Ma-tsu becomes Ma-tsu instantly. When Ma-tsu becomes Ma-tsu, zazen becomes zazen immediately. Therefore, the tradition of making a mirror by polishing a tile has been kept alive at the core of ancient Buddhas.⁶⁷

In the activity of zazen undefiled, a tile and a mirror or Ma-tsu and Buddha are one, though not dissolved. Although the tile is not transformed into the mirror, the tile *is* the mirror; the act of polishing the tile itself unfolds the purity of the mirror. Consequently, zazen, likened to the act of polishing the tile in this case, is nothing less than the unfolding enactment of original enlightenment, or in other words the mirror. At one level, Dōgen affirmed the conventional interpretation of the story, but on another level, he penetrated the matter far more deeply so as to give the story an entirely new significance. The real issue was not *whether* to meditate but *how* to meditate; the how was obviously not a matter of technique so much as a matter of authenticity. Hence the following observation is meaningful:

Although this Dharma inheres in each of us in abundance, it does not become visible without practice, nor is it realized without enlightenment. If you let it go, it fills your hand; yet it transcends one and many. If you talk about it, it fills your mouth; yet it is infinite in space and time.⁶⁸

Unless we take risks and choose to act, Buddha-nature never becomes visible, audible, or tangible. Prior to human (and other sentient and insentient beings’) creative activities and expressions, Buddha-nature cannot be said to exist in terms of potentiality, innate endowment, and so forth.⁶⁹ This is why Dōgen said: “The truth of Buddha-nature is such that Buddha-nature is embodied not before but after becoming a Buddha (*jōbutsu*). Buddha-nature and becoming a Buddha always occur simultaneously.”⁷⁰ Only when we strive to become Buddhas is Buddha-nature embodied in and through our efforts.

Another example will elucidate the matter further:

Ma-ku Pao-ch’e was fanning himself one day when a monastic came and asked: “The nature of the wind is abiding and universally present.

Why do you still use your fan?"

The teacher's answer was: "You know only the nature of the wind as abiding; you do not yet know the truth of its being universally present."

The monastic said: "What is the truth of its being universally present?"

The teacher only fanned himself without a word.

And the monastic saluted him.⁷¹

The monastic's intellectual grasp of the nature of the wind ignored a crucially important point—that is, the nature of the wind is such that it cannot be conceptualized or contemplated but is instead to be actualized; furthermore, it is not potentiality being actualized, but rather actuality creating itself through the act of fanning. Being a Buddha must be tested ever again by being an active Buddha (*gyōbutsu*). This is precisely what Dōgen meant by saying: "Buddha-nature and becoming a Buddha always occur simultaneously."⁷² He also stated: "If you have attained enlightenment, you should not halt the practice of the Way by thinking of your present state as final, for the Way is infinite. Exert yourself in the Way ever more, even after enlightenment."⁷³

The concept of activity regarding practice and discipline was primarily a religious, rather than a philosophical one, in Dōgen's thought. It was closely related to his treatment of the traditional theories of the Buddha-body (*buddhakāya*; *busshin*)—a most representative formulation of which is the so-called Threefold Body of Buddha—and to his conception of the active Buddha. The Threefold Body of Buddha consists of the Body of Law (*dharmakāya*; *hosshin*), the Body of Enjoyment (*sambhogakāya*; *hōjin*), and the Body of Transformations (*nirmāṇakāya*; *ōjin*). The Body of Law is the transcendental body of Buddha, which is utterly beyond time and space—formless, impersonal, immutable, and confined to itself. It is designated by such words as emptiness, thusness, Dharma-nature, and so on, and apprehended by *prajñā*; the Body of Law is primarily the subject of metaphysical speculation. The Body of Enjoyment refers to the "mythopoeic" body of Buddha, which enables mythic figures such as bodhisattvas to enjoy the rewards of their merits and vows to save sentient beings. It is at once transcendental and phenomenal, at once historical and supra-historical. It is consistent with the Mahāyāna spirit of "neither abiding in *nirvāṇa* nor abiding in *saṃsāra*" and possesses the dual nature of Buddha as both emptiness and compassion. Amida Buddha of Pure Realm Buddhism is a classic example of the Body of Enjoyment. The Body of Transformations is the physical and historical body of Buddha who lived about the sixth century B.C.E. and

preached Dharma to his disciples. In the evolution of various theories of the Buddha-body, the Body of Enjoyment was introduced relatively later in order to reconcile the theory of two Buddha-bodies, that is, the Body of Law and the Body of Transformations.⁷⁴ In the structure of the Buddhist experience, however, these three bodies represent one living reality of the Buddha-dharma.

Be that as it may, it is undeniable that the traditional doctrine of the Threefold Body of Buddha has a strong tendency to relegate historical and empirical realities to a metaphysically inferior status. Thus the historicity of the Body of Transformations is only superficially historical, because the life of Śākyamuni Buddha, for example, is construed as the “appearance” of the Body of Law, and his conduct on this earth as “make-believe acts” to guide the deluded sentient beings. As Sangharakshita notes, “In the system as a whole, however, Gautama the Buddha occupies a distinctly subordinate, indeed almost insignificant position, and one is often left with the impression that the Mahāyāna could now get on quite well without Him.”⁷⁵ To be sure, Dharma in Buddhism means always “Buddha-dharma,” indicating a certain relation to the historical Buddha; yet the latter never means the once-and-for-all event of Person, such as the historical Jesus in Christianity, that qualitatively sets itself apart from all other historical events. Śākyamuni Buddha is not solely the historical person who was awakened to Dharma and was revered as the initiator of turning the wheel of Dharma—he is also one of the innumerable transcendental Buddhas in the three periods of past, present, and future and in all the realms of the universe. By and large, the predominant propensity in Mahāyāna Buddhism has been to deemphasize or even obscure the historicity of Śākyamuni Buddha; its historical mooring, if any, has been tenuous, although the situation changes significantly in Theravāda Buddhism. Such a characterization of the doctrine of the Buddha-body may be construed as unfair to Mahāyāna Buddhism, but such an understanding seems to have been what made Dōgen unhappy with the traditional conception when he proposed his own view.

When Dōgen spoke of the pantheon of Buddhas, Tathāgatas, and bodhi-sattvas, he was not too different from other Buddhists. He enjoined his disciples to reverently recite the names of the ten Buddhas every day: Birushana-butsu (Vairocana Buddha) as the Body of Law, Rushana-butsu as the Body of Enjoyment, Śākyamuni Buddha, Miroku (Maitreya), all the Buddhas in the three periods and ten directions, Monju (Mañjuśrī), Fugen

(Samantabhadra), Kanzeon or Kannon (Avalokiteśvara), all the bodhisattvas and mahasattvas, and Mahā-prajñā-pāramitā.⁷⁶ Thus Dōgen was definitely in line with the general Buddhist tradition of emphasizing these Buddhas in speaking of the Buddha-dharma.

However, Dōgen's overriding emphasis was on the historical Buddha—Śākyamuni Buddha—in whom all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas are represented as his myriad forms. Śākyamuni Buddha is a historical person—an absolutely unadulterated, concrete human being, and the same historical person is the Buddha-dharma as well. The historical Buddha became the prototype of the Buddha-dharma in Dōgen's thought;⁷⁷ he was no longer an apparitional or assumed body of the Body of Law as in some interpretations of the doctrine. Dōgen rejected the logic of hierarchical degrees of being, and instead viewed the historicity of Buddha seriously. About this Dōgen had the following to say:

Truly you should know that although Śākyamuni the person (*ningen no shaka*) endeavors at this moment to liberate sentient beings [on this earth], Śākyamuni of the Tuṣita Heaven (*jōten no shaka*) is now transforming heavens. The student of Buddhism should understand that, while Śākyamuni the person has an infinite variety of expressions, activities, and sermons, they constitute glowing lights and auspicious signs in the human realm which is just one corner [of the universe]. Do not be foolish enough to fail to see an infinite variety of edifying activity on the part of Śākyamuni of the Tuṣita Heaven.⁷⁸

Although the transcendental Buddha was talked about along with the historical Buddha, they were no longer conceived in the traditional logic of, say, the Threefold Body of Buddha but in the logic of Dōgen's mystical realism. In Dōgen's use of "Śākyamuni Buddha" (Shakamuni-butsu), the historical Buddha and the transcendental Buddha were inseparably intertwined with each other.⁷⁹ It is also in this context that Dōgen declared the past Buddhas the disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha⁸⁰ and that all the Buddhas were necessarily Śākyamuni Buddha.⁸¹

The prototypical character of Śākyamuni Buddha as the historical and cosmic existence of the active Buddha (*gyōbutsu*) was further developed and articulated in Dōgen's view in which activity (*gyō*) and Buddhahood (*butsu*) were nondualistically one and the same. Dōgen maintained:

All the Buddhas necessarily enact venerable activities (*iigi*). Such is the active Buddha. The active Buddha is not the Buddha of the Body of Enjoyment (*hōbutsu*), or the Buddha of the Body of Transformations (*kebutsu*), or the Buddha of the Body of Law (*jishōshin-butsu*), or the Buddha of the other-directed Body of Enjoyment (*tashōshin-butsu*). It is neither acquired enlightenment (*shikaku*) nor original enlightenment (*hongaku*); it is neither the apprehension of one's nature nor that of emptiness. [The active Buddha is not static and contemplative as these terms might suggest.] No Buddha—none of these Buddhas—can ever equal the active Buddha. Note that all Buddhas active in the Way do not await enlightenment. The active Buddha alone is thoroughly familiar with the affairs of the realm of ongoing enlightenment. The Buddhas of the Body of Law and the like have never dreamed of such a thing.⁸²

One characteristic of the active Buddha is the “actual” Buddha, which differs from mere appearance. Dōgen equated the active Buddha with the “true human body” (*shinjitsu-nintai*) and maintained: “The meaning of the ‘true’ [in ‘the entire earth is the true human body’] is the actual body. You should know that the entire earth (*jindaichi*) is not our temporary appearance but our genuine human body.”⁸³ Thus the active Buddha was actual in the sense that it was absolutely concrete with no metaphysically inferior status attributed to it. For this reason, the active Buddha guarded against “binding one's self without a rope” (*mujō-jibaku*)—the victimization of the self by its own created mental constructs, especially those of Buddha and Dharma. Dōgen offered the following warning on the “bonds of Buddha” (*butsu-baku*) and the “bonds of Dharma” (*hō-baku*):

Unless you are the active Buddha, you will never be liberated from the bonds of Buddha and the bonds of Dharma and will be entangled with the demons of Buddha (*butsuma*) and the demons of Dharma (*hōma*).

The “bonds of Buddha” means to understand enlightenment abstractly and hence to be bound by intellectual views and theoretical understanding.... This is likened to binding one's self without a rope. The rope, so long without a break, is like the vines that entwine a tree to its death, or like living vainly in the cave of the conceptual Buddha. Humans do not know that the Body of Law is diseased and the Body of Enjoyment is troubled. Those scholars of doctrines, sūtras, and

śāstras, who heard the Way from a distance, even say that an intellectual view of Dharma-nature arises in Dharma-nature itself, and that this is due to ignorance. When they speak of an abstract thinking of Dharma-nature occurring in Dharma-nature, they do not attribute this to the bonds of Dharma-nature, but instead, they pile the bonds of ignorance on top of them. They are not aware of the existence of the bonds of Dharma-nature. Although they are pitiful on this account, they realize the bonds of ignorance having piled up, and this realization works as a seed for the aspiration for enlightenment. The active Buddha has never been bound by such bonds.⁸⁴

While Buddha and Dharma were conventionally thought to be liberating forces that were unchallenged and unchallengeable, Dōgen recognized the fact that they could become bonds as dangerous and sinister as the bonds of ignorance. Although Dōgen frequently used the traditional terms of the Threefold Body doctrine and related ideas in his writings, they were used in the context of his advocacy of the active Buddha, which was actual in an unadulterated historical concreteness and free of monistic vestiges. When Dōgen referred to the historical Buddha and the eternal Buddha, he meant the active Buddha.

The conception of the active Buddha expanded to cosmic dimensions in Dōgen's view. "Buddha's activities take place with the entire earth and with all sentient beings. If they are not with all existences, they are not yet the activities of Buddha."⁸⁵ "An infinite number of Buddhas reside in a speck of dust."⁸⁶ The active Buddha was the Buddha of the three periods and the ten directions;⁸⁷ in short, Buddhas abounded spatially and temporally. Dōgen further wrote:

Do not measure or judge the great Way [the active Buddha] in terms of the quantity of Buddhas [the Threefold Body of Buddha]. For the latter is a part of the former; it is like a flower blooming in the spring. Do not grope for or deliberate on the venerable demeanor of the active Buddha with the capacity of the mind. The latter is a facet of the former. It is likened to the world: A blade of grass is undoubtedly the mind of the Buddhas and ancestors; it is a piece imprinted by the traces of the active Buddha. Although the capacity of the mind is regarded as embodying an infinite quantity of Buddhas, to appreciate the forms and movements of the active Buddha would be indeed far more than it is capable of. Since the active Buddha cannot be fathomed by amount, it is immeasurable, inexhaustible, and transcends any number.⁸⁸

The “venerable demeanor” (*iigi*) of the active Buddha permeated the universe. Dōgen’s mythopoeic imagination described it as thus:

Where the active Buddha is engaged in transformative activities, there are sentient beings other than those born of the four forms of life [from eggs, from a womb, from moisture, and from metamorphosis]. There are places other than the heavenly and human worlds and the common universe. Do not use the eyes and the standards of the heavenly and human beings. You should not attempt to speculate by employing them. Even the bodhisattvas at the various stages of perfection do not fully comprehend [the active Buddha’s transformative activities], not to mention the comprehension that human and heavenly beings are capable of attaining. Since human stature is low, what we understand is also slight; since human life is brief, what we think is also shallow. How then can we comprehend the venerable demeanor of the active Buddha?⁸⁹

And:

The venerable demeanor of the active Buddha now is perfectly free, and is nothing but being Buddha through and through. Because it has passed through the path of freedom that is covered with mud and submerged in water [i.e., the bodhisattva-way], it is unobstructed. In the heavenly world it transforms the heavenly beings; in the human world, humans. While it has the power by virtue of which a flower blooms, it has also the power by virtue of which the world arises. There is no hiatus between them [the flower and the world].... In great enlightenment it is nothing but great enlightenment; in great delusion it is nothing but great delusion. These activities merely constitute a movement of the active Buddha’s toes in the sandals. Sometimes it is the sound of breaking wind; sometimes it is the smell of urination. Those who have the nostrils smell it; those who have the ears, the bodies, and the willingness to act, hear it.⁹⁰

The venerable movement of the active Buddha reached not only the heavenly worlds and beyond, but also affected such trivial things as breaking wind and urination.

In the foregoing, I have endeavored to show that in Dōgen’s thought the historical and transcendental Buddhas were focalized in the active Buddha

and that the latter, in turn, was identified with the historical existence of humanity in which activity and Buddhahood were undefiled in spiritual freedom. We see here considerable similarities between Dōgen and Tantric Buddhism as far as their views of the Buddha-body are concerned.⁹¹ Dōgen restored the fundamental significance of the historical Buddha and provided its existential and soteriological significance for those who practiced zazen-only in the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity (*jijuyū-zammai*). Such was the religious context in which his view of activity was developed.

Thus the fundamental characteristic of Zen was reformulated so that the efforts to become a Buddha (*jōbutsu*) were now seen in light of the post-enlightenment activity of Buddha (*gyō-butsu*).

Like expression (*dōtoku*), activity (*gyōji*) was a primitive concept in Dōgen's thought. It was so crucially important that Dōgen claimed that the authenticity or inauthenticity of practice, that is, of activity—rather than the superiority or inferiority of doctrine, or the profundity or shallowness of teaching—was the *sine qua non* of Buddhist truth.⁹² The metaphysical primitiveness of activity was well maintained as follows:

The sun, the moon, and the stars exist by virtue of such creative activities. The earth and the empty sky exist because of activities. Our body-mind and its environment are dependent on activities; so are the four elements and the five skandhas. Although activity is not what worldly people are likely to care for, it is every human's only true refuge.... It should be examined and understood thoroughly that dependent origination (*engi*) is activity, because activity does not originate dependently. That activity which realizes those activities—it is our activity now (*wareraga imano gyōji nari*). The now of activity (*gyōji no ima*) is not the self's primordial being, eternal and immutable, nor is it something that enters and leaves the self. The Way, called now, does not precede activity; as activity is realized (*gyōji genjō suru*), it is called now.⁹³

As is quite explicit, Dōgen dared to go beyond traditional Buddhist thought, by construing activity as more primitive than dependent origination and by saying that dependent origination was activity, but that the reverse was not the case. Literally interpreted, this statement may be criticized as a substantialization of activity as an entity in itself; on the other hand, it is too straightforward to be taken as mere rhetorical emphasis on activity. Despite our difficulty in fathoming Dōgen's intention, his statement deepens our

understanding of dependent origination whose conditions and causes are now translated in terms of activities.⁹⁴ It highlights not the prior existence of independent entities that then become functionally interdependent on one another, but precisely the denial of such a view. Activity is the primal property of dependent origination itself. In brief, this was Dōgen's way of maintaining the emptiness of dependent origination and the dependent origination of emptiness.

The dynamic ongoing movement of activity was envisioned in Dōgen's idea of "perpetuation of the Way through activity" (*gyōji-dōkan*):

The great Way of the Buddhas and ancestors always consists in these supreme activities (*mujō no gyōji*): the desire for enlightenment, practice, enlightenment, and nirvāṇa. These four activities are never interrupted in their continuation and never allow even a single interval between them. This is the perpetuation of the Way through activity (*gyōji-dōkan*). Consequently, supreme activity is neither a contrivance of the self nor that of others; it is activity undefiled. The power of such an activity sustains my self and others. Its import is such that all the heavens and the entire earth in the ten directions enjoy the merit of my activity. Even if neither the self nor others are aware of it, such is the case.⁹⁵

The perpetuation of the Way through activity consists of a succession of "circles" of time, each of which has a circumference ever moving without limits, a center ever movable in accordance with circumstances, and a path without an ultimate goal or purpose—although it is not without inner reason (*dōri*).

In these ongoing endeavors, activity and expression are such that when activity is totally exerted, there is nothing but activity, and similarly, when expression is totally exerted, there is nothing but expression. Thus, "while activity (*gyō*) fathoms the way to be in unison with expression (*setsu*), expression has the path to be attuned with activity."⁹⁶ After all, humanity "enacts that which is impossible to enact" (*gyōfutokutei*) and "expresses that which is impossible to express" (*setsufutokutei*).⁹⁷

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

The problem of expression emerges in Dōgen's thought primarily in connection with two different yet mutually related problems: Zen treatment of

Buddhist scriptures and the method of kōan meditation. Let us examine them briefly before we discuss the problem of expression.

As has been previously observed, the principle of “no dependence upon words and letters (*furyū-monji*)” should not mean abandoning the use of language, but rather, using it to our advantage instead of being victimized by it. Dōgen severely criticized those Zen Buddhists who cherished only the records of Zen ancestors at the sacrifice of traditional Buddhist scriptures. According to Dōgen, they fell into the dire fallacy of negating language entirely by having had an over-zealous reaction to the scholastic, doctrinaire tendencies of the school of the Buddha-word (*butsugo-shū*). Dōgen opposed this violently. He wrote: “Hearing and seeing (*shōshiki*) should not be regarded as more meritorious than reading the sūtras. It is hearing and seeing that delude you, yet you crave and indulge in them. The sūtras do not bewilder you; do not slander [them] in unbelief.”⁹⁸

Here we see that it is we who deceive ourselves—the sūtras do not deceive us. The root of the trouble in dealing with the sūtras consists not so much in the sūtras themselves as in our subjectivity. Hence, Dōgen maintained with Hui-nēng that the mind in delusion was moved by the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka sūtra*, whereas the mind in enlightenment moved it.⁹⁹ The enlightened mind was free to elucidate and appropriate the sūtras.

The sūtras in Dōgen’s conception were the entire universe itself. Dōgen expounded this view in a number of places:

What we mean by the sūtras is the entire universe itself. There is no space nor time which is not the sūtras. They use the words and letters of the ultimate truth as well as the words and letters of the worldly truth. They adopt the symbols of heavenly beings as well as those of human beings. They use the words and letters of beasts and asuras as well as those of hundreds of grasses and thousands of trees. For this reason, the long and short, the square and round, the blue and yellow, the red and white—marshalling solemnly in the ten directions of the universe—are undeniably the sūtras’ words and letters and faces. They are the instruments of the great Way and the scriptures for a Buddhist.¹⁰⁰

When you devote yourself to the study of the sūtras, they truly come forth. The sūtras in question are the entire universe, mountains, rivers, and the great earth, plants and trees; they are the self and others, taking

meals and wearing clothes, confusion and dignity. By following and studying each of them, you will see an infinite number of the hitherto unheard-of sūtras appear before you.¹⁰¹

Furthermore, “boundless words and letters (*kōdai no monji*) permeate the universe with overflowing abundance.”¹⁰² The entire spatio-temporal reality constituted the sūtras, as these quotations amply show. Humanity was born into the sūtras and will return to the sūtras. As soon as one is born into the world, one inescapably meets the sūtras and life thereafter consists in efforts to decipher their meanings: “From aeon to aeon, from day to night, there is not even a single instant when the sūtras are not recited or meditated, even though they are not actually expounded.”¹⁰³ On the other hand, the sūtras are identical with Dharma in which the “eighty-four thousand teachings” are stored and also with the treasury of the true Dharma eye (*shōbōgenzō*).¹⁰⁴

In his pietistic moments, Dōgen held that the sūtras are the same as the body-mind of the Buddhas and ancestors:

Therefore the sūtras are the whole body of Tathāgata. To revere the sūtras is to revere Tathāgata, and to meet the sūtras is to meet Tathāgata. The sūtras are Tathāgata’s bones; hence the bones are these sūtras. If you know the sūtras are the bones but do not understand the bones are the sūtras, it is not yet the Way. All-things-themselves-are-ultimate-reality (*shobō-jossō*) here and now constitutes the sūtras. The human world and the heavenly world, the oceans and the empty sky, this world and other worlds—all are neither more nor less than ultimate reality, the sūtras, and the bones.¹⁰⁵

“Now we are born to meet these sūtras,” said Dōgen, “how can we fail to rejoice in encountering Śākyamuni Buddha?”¹⁰⁶ It is in this sense that Dōgen admonished his disciples to study the sūtras assiduously:

An enlightened teacher is always thoroughly versed in the sūtras. “To be thoroughly versed” means to make the sūtras countries and lands, bodies and minds. The sūtras are made the instruments for liberating others and are turned into sitting, resting, and walking in meditation. Being thoroughly versed changes the sūtras into parents, children, and grandchildren. Because an enlightened teacher understands the sūtras through practice (*gyōge*), he/she penetrates them deeply.¹⁰⁷

Thus, the conventional sense of the sūtras, while acknowledged for its importance, was placed against the cosmic context in which it comprised only a small portion of the whole sūtras. To Dōgen, life was an incessant round of hermeneutical activities aimed at trying to understand such cosmic sūtras. Dōgen often criticized what he called the “scholars who count words and letters” and compared them to the “blind guiding the masses of the blind.”¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, Dōgen admonished his disciples that “In the monastics’ hall you should not look at words and letters even though they are in Zen books.”¹⁰⁹ These typically Zen Buddhist remarks—not infrequently made by Dōgen—should nevertheless not obscure Dōgen’s real intention concerning language and symbols, which were dynamic and alive, at the very core of life.

A brief historical digression may be worthwhile to assess the significance of Dōgen’s position in the foregoing matter. When Dōgen spoke of the sūtras, he had a specifically Zen Buddhist situation in mind, in which some maintained the sole legitimacy of the ancestral records as “a special tradition outside the sūtras” (*kyōge-betsuden*)—another Zen principle cognate to “no dependence upon words and letters.” The dictum insisted upon this special corpus of ancestral records as opposed to the sūtra tradition of other schools, and in turn rationalized such distinctions as those between Ancestral Zen and Tathāgata Zen, between the school of the Buddha-mind and the school of the Buddha-word, and so forth. Despite its historical significance in enunciating a distinctively Zen Buddhist identity in its formative period, this principle seems to have been fanatically exaggerated among some Zen Buddhists toward the close of the T’ang period and later through the Sung period. Historians today generally think that Lin-chi I-hsüan (d. 850), Tê-shan Hsüan-chien (780–865), and Yang-shan Hui-chi (807–883) were mainly responsible for this extremist predilection within Zen Buddhism.¹¹⁰ The literalistic, dogmatic interpreters of these two principles went so far as to burn the sūtras and images as they considered them spiritually harmful.

This extremist tradition was bequeathed to the so-called Kōan-introspection Zen and Silent-illumination Zen of the Sung period. Especially during the Southern Sung period, when Dōgen studied in China, the sectarian struggle between these two camps was even more belligerent than it had been during previous generations. The rejection of the sūtras notwithstanding, kōan meditation gradually became the Zen equivalent of sūtra studies, as we shall see on a later occasion—hence, there was quite an intimate relationship between sūtras and kōans.

The historical connection between Kōan-introspection Zen and kōan itself must be viewed in a proper historical context. Although the origins of kōan in its technical Zen sense are obscure, it appears to have been first used by Mu-chou Tao-tsung (780?–877?), popularly known by his followers as Ch'ên Tsun-su, as events of enlightenment in the sense of present living and lived realities of life—as the realization of truth itself. This was the kōan realized in life (*genjō-kōan*), which may have been what many Zen teachers employed for the guidance of disciples during the T'ang period.¹¹¹ Kōan, as paradigmatic problems for meditation that are neatly packaged in formulized statements, is called the kōan of ancient paradigms (*kosoku-kōan*). This form gradually developed, probably around the end of the tenth century, and the process of fixation was augmented thereafter by counterattacks from the camps of those who advocated the classical conception of kōan, such as Shih-shuang Ch'u-yüan (986–1039), Hsüeh-tou Ch'ung-hsien (980–1052), Wu-tsu Fa-yen (1024?–1104), Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in (1063–1135). Especially, Yüan-wu emphasized the kōan realized in life, by referring to it frequently, despite his advocacy of the kōan of ancient paradigms.

This tradition of the kōan realized in life was also inherited by both Ta-hui Tsung-kao (1089–1163), the foremost leader of Kōan-introspection Zen, and Hung-chih Chêng-chüeh (1091–1157), the celebrated exponent of Silent-illumination Zen, who, though often regarded as fierce enemies, were evidently good friends. They advocated the kōan realized in life and never absolutized either kōan or zazen at the expense of the other.¹¹² Their concern was to remind us of the dangers of misuses and abuses of these methods that could ultimately lead to dark quietism and deadly intellectualism. The real issue, therefore, was not so much whether or not to use kōan or zazen but *how* to use them.

Against this historical background, Dōgen emphasized *genjō-kōan* of classical Zen Buddhism and seems to have recognized the limited values of *kosoku-kōan* within that context.¹¹³ Although Dōgen adopted the idea of *genjō-kōan* from the Chinese Zen tradition,¹¹⁴ he developed the idea further and used it extensively throughout his works.¹¹⁵ He also fully used the linguistic and symbolic potentialities of the component words “kōan” and “realization” (*genjō*). From Dōgen's standpoint, the traditional kōan of the ancient paradigm: (1) was based upon the idea of kōan as a means to attain enlightenment and consequently, on the idea of enlightenment as realizable in the future (*taigo*), (2) had a strong predilection for an intellectual and intuitive “seeing into one's own nature” (*kenshō*) as if “seeing” and “nature”

were two different phenomena, and (3) perhaps most importantly for our purpose in the present context, observed an inherent irrationality in the traditional kōan.

In this view, the mind, confronted with kōans, or formulized nonsense, was systematically frustrated in its intellectual functions, and finally deconditioned so as to permit the release of the primitive psychic forces hitherto pent up in it, which was necessary for the experience of enlightenment.¹¹⁶ Such an instrumental view of kōan was closely related to the corollary view of reason in general and of language and symbols in particular, which was by and large negativistic. Dōgen's method, on the other hand, was to carefully and compassionately pursue the reason of nonsense, for kōans were not just ordinary nonsense or meaningless expressions, but symbols of life and death. As such, reason was not just abnegated, but reconstituted, in the wider context of enlightenment. To Dōgen, kōans functioned not only as nonsense that castigated reason, but as parables, allegories, and mysteries that unfolded the horizons of existence before us. In this sense they were realized, though not solved.

The upshot of what we have thus far examined is a strikingly new way of looking at conventional ideas such as sūtras and kōans. Dōgen liberated them from the narrow confines of traditional, especially Zen Buddhist, understanding, which more often than not tended to view them as nothing but instruments or means to attain enlightenment. This meant that words and letters (i.e., language and symbols)—the common components of sūtras and kōans—were given a positive significance in the total scheme of spiritual things. They were no longer a means to an end but, rather, a means that embodied the end within. Referring to the traditional story of when Buddha silently held up a flower one day before a congregation on Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa, and Mahākāśyapa alone, laughing, understood it, Dōgen attacked those who regarded the absence of the Buddha's utterance as supreme evidence of the profundity of truth. He then proposed his own view:

If Buddha's utterance is shallow, his holding up a flower and blinking without a word must also be superficial. When you say that Buddha's utterance is mere names and forms (*myōsō*), you do not understand the Buddha-dharma. Although you know that the utterance is words and letters, you do not yet discern that there are no mere words and forms with Buddha. This is due to the deluded state of the ordinary mind. To the Buddhas and ancestors, the whole being of body and mind is cast

off and constitutes sermons, discourses through utterances, and the turning of the wheel of Dharma.¹¹⁷

Buddha's holding up a flower in silence was his "speech" or expression. The sūtras, words, and silence—even an infant's mumblings, the alcoholic's "snakes," and whatnot—were all the possibilities of expression that were in turn the activities of emptiness and Buddha-nature. To study them was to study the "reason of words and letters" (*monji no dōri*). Dōgen's view was neither a derogation nor an idolization of language, but simply an acknowledgement of the legitimate place of language in the spiritual scheme of things. For this reason Dōgen's emphasis was not on how to transcend language, but on how to radically use it.

Language is not just that which describes and explains the state of affairs, detached from the operation of the human mind; it is not isolatable, at least in principle, from the mind and its environs. Rather, language performs its various functions within the very texture of the mind and the situation in which the mind is located. It is embedded in the matrix of our whole experience; as Wittgenstein once said: "The speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life."¹¹⁸ The range of the functions of language (in its broadest possible sense as Dōgen understood it) became coextensive with that of human activities. For Dōgen the false separation of words and activities was closely related to the impoverishment of religion and philosophy; language and activity were inseparably one in his thought, as we shall soon see.

Dōgen's view of expression (*dōtoku*) exemplified his dynamic view of language and symbols and his originality. *Dōtoku* consists of two Chinese characters: *dō*, "the Way" and "to say," and *toku*, "to attain" and "to be able." Thus it signifies both actuality and possibility of expression—in other words, expression and expressibility. What is expressed intimates what is yet to be expressed—it is the Way. It also implies the understanding and grasping of the Way by expression. Furthermore, it stresses not what humans express so much as what the Way expresses. These complex, pregnant meanings are implied in the word *dōtoku*. The word was by no means Dōgen's invention—as a matter of fact, it was frequently used, yet perhaps neglected, by Zen Buddhists. Dōgen rediscovered it and made it a central concept in his thought.

For Dōgen, expression did not necessarily mean expression in words: "The wordless (*fugen*) is not the same as the expressionless (*fudō*), for expression

(*dōtoku*) is not identical with an utterance in words (*gentoku*).¹¹⁹ This is the fundamental difference between expression and saying (*gentoku*). Without words and letters, we can express ourselves in myriad ways. Comparing the life of the monastic's silent zazen to that of the deaf, Dōgen wrote:

Even deaf-mutes have expressions. Do not judge that they cannot have expressions. Those who create expressions are not necessarily limited to those who are not deaf-mutes, for deaf-mutes do express themselves. Their voices should be heard and their utterances should be heeded. Unless you identify yourself with them, how can you meet them? How can you talk with them?¹²⁰

From this the following admonition is given: "Do not loathe wordlessness, for it is expression par excellence."¹²¹ Regarding the problem of expression, Dōgen guided us to not only take into consideration semantic possibilities in metaphors, images, gestures, and moral and aesthetic activities in the human realm, but also those possibilities in the activities of nonhuman and nonliving realms. Thus he said:

You should not think that the way insentient beings expound Dharma is necessarily like the way sentient beings expound Dharma. If you assume that [insentient beings] should be like sentient beings in their voices and the way they expound Dharma, and thereby, conjecture the voices of insentient beings in terms of those of sentient beings, that is contrary to the Buddha-way.... Even though humans construe what they now consider to be grasses and plants as the insentient, those grasses and plants, too, cannot be fully fathomed by the ordinary mind.¹²²

Following this view, all phenomena in the universe—visible and invisible, audible and inaudible, tangible and intangible, conscious and unconscious—were the self-expressions (*jidōshu*) of Buddha-nature and emptiness. Nothing was excluded from this.¹²³

In order to develop his metaphysics of expression, Dōgen employed a number of concepts and symbols taken from the repository of the Buddhist tradition—some of which were quite ordinary, others of which had been relegated to oblivion, while still others had been denigrated. He resuscitated them with new life and gave them astonishingly fresh and revelatory possibilities of meaning. Some examples of this were: dreams (*mu*), entwined

vines (*kattō*), pictures (*gato*), stream sounds, mountain sights (*keisei-san-shoku*), one luminous pearl (*ikka-myōju*), the primordial mirror (*kokyō*), the sky-flowers (*kūge*), light (*kōmyō*), plum blossoms (*baika*), the *udumbara* flower (*udonge*), dragon song (*ryūgin*), a particular time (*arutoki*), supranormal powers (*jinzū*), pilgrimage (*hensan*), spells (*darani*), the mountains and waters (*sansui*). These notions, metaphors, and images were transfigured and given completely new significance, so as to be legitimized as the philosophic and mythopoeic elements of Dōgen's thought. We see this, for instance, in the transformation of the "sky-flowers" (which traditionally meant illusory perceptions) into the "flowers of emptiness." We will examine this example and others in more detail presently. The point to note at this juncture is that such exploration and use of symbols was an integral part of Dōgen's philosophic and religious method. (His versatility in and sensitivity to the use of language and expression were well attested to by many Dōgen students. As noted before, Dōgen's sensibilities had undoubtedly derived from the distinguished poetic and literary traditions of his aristocratic family, although he was more concerned with philosophic and religious problems than with aesthetic ones.)

The problem of the symbol and the symbolized is very important in Buddhist thought as in any other philosophical and religious belief system. The former in Buddhism is often designated by metaphors (*hiyu*), provisional view (*kesetsu*), provisional name (*kemyō*), and so forth, whereas the latter (the symbolized) is designated by thusness (*shinnyo*), emptiness (*kū*), Buddha-nature (*bussō*), and the like. Metaphors, parables, and names constitute what the Buddhists call skillful means (*upāya*; *hōben*) which enable sentient beings to cross the river of birth-and-death to the other shore (*pāramitā*; *higan*) of ultimate reality. This view strongly suggests the instrumentality of symbol that must be transcended in order to attain truth.

To be sure, Dōgen vehemently attacked those who were entrapped and victimized by the words and doctrines they themselves created; he abhorred a deadly literalism. And yet for him, symbol was to be realized as an expression of the symbolized. This was possible only when symbol was mediated, liberated, and reinstated by the symbolized. Here we see Dōgen's creative and dynamic interpretation of the Buddhist doctrine of skillful means in which the means in question was not for the transcendence of duality so much as it was for the realization of it. The means and the end were not obliterated but undefiled. Thus, the motif of realization, rather than that of transcendence, was the key motivating force in Dōgen's thought about language and

symbols, as in other aspects of his philosophy.¹²⁴ This was clearly shown in Dōgen's analysis of the moon reflected on the water:

Śākyamuni Buddha said: "The true Dharma-body of Buddha is like the empty sky, and it manifests itself according to sentient beings like the moon [reflected] on the water." The "like" in "like the moon [reflected] on the water" should mean the water-moon (*sui-getsu*) [i.e., the non-duality of the moon and the water]. It should be the water-thusness (*sui-nyo*), the moon-thusness (*getsu-nyo*), thusness-on (*nyo-chū*), and on- thusness (*chū-nyo*). We are not construing "like" as resemblance: "like" (*nyo*) is "thusness" (*ze*).¹²⁵

Quite an ordinary statement of Buddha's (as translated above in its common-sensical rendering) is transformed suddenly into a profound discourse on the symbol and the symbolized, by making full use of semantic possibilities of the Chinese characters involved in it. The central character *nyo* means "likeness" and "thusness" simultaneously. Similarly *nyo-ze* means "like this" as well as "thusness." Dōgen astutely utilized the significant implications of these words. But his deeper underlying motive was thoroughly religious and philosophical—a profound insight into the metaphysic of symbol. Often the symbol and the symbolized are related to each other in terms of a certain likeness; the symbol is said to "point to," "represent," or "approximate" the symbolized. Rejecting such a dualism, Dōgen contended that "like this" (*nyoze*) meant that both "like" and "this" were emptiness and hence thusness (*nyoze*). Instead of saying, "Thusness is like this," he said: "'Like this' is thusness." "Like this" did not represent or point to thusness but *was* thusness. Therefore the symbol was the symbolized.

By articulating the problem in this manner, Dōgen did not engage in the absolutization of the symbol or in the relativization of the symbolized, which would have been dualistic. What he did in effect was to show how we can use the symbol in such a way that it becomes the total realization (*zenki*) or presence (*genzen*) of the symbolized. Dōgen's view can be best understood in the soteriological context of his mystical realism. This is why Dōgen held: "The Buddha-dharma, even in figures of speech (*hiyu*), is ultimate reality (*jissō*)."¹²⁶

The foregoing observations point to the fact that there is no metaphysical or experiential hiatus between the symbol and the symbolized. This becomes clearer when we examine Dōgen's discussion of "intimate words" (*mitsugo*). Employing the combination of the two meanings, "intimacy" and

“hiddenness,” in the Chinese character *mitsu*, Dōgen advanced an ingenious view of mystery. *Mitsugo* is ordinarily understood as “secret words” or “hidden words,” the secrecy or hiddenness of which can be removed by extensive learning, supernormal faculties, and the like. In opposition to this interpretation Dōgen said:

The *mitsu* in question means intimacy (*shimmitsu*) and the absence of distance. [When you speak of the Buddhas and ancestors], the Buddhas and ancestors embrace everything; [likewise] you embrace everything and I embrace everything. Practice includes all, a generation includes all, and intimacy includes all.¹²⁷

Intimate words were those spoken and acted out by us in such a way that there was no hiatus between words and referents, thought and reality, mind and body, and expressions and activities. When a symbol was used in such a nondualistic manner, it was totally intimate with and transparent to the symbolized. In a similar fashion, such words as “intimate activities” (*mitsugyō*), “intimate enlightenment” (*misshō*), “intimate thought” (*mitsui*), were used. Mystery, in Dōgen’s view, did not consist of that which was hidden or unknown in darkness or that which would be revealed or made known in the future. Rather, it consisted of the present intimacy, transparency, and vividness of thusness, for “nothing throughout the entire universe is concealed” (*henkai-fuzōzō*). Nevertheless, the mystery of emptiness and thusness had to go beyond this: intimacy had to be ever penetrated (*tōkamitsu*).¹²⁸

In the same vein, Dōgen held that “going beyond Buddha” (*bukkōjōji*)—discussed in connection with Tung-shan Liang-chieh’s discourse on ongoing enlightenment and speech—was realized by penetrating the inaudible in speech through practice and understanding.¹²⁹ Dōgen observed:

You should correctly understand that going beyond Buddha does not depend on any causes or their fruition. Even so, you experience and penetrate the inaudible when words are uttered (*gowaji no fumon*). Unless you reach beyond Buddha, there is no experience of being beyond Buddha. If going beyond Buddha is not uttered in speech (*gowa*), you do not experience it. [Speech and going beyond Buddha] are neither manifest in nor hidden from each other; they neither give nor take in their relationship. Therefore, when speech is realized, that itself is none other than going beyond Buddha.¹³⁰

The inaudible in speech transcends the audible (*mon*) and the inaudible (*fumon*) in the conventional sense. The body-mind must adjust itself—by being undefiled—to the inaudible through a new mode of activity. No sooner have we totally adjusted our body-mind to a new situation and begun to act in and through the audible than we realize that the inaudible resides in the audible itself. Thus, speech is undefiled by the dualism of the audible and the inaudible. Or to put it differently, speaker and speech are nondualistically one in that activity which goes beyond Buddha.¹³¹ Dōgen continued:

You must clearly study our founder Tung-shan's saying, "I await the time when I do not speak (*fugowa*) and then hear [speech uttered] immediately." When speech is uttered ordinarily, there is no immediate hearing (*sokumon*) at all. "Hearing-immediately" is realized at the time of "no speech." But it does not mean that you set aside a special occasion for awaiting no-speech needlessly, or that, at the time of hearing-immediately, you construe speech (*gowa*) as an onlooker [as if speech and hearing-immediately were dualistically separated]; for the true looking-on lies in the very hearing-immediately. At the time of hearing-immediately, speech is not removed from its own place to another location. At the time of speech, hearing-immediately does not resound after being hidden in the bosom of speech. For these reasons, the monastic [who appears in the story of Tung-shan's discourse] does not hear at the time of speech, and Tung-shan hears immediately on the occasion of no-speech. This is [the meaning of Tung-shan's] "You can speak of [going beyond Buddha] a little" and "You can experience going beyond Buddha." Therefore, you realize hearing-immediately when speech is uttered. Thus, "I await the time when I do not speak and then hear immediately." Although such is the case, going beyond Buddha is not the matter that happened before the Seven Buddhas, but rather the Seven Buddhas' endeavors to go beyond Buddha.¹³²

Only in the nondualistic context of "the inaudible in speech" and "the hearing-immediately in no-speech" is speech in the conventional sense liberated, authenticated, and reinstated for use in the realization of going beyond Buddha.

The foregoing observations on intimate words, the inaudible, hearing-immediately, and so forth, indicate that metaphors, images, and symbols chosen from an ordinary context are used and function quite extraordinarily in

the realm of enlightenment. Words are no longer things that the intellect manipulates abstractly and impersonally, but rather, things that work intimately in the existential metabolism of one who uses them philosophically and religiously in a special manner and with a special attitude. They are no longer mere means or symbols that represent realities other than themselves, but are themselves the realities of original enlightenment and Buddha-nature. In this view, words and symbols inevitably call for practices in which activity and expression are embedded in each other. In Dōgen, as I have noted previously, expression (*dōtoku*) and activity (*gyōji*) were synonymous.¹³³

It is in this context that Dōgen's fresh interpretation of the story of *sendaba* (*saindhava*) becomes extremely significant. (*Sendaba* means "a word having four significations"—hence, infinite semantic possibilities.) Dōgen explained the word and commented on it as follows:

The ordinary language of monastics is [one with] the entire universe that is thoroughly embraced by their words. You should clearly understand that, because everyday language (*kajōgo*) is the whole universe, the whole universe is everyday language.... It may be compared to the story in which a ruler [using the word *sendaba*] asks for a horse, salt, water, or a bowl, and his subject brings him water, a bowl, salt, or a horse [according to the ruler's wish]. Who would know that the enlightened ones turn their bodies and their brains within such words? They appropriate words freely in their utterances, transforming an ocean into a mouth, a mountain into a tongue. This is the daily life of upright, genuine language. Therefore, those who cover their mouths and close their ears [yet speak freely and hear everything] are the ones [who are attuned to] the upright, genuine state of the universe.¹³⁴

For Dōgen, the enlightened person was adept at appropriating the semantic possibilities of ordinary words in order to express and act out the extraordinary, and even the ineffable, according to the situation. Dōgen's characteristic way of thinking here in connection with the use of language was that the meaning of an ordinary word was totally exerted (*gūjin*) so that there was nothing but that particular meaning throughout the universe at that given moment. This was the idea of the total exertion of a single thing (*ippō-gūjin*), which was central to Dōgen's entire thought. Elsewhere Dōgen presented his view of life as *sendaba*—that is, the world sought *sendaba* from each of us, and we brought forth whatever we deemed to be *sendaba* in life.¹³⁵

Our symbolic and expressive activities were inseparably connected with our bringing forth *sendaba* in response to the world's demand. The world's search and the self's response were merely two aspects of one and the same reality.

Indeed life was nothing but searching for and acting out the myriad possibilities of meaning with which the self and the world were pregnant, through expressions (*dōtoku*) and activities (*gyōji*). This involved not only the human world but the nonhuman and nonliving worlds as well (which will be discussed later in connection with Dōgen's view of nature), plus much more. Even dreams, illusions, and imagination were not eliminated from the purview of semantic possibilities, even though we are prone to reject those areas of human experience as illusory or unreal.

Dreams are a favorite metaphor in the Buddhist tradition and are often used to signify phantasmic and phantasmagoric unrealities. Dreams and realities are sharply differentiated and contrasted, and by and large, the former are conceived in depreciatory terms. In Dōgen's view, however, dreams were as real and legitimate as the so-called realities in that they comprised our incessant efforts to decipher and dramatize the expressive and actional possibilities of existence. Both dreams and realities were ultimately empty, unattainable, and without self-nature. Going a step further, Dōgen thought that existence was essentially a discourse on a dream within a dream (*muchū-setsumu*).¹³⁶ He wrote:

Because this wheel of Dharma has myriad directions and myriad aspects, the great oceans, Mt. Sumeru, the countries and lands, and the Buddhas are realized; this is a discourse on a dream within a dream (*muchū-setsumu*) prior to all [ordinary] dreams. Every vivid particularity of the entire universe (*henkai no miro*) is a dream; this dream is none other than all things that are clear and distinct.... As we study things—roots and stems, leaves and branches, flowers and fruits, lights and colors—we see that all are a great dream. Never mistake this for a dreamy state of mind.

Thus, while encountering this discourse on a dream within a dream, those who try to eschew the Buddha-way think that people misconstrue the things of dreams as real and consequently pile up delusions on top of delusions. This is not true. Even though they say that delusions are multiplied in the midst of delusions, you should certainly investigate the path of freedom (*tsūshō no ro*) in which you apprehend delusions overcoming delusions (*madoi no ue no madoi*).¹³⁷

Here, Dōgen's notion of dreams was so original that dreams as a metaphor for both illusion and reality, and dreams as a metaphor for neither illusion nor reality, became exquisitely entwined with one another so as to present a unique metaphysic of dreams. If dreams were an unreality in the ordinary sense, Dōgen elevated this unreality to the level of cosmic or ultimate unreality, in its total exertion (*gūjin*) abiding in the Dharma-position (*jūhōi*):

“As the kōan realized in life, I spare you thirty blows” [the statement of Ch'ên Tsun-su (780?–877?)]. This is realization as a discourse on a dream within a dream (*genjō no muchū-setsumu*).

Therefore, a tree without roots, a land without a sunny or a shady side, a ravine without echoes—all are the realization as a discourse on a dream within a dream. It belongs neither to the human nor heavenly realm; nor is it what ordinary people can conjecture. Who can doubt that a dream is enlightenment? For it is not something that can be doubted. Who can know it? For it is not dependent on human knowledge. Because this supreme enlightenment is nothing but supreme enlightenment, a dream calls it a dream.¹³⁸

The dream of supreme enlightenment and the supreme enlightenment of dream were nondually conjoined in one reality or unreality. Dōgen also called it “liberation as a discourse on a dream within a dream” (*gedatsu no muchū-setsumu*), which “as though itself hanging in emptiness” (*mizukara kūni kakareru gotoku*) lets images, myths, parables, and fantasies “play in emptiness” (*kū ni yuke seshimuru*). Thus, Dōgen wrote:

Inasmuch as the wondrous Dharma of Buddhas is communicated only between a Buddha and a Buddha (*yuibutsu-yobutsu*), all the phenomena in the dream state as well as in the waking state are equally ultimate realities. In the waking state are the desire for enlightenment, practice, enlightenment, and nirvāṇa; in the dream state are the desire for enlightenment, practice, enlightenment, and nirvāṇa. Dream and reality—each is ultimate nature. Neither largeness nor smallness, neither superiority nor inferiority remains.... Both the dream life and the waking life are originally one as ultimate reality. The Buddha-dharma, even in figures of speech, is ultimate reality. No longer a mere figure of speech, dream-making (*musa*) constitutes the very reality of Dharma.... Although there is a truth that Buddha's liberating efforts [for sentient

beings] continue unceasingly in the waking life, the truth of the Bud-dhas' and ancestors' realization consists invariably of what a dream makes within a dream (*musa-muchū*).¹³⁹

Dreams were thus designated as legitimate expressions and activities in the total scheme of things, in which symbols and realities were purified and reinforced by emptiness so as to work for the liberation of sentient beings.

So-called illusion was also very carefully considered by Dōgen. The word *kūge*, as I have mentioned briefly, originally meant the “flowers blooming in the sky,” that is, flowers that are illusory owing to our dim vision (*eigen*). This term was changed by Dōgen into the “flowers of emptiness” (the Chinese character *kū* means both the sky and emptiness)—another example of his ingenious use of the semantic possibilities of a particular term—which shed radically fresh light on the matter of illusion. Dōgen contended:

There are not yet scholars who grasp this truth [of the flowers of emptiness] clearly. They fail to understand the flowers of emptiness, because of their ignorance of emptiness. Owing to their incomprehension of the flowers of emptiness, they do not know dim-sighted persons (*eijin*), do not recognize them, do not meet them; they do not become dim-sighted persons themselves. Upon encountering dim-sighted persons, they understand and recognize the flowers of emptiness. They know only that, the sky-flowers exist because of the eyes' dimness, but fail to discern the truth that the eyes' dimness exists by virtue of the flowers of emptiness.¹⁴⁰

Dōgen was vehement in attacking the view that the flowers of emptiness might turn out to be nonexistent if the eyes were cured of disease. To Dōgen, birth-and-death, nirvāṇa, Dharma, original enlightenment—all existences—were the flowers of emptiness. But this was precisely so because of the universality of “dim vision.” It did not mean that we see reality dimly independent of our dim vision. Paradoxically, clarity and dimness interpenetrated one another and were one. Dōgen argued further:

Foolishly construing dimness (*ei*) as untrustworthy, you should not think there is truth outside this dimness. This is the view of a small mind. If the flower of dimness were untrustworthy, both the subject and the object of that judgment, which misapprehends it as such, would all be

untrustworthy. If all were untrue, there would be no way of establishing reasonableness (*dōri*). Without reasonableness, the idea that the flower of dim vision is untrue cannot be supported. If enlightenment is dimness, all dharmas of enlightenment are similarly the dharmas of solemn dimness (*ei-shōgon*). If delusion is dimness, all dharmas of delusion are similarly the dharmas of solemn dimness. You should say as follows: Because dim vision is nondual (*byōdō*), the flowers of emptiness are nondual; because dim vision is of no birth (*mushō*), the flowers of emptiness are of no birth. Just as all things themselves are ultimate reality (*shobō-jissō*), so are the flowers of dim vision. It is not a matter of the past, present, and future; it does not concern itself with the beginning, middle, and end. Because it is not obstructed by birth and extinction, it duly allows birth and extinction to be born and extinguished. [Things] arise and perish in emptiness; they arise and perish in dimness; and they arise and perish in flowers. So do the rest of all things in time and space.¹⁴¹

The nondualistic oneness of dim vision and the flowers of emptiness was further described as follows:

Vision (*gen*) is realized in and through dimness (*ei*). The flowers of emptiness unfold themselves in vision, vision fulfills itself in the flowers of emptiness.... Thus, dimness is totally realized and present (*zenki-gen*), vision is totally realized and present, emptiness is totally realized and present, and flowers are totally realized and present.... Indeed, when and where one supreme vision is, there are the flowers of emptiness and the flowers of vision. The flowers of vision are called the flowers of emptiness. What they express is of necessity a disclosure (*kaimei*).¹⁴²

What concerned Dōgen most was not to eliminate illusion in favor of reality so much as it was to see illusion as the total realization—not as one illusion among others, but as *the* illusion, with nothing but the illusion throughout the universe until we could at last find no illusion. Only if and when we realized the nonduality of illusion and reality in emptiness could we deal with them wisely and compassionately. Dōgen wrote:

You must surely know that emptiness is a single grass. This emptiness is bound to bloom, like hundreds of grasses blossoming.... Seeing a dazzling variety of the flowers of emptiness, we surmise an incalculability

of the fruits of emptiness (*kūka*). We should observe the bloom and fall of the flowers of emptiness and learn the spring and autumn of the flowers of emptiness.¹⁴³

Imagination is another area for our consideration. In the Zen tradition, the statement “A painting of a cake (*gabyō*) does not satisfy hunger” is often spoken of in relation to the anecdotes of Tê-shan Hsüan-chien (782–865) and Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien, signifying something fantasized and unreal that cannot fill the stomach. Dōgen employed this metaphor and offered quite a positive view of a painting of a cake and of a picture or a painting (*gato*) in general.¹⁴⁴ Dōgen wrote for example:

People think that the statement [“A painting of a cake does not satisfy hunger”] tries to say an unreal thing is really useless, but this is a grave mistake.... What we now express as “a painting of a cake” includes all kinds of cakes such as paste, vegetable, cheese, toasted, nutritious, and so on—they are all realized in and through such a painted picture/painting a picture (*gato*). You should realize that they are one with painting; they are one with cake; and they are one with Dharma. For this reason, all the cakes that are now realized are, without exception, the paintings of various cakes.¹⁴⁵

Proceeding from this, Dōgen further developed his thesis of painting and imagination:

For painting a landscape, you use blue and green paints, rare boulders, extraordinary rocks, or the seven jewels and the four treasures [a brush, ink, paper, and an ink-stone]. The same is true of the task of making a painting of a cake. To paint a picture of a person, you choose the four elements and the five skandhas. To paint a picture of a Buddha, you choose not only a clay shrine and an earthen image, but the thirty-two marks, a blade of grass [from which the golden body of Buddha is said to be created], and countless kalpas of assiduous practice. Inasmuch as one paints a picture of a Buddha in such a manner, all the Buddhas are the paintings of/by Buddhas (*gabutsu*); all the paintings of/by Buddhas are the [actual] Buddhas. Examine carefully the painting of/by a Buddha and the painting of/by a cake. Which one is a stone-carved tortoise? Which one is an iron staff? Which one is material, and which is mental?

You should carefully consider these questions and investigate them thoroughly. When you endeavor this way, [you will realize that] life and death, coming and going, are all a painted picture/painting a picture (*gato*); supreme enlightenment is none other than a painted picture/painting a picture. All the dharma world and the empty sky—there is nothing whatsoever that is not a painted picture/painting a picture.¹⁴⁶

Painting a picture, the painter, and a painted picture all constituted a single reality; religion and art ultimately converged in this holistic view that mirrored the self and the world. From this, Dōgen drew a striking conclusion—entirely contrary to the traditional interpretation—that the painted cake alone could satisfy hunger, or to put it differently, unless we ate the painted cake, we could never satisfy our hunger. Thus, he wrote:

Therefore, if there is no painted cake, you have no way to satisfy hunger; if there is no painted hunger (*gaki*), you do not encounter [genuinely seeking] human beings; and, if there is no painted satisfaction (*gajū*), you cannot gain energy [for spiritual endeavors]. Indeed, you are satisfied in hunger and no-hunger; you do not satisfy hunger and no-hunger: this truth cannot be attained or spoken of except in terms of the painted hunger.¹⁴⁷

As has been abundantly shown by now, Dōgen did not reject creative imagination and artistic creations as unreal or fictitious any more than he discarded the empirical realities of the senses. What is of utmost importance is to understand that both imagination and reality are mediated, purified, and revitalized by emptiness and, hence, are undefined.

The forgotten notions of dream, illusion, and picture were rescued from their relegated status in Buddhist thought at large and brought to the foreground of Dōgen's thought as areas of human experience that were richly pregnant with soteriological possibilities. The question of "How and what shall I offer in response to life's demand for *sendaba*?" represented everyone's ultimate quest. Dreams, visions, and images were the rich fountainheads for such a quest. Dōgen's own existential search for *sendaba* extended even to supranormal powers (*jinzū*), spells (*darani*), and so forth, though his interpretations of these notions were radically different from traditional ones.¹⁴⁸ His search also extended to many other symbols, metaphors, and

kōans in which he discovered and rediscovered neglected and unrecognized semantic possibilities through his exceedingly meticulous examination and analysis. Indeed, Dōgen's originality lay primarily in such efforts, which we shall have occasion to witness many times in subsequent chapters.

The foregoing observations should not lead us into thinking that Dōgen was insensitive to the ineffable in the mystical experience. As I have suggested already, quite the opposite was the case. He wrote, for example:

When this expression is uttered, nonexpression (*fudōtoku*) is unuttered. If you recognize that expression is uttered in its fullness, and yet do not experientially penetrate nonexpression as nonexpression, you are still short of attaining the original face and marrowbones of the Buddhas and ancestors.¹⁴⁹

Dōgen's acknowledgment of nonexpression, however, was not a submission to the tyranny of silence but was instead a fidelity to the inexhaustible possibilities in the transparency of expressions and activities. Departing radically from the mystic method of *via negativa*, Dōgen was confident in what was yet to be expressed, in what had already been expressed, as well as in what had not yet been expressed or allegedly could not be expressed. Here he concurred with John Wisdom, who wrote: "Philosophers should be constantly trying to say what cannot be said."¹⁵⁰ Philosophic and religious enterprises consisted in fidelity to the inexpressible *and* in the search for expressibility; fundamentally speaking, it was an impossible task,¹⁵¹ yet it had to be carried out, because it was a mode of compassion that Dōgen so eloquently expounded as "loving speech" (*aigo*).¹⁵²

Let us now examine the cosmological aspect of expression briefly. Dōgen's metaphysic of expression envisioned the universe as a whole, as consisting of dynamic, symbolic activities without interruption. Often we think that humans express something or that the Absolute expresses itself in its self-limiting manifestations, but this still retains some residue of dualistic thinking. Inasmuch as there are only expressions throughout the universe, expressions naturally express themselves in the total exertion of their shared efforts (*jin-riki dōtoku surunari; chikara o awasete dōtoku seshimuru*).¹⁵³ They are realized neither autonomously nor heteronomously, neither through self-power nor through other-power, yet the Buddhas' and ancestors' practice of the Way and enlightenment are realized in and through expressions. Dōgen wrote:

Because you regard seeing-then (*kano toki no kentoku*) as true, you do not doubt that expression-now (*ima no dōtoku*) is true as well. Accordingly, expression-now is provided with seeing-then, and seeing-then is prepared with expression-now. Thus, expression exists now, seeing exists now. Expression-now and seeing-then are ever one in their perpetuation. Our efforts now are being sustained by expression and seeing.¹⁵⁴

An expression at any particular space and time was self-contained and absolutely discrete from the preceding and subsequent expressions; each expression was transcendent as well as inherent in relation to the other. Dōgen used “seeing” synonymously with expression, rather than with contemplative *theoria*. Expression, however, had to be cast off (*datsuraku*):

As you maintain such efforts throughout the months and years, you further cast off those months and years of efforts. In this casting off, you come to understand that different people with different modes of realization are likewise cast off, and that countries, mountains, and rivers are likewise cast off. At this time, if you decide to attain the casting off as your ultimate norm of perfection, your decision to attain it is already the very presence of that ultimate norm. Therefore, at the time of this casting off, there is expression being realized immediately. Though neither by the strength of the mind nor by the strength of the body, expression comes forth of its own accord. When it is uttered, it does not appear to be novel or strange.¹⁵⁵

Expression generated itself ever anew in the context of incessantly changing conditions in the perpetuation of the Way through activity (*gyōji-dōkan*)—akin to Whitehead’s metaphysical vision of “the creative advance of the universe into novelty” from moment to moment.¹⁵⁶ As we shall see in more detail later in conjunction with the examination of Buddha-nature, expression was, more exactly speaking, the self-expression (*jidōshu*) of Buddha-nature, and hence the Buddha-nature of expression (*setsu-bushō*).

Expression was compared to “entwined vines” (*kattō*), which attained an entirely new significance in Dōgen’s thought. The notion of “entwined vines” was ordinarily used in a derogatory sense, such as in reference to doctrinal sophistries and entanglements, attachment to words and letters, and theoretical conflicts. Again we encounter here Dōgen’s originality in the positive use of such an ordinary metaphor as this by elevating it to new metaphysical

and religious heights. In connection with his discussion of entwined vines, Dōgen referred to Bodhidharma's last conversation with his four disciples, Tao-fu, Tsung-chih, Tao-yü, and Hui-k'o, who were said to have attained, by Bodhidharma's acknowledgement, his "skin, flesh, bones, and marrow" (*hi-niku-kotsu-zui*), respectively.¹⁵⁷ The story was apparently designed, according to conventional interpretation, to justify Hui-k'o's succession to the ancestorship of Bodhidharma on account of his having most deeply understood his teacher's truth—the wisdom of silence, which was thereafter regarded as the hallmark of Zen Buddhism. On this story, Dōgen admitted the existence of differences in the four disciples' interpretations, yet refused to view them discriminately in terms of superiority and inferiority of views and instead maintained:

You should understand that the ancestor's words "skin, flesh, bones, and marrow" are not concerned about shallowness and deepness [in the disciples' understanding]. Even though there are superior and inferior views, the ancestor's words signify solely the attainment of his whole being. Their cardinal meaning is that the attainment of marrow, the attainment of bones and so on are all to guide people; there is no sufficiency or insufficiency in holding grass or dropping grass [as the means to guide people according to their abilities and needs]. For example, it is just like [Buddha's] holding up a flower, or like [a teacher's] imparting a robe [to a disciple]. What [Bodhidharma] said for the four disciples is that each was equal from the beginning. Although the ancestor's words are the same, the four views are not necessarily identical. The four views differ in their respective incompleteness, and yet, the ancestor's words are nothing but the ancestor's words. Generally speaking, [the teacher's] words and [the disciples'] understanding do not necessarily agree with each other.¹⁵⁸

Parting from the traditional interpretation, Dōgen maintained here that despite differences in the disciples' interpretations and responses as "skin, flesh, bones, and marrow," it was also true that each of them, in his or her own way, grasped the teacher's whole being. Hence the following: "The skin, flesh, bones, and marrow partake equally in the first ancestor's body-mind. Marrow is not deepest, and skin is not shallowest."¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, there was infinite progress beyond the marrow.¹⁶⁰ Dōgen also said:

If there appear hundreds of thousands of disciples after the second ancestor, there will correspondingly be hundreds of thousands of interpretations. There is no limit to them. The number of disciples happened to be four, so there were just the four views of skin, flesh, bones, and marrow for the time being. However, many an expression is left as yet unexpressed and remains to be expressed.¹⁶¹

The disciples' questions and answers were the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow that cast off the body-mind. Each view was seen in the aspect of its total exertion (*gūjin*) and of abiding in the Dharma-position (*jū-hōi*); consequently, it was not an approximation to, or a self-limiting manifestation of, the Absolute, but a self-activity or a self-expression of Buddha-nature.

In this respect, every person is the second ancestor—the successor to Bodhidharma. However lowly one's symbols and practices are as in, say, a peasant's religion, one is nevertheless entitled to enlightenment if and when one uses them authentically. Here is the egalitarian basis for the claim that Dōgen's religion is a religion of the people.

Furthermore, Dōgen provided us with profound insight into the nature of philosophizing activity. To him what mattered most was not the relative significance of theoretical formulations, but how and what we did with the ideas and values inherited from our past—in other words, the authenticity of our philosophic activity. The issue was not so much whether or not to philosophize as it was *how* to philosophize—in total freedom with body-mind cast off. The philosophic enterprise was as much the practice of the bodhisattva way as was zazen. And significantly enough, this view implied that philosophic activity itself was a kōan realized in life.

In view of this, different philosophical and religious expressions are entwined vines, that is, conflicts, dilemmas, antinomies that are all too human and real to be brushed away from the texture of existence. The logic of mystical realism impelled Dōgen, quite understandably to us by now, to see the heritage and vitality of the Way of the Buddhas and ancestors in the entwined vines themselves—not in an absence of or freedom from them.¹⁶² According to Dōgen, Dharma did not and should not avoid intellectual—let alone religious and existential—involvement in conflicts concerning various interpretations and views. The noncommittal way of life—in this case with respect to conflicts—for which Zen Buddhism has been blamed, rightly or wrongly, was absolutely alien to Dōgen's thought. Thus he wrote:

By and large, many sages are commonly concerned with the study of cutting off the root of entwined vines, but do not realize that “cutting” (*saidan*) consists in cutting entwined vines with entwined vines. Nor do they understand entwining entwined vines with entwined vines, let alone inheriting Dharma in and through entwined vines. They rarely know that the inheritance of Dharma resides precisely in entwined vines. There is still no one who hears about it, no one who understands it. Can there be anyone who realizes it?¹⁶³

Each entwined vine grew of its own inner necessity without nullifying the others:

You should further investigate thoroughly that because of the power to transcend itself, a vine seed grows into branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits that are intertwined in harmony with one another, without losing their respective particularities. For this reason, the Buddhas and ancestors are realized, and the kōan is realized in life.¹⁶⁴

Each interpretation, though fragmentary and limited, nevertheless exerted itself totally in its Dharma-position, fulfilling its own possibilities and destiny in perfect freedom, without obstructing others and without being obstructed by others. Hence, philosophical and religious unity of expressions and vines was not comprised of an entity, but of activity—that mode of activity in which “unity” was not contemplated in terms of any metaphysical principle but was instead acted out. These entwined and entwining vines constituted the living texture of Dōgen’s mythopoeic image of a unity that advanced infinitely “beyond the marrow,” without a *finis*, though not without reason (*dōri*). This was what Dōgen called the “reason of the skin, flesh, bones and marrow entwining with each other as vines” (*hiniku-kot-suzui no kattō suru dōri*).¹⁶⁵

Dōgen viewed the philosophical enterprise as an integral part of the practice of the Way. In contradistinction to cultic and moral activities, philosophy consisted predominantly of intellectual activities that were no less creative than those other activities of life, if and when intellect was purified and reinforced by the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity (*jijuyū-zammai*). Our philosophic and hermeneutical activities were no longer a means to enlightenment, but identical to enlightenment itself, for to be was to understand—one was what one understood. Thus the activity of philosophizing, like any

other expressive activity, was restated in the context of our total participation in the self-creative process of Buddha-nature.¹⁶⁶

Dōgen once said in the *Tenzo kyōkun*, as I have quoted before: “The monastics of future generations will be able to understand a nondiscriminative Zen (*ichimizen*) based on words and letters, if they devote efforts to spiritual practice by seeing the universe through words and letters and words and letters through the universe.” It is small wonder then that Dōgen produced a unique style of Zen that fully valued our expressive and symbolic activities—including intellectual and philosophic ones—in the context of all beings’ soteriological aspirations.

THE ACTIONAL UNDERSTANDING

The fundamental concept of understanding was activity in Dōgen’s thought. Understanding was indispensably associated with our whole being—we understood as we acted and acted as we understood. The activity of the body-mind served not only as the vehicle of understanding, but also as the embodiment of truth. Often in conventional thought, knowledge and truth are ascribed solely to the functions of sensation and reason, while the functions of feeling and intuition are considered merely subjective. Such an artificial compartmentalization of human activity has created some distorted views of the subject. For Dōgen, however, the problem of understanding invariably involved the whole being which he called the “body-mind” (*shinjin*). “Body-mind” was one of Dōgen’s favorite phrases, and he often used the phrase “mustering the body-mind” (*shinjin o koshite*) to show the human attempt to understand the self and the world.

In Buddhism, as in Hinduism, the human body has traditionally been of crucial religious significance, as Edward Conze rightly emphasizes: “A mindful and disciplined attitude to the body is the very basis of Buddhist training.”¹⁶⁷ However, in some aspects of Theravāda Buddhism, an overly analytic and negativistic view of the body cannot be denied. That is, the impurity of the body is assumed, and the realization of its religious implications constitutes one phase of Theravāda meditation.¹⁶⁸ Dōgen discussed this matter in his exposition of the “four applications of mindfulness” (*catvāri smṛty-upasthānāni; shinenjū*),¹⁶⁹ and argued with respect to the first application:

Mindfulness of the impurity of the body means that a skin bag, on which you meditate at the moment, is the entire universe. Because this

is the true body, the mindfulness of the impurity of the body is spirited in the path of freedom [i.e., the nonduality of purity and impurity]. If it is not spirited, mindfulness cannot be possible. If you do not have the body, you cannot practice, expound, or meditate....

Mindfulness of the body (*kanshin*) is the body's mindfulness (*shinkan*) that is the body's, and not any other's, mindfulness. Mindfulness such as this is truly venerable. When the body's mindfulness is realized, the mind's mindfulness cannot be found—even though you look for it, it does not manifest itself.¹⁷⁰

Dōgen uses the Theravāda concept of the body here, in order to advance his view without concern for the accuracy of his exposition. The human body, in Dōgen's view, was not a hindrance to the realization of enlightenment, but the very vehicle through which enlightenment was realized. "Birth-and-death and coming-and-going are the true human body' (*shinjitsu-nintai*) means that in the midst of birth-and-death, an ordinary person wanders about in delusion, whereas a great sage is liberated in enlightenment."¹⁷¹ Dōgen's position on this issue, as I shall discuss later, was a thorough appreciation of the metaphysical and religious significance of the body without monistic and idealistic vestiges that characterized some Mahāyāna schools of Buddhism. Thus Dōgen claimed that we search with the body, practice with the body, attain enlightenment with the body, and understand with the body. This was epitomized in his statement: "The Way is surely attained with the body."¹⁷²

The human body, with all its particularities and concreteness, attained a religio-philosophical status in Dōgen's thought. This was due to the body's twofold participation in the self and the world:

(1) The human body is the most primitive matrix from which the human mind evolves and with which the human mind cooperates. In Dōgen's view, both body and mind shared fortunes with one another: "Because the body necessarily fills the mind and the mind necessarily fills the body, we call this the permeation of body and mind. That is to say, this is the entire world and all directions, the whole body and the whole mind. This is none other than joy of a very special kind."¹⁷³ Body and mind were so inextricably interwoven that it was impossible to separate them. For Dōgen, the exaltation of the mind at the expense of the body led to an enfeebled spirituality. Spirituality necessarily had to involve the complex whole of body and mind.¹⁷⁴ The non-dual unity of body and mind (*shinjin-ichinyo*) was forcefully brought forth

by Dōgen in his attack on the Senika non-Buddhists who held the view that the self-identical reality of the mind endured throughout the accidental adventures of the body. Dōgen argued:

You should consider carefully that the Buddha-dharma has always maintained the thesis of the nondual oneness of body and mind. And yet, how can it be possible that while this body is born and dissolves, mind alone departs from the body and escapes from arising and perishing? If there is a time when they are one and another time when they are not, the Buddha's teaching must be false indeed.¹⁷⁵

It was fundamentally un-Buddhist in Dōgen's view to treat the body and mind as if they were separable and consequently to regard the former as perishable, changeable, accidental, and the latter as altogether otherwise. The permanence of mind or soul independent of the perishability of body was an illusion. We shall examine this problem in more detail in the next chapter.

(2) For Dōgen, the body and mind were united with the world as a whole. The body-mind unity, at the level of psycho-physical constitution, was now extended to a cosmic dimension that was characterized by Dōgen in such phrases as "the body-mind of Dharma," "the body-mind of the Buddhas and ancestors," "the body-mind of Tathāgata," "the body-mind of the Way," and "the body-mind of the three realms and the realms of heavens and humans." The body and mind were the entire universe: "The body-mind in the Buddha-way is grass, trees, tiles, and stones; it is wind, rain, water, and fire."¹⁷⁶ From this standpoint, Dōgen continued:

You should understand the truth that when all the Buddhas of the past, present and future aspire for enlightenment and carry out that aspiration, they never exclude their bodies and minds. To doubt this is already to slander them. As we reflect quietly on this matter, it seems quite reasonable that our bodies and minds have endeavored with the Buddhas of the three periods and that our desire for enlightenment has been awakened with the Buddhas of the three periods.¹⁷⁷

Although we often think our bodies are bound by our skin and therefore separated from the world, it is not always definite where the body ends and where the external world begins, and vice versa. As Whitehead observes, the biological and physiological functions of the human body, such as those of

the molecules that constitute it, further blur the boundaries between the human body and its external environment.¹⁷⁸

Dōgen saw the human body as an important part of the external world. The human body participated in both our inner and outer worlds, and in turn, both the inner and outer worlds participated in each other through the human body. The mind, body, and world interpenetrated one another so inseparably that a hard and fast demarcation between them was altogether impossible. With such a view, to cleanse the body was to cleanse the mind; to cleanse the body-mind was to cleanse the entire universe.¹⁷⁹ We shall address this problem of cleansing in more detail later.

Because the mind, body, and world were inextricably interpenetrated so as to constitute the totality of reality, the act of human understanding (*gakudō*) became possible only when we participated in this totality.¹⁸⁰ Dōgen contended: “There are two ways to study the Way: one is to understand it with the mind, the other is with the body.”¹⁸¹ The first of these methods, understanding with the mind, was explained by Dōgen as follows:

Shingakudō is to study [the Way] with all the various aspects of the mind: the conscious mind (*citta*; *sittashin* or *ryochishin*), the cosmic mind (*hṛdaya*; *karidashin*), the transcendental mind (*iridashin*), and so on. It also means that after arousing the thought of enlightenment through cosmic resonance (*kannō-dōkō*), you devote yourself to the great Way of the Buddhas and ancestors and learn your daily activities with an awakened desire for enlightenment.¹⁸²

It is particularly important for us to note that Dōgen stressed the importance of perception and thought, which he called *sittashin* or *ryochishin*, at the conscious level for the attainment of enlightenment:

Of these aspects of the mind, arousing the thought of enlightenment (*bodaishin*) invariably employs the conscious mind.... The aspiration for enlightenment cannot be awakened without this conscious mind. I do not mean to identify this conscious mind directly with the thought of enlightenment, but the latter is engendered by the former.¹⁸³

Despite the emphasis on conscious thought, it constituted only a portion of Dōgen's conception of mind, as we shall see further in the next chapter. It differed from the narrowly conceived subjectivistic idealism (which Dōgen

would have considered a form of reductionism); understanding with the mind did not imply any subjectivistic or solipsistic predilections in the least. Nor was it a dissolution of the conscious mind, as in the case of a certain type of mysticism. The enlightened mind, as is clear from this, was post-critical and yet continuous with the pre-critical forces of the body-mind. The critical mind was never forfeited in Dōgen's thought.

Understanding with the body was described by Dōgen as follows:

Shingakudō is to study the Way with the body—to study in and through the naked bodily whole (*sekinikudan* or *shakunikudan*). The body comes forth from the study of the Way, and what comes forth from the study of the Way is all body. The entire universe is precisely this very human body (*shinjitsu-nintai*); birth-and-death and coming-and-going are the true human body. By moving this body, we shun the Ten Evils, uphold the Eight Precepts, devote ourselves to the Three Treasures, and enter the monastic's life through renunciation. This is the real study of the Way; consequently it is called the true human body. A young Buddhist student should never sympathize with any non-Buddhist view of naturalism [i.e., spontaneous generation].¹⁸⁴

Again Dōgen was very eager to remind us of the dangers of naturalistic views. When he spoke of the naked bodily existence, he meant the true human body that came forth from the act of understanding, which was not to be mistaken with crude biological instincts or physiological drives. A reductionistic view of body was radically rejected by Dōgen; only after this rejection did the “nakedness” of bodily existence, mediated and purified by emptiness, become truly authentic as it was free of self-centered orientation. Thus, the body came forth from understanding; the true human body functioned freely and authentically in harmony with the entire universe.

The body-mind totality was at last free from dualistic shackles and was free for duality—that is, the body-mind was now authentically able to deal with the self and the world. This was the meaning of the body-mind cast off (*shinjin-datsuraku*), as described in the following famous statement:

To study the Way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be enlightened by all things of the universe. To be enlightened by all things of the universe is to cast off the body and mind of the self, as well as those of others. Even the traces of

enlightenment are wiped out, and life with traceless enlightenment goes on forever and ever.¹⁸⁵

The self and the world were “cast off” and hence “undefiled,” but not dissolved. The inexorable duality of the self and the world—with all the ensuing implications, paradoxes, and conflicts—was not dissolved, but seen in the light of emptiness and thusness.

The casting-off of the body-mind authenticated “mustering the body-mind” (*shinjin o koshite*), as eloquently stated in the following:

Mustering our bodies and minds (*shinjin o koshite*) we see things, and mustering our bodies and minds we hear sounds, thereby we understand them intimately (*shitashiku*). However, it is not like a reflection dwelling in the mirror, nor is it like the moon and the water. As one side is illumined, the other is darkened (*ippō o shōsuru toki wa ippō wa kurashi*).¹⁸⁶

Herein lies the epitome of Dōgen’s mystical realism. The Way was “intimately understood” in and through what we expressed and enacted by the mustering of our body-minds. Humans and the Way were no longer in a dualistic relationship like that of the moon and the water, or the mirror and the reflection, or the knower and the known.

Such an intimate understanding has been likened to “forgetting the footsteps of enlightenment.”¹⁸⁷ However, Dōgen’s nondualistic mystical thinking had an especially realistic thrust, which permeated all aspects of his religion and philosophy. That is to say, nonduality did not primarily signify the transcendence of duality so much as it signified the realization of duality. When one chose and committed oneself to a special course of action, one did so in such a manner that the action was not an action among others, but *the* action—there was nothing but that particular action in the universe so that the whole universe was created in and through that action. Yet even this action was eventually cast off, leaving no trace of the Way whatsoever. This was indeed far from being a kind of mysticism that attempted to attain an undifferentiated state of consciousness. On the contrary, Dōgen’s thought was entirely committed to the realm of duality—including its empirical and rational aspects.

As we incorporate these observations on Dōgen’s view of the body-mind understanding into what I have said about activities and expressions, it is

evident that activities, expressions, and understanding were one and the same for Dōgen. It was not that we acted first and then attempted to understand, nor was it even that action was a special mode of understanding; all modes of understanding were necessarily activities and expressions. This was why Dōgen said: “Understanding through faith (*shinge*) is that which we cannot evade.”¹⁸⁸ Every activity-expression was a hermeneutical experiment in and through the body-mind. Ontology and epistemology together became an ethically, emotionally, and intellectually purified and revitalized cognition of life and reality. Thus:

Tathāgata’s supranormal power of compassion and everlasting life permit us to understand through faith—by exerting our minds and bodies, by exerting the entire universe, by exerting the Buddhas and ancestors, by exerting all things, by exerting ultimate reality, by exerting the skin-flesh-bones-marrow, and by exerting birth-and-death and coming-and-going.¹⁸⁹

As noted before, one was what one understood. Ontology (and soteriology for that matter) was inevitably hermeneutical.

In this chapter, I have endeavored to examine how cultic and moral activities (*gyōji*), and mythopoeic and philosophic expressions (*dōtoku*), were differentiated from Dōgen’s conception of zazen-only in the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity. The concepts of activity and expression were generally in line with the traditional polar concepts of meditation and wisdom in the Buddhist symbolic model. In Dōgen’s thought, however, the philosophy of activity and the activity of philosophy were more radically legitimized without falling into the two extremes of monistic pantheism and reductionistic phenomenalism (both of which were, according to Dōgen, dualistic). Hence, ethical and philosophic endeavors in the world of duality were not to be abandoned, but were to be liberated by the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity in order for humans to act and think authentically. Only then did the use of categories and concepts of duality become the coefficient of our total liberation—a liberation no less creative than other modes of creativity.

Self-understanding of *how* has led us to the problem of *what*, that is, what to think and act. So far we have been primarily concerned with the how, and shall now turn in the remaining chapters to a detailed investigation of *what* Dōgen thought and did.

THE RELIGION AND METAPHYSICS OF BUDDHA-NATURE

EXPRESSION (*dōtoku*) AND ACTIVITY (*gyōji*) in Dōgen's thought can be profitably discussed in terms of the religion and metaphysics of Buddha-nature and the ritual and morality of monastic asceticism. We will embark on the exposition of these two aspects in the remaining two chapters. As we have observed, Dōgen's thought was intimately connected with Japanese Tendai thought and the Chinese Zen tradition. As we probe Dōgen's life and thought, we also come to realize that these ideological elements were further transformed by the Japanese ethos of the age in which Dōgen lived. Two of them stand out most prominently: one is the sentiment of impermanence (*anitya*; *mujō*) and the other, reason (*yukti*; *dōri*). Both terms were borrowed from the Buddhist tradition, yet they had been thoroughly acculturated by the late Heian and early Kamakura periods.

As Karaki discusses, there were two major types of conceptions regarding impermanence in the history of Japanese thought.¹ One treated the actualities of life as evanescent and empty (*hakanashi*). This sentiment was prevalent in the Age of Degenerate Law (*mappō*), in which a great number of sensitive minds turned first from the secular world to established Buddhism, and then turned, in despair and alienation, from religion to a retreat from everything to a quiet pursuit of their personal predilections (*suki* or *susabi*). This was essentially a flight from the impermanence of existence through a "sentimentalization" of it in melancholic and indifferent fatalism, rather than a realistic attempt to cope. It was a sentiment of impermanence rather than a metaphysic of impermanence.² The other conception confronted

the actualities of impermanence as facts that could not be escaped and, hence, asked that one attempt to live them and transform them resolutely and heroically. Sadly enough, the aesthetic and religious means of inward fortification that were fashionable at the time were fatally inadequate since they were merely psychological contrivances, and more important, were acts of attachment to the self that could not change the reality of impermanence. Hence, this second approach concerned itself mostly with a genuine philosophic understanding and religious transformation of the existential situation.

The leaders of Kamakura Buddhism such as Hōnen, Shinran, Dōgen, and Nichiren shared this latter understanding of the existence of impermanence, but Dōgen was the first who seriously attempted to deal with the problem philosophically and religiously, and as a result produced a metaphysic of impermanence.³ As we will recall, impermanence was the alpha and omega of religion for Dōgen: reflection upon and understanding of the impermanence of existence was tirelessly exhorted throughout his works. His approach was neither emotive nor psychological but rather religious and metaphysical through and through, as we shall see in more detail in what follows. His view was alien to the fatalism and escapism that had often been associated with the sense of impermanence; moreover, he shunned aesthetic indulgence, though he could not help but be poetic and eloquent about impermanence.⁴ The crucially important point to note here is the centrality of impermanence, and accordingly of death, in Dōgen's whole religious and philosophic thought.

Another important idea that bore deeply upon Dōgen's thought was the concept of reason, in the sense of the nature or intrinsic logic of things—not the reasons for them, but the principle, meaning, or truth behind them. In the Buddhist tradition, the concept of reason was a common subject. Dōgen in particular favored this word and used it in practically all the subjects with which he dealt.⁵ The pervasiveness of this concept in medieval Japan has been well attested by many students of Japanese thought.⁶ After the Jōkyū War (1221) or thereabout, an earlier fatalistic view of reason gradually lost popularity in favor of a more positive, realistic understanding of it; this development reflected the fall of the last remnants of the Heian aristocracy and the rise of the military class.⁷ The Buddhist tradition in general advocated the fourfold reason of the *Samdhinirmocana sūtra* and the *Yogācārabhūmi*—namely the reason of relation (*kandai-dōri*), the reason of causation (*sayū-dōri*), the reason of recognition (*shōjō-dōri*), and the reason of naturalness (*hōni-dōri*).⁸ However, Dōgen's usage was much wider and more

comprehensive; in fact, the whole spectrum of his thought and practice was permeated without exception by his search for reason in all aspects of life.⁹

Thus to Dōgen it was imperative, both philosophically and religiously, to understand (*akiramu*) the reason of impermanence and to act upon it—this orientation differed fundamentally from the view of being subjugated to or of fighting against the intolerable realities of the age. Furthermore, in this pursuit of the reason of impermanence, Dōgen in turn deeply probed the mystery and reason of Buddha-nature.

TWO STRANDS OF MAHĀYĀNA IDEALISM

Buddhism, like other Indian religious and philosophical traditions, approaches the problems of humanity and the world from what we would broadly designate the “psychological” standpoint.¹⁰ Its methodology assumes that the activities of the mind are the decisive factor in determining our well-being. The opening statements of the *Dhammapada* proclaim that all we are is the result of what we have thought;¹¹ the *Ratnamegha sūtra* beautifully describes this in the following:

All phenomena originate in the mind, and when the mind is fully known, all phenomena are fully known...Bodhisattvas, thoroughly examining the nature of things, dwell in ever-present mindfulness of the activity of the mind, and so do not fall into the mind’s power, but the mind comes under their control. And with the mind under their control all phenomena are under their control.¹²

Nyanaponika Thera summarizes this psychological orientation by saying: “In the Buddhist doctrine, mind is the starting point, the focal point, and also, as the liberated and purified mind of the Saint, the culminating point.”¹³ Hence, what matters most in liberation both individually and collectively (which is, after all, what religion is all about), as Buddhism conceives it, is the proper understanding and use of the mind. The way to liberation is founded upon the understanding of our psychic conditions and the moral and religious rectification of them, for all the sufferings of existence arise from what we feel, think, and do—ultimately from an ignorant mind. Careful analysis of the states of consciousness as well as of the unconscious (which was systematized elaborately in the doctrine of consciousness-only by the Vijñānavāda school, as we shall see presently) derives from this

methodological orientation. Thus Buddhism has been, from its very beginning, strongly psychological in its outlook and method.¹⁴

Buddhism has presented, from its earliest phase to Abhidharma and Vijñānavāda Buddhism to present-day Buddhism, wide-ranging analyses, issues, and theories of the mind such as those of the five aggregates (*goun*); the dependent origination of the twelve *nīdanas* (*jūni-innen*); the unity of the six sense-organs (*rokkon*), the six sense-objects (*rokkō*), and the six consciousnesses (*roku-shiki*); various interpretations of the mind (*citta-manas-vijñāna*; *shin-i-shiki*); various attempts at the classification of mental functions; controversies over the distinction between the mind (*shin'ō* or *shinnō*) and mental functions (*shinjo*) and their relationship; Abhidharmic analysis of dharmas; Vijñānavādin's eight consciousnesses (*hasshiki*) developed from the six consciousnesses; and controversies over the original purity of the nature of the mind. All these are abundantly indicative of Buddhism's fascination with the human mind as a clue to religious and moral matters.¹⁵

Buddhist psychology also extends beyond conventional concerns to embrace physical, metaphysical, and ethical issues. It deals with the totality of the self and the world. This will become increasingly clear as we go on in this chapter.

Having observed this, I now wish to review, very briefly, two facets of Mahāyāna Buddhist "idealism" (*citta-mātra*; *yuishin*)¹⁶ as it is broadly interpreted—that is, the tradition of consciousness-only (*vijñāna-mātra* or *vijñapti-mātra*; *yuishiki*) and that of *tathāgata-garbha* (*nyoraijō*).¹⁷ The former has to do with a "substratum" of the mind beyond the six consciousnesses of early Buddhism and Abhidharma philosophy, and the latter pertains to the original nature of the mind, which has been very important throughout the history of Buddhism.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the history of Buddhist thought is the peculiar—almost agonizing—ideological readjustments attempted by various individuals and schools to meet the difficulties posed by the doctrine of no-self (*anātman*; *muga*), which has existed from the very beginning of Buddhism. Abhidharma Buddhism assumed a position that S. Dasgupta calls "pluralistic phenomenalism."¹⁸ the self is viewed as a succession of ever-changing conglomerations of impersonal dharmas—momentary phenomenal forms devoid of ultimate ground or cause. This doctrine of no-self had difficulties explaining to its critics the nature and continuity of a subject who is reborn through a succession of lives, the mechanism of memory and karmic inheritance, the nature of cognition, the locus of moral responsibility, and a

legion of other problems. Adherents of this theory searched for some sort of “agent” or “substratum” that could integrate mental functions, transmit karmic effects, and continue the personality through rebirths, but they tried to avoid admitting to any substantialistic self. For example, the idea of “life-force” (*āyus*; *ju* or *jīvitendriya*; *myōkon*) was often referred to in primitive Buddhism, Abhidharma Buddhism, the Vijñānavāda school, and so forth. According to this view, the life-force underlies the six consciousnesses, and its duration and measure are allotted to each person on account of karmic merits; it is said to preserve warmth (*nan*) and consciousness (*shiki*) and is in turn preserved by the latter (although the relation between the life-force, warmth, and consciousness are not always clear). Thus, the life-force is the integrator of the body and mind. These three factors are said to depart from the body at death and to be transmitted to the next life. This idea is only one among many other theoretical concessions, such as the “original consciousness” (*kompon-jiki*) of the Mahāsaṃghika school, the “subconscious life-stream” (*bhavaṅga-citta*; *ubun-jiki*) of the Sthavira school, and the “person” (*pudgala*; *fudogara*) of the Vatsīputriya school.¹⁹

Let us consider the idealistic line of thought in its historical context. Some rudimentary ideas of consciousness-only appeared in such texts as the *Samdhinirmocana sūtra*, *Mahāyāna-abhidharma sūtra*, and were later developed by Maitreya (c. 270–350) in the *Yogācāra-bhūmi* (which is traditionally attributed to him), by Asaṅga (c. 310–390) in his *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha*, by Vasubandhu (c. 320–400) in his *Viṃśatikā-vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi*, *Triṃśikā-vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi*, and by Dharmapāla (sixth century) in his *Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi-śāstra*. The consciousness-only thought reached its highest point in the fourth century and thereafter. Later it was combined, as we see in the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra* and the *Ta-ch’êng ch’i-hsin lun* (both of which were presumably fifth-sixth century works), with the tradition of *tathāgata-garbha*, which had been developed independently of the Vijñānavāda tradition. Vijñānavāda thought developed the ideas of *manas*-consciousness (*manas*; *manashiki*) and store-consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*; *arayashiki*) as the seventh and the eighth consciousnesses. Store-consciousness is said to be the psychic repository in which unconscious memories, karmic accumulations, impulses, drives, and so forth are stored in the form of “seeds” (*bīja*; *shūji*). When conditions are right, these seeds produce “manifestations” (*gengyō*) that are taken by the ordinary worldly person to be phenomena of the external world independent of the mind—thus forming a dualistic conception of the mind and the world (*temben*). In this connection,

thought-consciousness (*mano-vijñāna*; *ishiki*) and *manas*-consciousness are primarily responsible for the discrimination and individuation that characterize the empirical world. The manifestations “perfume” (*vāsanā*; *kunjū*) their impressions or energies into the store-consciousness and thus form new seeds. This process of “seeds-manifestations-perfuming-new seeds” takes place constantly—hence, cause and effect occur simultaneously in the present (*sambō-chinden-inga-dōji*); the process repeats itself ad infinitum in a succession of such presents. This is the dependent origination of phenomena and consciousness (*arayashiki-engi*), in which both subjectivity and objectivity are the products of store-consciousness.

As is clear from these cursory observations, store-consciousness is by far the most sophisticated concept innovated by the Buddhists in response to criticisms of the idea of no-self. Indeed, it almost envisions a self-surrogate, yet this differs, or allegedly differs, from any immutable, self-identical substratum of the self.²⁰ Here we can see the close historical connection between the idea of the self and the idea of the store-consciousness. However, these ideas of store-consciousness, seeds, and so on are sometimes ambiguous and misleading due to the intrinsic connotations of the terms. The store-consciousness often reminds us of a receptacle in which seeds are stored and hence, is strongly suggestive of permanence and substance instead of impermanence and nonsubstantiality—that is, the rise and dissolution of store-consciousness from moment to moment in accordance with dependent origination. Seeds, active in the processes of manifestation and perfuming, are an embryological analogy that strongly suggests the continuity of development, which again is liable to association with the ideas of substratum and immutability.²¹

Such a developmental perspective is also reflected in the notion of the “five stages of spiritual discipline” (*goi*) that are necessary to realize the so-called transformation of the eight consciousnesses and the attainment of the four wisdoms (*tenjiki-tokuchi*). Moreover, the Vijñānavāda school is preeminently psychological and epistemological rather than ontological. It emphasizes the process of transformation that occurs in store-consciousness, but it does not go so far as to affirm mind-only as the ultimate reality in which the opposites of pure and defiled, good and evil, enlightenment and delusion are resolved in a different way from the process of transformation.²²

Let us now turn to the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition. This tradition developed independently along with the Vijñānavāda tradition of Buddhism. Its earliest formulations appeared in the *Ārya-tathāgata-garbha-namamahāyāna*

sūtra, the *Śrīmālādevī-śiṃhanāda sūtra*, and many other such *sūtras* around the fourth century, and were later developed in such works as the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, the *Ta-ch'êng ch'î-hsin lun* (popularly known as the *Awakening of Faith*), Vasubandhu's *Buddhatva-śāstra*, *Ratnagotravibhāga-mahāyānottaratantra-śāstra*, and other treatises in the fifth and sixth centuries. In the history of the evolution of this tradition, the idea of *tathāgata-garbha* was acknowledged independently from that of store-consciousness in its earliest stage; in the next stage, both were acknowledged simultaneously; and in the final stage, the fusion of the two strands took place as in the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra* and the *Ta-ch'êng ch'î-hsin lun*. Especially the latter is said to be the culmination of the *tathāgata-garbha* school of Buddhist thought, which influenced practically all the schools and sects of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the East Asian countries.²³

Although the foregoing observations may give an impression that the tradition of the *tathāgata-garbha* is strictly Mahāyānist, it is actually the result of long developments of Buddhist collective reflections upon the essential nature of the mind—that is, as to whether it is originally pure or defiled, or both, or neither. The issue was debated among the Buddhists in the earliest phase of its history. As Katsumata observes, the primitive Buddhists conceived that the mind is originally pure and that passions are foreign defilements (*shinshō-shōjō*; *kakujin-bonnō*). Even when some argued for the purity and defilement of the mind, the general tendency was to subscribe to the original purity of the mind and to see the phenomenal nature of the mind as both pure and defiled.²⁴ In Abhidharma Buddhism the two schools of thought on this issue controverted each other, one maintaining the original purity of the mind (e.g., the Mahāsaṃghika school) and the other rejecting it (e.g., the Sarvāstivāda school).²⁵

What characterizes Mahāyāna Buddhism, on the other hand, is its consistent adherence, throughout its history, to the idea of the original purity of the mind. Indeed, this is said to be the core of Mahāyāna Buddhism, from which all later doctrinal developments derived, and without which they cannot be adequately understood.²⁶ In contradistinction to the psychological and ethical approach of early Buddhism and the Abhidharma school, the Mahāyāna approach was predominantly metaphysical with respect to the nature of the enlightened mind and the possibility of Buddhahood, as we see in such concepts as no-mind (*acitta*; *mushin*), emptiness (*śūnyatā*; *kū*), *tathāgata-garbha*, Dharma-mind (*dharma-citta*; *hosshō-shin*), Buddha-nature (*buddhatva*; *bussō*), thusness (*tathatā*; *shinnyo*), one mind (*eka-citta*; *isshin*),

original enlightenment (*hongaku*).²⁷ Thus, the crude psychological conception of the original purity of the mind—of early Buddhism—was metaphysically elaborated and refined in various schools of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Garbha, in *tathāgata-garbha*, refers either to “embryo,” which is the potentiality to become Tathāgata, or to “womb,” which gives birth to Tathāgata. *Garbha* in the sense of “store” (which is customary in Chinese translations, comparable to the *ālaya* of *ālaya-vijñāna*) may also be interpreted either as the Tathāgata “hidden” in sentient beings or as the Tathāgata which “embraces” sentient beings. In both cases (the analogies of which are strikingly similar to those of the Vijñānavāda school at this point), the first meaning seems to have been conceived at the early stages of *tathāgata-garbha* thought.²⁸ In one case, the *tathāgata-garbha* is in us, whereas in the other we are in the *tathāgata-garbha*. In the former, *tathāgata-garbha* is the potentiality to become Buddhas, psychologically and anthropologically; in the latter it is a metaphysical or ontological vision of ultimate reality in which humans are the constituents of the *tathāgata-garbha*. In this latter case we can see the metaphysical possibilities when such an idea is combined with other potent Buddhist ideas, such as Buddha-nature, emptiness, and mind-only.

This is precisely what happened in Buddhist idealism around the fifth and sixth centuries when the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, the *Ta-ch'êng ch'i-hsin lun*, and other sūtras and treatises were produced. It was in these works that the two quite different traditions of store-consciousness and *tathāgata-garbha* were synthesized; yet the synthesis was weighted in favor of the *tathāgata-garbha* orientation, that is, the belief in the original purity of the mind. This is especially true of the *Ta-ch'êng ch'i-hsin lun*, which is often said to be the apex of the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition of Buddhist thought.²⁹

In this work, store-consciousness is defined as that in which “neither birth nor death” (*nirvāṇa*) pervades “birth and death” (*samsāra*)—both are neither identical nor different—and that which has the two aspects of enlightenment and nonenlightenment.³⁰ The Vijñānavādin conception of the significance of store-consciousness is discarded, and *manas*-consciousness in the scheme of the eight consciousnesses is dropped, although some basic ideas of the Vijñānavāda school are still utilized. The phenomenal world is construed as arising from the activation of store-consciousness, or thusness, by “basic ignorance” (*kompon-mumyō*), and explained in terms of the three subtle aspects (*sansai*) and the six coarse aspects (*rokuso*),³¹ or in terms of the five minds (*goi*).³² In a symbolic expression, indicative of the mystery of ignorance, this work speaks of ignorance as originating “suddenly.”³³ Enlightenment is classified as “original

enlightenment” (*hongaku*) and “acquired enlightenment” (*shikaku*), two classifications that became the fundamental concepts in Buddhist thought in its subsequent history.³⁴ Both enlightenment and nonenlightenment have been said to be aspects of the same essence, namely, thusness.³⁵ The mystery of “perfuming” (*vāsanā*; *kunjū*)—permeation or suffusion in the Vijñānavāda tradition—is of two kinds: the perfuming of ignorance and the perfuming of thusness. Thus, original enlightenment, ignorance, and the mind in between, perfume one another in such ways that one has either a deluded mind or an enlightened mind.³⁶ Ignorance continues perpetually to permeate the mind, from the beginningless beginning until it perishes by the realization of enlightenment, but thusness or original enlightenment has no interruption and no ending.³⁷ Thusness, moreover, has the inner urge to express itself, seeming to suggest that it is not nothing as well as not neutral.³⁸

These strands of Buddhist idealism are presented here in order to provide the background for our subsequent investigation. It is particularly noteworthy at this juncture to recognize that the oldest idealistic tenet, “The triple world is mind-only” (*sangai-yuishin*) in the *Daśabhūmika sūtra*—which was originally an independent sūtra but later incorporated into the *Avatamsaka sūtra*—is more closely aligned historically and ideologically with the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition than with the Vijñānavāda tradition, although the latter two provided two different interpretations of the tenet.³⁹ Indeed, *tathāgata-garbha* thought can be construed as the philosophical-religious explication of the tenet “The triple world is mind-only”; incidentally, Chinese Hua-yen metaphysics can be regarded as the further development of this interpretation.⁴⁰ Furthermore, Zen’s relation to these traditions can be conjectured from the legendary association of Bodhidharma with the *Lañkāvatāra sūtra* and from the association of Chih-yen (602–668), Ch’eng-kuan (738–840), and Kuei-fêng Tsung-mi (780–841) with Zen Buddhism. Thus, Hua-yen metaphysics, the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition, and Zen Buddhism were intimately related to each other historically and ideologically. This strand of Buddhist idealism is very important to understand Dōgen’s view of mind in general and Buddha-nature in particular, the examination of which we shall now begin.

MIND: BEYOND MONISTIC PANTHEISM AND REDUCTIONISTIC PHENOMENALISM

Dōgen once proclaimed: “Discourse on [the nonduality of] the mind and its essence (*sesshin-sesshō*) is the great foundation of the Buddha-way”;⁴¹ he wrote extensively on this subject matter in many chapters of the *Shōbōgenzō*.⁴² As shall become increasingly clear in our subsequent investigation, Dōgen’s interpretation of mind inherited the best elements of Hua-yen, *tathāgata-garbha*, and Zen traditions, yet overcame some vulnerabilities inherent in them, and went beyond them by being deeply practical and existentialist.

In general accord with the Mahāyāna Buddhist interpretation of mind, Dōgen used the notion in various ways.⁴³ First of all, mind was the totality of psycho-physical realities. As noted before, Dōgen emphasized the importance of the conscious mental activities of intellect, feeling, and will (*ryochi-nenkaku*). However, he also said that the entire universe was mind: “The triple world is mind-only” (*sangai-yuishin*). Thus he equated mind with “mountains, rivers, and the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars.”⁴⁴ By so doing, Dōgen did not maintain, like some Buddhists, that all existence was reducible to mind as ordinarily interpreted by Berkeleyian subjective idealism. Dōgen discussed conversations between Saṃghanandi, the seventeenth ancestor of Indian Buddhism, and his disciple Gayāśata regarding the phenomenon of the tinkle of a bell—whether what tinkles was the bell, the air, or the mind. Gayāśata’s view, approved by his teacher subsequently, was that the mind—neither the bell nor the air—tinkles.⁴⁵ A subjective idealism in this sense was also generally accepted by Zen Buddhists. Dōgen’s view on the other hand was that, in the final analysis, inasmuch as these three factors were “quiet” (*jakujo*) or empty, the “tinkle of the bell” was neither the tinkle of the air nor the tinkle of the bell nor the tinkle of the mind (in its ordinary sense). It was “the tinkle of the air, the tinkle of the bell, the tinkle of stirring [the air], and the tinkle of tinkle (*mei-mei*)—each abiding in its own Dharma-position as an expression and activity of emptiness and thusness.”⁴⁶ As already mentioned in this example, Dōgen maintained that mind was not only the totality of the psycho-physical world but also “something” more; accordingly, mind was identified with some important terms such as thusness (*tathatā*; *shinnyo*), Dharma-nature (*dharmatā*; *hosshō*), Buddha-nature (*buddhatā* or *buddhatva*; *bussō*), and emptiness.

Dōgen wrote:

You should know that in the Buddha-dharma, the teaching of the “essence of mind (*shinshō*) as the all-embracing aspect of the universe” [the *Ta-ch’êng ch’i-hsin lun*] includes the whole reality; it does not separate reality from appearance or concern itself with arising and perishing. Even enlightenment and nirvāṇa are nothing other than this mind-essence. All things and all phenomena are invariably this one mind—nothing is excluded, all is embraced. All these various teachings are all one mind of nonduality (*byōdō-issuin*). To see no particular difference is the way Buddhists have understood the nature of mind.

Such being the case, how can you discriminate between body and mind, and divide birth-and-death and nirvāṇa, within this single Dharma? Inasmuch as we are undoubtedly the children of Buddha, do not listen to those mad people who speak of non-Buddhist views.⁴⁷

It is noteworthy to see here a specific reference to the *Ta-ch’êng ch’i-hsin lun*’s doctrine of *tathāgata-garbha*, which embraces the Dharma-world (*dharmadhātu*; *hokkai*)—indicating the affinity Dōgen’s view of mind felt for that particular tradition. To Dōgen, mind was at once knowledge and reality, at once the knowing subject and the known object, yet it transcended them both at the same time. In this nondual conception of mind, what one knew was what one was—and ontology, epistemology, and soteriology were inseparably united. This was also his interpretation of the Hua-yen tenet “The triple world is mind-only.” From this vantage point, Dōgen guarded himself against the inherent weaknesses of the two strands of Buddhist idealism: the advocacy of the functions of mind (*shinshō*) by the school of consciousness-only and the advocacy of the essence of mind (*shinshō*) by the school of *tathāgata-garbha*—both of which were vulnerable to a dualism between phenomena and essence. Thus, philosophically speaking, Dōgen maneuvered between monistic pantheism and reductionistic phenomenalism. In this respect, he sought the middle way in his own manner.

Now, mind can be posited as the knowing subject in opposition to the known object, as the mind in opposition to the body, and as the essence of mind in opposition to the functions of the mind or the mind-body totality. One of the typical views of mind embraces the first of these three pairs of opposites; another holds to the second group. Mahāyāna Buddhism, being nondualistically oriented by virtue of its two pivotal notions, of dependent

origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*; *engi*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*; *kū*), was ever vigilant against falling into any dualistic traps. Nevertheless the dangers of subtle dualisms existed even at the time of Dōgen. Let us examine this matter a little further.

One of the targets for Dōgen's philosophical attack was the so-called Senika non-Buddhist school (*senni-gedō*), which held the view of the self-identical reality of mind as opposed to the body. Dōgen explained the Senika view as follows:

Speaking of association with non-Buddhist ways, there is a school called the Senika in India. Its view is as follows: "The great Way resides in our present bodies, and its nature can be easily understood: it recognizes pleasure and suffering, is aware of hot and cold, and discerns pain and itch. It is neither obstructed by things nor affected by environs; although things come and go, and environs appear and disappear, spiritual intelligence (*reichi*) is eternal and unchangeable. This spiritual intelligence permeates all living beings, ordinary and holy alike, without discrimination. Even though there may be the illusory flowers of false dharmas temporarily in them, once wisdom suited to a particular thought-moment appears, things are dissolved and environs disappear; thereupon, the original nature of spiritual intelligence alone remains clear and calm. Even if our bodily form disintegrates, spiritual intelligence emerges intact, just as when a house is burning from an accidental fire, its owner escapes safely from it. The luminous and subtle—known as the nature of the awakened and the wise one—is also called Buddha, or known as enlightenment. The self and the other are both endowed with it; delusion and enlightenment are both permeated by it. Whatever things and environs may be, spiritual intelligence is neither together with the environs nor the same as the things: it is eternally changeless. All environs now existing may be regarded as real insofar as they depend on the presence of spiritual intelligence; because they are conditioned to arise by the original nature, they are real dharmas. Even so, they are not always abiding as spiritual intelligence is, because they are subject to arising and perishing. Regardless of light and darkness, [spiritual intelligence] knows them mysteriously; hence it is called spiritual intelligence. Furthermore, it is known as the true self, the origin of enlightenment, the original nature, or the original substance. When one awakens to this original nature, one is said to return to the always

abiding, and is called 'the great being returning to the true.' Thereafter, no longer transmigrating in the cycles of birth and death, one enters the ocean of the [original] nature where there is no arising nor perishing. Aside from this, nothing is true. The more such a nature is obscured, the more the triple world and the six worlds arise in rivalry." This is the view of the Senika school.⁴⁸

Spiritual intelligence was serenely unaffected by the vicissitudes of bodily existence and, even after the latter's dissolution, retained its self-identical existence. The idealistic orientation of Buddhist thought in general left many susceptible to the Senika view, and Dōgen wrote frequently about it in his works to warn fellow Buddhists against allowing variously disguised versions of this view to creep into their thoughts. Dōgen wrote for example: "Hearing the word Buddha-nature, many scholars erroneously take it for the ātman of the faulty Senika view."⁴⁹ Dōgen's critique of the mistaken view of the eternity of mind and the perishability of body (*shinjō-sōmetsu no jaken*) was vehement and relentless, as evident in the following:

You should understand this: In India and China, it is well known that the Buddha-dharma from the very beginning has maintained the unity of body and mind and the nonduality of essence and form. This is indisputable. Needless to say, from the standpoint of changelessness (*jōjū*), all things are changeless without exception, with no differentiation between body and mind. From the standpoint of unconditionedness (*jakumetsu*), all existences are equally unconditioned, with no differentiation between essence and form. In view of all this, is it not unreasonable for some to assert that while the body perishes, the mind endures? What is more, it should be realized that this very birth-and-death itself is nirvāṇa; nobody can speak of nirvāṇa independently of birth-and-death. Indeed, even if you intellectually apprehend the eternity of mind that is separated from the body, and thereby deceive yourself into construing it as the Buddha-wisdom independent of birth-and-death, your mind of abstract understanding and discriminative perception is still subject to birth and annihilation, and it is by no means changeless. Is this not pitiful?⁵⁰

Dōgen's concern was quite justifiable since it was an ever-recurring philosophical temptation to corrupt the ideas of dependent origination and

emptiness—the lasting Buddhist contribution to the philosophical and religious heritage of the world. The real purpose behind Dōgen's critique of the Senika school was to warn those Buddhists who had unwittingly accepted the Senika presuppositions and consequently ruined the Buddhist metaphysical foundation.⁵¹

Another frequent target of Dōgen's vehement attack was Ta-hui Tsung-kao (1089–1163), the foremost leader of the Lin-chi (Rinzai) sect of Chinese Zen Buddhism, who advocated a view different from that of the Senika school. Dōgen wrote:

Subsequently, Zen Teacher Ta-hui Tsung-kao of Ching-shan once said: "Buddhists today are fond of arguing the problem of mind and its essence, and like to talk about its mystery and subtlety; consequently, they are slow in the attainment of the Way. When we resolutely abandon both mind and its essence, forgetting its mystery as well as its subtlety, and thereby establish that these two aspects are of no-birth, only then do we attain enlightenment."

Such a view understands neither the fundamental writings nor the eternal teachings of the Buddhas and ancestors.⁵²

Dōgen then tells us that Tsung-kao asserted a kind of negativistic mysticism that totally obliterated any mental activities. He further states his interpretation of Tsung-kao's view as follows:

Accordingly, he holds such a view because he conceives mind to be nothing but intellect and perception, but fails to learn that intellect and perception are also [an integral part of] mind. He unwarrantedly regards the *essence* of mind as only serene and calm, but does not understand the existence and nonexistence [that is, the dynamic workings] of Buddha-nature and Dharma-nature. He has never even dreamt of the nature of thusness (*nyozeshō*); this is why he misunderstands the Buddha-dharma in this manner.⁵³

While I have some reservations about Dōgen's interpretation of Tsung-kao at this point, in light of his frequent sectarian attitude toward his rival sect (to which Tsung-kao belonged) despite his catholic view of Buddhism, we must appreciate Dōgen's attack on the negativistic predilection of Tsung-kao's thought. Thus, in contrast to the Senika thinkers who believed in the eternity

of spiritual intelligence as opposed to the body, Tsung-kao maintained the dissolution of any discriminative activities of consciousness that amounted to a state of unconsciousness. As Dōgen further argued, “abandoning both mind and its essence” was itself the very act of mind; likewise, “forgetting its mystery as well as its subtlety” was itself an expression of the profound mystery of mind. Hence, there was no escape from the mind.⁵⁴ Enlightenment was not a static unconsciousness, but rather a dynamically heightened awareness.

Going a step further, Dōgen detected in Tsung-kao a dualistic presupposition concerning the “serene and calm” essence of mind (*shō*) and the ordinary functions of mind (*shin*); Tsung-kao believed enlightenment lay in the former. Perhaps this criticism was related to Dōgen’s unusually severe disparagement (as we saw previously) of the phrase “seeing into one’s nature” (*kenshō*) in Hui-nēng’s *Platform Sūtra*—a phrase Dōgen believed inauthentic and indicative of substantialistic thinking.⁵⁵ Dōgen’s view supported the nonduality of mind and its essence, which was said to be “the great foundation of the Buddha-way.”⁵⁶ In any event, Tsung-kao and the Senika view were not far apart from one another at their deeper level—there was only the difference of the substantialization of mind in opposition to body in one case, and that of mental essence as opposed to mental functions in the other.⁵⁷

It is patent in the foregoing observations that however we may interpret the mind—whether as the knowing subject, the mind, or the spiritual essence in relation to the known object, the body, or the mental functions, respectively—its elevation to any metaphysical preeminence was radically and definitively repudiated by Dōgen. The mind in Dōgen’s thought was not an all-embracing and all-pervasive metaphysical principle (such as the Absolute, the ground of being, etc.),⁵⁸ nor was it a cosmic extension of the ordinary mind (such as Spirit, Cosmic Consciousness, etc.). The mind came into and out of being with the psycho-physical activities of the mind and the creative activities of the physical universe. Yet it was not just coextensive with them or in proportion to them; rather it transcended the sum total of them, as we shall see later in connection with Buddha-nature. Hence, the depths and mysteries of the mind were unfathomable by what Dōgen called “the non-Buddhist view of naturalism” (*jinen-gedō*), from which he vehemently disassociated himself (naturalism in Buddhism specifically referred to the view that all things were generated spontaneously without karmic causation; the devastating implication of this was that spiritual efforts were dispensable).

Dōgen frequently mentioned naturalism throughout his works, implicitly and explicitly. In his criticism of Tsung-kao, which I quoted a moment ago,

Dōgen charged him with subscribing to what essentially amounted to a naturalistic view of the mind, in which activities of sensation and intellect were the inert products of organismic and phenomenal conditions, rather than contributing parts of them in a larger reality. In his discourse on “this mind itself is Buddha” (*sokushin-zebutsu*), the Zen equivalent of the esoteric Buddhist principle “this body itself is Buddha” (*sokushin-jobutsu*), Dōgen pointed out the mistake of naively identifying the discriminating and individuating activities of mind with Buddha.⁵⁹ For them to be purified and reinforced by enlightenment, the mind had to be redeemed by the mind that is Buddha in order to say that it was “mountains, rivers, and the earth; the sun, the moon, and the stars.” This was the true meaning of the principle “this mind itself is Buddha.”

Thus, Dōgen’s position adroitly avoided any monistic or reductionistic pitfalls, and abided, remarkably consistently, with the nonduality of mind and matter, mind and body, spirit and mind, and so on. He wrote:

This mind [that is, the thought of enlightenment (*bodaishin*)] does not exist intrinsically or rise suddenly in a vacuum. It is neither one nor many, neither spontaneous nor congealed. [This mind] is not in one’s body, and one’s body is not in the mind. This mind is not all-pervasive throughout the entire world. It is neither before nor after, neither existent nor nonexistent. It is not self-nature or other-nature; nor is it common nature or causeless nature. Despite all this, arousing the thought of enlightenment occurs where cosmic resonance (*kannō-dōkō*) is present. It is neither conferred by the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, nor is it acquired by one’s own effort. Because the thought of enlightenment is awakened through cosmic resonance, it is not spontaneously generated.⁶⁰

Things, events, and beings of the universe were the expressions (*setsu*) of mind without exception.⁶¹

Dōgen further discussed the classical Buddhist statement, “The triple world is mind-only; there is no dharma other than the mind. Mind, Buddha, and sentient beings—these three are no different from one another.” He argued that we would not say “the triple world is mind-only” as if there were the two separate entities of “the triple world” and “mind-only”—rather we would say “the triple world of mind-only” and “the mind-only of the triple world.”⁶² This notion was said to be the “total realization of the total Tathāgata” (*zen-nyorai no zen-genjō*), beyond which there was no world whatsoever. There was nothing outside the triple world (*sangai wa muge nari*)

any more than there were beings other than “sentient beings” (*shujō*), which for Dōgen meant all beings—sentient and insentient alike. The triple world was not to be seen in subjective or objective terms, but “in and through the triple world” (*sangai no shoken*). Dōgen explained:

The triple world is not the intrinsic being nor the present being. The triple world is neither newly formed nor born by way of causation. It is not circumscribed by the beginning, middle, and end [of the time scheme]. There is the triple world we transcend, and there is the triple world we live in here and now. All its workings meet one another; all its conflicts grow with one another [in perfect freedom]. The triple world of here-and-now is seen in and through the triple world itself. To be seen [in and through the triple world] means to see the triple world. To see the triple world is the realization of the triple world and the triple world of realization—the *kōan* realized in life (*genjō-kōan*).⁶³

Mind-only was described as follows:

Mind-only is not one or two. It is not within the triple world, nor does it leave the triple world. You should not err in this matter. It is at once the conscious mind and the nonconscious mind. It is walls, tiles, mountains, rivers, and the great earth. Mind is the “skin-flesh-bones-marrow” and the “holding-up-a-flower-and-bursting-into-laughter.” There are the mind of being and the mind of nonbeing; the mind of body and the mind of nonbody; the mind prior to the physical formation and the mind posterior to it. The body is variously begotten from either a womb, eggs, moisture, or metamorphosis; the mind is created differently through either a womb, eggs, moisture, or metamorphosis. Blue, yellow, red, and white—these are mind; long, short, square, and round—these are mind. Birth and death, and coming and going constitute this mind; years, months, days, and hours form this mind. Dreams, visions, and the illusory flowers in the sky are mind; bubbles and flames are mind. The spring flowers and the autumn moon are mind, and topsyturvy everyday life is mind. Despite being such trivialities, mind should not be abandoned. For these reasons, it is the mind in which all things themselves are ultimate reality (*shohō-jissō-shin*)—the mind that communicates between a Buddha and a Buddha (*yuibutsu-yobutsu-shin*).⁶⁴

What emerges from these observations is that the triple world and mind-only are not the two polar concepts of an epistemologically oriented idealism or of a cosmological explanation. As I have alluded to earlier in this chapter and shall make clearer later, any embryological, cosmological, emanationistic, or causal outlooks are alien to the basic religious and philosophical insight of Buddhism, and particularly to Dōgen's thought. In his exposition on the idea of dependent origination, Ui is emphatic in pointing out that the original intention of dependent origination was not to probe into the process or causation of origination so much as it was to envision the state in which all the conditions and forces of the world were functionally interdependent. The idea of dependent origination was not a theoretical explanation but a soteriological vision.⁶⁵ Thus, combined with the idea of dependent origination and its twin idea of emptiness, Dōgen's "idealism" of mind-only provides a unique vision of reality in which mind-only is the one and only reality that is both subject and object (the triple world) and their ground. That is why "the triple world is mind-only" is also equated with "all things themselves are ultimate reality" (*shobō-jissō*), "the kōan realized in life" (*genjō-kōan*), and so forth.

At this juncture, we must further probe Dōgen's view of mind as unattainable (*anupalambha*; *fukatoku*), which is often associated with the negative aspects of emptiness such as its being ineffable, nothingness, and an innate endowment. However, Dōgen was openly critical of such a view.⁶⁶ In his discussion of extensive pilgrimages (*hensan*), which for him were not so much about physical travel or visits to Zen teachers in the spatio-temporal realm as they were about "nondual participation" (*dōsan*) in the enlightenment of the Buddhas and ancestors, Dōgen had this to say:

When extensive pilgrimages are indeed totally exerted, so are they cast off. [It is just like] the sea which is dried up, yet does not show its bed, or the one who dies and does not retain mind. "The sea is dried up" means the whole sea is totally parched. Nevertheless, when the sea is parched, the bed is not seen [because it is of no-bed, empty, and unattainable]. Analogously, the nonretaining and the total retaining [of mind]—both are the human mind. When humans die, mind is not retained—because their dying is exerted, mind is not left behind. Thus, you should know that the total human is mind and the total mind is human. In such a manner, you can thoroughly understand both sides of a dharma.⁶⁷

Here, we have the application of Dōgen's fundamental idea of "the total exertion of a single thing" (*ippō-gūjin*) to the theme of pilgrimages. Unattainability, in Dōgen's thought, was maintained less in the static and transcendent mode of emptiness and more in the dynamic and creative mode in which any single act (dying, eating, or whatnot) was totally exerted contemporaneously, coextensively, and coessentially with the total mind—not with a fragment of that mind. Thus in this moment, this single act alone was the mind-only of the triple world, excluding all other acts and things. This was Dōgen's metaphysics of "mystical realism," epitomized in the statements "when one side is illumined, the other is darkened" (*ippō o shōsuru toki wa ippō wa kurashi*) and "the total experience of a single thing is one with that of all things" (*ippōtsū kore mambōtsū nari*). This was also what Dōgen meant by "abiding in a Dharma-position" (*jū-hōi*). When viewed in this way, Dōgen's theory of mind was far from a dry, impersonal theoretical pursuit of the nature of mind, but was a profoundly personal and existential concern with the self, as expressed in the following:

To study the Way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self.
To forget the self is to be enlightened by all things of the universe. To be enlightened by all things of the universe is to cast off the body and mind of the self as well as those of others. Even the traces of enlightenment are wiped out, and life with traceless enlightenment goes on forever and ever.⁶⁸

This was Dōgen's answer to the dictum "Know thyself" (the common heritage of Greek and Buddhist philosophies).⁶⁹ The net result of this approach to the self and the world was Dōgen's preeminent emphasis on a choice or commitment—in creative activities (*gyōji*) and creative expressions (*dōtoku*)—to live duality in the manner of "abiding in a Dharma-position" and "the total exertion of a single thing," rather than to flee or obfuscate it. In this view, what duality implied was not necessary evil, but the necessary (and only) habitat in which we lived and were enlightened. We are now prepared to proceed to the pivot of Dōgen's thought—Buddha-nature.

BUDDHA-NATURE

Dōgen's analysis of Buddha-nature (*buddhatā* or *buddhatva*; *bussō*) starts with his own unique interpretation of a passage taken from *the Mahāpari-nirvāṇa*

sūtra, which reads: “All sentient beings possess Buddha-nature without exception” (*issai no shujō wa kotogotoku busshō o yūsu*). However, the same Chinese sentence can also be read as Dōgen read it, “All existence (i.e., all sentient beings) is Buddha-nature” (*issai-shujō shitsuu-busshō*),⁷⁰ and thus have its meaning dramatically transformed. In his reading of this classic passage, which revealed his ingenuity and versatility in interpreting scriptural passages, Dōgen modified the conceptions of Buddha-nature and sentient beings. He accomplished the first by his equation of all existence with Buddha-nature; the second by his equation of all existence and sentient beings. In each case, both Buddha-nature and sentient beings were liberated from anthropocentric and biocentric perspectives; as a consequence, they acquired a new scope and depth. Let us examine them in some detail.

As is clear from the history of Buddhist thought, Buddha-nature was intimately related to the *tathāgata-garbha* strand of the Buddhist idealist tradition that pursued, as we have seen before, the problem of the original purity of the mind. It was also well known that this tradition employed misleading metaphors such as seed, embryo, womb, and *gotra*. Thus Buddha-nature was construed, more often than not, as the innate potentiality of Buddhahood. Whether this potentiality was to be attributed to all sentient beings without discrimination or only to certain types of beings was hotly debated by the Buddhists and produced two schools of thought on the matter: one that advocated the universality of the Buddha-nature in all sentient beings (the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition); and the other that, as in the consciousness-only sect, held that there were the so-called five groups (*goshō*) of sentient beings classified according to their “inherently existing seeds” (*honnu-shūji*) and were thus rigidly predetermined in terms of their spiritual destinies. For example, the *icchantika* group (*issendai*) of sentient beings were said to lack undefiled seeds (*muroshūji*) in store-consciousness and were hence doomed to eternal wandering through rebirths. The *śrāvaka* group (*shōmon-jōshō*) and the *pratyekabuddha* group (*engaku-jōshō*), though far better than the *icchantika* group in the sense that they were able to attain the arhatship and the pratyekabuddhahood respectively, were eternally precluded from the possibility of attaining Buddhahood due to their lack of undefiled seeds. Only the bodhisattva group (*bosatsu-jōshō*) and some from the indeterminate group (*fujōshō*) entertained hope of the enlightenment of Buddha.

In this manner, sentient beings were hierarchically placed in accordance with the nature of inherently existing seeds and their possession or non-possession of undefiled seeds. Consequently, certain groups of sentient

beings were branded as possessing no Buddha-nature.⁷¹ It goes without saying that Dōgen sided, as other Mahāyānists did, with the universalism of the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition by advocating the theory of one group or nature—Buddha-nature was possessed by *all* sentient beings. However, this traditional theory still had disturbing implications: Buddha-nature was strictly confined to sentient beings and did not include insentient beings, and Buddha-nature was the native endowment or potentiality possessed by sentient beings. That is to say, its “universalism” was still restrictive and conceived in a highly anthropocentric or biocentric manner.

Dōgen revolted against these implications of the traditional theory and declared the absolute inclusiveness of Buddha-nature under which sentient, as well as insentient, beings were equally subsumed. This was what he meant by “all existence.” He wrote:

Therefore, mountains, rivers, and the great earth are all the sea of Buddha-nature. “All is realized by virtue of [the sea of Buddha-nature]” (*kaie-konryū*) [in Aśvaghoṣa’s previously quoted saying] means that the very time [all is] realized by virtue of it is none other than mountains, rivers, and the great earth. Inasmuch as it is unambiguously said that all is realized by virtue of it, you should understand that such is characteristic of the sea of Buddha-nature. It has absolutely nothing to do with the inside or the outside or the center [of the universe]. Thus, to see mountains and rivers is tantamount to seeing Buddha-nature. To see Buddha-nature is to observe a donkey’s jaw and a horse’s mouth [that are nothing special in our ordinary experience]. “All [is realized] by virtue of it” means “All the universe [is realized] by virtue of it” as well as “By virtue of it [is realized] all the universe.” You should understand it this way, and even go beyond that understanding.⁷²

The self-creation of Buddha-nature itself constituted all the phenomena of the universe. In a spirit similar to that of Meister Eckhart, Dōgen would say that Buddha-nature “abhors an empty space.”

Dōgen further elaborated on “all existence” as follows:

Note the following: Existence now construed as all existence by virtue of Buddha-nature is not that being which is in opposition to nonbeing. All existence is the words and tongues of Buddhas, the eyeballs of the Buddhas and ancestors, and monastics’ nostrils. It goes without saying

that the notion, “all existence,” is not the existence with a beginning in time (*shiu*), or the intrinsic existence in things (*honnu*), or the mysterious and subtle existence (*myōu*)—much less the existence in causation (*en’u*) or the existence caused by ignorance (*mōu*). It cannot be labeled by such words as subject and object, or essence and form.... In the entire universe there is not even a single object alien to Buddha-nature, nor is there any second existence other than this universe here and now.⁷³

Dōgen was emphatic in rejecting all existence as conceived in terms of action as a means to spiritual advance (*gō-zōjōriki*), delusory dependent origination (*mō-engi*), spontaneous generation (*hōni*), or the practice and enlightenment through supranormal powers (*jinzū-shushō*).⁷⁴ Not only was Buddha-nature not existence with a beginning, as we have seen, but it was also not existence with no beginning (*mushiu*).⁷⁵

It is evident in these observations that by declaring “all existence is Buddha-nature,” Dōgen presented a new theory of Buddha-nature consistent with his general theory of mind. To put it differently, Dōgen radically transformed the predominantly psychological conception of Buddha-nature into a predominantly ontological and soteriological one whereby it was equated with, and hence used synonymously with, thusness (*tathatā*; *shinnyo*) and Dharma-nature (*dharmatā*; *hosshō*), which in Buddhist thought referred to the impersonal ground of being or ultimate reality. Buddha-nature, in Dōgen’s view, was at once beings and being itself.⁷⁶

Buddha-nature was all existence which included sentient and insentient beings, and was no longer the possession of these beings. As a result, the unlimited inclusiveness of Buddha-nature did not mean that Buddha-nature was immanent in all existences but that all existence was vibrant with Buddha-nature. As we compare this with the traditional psychologically minded view of Buddha-nature, we can easily see the original nature of his reconception of this notion. Obviously “all existence is Buddha-nature” should not be construed as a mere formal identity. The dynamic relationship between Buddha-nature and all existence was expressed in a slightly different context as follows: “Though not identical, they are not different; though not different, they are not one; though not one, they are not many.”⁷⁷ This was Dōgen’s (and hence Buddhism’s) way of expressing the nonduality of beings and being itself, in terms of “neither identical nor different” or “neither one nor many” (*fuitsu-fui* or *fusoku-furi*) or the Hua-yen principle of “mutual identity and mutual penetration” (*sōsoku-sōnyū*). Thus, it is a gross

mistake for us to equate his thought with pantheism, for Buddha-nature is more than the de facto sum of all beings and more than the naive identity of the Absolute and the relative, or of the necessary and the contingent.⁷⁸

Since we have considered thus far the proposition “all existence is Buddha-nature,” we shall now examine Dōgen’s equation of all existence with all sentient beings. Along with his extension of the meaning of Buddha-nature, Dōgen also extended the meaning of sentient beings (*shujō*). He argued:

We use such names as *shujō*, *ujō*, *gunjō*, and *gunrui*. The expression “all existence” refers to both sentient beings and all beings. That is, all existence is Buddha-nature, and the totality of all existence is called sentient beings. Right at the time [of such realization], both the inside and outside of sentient beings are, as such, all existence as Buddha-nature.⁷⁹

Furthermore, Dōgen stated: “Just as no realm exists outside the triple world, so there exists no being other than the sentient.”⁸⁰ While the words “sentient beings” (*sattva*; *shujō*) ordinarily referred to all living beings who transmigrated in the six realms of life (the worlds of hell, hungry spirits, animals, *asuras*, humans, and gods), in the Buddhist scheme, it may have originally meant whatever was generated by the dependent origination of conditions and forces of the universe; accordingly, the words may have included not only sentient beings but also insentient beings.⁸¹ Dōgen was aware of this broad sense when he wrote: “Sentient beings are the true body of the entire universe. For the reason that each sentient being comes into existence through [the co-creation of] myriad things, it is called ‘sentient being.’”⁸² Thus Dōgen proposed that Buddhism adopt the original (indeed the broadest possible) sense of the notion.

However, deeper than this etymological awareness was the demand made by the logic of his thought, especially regarding his view of mind. Dōgen’s reasoning on this point was clearly stated as follows:

“All sentient beings,” discussed now in the Buddha-way, means all beings possessing mind, for mind is itself sentient beings. Those beings not possessing mind (*mushinsha*) should equally be sentient beings, because sentient beings are, as such, mind. Therefore, mind is invariably sentient beings; sentient beings are necessarily the Buddha-nature of existence (*u-busshō*). Grasses and trees, and countries and lands are

mind. They are sentient beings by virtue of being mind, and are the Buddha-nature of existence on account of being sentient beings. The sun, the moon, and the stars—all are mind. They are sentient beings by reason of being mind, and are the Buddha-nature of existence because of being sentient beings.⁸³

By defining sentient beings in this way, Dōgen presented two propositions: all existence is sentient beings and sentient beings are Buddha-nature. The nondual oneness of all existence, sentient beings, and Buddha-nature is complete. This is neither a merely arbitrary redefinition of the words, nor a mere conformity to the original senses of them; it is rather the result of the logical demand made by his thought, deeply rooted in his radical reconception of mind and of Buddha-nature. It is important to note Dōgen's vehement de-anthropocentricization and de-biocentricization of the originally anthropocentric and biocentric notion of sentient beings.⁸⁴ We might call this Dōgen's way of demythologizing, in which we cannot fail to recognize his rigorous exercise of logic and reason (*dōri*) in a uniquely Buddhist way.

It is evident through the foregoing observations of Dōgen's fundamental proposition, "all existence (i.e., all sentient beings) is Buddha-nature," that not only is Buddha-nature not an embryo nor a seed, but it is not a Platonic "receptacle" or Newtonian "absolute space" either (the *tathāgata-garbha* itself was highly vulnerable to such interpretations). Buddha-nature has no wall, no circumference, and no compartment in which all existence, or sentient beings, is "contained."⁸⁵ As the proposition says, all existence is Buddha-nature itself, although there is some distinction between them. This nondual "oneness" is generally expressed within Buddhism, as I have already noted, in terms of "neither identical nor different"; the structure of this nondual relation in Dōgen's own thought will become clearer in subsequent pages. Having set forth these preliminary remarks, we shall now proceed to a detailed analysis of Dōgen's theory of Buddha-nature.

All existence and phenomena are the activities (*gyōji*) and expressions (*dōtoku*)—respectively, the self-activities and the self-expressions—of Buddha-nature. These self-activities and self-expressions, however, must be understood in the context of Dōgen's own conceptions of "all things themselves are ultimate reality" (*shohō-jissō*) and "the kōan realized in life" (*genjō-kōan*), which I have touched upon in connection with his theory of mind; they are not emanationistic manifestations, cosmological processes, or the like, but

are the soteriological realization of things as they are in thusness. Addressing himself to the embryological argument concerning Buddha-nature, Dōgen wrote:

A certain group of people think that Buddha-nature is like a seed of a grass or plant. When the rain moistens it generously, buds and stems grow, branches, leaves, and fruits become dense, and eventually the fruits bear seeds. Such a view is what an ordinary person imagines. Supposing that you understand the matter this way, you should still realize that the seeds, the flowers, and the fruits are each the unadulterated mind itself (*jōjō no sekishin*). A fruit seed, though unseen, produces roots and stems and, though not brought together from elsewhere, flourishes with a thick trunk and big branches. This has nothing to do with something inside or outside, and yet, it is true throughout the ages. For this reason, even if an ordinary person's approach is taken [for the sake of argument], the roots, stems, branches, and leaves all live the same life and all die the same death; they are equally one and the same Buddha-nature of all existence.⁸⁶

Perhaps the full implications of this thesis will be understood adequately once we examine Dōgen's view of existence and time (*uji*), as we will later in this chapter. Suffice it to say that the self-realization of Buddha-nature in its myriad forms of existence defies the model of processes, degrees, and levels from potentiality to actuality, from the hidden to the manifest, from the lower to the higher, from the imperfect to the perfect. In contrast, it is the realization that each form of existence is whole and self-sufficient in its "total exertion" (*gūjin*) in the Dharma-position (*hōi*), which amounts to the total actualization of Buddha-nature. Hence, processes, degrees, and levels are those actualities which are arranged conveniently in a linear fashion. That is why Dōgen said, in reference to Bodhidharma's "skin, flesh, bones, and marrow" (*hiniku-kotsuzui*), that "Marrow is not deepest, skin is not shallowest."⁸⁷ To put it differently, Dōgen was concerned not with how and why all existence was as it was, but simply with the fact that all existence existed in thusness—he found Buddha-nature in this fact. It was in this sense that Dōgen used "the Buddha-nature of existence" (*u-bussō*) by which he meant that Buddha-nature was always, and necessarily, particularized in concrete existence. Without understanding this aspect of Buddha-nature, the study of the Way was not complete.⁸⁸

All existence as particularities was necessarily limited and circumscribed, and hence vulnerable to similar dangers inherent in all forms of phenomenistic thought. Dōgen thus warned:

We do not say “all sentient beings are Buddha-nature” (*issai-shujō soku busshō*) [for even “are” smacks of dualistic thinking], but instead “all-sentient-beings-the-Buddha-nature-of-existence” (*issai-shujō-u-busshō*). This should be considered carefully. The “existence” of “the Buddha-nature of existence” should indeed be cast off. Casting off is all-pervasive and all-pervasive means [leaving no traces like] a bird’s path in flight. Therefore, [it should be expressed as] “all-Buddha-nature-existence-sentient-beings” (*issai-busshō-u-shujō*). The truth of the matter is that you elucidate and penetrate not only sentient beings but also Buddha-nature.⁸⁹

Clearly, Dōgen recommended penetrating the ordinary dualistic mode of existence. Buddha-nature has an aspect called the Buddha-nature of nonexistence (*mu-busshō*) that negates and further penetrates concrete realities. *Mu-busshō* is traditionally understood in Buddhism to signify the absence of Buddha-nature, analogous to a nonbeing that is antithetical to being. But according to Dōgen, inasmuch as all existence was Buddha-nature, the nonexistence in question could not and should not mean the absence of Buddha-nature. The Buddha-nature of nonexistence meant, rather, the liberating and penetrating powers of Buddha-nature that liberated us from fixation on the particularities of existence. In thus transforming the traditional Buddhist terms in a manner consistent with his thought, Dōgen shifted the direction of the issue from whether or not any existence has Buddha-nature to how it can use (*shitoku suru*) Buddha-nature in the midst of its presence. Thus, Dōgen devoted a great deal of effort to clarifying the Buddha-nature of nonexistence, without the study of which, he contended, the Way could not be fully understood.⁹⁰

The inner structure of Buddha-nature has the element of nonexistence, not as a dualistic antithesis to existence, but as one of the poles in the non-dual structure. This view was unmistakably evidenced in the kōan in which Chao-chou Ts’ung-shên (778–897) answered both *yes* and *no* on different occasions to a well-known question concerning whether the dog has Buddha-nature. The story goes something like this: In response to Chao-chou’s “No,” a monastic once asked, “All sentient beings have Buddha-nature, but why

doesn't the dog have Buddha-nature?" Chao-chou answered, "Because the dog has karmic consciousness." In another case, in response to Chao-chou's "Yes," a monastic asked, "If Buddha-nature already exists, why does Buddha-nature enter this skin-bag?" Chao-chou answered: "Because the dog transgresses knowingly."⁹¹ Dōgen's comments on the *kōan* repudiated every possible implication derived from the literal and dualistic interpretation of Chao-chou's answers and held in effect that the dog's karmic existence and its knowing transgression were, paradoxically enough, themselves the thusness of Buddha-nature. The *because* in Chao-chou's answers did not signify, according to Dōgen's interpretation, the causal relationship as ordinarily interpreted. The problem, therefore, was not whether the dog had Buddha-nature or not, which was the conventional assumption. Rather, both answers of *yes* and *no*, or existence and nonexistence, were construed as nondual structural elements of Buddha-nature; each had its ultimate significance and value in Buddha-nature.⁹²

It was in this vein that Dōgen said:

How could the existence (*u*) of "all existence is Buddha-nature" not result in the nonexistence (*mu*) of ultimate nonexistence (*mumu*)?... Regarding the existence or nonexistence [of Buddha-nature], set aside nonexistence for awhile and ask yourself instead what Buddha-nature is like. Question what sort of thing Buddha-nature is. When some people nowadays hear the words "Buddha-nature," they never inquire about what it is but seem concerned only with the meaning of its existence or nonexistence. This is pointless indeed. Nonexistence in its various forms should be studied in light of that nonexistence which is the Buddha-nature of nonexistence.⁹³

What Dōgen tried to emphasize with the term "Buddha-nature of nonexistence" is the emptiness of Buddha-nature, or the Buddha-nature of emptiness (*kū-busshō*), which at once subsumed and transcended existence and nonexistence. In his discourse on Buddha-nature, nonexistence (*mu*) and emptiness (*kū*) went hand-in-hand; the former was always spoken of in terms of the latter.

On the subject of emptiness, Dōgen emphasized, as I have pointed out elsewhere, the dynamic and creative aspects rather than the static and transcendent aspects of this cardinal idea. He also emphasized the Mahāyāna Buddhist idea of dependent origination, which held that existence was mediated, purified,

and authenticated by emptiness and was therefore called wondrous existence (*shinkū-myōu*). Dōgen's view of emptiness pursued this direction rigorously.⁹⁴ Just one example of this will suffice. There is a Zen story involving two Zen teachers, Shih-kung Hui-tsang and Hsi-t'ang Chih-tsang, both of whom were the disciples of Ma-tsu Tao-i (709–788). One day Shih-kung asked Hsi-t'ang: "Can you grasp emptiness?" Hsi-t'ang replied: "Yes, I think I can." Shih-kung continued: "How would you grasp emptiness?" Using his hand, Hsi-t'ang then grasped at empty space. Shih-kung retorted: "You don't understand how to hold emptiness." "Then how do you do it?" asked Hsi-t'ang. Shih-kung seized Hsi-t'ang's nose and pulled it. Hsi-t'ang exclaimed: "Ouch! Ouch! You are going to pull off my nose!" Shih-kung said: "You can grasp emptiness only in this way."⁹⁵ Commenting on this kōan, Dōgen observed that that which grasps and that which is grasped are, after all, one and the same emptiness—emptiness grasps emptiness. Dōgen asserted that it might have been more appropriate had Shih-kung grasped his own nose. Despite this, Dōgen praised Shih-kung for his understanding of the mystery of emptiness and admonished his disciples as follows: "Even if you are adept at grasping emptiness, you should study its inside and outside, investigate its life and death, and appreciate its weight."⁹⁶

Let us pursue Dōgen's view of Buddha-nature as emptiness a little further along this line of thought. Dōgen, like other Zen Buddhists, was fond of using such interrogative pronouns as "what," "how," and "that," (*nani, ga, ka, nanimono, shimo, somo, immo*, etc.) to denote the ultimate truth of thusness and emptiness. For example:

Teacher Ta-chien [Hui-nêng] of Mt. Ts'ao-ch'i once asked Nan-yüeh Ta-hui: "What is this that comes thus?"

This saying [containing] "thus" is not actually an interrogation since it transcends human understanding. We should thoroughly investigate the fact that because "this" [particularity] is the "What," all things are always the "What" and each and every thing is the "What." The "What" is not an interrogative; it is the "coming of thusness."⁹⁷

In asking the question "What is this that comes thus?" we already know that the answer to "What" is "this that comes thus." In this respect, to question is to know, because "What" is "thusness" (*monsho no dōtoku*). To put it differently, the What is the eternal kōan realized in life (*genjō-kōan*); this theme was expanded and elaborated upon in Dōgen's discourse on Buddha-nature

when he took up the conversation between Ta-i Tao-hsin (580–651), the fourth ancestor of Chinese Zen Buddhism, and Ta-man Hung-jên (601–674), the fifth ancestor, which ran as follows: On the way to Mt. Huang-mêi, Hung-jên met Tao-hsin, and the latter asked: “What is your name?” Hung-jên replied: “Although I have a name, it is not an ordinary one.” “What is it?” the teacher asked. “It is Buddha-nature” was the answer. Then Tao-hsin said: “You do not have Buddha-nature.” Hung-jên responded thus: “Because Buddha-nature is empty (*kū*), it is called nonexistence (*mu*).”⁹⁸ Once again Dōgen probed deeply into Buddha-nature by giving an extraordinary interpretation of this story. He explained:

When we examine the story of the two ancestors, there is profound meaning in the fourth ancestor’s question, “What is your name?” In ancient times there were persons from the country of Ho, as well as persons with the surname of Ho. [The real purport of this interrogative statement is an affirmative statement, and thus] to say “Your name is Ho” is just like saying “I am thusness and you are thusness as well.” [You and I belong to the same family of Buddha.]⁹⁹

Since the Chinese character *ho* (the Japanese rendering is *nani* or *ka*) has the meaning of “what,” “your name is Ho” means “your name is What.” Thus, according to Dōgen’s interpretation, Tao-hsin’s statement revealed his understanding of the nature of one’s “name” (*shō*)—an eternal question mark of What—which was at the same time one’s “nature” (*shō*), that is, Buddha-nature (*bussō*). In a very special sense, name was nature. All existence had the same family name of Ho or What, which was the essence of Buddha-nature. (This was more significant in light of the fact that Hung-jên’s real surname was Chou.)

From this vantage point, Dōgen developed his remarkable interpretation of emptiness in relation to name: “The fifth ancestor said: [‘Although I have a name, it is not an ordinary one,’ which means] ‘Name’ is ‘existence-itself,’ ‘not-this,’ and ‘ordinary-name-as-permanent-nature.’ Its import is that ‘Existence as name-nature’ is not an ‘ordinary name’; an ‘ordinary name’ is not adequate to this ‘existence-itself.’”¹⁰⁰ Dōgen’s interpretation did not deny the significance of an ordinary name. On the contrary, name as an ordinary name became an extraordinary one only when it was mediated and authenticated by Buddha-nature. It was in this sense that the name of Chou—the real surname of the fifth ancestor—“[was] not received from his father or

from his ancestors, nor [did] it resemble the name of his mother, let alone any other person's name."¹⁰¹ Dōgen further developed his view in a truly extraordinary manner:

The fourth ancestor said: ["What (name) is it?" which means] "'This' (*ze*) is the 'name-nature' (*shō*) of 'What' (*ka*)." "What" is "this" and it has been exerting "this" as "What" (*ze o kashi kitareri*). Such is "name-nature." That which makes "What" what it is does so by virtue of "this." That which makes "this" what it is is the power of "What." "Name-nature" is "this" and "What" at once. We brew herbal tea with this [realization]; so do we with ordinary tea. We also make [this realization] our everyday meal. The fifth ancestor said: "it (or this) is Buddha-nature," in which "this" is in itself "Buddha-nature." Because of "What," it is "Buddha." Yet, can we profoundly grasp "this" by "What" and "name-nature" alone? When "this" is unmistakably "not-this," it is "Buddha-nature." Such being the case, "this" is "What" and "Buddha"; nevertheless, once it has cast off and liberated itself, it is bound to be "name." [In the case of the fifth ancestor], that name was Chou.¹⁰²

Dōgen lifted "what," "this," and "name" out of the ordinary context of the two ancestors' dialogues and elevated them to the height of philosophical analysis of and insight into Buddha-nature. He did so not in a speculative spirit but in a deeply personal, existential, and practical mode of thought. Thus, the dynamic creativity of the Buddha-nature of emptiness was ingeniously characterized in the context of the following: "What," as the eternal quest or kōan realized in life, which showed us the abysmal depths and mysteries of existence with infinite possibilities; "this," the particular concretization of existence in thusness in which "What" unfolded ever anew; and "name," the linguistic and symbolic mediation by virtue of which "What" was "this" and "this" was "What." "What," "this," and "name" were each the total exertion (*gūjin*) of the Buddha-nature of emptiness in the Dharma-position. Dōgen observed:

The emptiness in question is not that emptiness which is spoken of in "form is emptiness" (*shikisoku-zekū*). Regarding "form is emptiness," you do not artificially designate form as emptiness, nor do you construct form by dividing emptiness. [What I mean] is emptiness in "emptiness is emptiness" (*kū-ze-kū*). The emptiness of "emptiness is

emptiness” means that in the realization of emptiness, there is nothing but emptiness.¹⁰³

When emptiness was totally exerted, there was only emptiness; when form was totally exerted, there was only form.¹⁰⁴ In this manner, the principle of the “total exertion of a single thing” (*ippō-gūjin*) applied to everything—eating, sleeping, laughing, and whatnot. The wondrous existence of this emptiness (*shinkū-myōu*) meant, for Dōgen, precisely the total exertion of a single thing that abided in the Dharma-position. “Nothing but,” in this context, did not imply by any means a reductionistic mode of thinking; on the contrary, herein lay the crux of Dōgen’s mystical realism—his solution, in general philosophical terms, to the perennial metaphysical problem of the relation between Buddha-nature and all existence, between one and many, between the Absolute and the relative.

Buddhism generally defies the view that Buddha-nature is identical with, or in proportion to, or nothing but, all existence, as well as the view that Buddha-nature is something other than, or transcendent to, or inclusive of, all existence. Instead it takes recourse in the notion of emptiness, making reference to “neither identical nor different,” “neither one nor many,” and so forth. This is not a flight from linguistic commitment, but an awareness of the nature and limitations of it, which frees and authenticates the use of such a commitment. From Dōgen’s standpoint, however, these dicta still smacked of an abstract formalism. The mystery or paradox of “all existence is Buddha-nature” (or of one and many) was experientially and practically verified and enacted, though it still remained unresolved (perhaps never to be resolved), theoretically. (Once again, this did not mean that Dōgen went as far as he could intellectually, letting experience take over the remainder, for intellect did not leave room for experience, intuition, or faith.) At each moment of existence, reason (*dōri*) went hand-in-hand with expressions and activities so as to exert totally. Thus, in the realization of life there was nothing but life; in the realization of death there was nothing but death. When there was nothing but life, life became meaningless, since it was meaningful only in view of death. By the same token, when there was nothing but Buddha-nature, it was nil, empty, and meaningless. In this total meaninglessness, Dōgen found the reason and logic of “all existence is Buddha-nature.”¹⁰⁵

As I have noted, all existence is the expressions (*dōtoku*) and activities (*gyōji*) of Buddha-nature. The expressions and activities of Buddha-nature

incessantly arise and perish moment by moment. Being impermanent, existence is necessarily temporal. Thus far we have examined the Buddha-nature of existence, the Buddha-nature of nonexistence, and the Buddha-nature of emptiness, and thereby glimpsed into Dōgen's view of Buddha-nature, which was the core of his philosophical and religious thought. Dōgen's analysis of the matter, however, did not stop at this. For him, the creative dynamism of Buddha-nature had to be further probed in connection with the Buddha-nature of expression (*setsu-busshō*), the Buddha-nature of activity (*gyō-busshō*), the Buddha-nature of impermanence (*mujō-busshō*), and the Buddha-nature of time (*ji-busshō*).¹⁰⁶

In a slightly different context concerning the problem of mind, Dōgen had this to say: "There is no expression (*setsu*) that is not essence (*shō*); there is no mind (*shin*) that is not expression."¹⁰⁷ The usual distinction between the mind and its essence or between essence (*shō*) and form (*sō*)—along with the presupposition that one is eternal and unchangeable while the other is phenomenal and changeable—was challenged here. However, more important, with regard to the present subject matter, both mind and its essence were invariably the expression, or more precisely the self-expression (*jidōshu*), of Buddha-nature. There was no expression that was not Buddha-nature and vice versa. As I have emphasized earlier in this work, expression was ultimately the impossible task made possible. This paradoxical situation, with which every possible expression was confronted, was well stated in the following quote, in which Dōgen referred to Po-chang Huai-hai's statement, "If you say sentient beings have Buddha-nature, you slander Buddha, Dharma, and Saṃgha; if you say sentient beings have no Buddha-nature, you slander Buddha, Dharma, and Saṃgha as well":

Therefore, the Buddha-nature of existence and the Buddha-nature of nonexistence—both are equally disparaging. However disparaging they may be, you cannot avoid uttering them.... Indeed, disparaging utterances may be made, and yet did you or did you not express Buddha-nature therewith? If you did, your expression is itself Buddha-nature. Where there is one who speaks, there is also one who hears. [Both the speaker and the hearer are of Buddha-nature.]¹⁰⁸

In Dōgen's thought, language and symbols were not always necessary evils (as "disparaging utterances" might suggest), but could be used in such ways as to make them expressions of Buddha-nature. Giving positive significance

to expressions, Dōgen also contended, in reference to Nāgārjuna's discourse on Buddha-nature and Kāṇadeva's interpretation of it, that Buddha-nature beyond forms, qualities, and measures was realized in and through bodily activities and expressions. This was called the bodily realization of Buddha-nature (*shingen*) which was boundless (*kakunen*) and transparent (*komei*), as characterized by Kāṇadeva.¹⁰⁹ Language and symbols were inseparably intertwined with bodily expressions, and together constituted the realization of Buddha-nature, in the sense that a particular concretization of expression was not one being among many but *the* being, as in the total presence of Buddha-nature in the metaphor of the full moon, a symbol of enlightenment.¹¹⁰

Expression was necessarily activity and activity was necessarily expression. An expression was not a theory or an abstraction, but an activity—to see, understand, and express Buddha-nature was tantamount to acting out Buddha-nature. Thus, we see the necessary connection between the Buddha-nature of expression and the Buddha-nature of activity. With the following statement, Dōgen began his exposition on time and existence:

A Buddha said: "If you want to know the meaning of Buddha-nature, you should reflect upon temporal conditions (*jisetsu no innen*). If the time arrives, Buddha-nature will manifest itself." "If you want to know the meaning of Buddha-nature" is not solely a matter of knowing. You can also say: "If you want to practice it..." "If you want to realize it..." "If you want to elucidate it..." "If you want to forget it..." and so on.¹¹¹

Another of Dōgen's remarks is pertinent to our discussion:

To say "if the time arrives" is tantamount to declaring that the time has already arrived; how can you doubt this? You may entertain a doubt about the time. Be that as it may, witness Buddha-nature's arrival. You should know that "if the time arrives," [as understood in this manner,] every moment of the twenty-four hours of the day does not pass by in vain. The "if-arrives" (*nyakushi*) is construed as the "already-arrived" (*kishi*). [Otherwise,] "if the time arrives" would mean "Buddha-nature never arrives." For this reason, since the time has already arrived, Buddha-nature is unmistakably present here and now.¹¹²

If we consider this statement, along with the seed analogy discussed before, Dōgen's position is evident. Buddha-nature actualized itself not in such

ways as from potentiality to actuality, from the not-yet to the already, from the lower to the higher, from the hidden to the manifest—but rather, Buddha-nature was always coeval and coessential with what we acted out in our activities and expressions. In light of this, Dōgen’s paradoxical statement quoted earlier makes sense: “The truth of Buddha-nature is such that Buddha-nature is embodied not before but after becoming a Buddha (*jōbutsu*). Buddha-nature and becoming a Buddha always occur simultaneously.”¹¹³ *Being* Buddha and *becoming* Buddha (i.e. original enlightenment and acquired enlightenment), although distinct, occurred simultaneously. To the extent that we took risks when we chose to act, Buddha-nature became visible, audible, and tangible. Until this happened, Buddha-nature could not be said to exist or subsist in such forms as potentialities, innate ideas, and eidetic forms.

The Buddha-nature of expression and the Buddha-nature of activity were inevitably impermanent and temporal, and ultimately led to death. There was no way out of this ultimate limitation. Thus, Dōgen expounded the Buddha-nature of impermanence (*mujō-busshō*): If the world was as fleeting and transient as the morning dew, and this was not a mere sentiment but a fact of life, then how was one to commit oneself to specific expressions and activities so that they were simultaneously one’s self-realization and self-expression of Buddha-nature? This was the ultimate question that concerned Dōgen throughout his life, as has been pointed out so often in this work. For Dōgen, it was not a matter of whether to commit, but how to commit—that is, how to make a specific commitment in complete freedom. In his analysis of the Buddha-nature of impermanence, Dōgen challenged the conventional idea that Buddha-nature was permanent (*ujō*), and that religiosity consisted in seeking and attaining such permanence by departing from impermanence; consequently, he asserted that impermanence was Buddha-nature, and vice versa. Referring to Hui-nêng’s saying, Dōgen observed:

The sixth ancestor [Hui-nêng] once said to his disciple, Hsing-ch’ang: “Impermanence is Buddha-nature. Permanence is the mind that discriminates good and evil and all things.”

The “impermanence” the sixth ancestor speaks of is not like what the non-Buddhists and those of the Lesser Vehicle conjecture. Although their founders and followers talk about impermanence, they fail to penetrate it thoroughly. Accordingly, impermanence expounds itself, enacts itself, and verifies itself—all these are impermanent. Those who now

manifest themselves to save others are manifesting themselves [in their myriad forms of impermanence] so as to expound Dharma for others. Such is Buddha-nature. Sometimes they display a long Dharma-body, and sometimes a short Dharma-body. A sage who is perpetually sagely is impermanent; an ordinary person who is constantly deluded is also impermanent. The unchangeability of both sagacity and delusion should not be Buddha-nature.¹¹⁴

Hui-nêng's statement was not only in opposition to the conventional view of Buddha-nature as permanent and the discriminating mind as impermanent, but could have been interpreted as saying that permanence and impermanence were mutually exclusive. Dōgen, however, interpreted it as saying that permanence and impermanence were equally Buddha-nature, for "permanence" according to him was the state of "nonturning" (*miten*) or nonduality. As Dōgen said: "Nonturning means that whether we overcome delusions or are conditioned by them, we are never attached to the traces of their coming and going. Hence, this is called permanence."¹¹⁵ Dōgen accepted Hui-nêng's notion that Buddha-nature was impermanent, but also reconciled permanence and impermanence, and Buddha-nature and the discriminating mind. The following, then, can be understood in this context in which impermanence and nonduality have been fused:

On this account, plants and trees, and thicket and forest are impermanent; as such, they are Buddha-nature. Humans and things, and bodies and minds are impermanent; thus, they are Buddha-nature. Countries and lands, and mountains and rivers are impermanent because they are Buddha-nature. Supreme enlightenment, because it is Buddha-nature, is impermanent. The perfect quietude of nirvāṇa, because it is impermanent, is Buddha-nature.¹¹⁶

"Everything perishes as soon as it arises" (*setsuna-shōmetsu*) is a well-known assertion in Buddhism. The corollary is that nothing in the universe remains unchanged and unchangeable. Despite this metaphysical insight into the scheme of things, Buddhists, more often than not, have betrayed it by excepting ultimate reality from this principle. It seems to be an almost universal philosophical temptation (in both the East and West) to revere "being" by degrading "becoming." For Dōgen's part, he refused to exempt Buddha-nature. The universality of the momentariness of arising

and perishing had to be applied to Buddha-nature as well. Hence, Buddha-nature was impermanent.

This thought was vividly expressed in the metaphors “the blue mountain always walks” (*seizan jō-umpo*) and “the Eastern Mountain moves on the water” (*tōzan suijō-kō*).¹¹⁷ The mountain—regarded as immovable—was said here to be walking and moving, thus alluding to the fact that nothing in the universe was static and immutable; the universe was becoming in time.¹¹⁸ The impermanence of Buddha-nature was that aspect of Buddha-nature which eternally came in and out of being with the universe and all existence within it. At any given moment, it pulsed with the arising and perishing of the universe, in accordance with the infinitely intricate dependent origination of its constituents. Buddha-nature gave birth to a new creation moment by moment and shared its fate with the universe. Being and becoming were not two separate metaphysical realities but one and the same in the process of impermanence. The religious and philosophical significance of impermanence was the infinite versatility and dynamism of Buddha-nature in its ever-changing and ever-becoming character.¹¹⁹

Dōgen’s primary concern was with the religious implications of the Buddha-nature of impermanence. As he probed the ethos of impermanence, thoroughly indigenized by the medieval Japanese mind, Dōgen did not indulge in aesthetic dilettantism and sentimentalism as a way to escape from the fleeting fate of life. He instead examined the nature of impermanence and its ultimate companion, death, unflinchingly, attempting to realize liberation in and through this inexorable scheme of things. In his view, things, events, and relationships were not the given (i.e., entities), but were possibilities, projects, and tasks that could be lived out, expressed, and understood as self-expressions and self-activities of Buddha-nature. This did not imply a complacent acceptance of the given situation, rather it required strenuous efforts to transform and transfigure it. Dōgen’s thought involved this element of transformation, which has been more often than not grossly neglected or dismissed by Dōgen students.¹²⁰ His search for the reason of impermanence impelled him to radically live the duality of impermanence and temporality by being liberated for the sake of duality.

Dōgen’s entire philosophical and religious work was a testimonial to his passionate search for those possibilities and tasks in his own time—through the use of symbols, rites, and concepts available in his inherited Buddhist tradition. He composed his abstruse philosophical prose in the medieval Japanese style, only occasionally using the classic Chinese style. This fact alone

uniquely positions Dōgen in the history of Japanese thought, for he sought the reason of impermanence through the Japanese language and in the Japanese manner.¹²¹

Our analysis of impermanence will now continue, by delving into the problem of temporality, which was the culmination of Dōgen's metaphysics and religion of Buddha-nature.

EXISTENCE AND TIME

Buddhism has maintained throughout its history that everything in the universe arises, changes, and perishes, and that there is nothing that is not subject to impermanence and death. An ardent Buddhist, Dōgen inherited this sense of the impermanence of existence, but the quality of his awareness was medieval Japanese to its core in intensity and content. The age was deeply troubled, hopeless, and characterized as the Age of Degenerate Law; people despaired of the world and life and retreated into their own egotistical shells to pursue their various diversions. Life was nothing but fleeting, wearisome, and empty (*hakanaki* or *hakanashi*). These psychological states are said to have resulted from an inner failure to cope with the pace of a rapidly changing world. The people's sense of despair and emptiness was their internalization of this failure.¹²² Dōgen rejected this psychological or subjectivized view of impermanence (which was dualistic after all), seeing instead that impermanence was structurally inherent in the self and the world, and hence should be taken seriously—metaphysically and religiously. Only then was one assured of understanding and living the reality of impermanence.¹²³

At this point in our investigation, I shall briefly digress to review the development of some salient aspects of the problem of time in the history of Buddhist thought. The problem of time was an essential part of Buddhist thought from its very inception, as evidenced in the doctrine of the impermanence or momentariness of all things, which was one of the three characteristics of existence (the other two being suffering and nonsubstantiality), and in the doctrine of moral causation and rebirth for the three periods of past, present, and future.¹²⁴ The fundamental assumptions that ran through the history of mainstream Buddhist thought in relation to the problem of time were twofold. One was characterized by the proposition: "Time has no independent existence but is dependent on dharmas" (*jimubettai-ehōjiryū*); the other was related to the mutual implication of space and time—the flow of events

and vicissitude of things as they occurred in the world—clearly indicated by the word *se* (used in, e.g., *sanze*, “three periods”—the *ze* here is a corrupted form of the *se*), which meant both “period” and “world.”¹²⁵ It goes without saying that these two assumptions were deeply rooted in the doctrines of nonsubstantiality and dependent origination. Time was not considered a self-same entity but was construed invariably as the bearer of events of the self and the world; in brief, events did not move in time but *were* time.¹²⁶

Various formulations and issues regarding time evolved with the history of Buddhism. One of the most prominent controversies in early Buddhism involved the contrasting views of the Sarvāstivādin and the Sautrāntika. The former believed that the three periods (the past, present, and future) were realities and that dharmas did not change; the latter held that the past and the future were not realities—only the present was real—and although the past was that which once existed and the future was yet to exist, the present contained the past and the future in some way. Both schools concurred on the reality of the present, but differed on the reality of the past and future in relation to the present.¹²⁷

The Vijñānavādin’s view consisted of the thesis that the manifestation (*abhisamṣkāra*; *gengyō*) arising from an original seed (*bīja*; *shūji*) in store-consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*; *arayashiki*), and the “perfuming” (*vāsanā*; *kunjū*), or projection of a new seed into store-consciousness, took place simultaneously. Thus, this view held that the “causal” relationship between the processes of the original seed producing its manifestation and of the manifestation perfuming the new seed was simultaneous in the present; that is to say, cause-effect arose and perished in the same moment of the present. The process repeated itself ad infinitum in a succession of such “presents.” In this respect, each present embraced the past and future in the form of seeds in store-consciousness.¹²⁸

The Mādhyamika philosophy of Nāgārjuna viewed dharmas as empty and unattainable, hence the so-called three periods had no existence of their own. Time was but a mental construction, yet this fact did not lead us into bondage with it.¹²⁹

The foregoing observations point to a gradual evolution of Buddhist consciousness that probed the structure of the present in which the essence of time lay and in which the past and future were somehow contained. Both the Sarvāstivādin and the Sautrāntika analyzed the three periods but did not clarify the nature of the present sufficiently. The Vijñānavāda view provided a psychological solution that offered profound insights into the mystery of our

unconscious strivings and aspirations, both personal and collective. Yet it remained idealistic, neglecting the significance of the world in the structure of the present. The Mādhyamika view radically rejected time as nothing but absurd. (This negativism, however, should not obscure the other side of the Buddhist idea of emptiness—namely, the creative and dynamic aspects.)

The implications of this evolution were developed in Hua-yen philosophy, along with other insights from various schools of Buddhism. In Hua-yen thought, we see philosophical and religious efforts taking into account both the self and the world in the consideration of time. Hua-yen thought uniquely interpreted the Dharma-realm (*dharmā-dhātu*; *hokkai*) in terms of the principle of the nonobstruction of all phenomena (*shih-shih wu-ai*; *jiji-muge*).¹³⁰ The entire universe consisted of creative processes in which the multiplicity of things and events interacted with and interpenetrated one another without obstruction. Particularities were not obliterated or deficient in any way, yet were unhindered in the perfect harmony of the total Dharma-realm. This nonobstruction (*muge*) was possible through the mediation of emptiness. This grand cosmic process of interaction, interpenetration, and integration in all realms, dimensions, perspectives of the self and the world went on endlessly (*jūjū-mujin*).¹³¹

This ontology obviously avoided the reductionism of phenomena as well as the reductionism of principles. Moreover, it regarded even the perfect harmony of principles and phenomena as merely an expediency for the final envisionment of the Dharma-realm of the nonobstruction of all phenomena, in which the lucidity and freedom of particularities in the transparency of emptiness were realized.

The fundamental logic underlying the principle of the nonobstruction of all phenomena was the principle of mutual identity and mutual penetration (*sōsoku-sōnyū*). Mutual identity referred to the nondifferentiated state in which antitheses, such as one and many, absolute and relative, being and nonbeing, co-existed in oneness and interfusion.¹³² Mutual penetration referred to the simultaneous origination of all things and events that interpenetrated one another in their myriad realms and dimensions. As Chang explains, different “entities” of different realms (e.g., water as a liquid, H₂O, an aggregate of molecules, etc.) penetrate into and contain one another without the slightest hindrance and thus arise simultaneously.¹³³

From this underlying logical basis, traditional Hua-yen philosophy extended its ontology in terms of the “principles of the ten mysteries” (*jūgemmon*).¹³⁴ The first and ninth principles are crucially important for

our examination of the problem of time.¹³⁵ The first was the “principle of simultaneous completion and co-existence” (*dōji-gusoku-sō-mon*) and the ninth the “principle of the various formations of the discrete events of the ten periods” (*jisse-kyakuhō-ijō-mon*). The first is usually regarded as the general principle because it was basic to all the other principles: All things and events of the universe originated, co-existed, and integrated simultaneously; they were co-related not only in terms of space but also time. Hence, the fundamental idea was simultaneity (*dōji*). As fundamentally contradictory and incompatible as one and many, or nondifferentiation and differentiation were, the former did not come after the latter and vice versa. On the contrary, these pairs of antitheses existed simultaneously. Thus, all the principles of the ten mysteries presupposed this notion of simultaneity—the simultaneous completion of all things and events in space and time. Furthermore, this simultaneity was experienced most concretely and vividly in the present moment of a single thought of one’s lived experience. These two characteristics constituted the distinctive conception of time that underlay all the principles of the ten mysteries.¹³⁶

The principle of mutual identity and mutual penetration was applied more specifically to time in the ninth principle of various formations of the discrete events of the ten periods. The “ten periods” here meant the past, present, and future; each contained the three periods by virtue of the principle of mutual identity and mutual penetration. The past, present, and future thus comprised nine periods altogether, which in turn formed one period—this amounted to a total of ten periods. Each of these ten periods was fulfilled in the present moment of a single thought.¹³⁷ The corollary of this was as follows: the great aeons were one moment and one moment was the great aeons. The thesis that all the aeons and *kalpas* were contained and fused in the present moment of a single thought did not obliterate the distinctions of the three periods and the triple divisions within each of them. The present was distinct and separate from the past and future: they were discrete events (*kyakuhō*). Nevertheless, these mutually exclusive and discontinuous times or periods were “variously formed” (*ijō*). The various formations of discrete events, thus, took place in the matrix of the present moment. This accounted for the fundamental structure of time in which the three periods or nine periods were simultaneously, yet variously, realized at each moment—one-in-many or many-in-one in the present.¹³⁸ Another important implication of the concept of the various formations of discrete events concerned that succession of self-contained present moments we call

the flow of time. The present moment, absolutely discrete from those before and after it, proceeded to another and another, thus forming a succession of “presents,” in each of which the various formations of discrete events were executed in a unique way.¹³⁹

When we consider the first and ninth principles together, one important implication becomes immediately clear: the present moment of a single thought was not only temporal, but spatial in that it simultaneously contained the ten periods and the ten directions. The mutual identity and penetration of space and time was clearly seen in this juxtaposition of the two principles.¹⁴⁰ Fa-tsang (643–712) described this as follows:

Since a single moment has no substance of its own, it becomes interchangeable with the great aeons. Because the great aeons have no substance, they also embrace the single moment. Since both the single moment and the great aeons have no substance, all the marks of the long and the short are merged into [a great harmony], hence all the universes that are far away or nearby, all the Buddhas and sentient beings, and all things and events in the past, present, and future come into view simultaneously. . . . [Since time is inseparable from events,] if one moment becomes nonobstructive, all dharmas will [automatically] become harmoniously merged. This is why all things and events in the three times vividly appear within one moment.¹⁴¹

We have examined some salient features of the Hua-yen philosophy of time in the foregoing. The basic Buddhist assumptions were retained, yet greatly extended and deepened as Hua-yen probed into the structure of the present moment from the standpoint of its totalistic ontology. However, the Hua-yen school was conspicuously speculative; consequently, its profound insight into the nature of time remained largely submerged in the abstract discourse of a grand ontology.

As we turn to Dōgen's view of time, we must, at the outset, note the fact that although the problem of time was an integral part of Buddhist thought, it was never treated as central but was instead subordinated to such issues as nonsubstantiality, causation, emptiness, Buddha-nature, and so forth. Perhaps the unique significance of Dōgen, in this regard, consisted of his attribution of central importance to this problem.¹⁴² Dōgen picked the problem of time out of obscurity and placed it in the total context of his thought. This was done not from any speculative interests, which he vehemently disdained,

but out of existential concerns with the impermanence of life and its limits, namely death. Thus, his analysis of time, as we shall see presently, was deeply personal, existential, and soteriological.¹⁴³

In his exposition of time, Dōgen recommended that one consider the commonsense view that a day was divided and subdivided into measurable units or quanta—a view that presupposed that time *flowed* uniformly in an infinite series of homogeneous temporal units from the past to the present to the future. According to this view, time was akin to what Bergson designates “spatial time,” which is time organized spatially or segmentally. Dōgen urged his disciples to examine such a presupposition carefully.

Study [time] in light of the twenty-four hours of the day. A deity with three heads and eight arms is time; because it is time, it is no different from the customary twenty-four hours. Although you never measure [what you experience regarding] the twenty-four hours’ length or brevity, slowness or swiftness, you still construe [time] as the twenty-four hours. The directions and traces of its coming and going [as with the four seasons] are so obvious that you never bother to doubt it. Even though you have no doubt about it, that does not mean you understand it.¹⁴⁴

The so-called coming and going (*korai*) of time was so deeply and naturally ingrained in the ordinary mind that its nature was never questioned or analyzed. The twelve horary divisions of time were a part of this conventional view—undoubtedly useful for daily living, but not to be mistaken as constituting the structure of time. Yet such a view may be worth examining as an initial step into the mystery of time. For in one sense, time is said to “flow” and “come and go”; accordingly, we must examine what we mean by that.

When we use such expressions as “time flows,” “time flies,” and so forth, two different situations are implied: (1) Time is a kind of entity, or a thing in itself, that moves, apart from and independent of, the flow of events and vicissitudes of life in the world; and (2) the things and events of the world move against the background of time. If we use the familiar analogy of a fruit in a pot, with the pot representing time, the former case is analogous to the situation in which the pot is moving but the fruit is still; the latter is the reverse. Regardless of these differences, the two scenarios actually speak of one and the same thing—that is, the fundamental assumption, quite familiar to us by now, of the dualism of time and events. Thus, temporal units are represented

only quantitatively, abstracted from their experiential contact with felt qualities of life; events are but episodes or appearances on the stage of the impersonal passage or duration of time. Time and events are divorced from one another. Such a dualistic assumption is deeply rooted in the conventional view of time. This is why Dōgen said: “According to an ordinary person’s view of existence-time, even enlightenment and nirvāṇa are merely the appearance of its coming and going.”¹⁴⁵ Dōgen thus admonished us as follows:

Do not think that time only flies away. You should not regard time’s flying as its sole activity. If time were exclusively dependent on flying, there would be an interval (*kenkyaku*) [between time and the experiencing self]. People do not listen to the truth of existence-time, because they conceive it to be only passing away.¹⁴⁶

As is clear from this statement (and from other passages of the *Shōbō-genzō*), Dōgen was not rejecting the commonsense view as totally irrelevant or false. There is a grain of truth in the statement “time flows.” Dōgen’s task lay in explicating this truth as much as possible, while probing and clarifying its misleading and false aspects. This was the meaning of his admonition, “Study [time] in light of the twenty-four hours of the day.”

Dōgen thus proclaimed: “The existence-time in question means that time is already existence and existence is necessarily time.”¹⁴⁷ He quoted the statement of Yüeh-shan Wêi-yen (745–828), but modified it in such a way that “a particular time” (*arutoki*), from Yüeh-shan’s original, was interpreted as “existence-time” (*uji*). Dōgen’s own modified version read as follows:

Standing on the peak of a high mountain is existence-time. Diving to the bottom of the deep ocean is existence-time. A deity with three heads and eight arms is existence-time. The Buddha [with the magnificent body] of one *jō* and six *shaku* is existence-time. A staff and a whisk are existence-time. A pillar and a lantern are existence-time. You and friends in the neighborhood are existence-time. The great earth and the empty sky are existence-time.¹⁴⁸

He also stated:

Mountains are also time; oceans are time as well. If they were not, there would be neither mountains nor oceans. Do not say that the realized

now (*nikon*) of mountains and oceans does not bear upon time. If time perishes, mountains and oceans will perish as well; if time does not, then neither will they. In and through this truth did Buddha's enlightenment unfold, Tathāgata originate, the eye-balls proclaim, and Buddha's holding up a flower manifest. Such is time. Were that not the case, they would not be possible.¹⁴⁹

Likewise, "a pine tree is time; a bamboo is time." Time even had colors: "Various times have such colors as blue, yellow, red, white, and so on."¹⁵⁰ If time was existence and vice versa, it is not surprising to see that time had shapes, colors, smells, sounds, and so on. Moreover, "good and evil are time; time is neither good nor evil."¹⁵¹ All in all, the things and events of the entire universe were invariably time, and hence existence-time.

Dōgen's position was quite consistent with the traditional Buddhist position that time had no independent existence but was dependent on dharmas. The particularities of the world and of time were not two different sets of realities but one and the same. The commonsense view, on the other hand, tended, as we have seen before, to regard time as something that proceeded endlessly, uniformly, and linearly from the unknown past to the unknown future, irrespective of the actualities of reality and life. The actualities of the world, in this dualistic view of existence and time, were merely the arising and dissolving, or coming and going, of "appearances" in a temporal succession. Dōgen vehemently rejected such a view.

Time as existence-time was at once temporal and spatial. Again, consistent with Buddhist tradition, particularly the Hua-yen metaphysics of time, Dōgen observed:

You should examine the fact that all things and events of this entire universe are temporal particularities (*jiji*)... existence-time invariably means all times. Every particular phenomenon and every particular form are likewise time. All existence and all worlds are included in a temporal particularity. Just meditate on this for a moment: Is any existence or any world excluded from this present moment?¹⁵²

Dōgen's whole thesis in this regard was crystallized in the following: "As we realize with the utmost effort that all times (*jinji*) are all existence (*jin'u*), absolutely no additional dharma remains."¹⁵³ In other words, existence-time subsumed space and time totally and exhaustively. At this point, the

following observations should be made: (1) In Dōgen's view, space and time were so inseparably interpenetrated that to see one without the other destroyed the fundamental understanding of his thought, particularly of his thought about Buddha-nature. Thus, spatiality and temporality were equally crucial to existence and hence, to Buddha-nature.¹⁵⁴ In this connection, Dōgen's view of "all times" and "all existence" was not comparable to "absolute time" and "absolute space" or to such mythopoeic metaphors as "cosmic womb," and "cosmic receptacle," as we shall see in more detail later. (2) Related to this last remark is the fact that temporality, for Dōgen, was not a manifestation of a timeless eternity to which a metaphysically inferior status was attributed. A dualistic—transcendental and static—view of eternity in contradistinction to time was alien to Dōgen's thought. A hasty association of "all times" with a dualistic conception of eternity (or any other notions of "everlastingness" or "timelessness" for that matter) was also to be avoided.¹⁵⁵

Although he followed the traditional Buddhist conception of time fairly closely, Dōgen differed from it in his highly personal and existential emphasis. This was especially notable in his search for the "reason of the time of my self" (*jiko no toki naru dōri*):

You should examine the fact that my self unfolds itself and makes the entire universe of it (*ware o hairetsu shi-okite jinkai to seri*), and that all things and events of this entire universe are temporal particularities. Just as particular times are unobstructed by one another, so are particular things and events unobstructed. For this reason, the minds of enlightenment awaken at the same time; the times of enlightenment awaken in the same mind. The same holds true of practice and enlightenment.

My self unfolds itself and beholds it. Such is the reason of the time of my self.¹⁵⁶

Quite obviously, my self was not merely the psycho-physical ego but that self which was one with the world—both the self and the world were the self-expressions (*jidōshu*) of Buddha-nature. Yet this self was my self with an individual's own unique doubts, fears, hopes, agonies, and aspirations.¹⁵⁷ Hence, it was neither an abstract speculation about the self in relation to the world (as is often the case with the traditional Buddhism of, say, Hua-yen metaphysics), nor a subjectivistic involvement with the empirical "I" (as

we see in some schools of existentialism). While employing the traditional categories, such as the self, mind, time, the world, Dōgen's use of them was imbued with his personal experience, as well as with the ethos of medieval Japan. This was clearly expressed in the following:

Nevertheless, ordinary people, being untutored in the Buddha-dharma, have their own view of time, and by hearing the word *uji*, think as follows: "At one time it became a deity with three heads and eight arms, at another the magnificent Buddha of one *jō* and six *shaku*. For example, it is like [the self-same I's] crossing rivers and climbing mountains. Although they now remain behind, I have passed through them and now dwell in a grand palace. Thus, the mountains and rivers are as far separate from me as heavens from the earth." [In this view, the self-identical I is presupposed in contrast to the physical environments.] Such a view, however, does not tell the whole truth of time. When I waded the rivers and ascended the mountains, I was there. To [that particular] me belongs a particular time. As I am already here and now, time should not depart from me. If time does not have the quality of coming and going, the occasion of mountain climbing is the realized now of [my] existence-time. If time comes and goes, the realized now of existence-time is [still] mine. [Existence-time is invariably a personal time, irrespective of whether time comes and goes.] This is the meaning of existence-time. Doesn't [existence-time] swallow that time of climbing and fording and this time of dwelling in the grand palace? Doesn't it disgorge them? The deity with three heads and eight arms is yesterday's time; the Buddha of one *jō* and six *shaku* is today's time. But the truth of yesterday and today is [comparable to] that moment in which one climbs a mountain and looks around at tens of thousands of peaks at a glance. [Yesterday and today, and all times for that matter, are seen simultaneously.] Time does not pass. The particular time of the deity [of yesterday] is also experienced precisely as my existence-time; though it appears to be far off, it is the realized now. The particular time of the magnificent Buddha [of today], too, is realized as nothing but my existence-time; seeming to be far away, it is the realized now.¹⁵⁸

Although the foregoing passage has many important elements on which we should comment, suffice it to say, for the moment, that Dōgen sufficiently demonstrated his existential tenor in his treatment of existence and time,

which was radically concretized by his concept of self. In other words, Dōgen's concept of time fully incorporated into itself the self and the world—traditional bipolar concepts of Buddhism—yet it deepened the whole character of the problem with a concept of self based on Dōgen's personal experience and the cultural ethos of Japan. In this respect, Dōgen's view of time was strikingly similar to Heidegger's in its vehement insistence on the “mineness” of temporality regarding death.

Thus, Dōgen wrote:

Indeed, existence-time is realized, freely and without restraint. Heavenly rulers and celestial beings, actualized here and manifested there, are the existence-time that I now exert totally. In addition to these beings, myriad forms of existence-time, in water and on land, are realized now through my efforts. All kinds of beings constituting existence-time, in the invisible as well as visible worlds, are the embodiments of my endeavors without exception. Exertions move in and through time (*jinriki kyōryaku nari*). You should learn that if my self does not put forth the utmost exertion and live time now (*waga ima jinriki kyōryaku ni arazareba*), not a single thing will be realized, nor will it ever live time.¹⁵⁹

This last sentence summarizes Dōgen's view of “my self” in connection with the problem of time. In this passage and others to which I have already referred, the problems of the realized now (*nikon*) and of temporal passage (*kyōryaku*) stand out as particularly important in Dōgen's thought. Thus, we will now examine them individually.

Existence-time is realized in the present. Its concrete realization takes place in the present moment; hence, an analysis of this is fundamental to all other aspects of the problem of time. As Dōgen asked: “Is any existence or any world excluded from this present moment?” (This was quoted earlier in this section.) He also commented:

The present time (*konji*) under consideration is each individual's realized now (*ninnin no nikon*). Even though it makes you think of the past, present, and future, and tens of thousands of other times, they are the present time, the realized now. A person's duty (*ninnin no bunjō*) always lies in the present. At times, the eyeballs might be regarded as the present time; at other times, the nostrils are the present time.¹⁶⁰

It was also in the context of the present time that Dōgen's critique of the commonsense view of time as uniformly and one-directionally flowing and "coming and going" (*korai*) became most severe. For him, the first step toward the analysis of time was to understand the traditional Buddhist dictum: "Everything perishes as soon as it arises" (*setsuna-shōmetsu*). However, the ordinary person was not aware of this truth, according to Dōgen. Hence:

You should take note that the human body in this life is formed temporarily as a result of the combination of the four elements and the five skandhas. There are always the eight kinds of suffering [birth, old age, sickness, death, separation from the beloved, union with the hated, frustrations, and those sufferings caused by clinging to the five skandhas], not to mention the fact that life arises and perishes instantaneously from moment to moment and does not abide at all, and the fact that there are sixty-five *setsunas* born and annihilated in one *tanji*, yet the ordinary person does not realize this because of his/her own ignorance. Although one day and one night are comprised by 6,400,099,980 *setsunas*, and the five skandhas appear and disappear, he/she does not know these facts. Pity those who are altogether unaware of their own births and deaths!¹⁶¹

For Dōgen, to investigate this aspect of impermanence was crucially important, philosophically and religiously. In short, the tenet "Everything perishes as soon as it arises" denied duration: The ultimate limit of momentariness was a lack of duration as well as an absence of coming and going. The commonsense view failed to see this.

Dōgen analyzed the problem as follows:

When firewood becomes ash, it can no longer revert to firewood. Hence, you should not regard ash as following and firewood as preceding [as if they formed the continuous process of a self-identical entity]. Take note that firewood abides in its own Dharma-position (*hōi*), having both before and after. Although there are before and after, they are cut off (*zengo saidan seri*) [so that there remains only middle or present, i.e., the Dharma-position of firewood]. Likewise, ash resides in its own Dharma-position, possessing both before and after. Just as firewood does not revert to firewood again after having been burnt to ash, so death is not transformed into life after the individual is dead. Thus, do not hold that life becomes death; this is an authoritative teaching of the

Buddha-dharma. Accordingly, call it nonlife (*fushō*). Buddha's authentic sermon proclaims that death does not change to life; accordingly, call it nondeath (*fumetsu*). Life is a position of total time, death is a position of total time as well. They are like winter and spring. We do not think that winter turns to spring or that spring turns to summer.¹⁶²

Firewood and ash, life and death, winter and spring—all have their own Dharma-positions that are absolutely discrete and discontinuous. Each has its before and after but is cut off from those Dharma-positions preceding and following. Because of its central importance to Dōgen's mystical realism, we shall attempt to delve into the problem of abiding in the Dharma-position (*jū-hōi*) in some detail now.

First, a Dharma-position is composed of a particular here and now (a spatio-temporal existence in the world); hence, it is inevitably comprised of the existential particularities—biological, psychological, moral, philosophical, religious, and so forth—that are observed, compared, judged, and chosen in the dualistic scheme of things. That is to say, the existential particularities of a given moment constitute a particular position of time, which in turn is a Dharma-position. What makes a particular position of time a Dharma-position is the appropriation of these particularities in such a manner that they are seen nondualistically in and through the mediation of emptiness. As such, the significance of the existential qualities and phenomenality of things and events is by no means minimized; on the contrary, they are reconstituted, without being naively phenomenalist, in their true aspect of thusness. “Dharma abides in a Dharma-position” (*hō wa hōi ni jūsuru nari*); therefore, it does not imply that the Dharma-position is in any way a self-limiting manifestation or a temporal instance of eternity. To abide in a Dharma-position should not be construed as instrumental or subsidiary to some idea of eternity, but rather as an end in itself—as eternity in itself. Thus, the act of eating, for example, is viewed as self-sufficient in itself; it is the kōan realized in life (*genjō-kōan*).

Second, such a particular here-and-now is also the bearer of the total situation in which it is lived. Dōgen frequently used the expression he was so fond of—“the total exertion of a single thing” (*ippō-gūjin*)—or simply, “total exertion” (*gūjin*). He wrote, for example:

Those who know a speck of dust know the entire universe; those who penetrate a single dharma penetrate all dharmas. If you do not penetrate

all dharmas, you do not penetrate a dharma. When you understand the meaning of penetration (*tsū*) and thereby penetrate thoroughly, you discern all dharmas as well as a single dharma. For this reason, while you study a speck of dust, you study the entire universe without fail.¹⁶³

Elsewhere, related to the idea of the total exertion of a single thing, Dōgen had this to say: “When one side is illumined, the other is darkened” (*ippō o shōsuru toki wa ippō wa kurashi*).¹⁶⁴ As I noted in the foregoing, when one eats, eating is the total activity at that particular moment and nothing else. All other things remain in darkness, so to speak. This does not mean, however, that this affirmation of eating is achieved through the negation of the existence of the “hidden”—such would be dualistic. On the contrary, eating is enacted in such a way that it embodies, nondually and undefiledly, both the disclosed and the concealed, the part and the whole, microcosm and macrocosm. The activity of eating is, according to Dōgen’s favorite expression, “the whole being of emptiness leaping out of itself” (*konshin-chōshutsu*). When part and whole are simultaneously and unobstructedly realized in the act of eating, it is the moment when the whole being of emptiness leaps out of itself, “mustering the whole body-mind” (*shinjin o koshite*)—another favorite expression of Dōgen. This is precisely what Dōgen meant by “total realization” or “total function” (*zenki*). As I intend to discuss this matter in a different context later, I shall quote just one passage in connection to this:

Life is, for example, like sailing in a boat. Although we set a sail, steer our course, and pole the boat along, the boat carries us and we do not exist apart from the boat. By sailing in the boat, we make the boat what it is. Assiduously study [such an example of] this very moment (*shōtōim-moji*). At such time, there is nothing but the world of the boat. The heavens, the water, and the shore—all become the boat’s time (*fune no jisetsu*); they are not the same as the time that is not the boat. Hence, I make life what it is; life makes me what I am. In riding the boat, one’s body and mind, and the self and the world are together the dynamic function of the boat (*fune no kikan*). The entire earth and the whole empty sky are in company with the boat’s vigorous exertion. Such is the I that is life, the life that is I.¹⁶⁵

Third, a Dharma-position does not come and go, or pass, or flow as the commonsense view of time would assume. This is a radical rejection of the

flow of time, or the stream of consciousness, or any other conceptions of time based on the idea of continuity and duration. That is, time is absolutely discrete and discontinuous. This characteristic was primary to Dōgen's thought.¹⁶⁶ His thesis, however, was not based on any quantitative or atomistic consideration of time, that is a theoretical concern, but rather on qualitative and practical reflections on his existential and religious experiences of the present. As he probed the "reason of total exertion" (*gūjin no ri*), he could not help but come to the idea of the radical discontinuity of the present.

Though the expressions themselves of "abiding in the Dharma-position" and "the total exertion of a single thing" were by no means Dōgen's own invention, the ideas themselves nevertheless bore the imprints of typical Dōgen-like mystical realism, as epitomized in Dōgen's statement (the English translation of which hardly does justice to the spirit, eloquence and force of the original Japanese): "Obstruction hinders obstruction, thereby obstruction realizes itself (*ge wa ge o sae, ge o miru*); obstruction obstructs obstruction (*ge wa ge o gesuru nari*)—such is time."¹⁶⁷ As Dōgen explained immediately after this passage, "obstruction" (*ge*, a shortened expression of *keige*) was not used in the ordinary sense of the word, but in the sense of "self-obstruction" while abiding in a Dharma-position. A thing was obstructed by itself and nothing else; that is, it exerted itself in perfect freedom.¹⁶⁸ Dōgen's purport was to express the realistic aspect of thusness, which entailed neither a monistic nor a phenomenalist reductionism. Accordingly, we might legitimately translate the above passage as: "Thusness thuses thusness, thereby thusness realizes itself..." Analogously, "a mountain mountain-s a mountain, thereby a mountain realizes itself ..." and so on, in the manner of total exertion.¹⁶⁹

So far I have tried to establish the necessary relationship between the idea of abiding in the Dharma-position and that of the realized now in Dōgen's thought, for Dōgen declared: "Living vigorously in a Dharma-position—such is existence-time."¹⁷⁰ We can now fully comprehend the statement to which I referred earlier:

The deity with three heads and eight arms is yesterday's time; the Buddha of one *jō* and six *shaku* is today's time. But the truth of yesterday and today is [comparable to] that moment in which one climbs a mountain and looks around at tens of thousands of peaks at a glance. Time does not pass. The particular time of the deity [of yesterday] is also

experienced precisely as my existence-time; though it appears to be far off, it is the realized now. The particular time of the magnificent Buddha [of today], too, is realized as nothing but my existence-time; seeming to be far away, it is the realized now.¹⁷¹

The present moment of a single thought (regardless of its length from a theoretical standpoint) is the subjectively appropriated, complete, and realized existence-time. Dōgen's statement clearly denies seeing the present as an instance in a linear view of time. Instead, the motif of simultaneity we have examined in connection with the Hua-yen metaphysics of time was strong and pervasive in his thought.¹⁷² In this framework, such statements as the following can be properly appreciated:

You should understand that even though there was a moon last night, the moon you see tonight is not last night's moon. Tonight's moon, whether of the earlier, middle, or later phase, is likewise nothing but the moon of tonight. Although they say there is the moon, it is neither new nor old, because the moon inherits the moon.¹⁷³

Analogously, the present can be divided into earlier, middle, and later phases, or into new and old, or past, present, and future. The present, however, is not divided into the actuality of human subjectivity. This view is strikingly similar to what Whitehead conceived of in his "epochal theory of time" in which the epochal quantum of becoming was said to be divisible, but not divided.¹⁷⁴ Thus, each realized now constitutes a unique whole of actuality.

Furthermore, the structure of the realized now is such that the past, present, and future, in an epochal whole (to use Whitehead's term here for convenience's sake), are not arranged in a linear fashion but realized simultaneously in the manner of mutual identity and mutual penetration (*sōsoku-sōnyū*). This refutes the ordinary ways of defining these three periods:

[A common belief] says that the past has already perished, the future is yet to come, and the present does not stay. But, the past has not necessarily already perished, the future is not necessarily yet to come, and the present will not necessarily not stay. If you learn the not-staying, the not-yet, and the no-longer as present, future, and past, respectively, you should certainly understand the reason why the not-yet is the past,

present, and future. [The same holds true of the no-longer and the not-staying.]¹⁷⁵

What this statement indicates, in the final analysis, is that the manner in which an epochal whole of the present incorporates the selective memory of the past, as well as the projected anticipation of the future, is far more complex than conventional definitions of the past, present, and future (in terms of the no-longer, not-staying, and not-yet) would assume it to be. The very complexity of this problem, in turn, points to various possibilities of freedom in this religio-philosophical appropriation of the three periods in the realized now, in which Buddha-nature is realized (*ji-bussō*). We now come to the problem of temporal passage (*kyōryaku*) in Dōgen's view of time.

Before we embark on an examination of Dōgen's view of temporal passage, several prevalent views must be cleared from our path at the outset. First, as is apparent from the general characteristics of his metaphysics, Dōgen rejected any supernaturalistic agent that governed a providential continuity or a sacred history, independent of the ever-changing flux of existence and time. Any other all-embracing principle of eternity or timelessness, or any evolutionary scheme of history, was also alien to Dōgen's thought. Secondly, Dōgen's analogy of firewood and ash indicates that the continuity of becoming ash from firewood is an illusion that presupposes some changeless substratum that endures throughout the accidental changes of the burning firewood until it reduces to ash. Certainly, a uniformly flowing and measurable time, in an infinite continuum, would assume such a presupposition. Although the drawbacks of these two views are fairly easy to detect, the third view of continuity as a process from potentiality to actuality is subtler than the other two—so much so that Dōgen undertook his analyses with great care to repudiate it once and for all.

Let us examine this last view a little more closely. Dōgen presented a metaphor strikingly similar to Aristotle's metaphor of the acorn and the oak tree:

A certain group of people think that Buddha-nature is like a seed of a grass or plant. When the rain moistens it generously, buds and stems grow, branches, leaves and fruits become dense, and eventually the fruits bear seeds. Such a view is what an ordinary person imagines. Supposing that you understand the matter this way, you should still realize that the seeds, the flowers, and the fruits are each the unadulterated mind

itself (*jōjō no sekishin*). A seed in a fruit, though unseen, produces roots and stems and, though not brought together from elsewhere, flourishes with a thick trunk and big branches. This has nothing to do with something inside or outside, and yet, it is true throughout the ages. For this reason, even if an ordinary person's approach is taken [for the sake of argument], the roots, stems, branches, and leaves all live the same life and all die the same death; they are equally one and the same Buddha-nature of all existence.¹⁷⁶

Buddha-nature is not something that will be realized in the future, if and when a right season arrives, as is the case with a seed that grows into a plant and bears fruit. Buddha-nature is not a potentiality to be actualized some time in the future, but is an actuality in and of the present. Dōgen contended:

People, ancient and modern alike, have often thought and think that the Buddhist saying "if the time arrives" means waiting for some time in the future when Buddha-nature will manifest itself, and that, when they practice the Way in this manner, they will naturally witness the time of Buddha-nature's manifestation. But they say that if the time does not come, it will never manifest itself, even though they may visit teachers and inquire about Dharma and endeavor to study the Way. Thinking this way, they are aimlessly enmeshed in the whirlwind of worldly dusts and observe the Milky Way in vain. Such people belong perhaps to the non-Buddhists' naturalism [that maintains the spontaneous generation of all things].¹⁷⁷

Dōgen then expounded his view as follows:

Wanting to know the meaning of Buddha-nature, as we see it, is to really know it. To reflect upon temporal conditions is to actually know them. If you wish to know Buddha-nature, you must know temporal conditions in this way. To say "if the time arrives" is tantamount to declaring that the time has already arrived; how can you doubt this? You may entertain a doubt about the time. Be that as it may, witness Buddha-nature's arrival. You should know that "if the time arrives" [as understood in this manner], every moment of the twenty-four hours of the day does not pass by in vain. The "if-arrives" (*nyakushi*) is construed

as the “already-arrived” (*kishi*). [Otherwise,] “if the time arrives” would mean “Buddha-nature never arrives.” For this reason, since the time has already arrived, Buddha-nature is unmistakably present here and now. The reason of Buddha-nature discloses itself. There is absolutely no time that has not yet arrived [according to our interpretation of “if the time arrives”]; there is no Buddha-nature that is not yet realized.¹⁷⁸

We see here Dōgen’s emphatic repudiation of continuity as the process from potentiality to actuality. If we seek to find a kind of continuity in Dōgen’s thought, we should do so without doing injustice to what Dōgen had to say with respect to the discontinuity of actualities. In any event this much is clear: The concept of continuity in Dōgen’s thought did not refer to a process of evolutionary becoming, from the inferior to the superior, from the imperfect to the perfect, from the incomplete to the complete, or from the hidden to the revealed, which was invariably associated with the image of the linear flow of time. Realization (*genjō*) in Dōgen’s thought rejected such a process of evolutionary becoming, or “coming and going” and “arising and perishing” for that matter. Rather, it meant that reality in its realized state was always a self-sufficient, yet dynamic whole. (Obviously, this was not a naive phenomenalism that affirmed the empirical reality at face value. We shall have occasion to say more about this later.)¹⁷⁹

Dōgen wrote:

Existence-time has the characteristic of passage (*kyōryaku*): it passes from today to tomorrow, from today to yesterday, from yesterday to today, from today to today, and from tomorrow to tomorrow [in the experience of my realized now]. Dynamism (*kyōryaku*) is the characteristic of time. While the times of ancient and modern do not pile up, nor do they line up [because they are mutually identical and mutually penetrated], Ch’ing-yüan [Hsing-ssü] is time, Huang-po [Hsi-yün] is also time, [Ma-tsu Tao-i of] Chiang-hsi and Shih-t’ou [Hsi-ch’ien] are times as well. Because the self and others are already times [discrete from each other], practice and enlightenment are different times. Also, to enter the mire and go into the water [to guide sentient beings] is likewise time.¹⁸⁰

Temporal passage, in this view, was not so much a succession or contiguity of inter-epochal wholes, as it was the dynamic experience of an intra-epochal whole of the realized now, in which the selective memory of the past and the

projected anticipation of the future were subjectively appropriated in a unique manner. In brief, continuity in Dōgen's context meant dynamism. (In this sense alone, Dōgen allowed for the notion of "flow" in time.) This is in accord with what we saw previously with the Hua-yen "principle of the various formations of the discrete events of the ten periods" (*jisse-kyakuhō-ijō-mon*). In the realized now, the discrete events of past, present, and future were variously formed at a given moment. The dynamic structure of the realized now, and its manner of appropriating these three periods, were extremely complex and defied any simplistic characterization from the linear perspective alone.

If we take the linear or directional metaphor advisedly like Dōgen (as in the idea of temporal passage), time may be said to be multi-directional and multi-dimensional. As I have already quoted, it moves from today to yesterday, from tomorrow to tomorrow, from yesterday to today, and so forth—not only that, but it moves "vertically." Dōgen wrote:

The hour of the horse [II A.M.—I P.M.] and the hour of the sheep [1–3 P.M.], in relation to things arrayed in the world now, are as they are by virtue of abiding in their Dharma-positions, constantly moving up and down.¹⁸¹

Thus, temporal passage in the intra-epochal whole of a realized now, as Dōgen saw it, was perhaps best described in terms of the Hua-yen philosophy of simultaneity. Dōgen said:

You should not construe temporal passage (*kyōryaku*) as something like a storm passing from east to west. The world is neither motionless and changeless nor without advance and retreat: it is temporal passage. Passage is, then, like spring. Myriad events take place in the spring and they are called passage. It should be noted that [spring] passes without anything outside itself, [such as winter or summer]. For example, the passage of spring always passes through spring itself. [There is nothing but the dynamism of spring.] Although temporal passage is not confined to spring alone, it is now realized at this particular time of spring, because it is the dynamism of spring. This should be understood carefully. Speaking of temporal passage, ordinary people think that the objective environment exists independently, while the subject of passage (*nōkyōryaku no hō*) traverses eastward through hundreds of thousands of

worlds and aeons. However, the study of the Buddha-way is not confined to this one thing alone.¹⁸²

As we recall, Dōgen said: “Unless my self puts forth the utmost exertion and lives time now, not a single thing will be realized, nor will it ever live time.” Herein lay Dōgen’s existential solution to the problem of one and many.

The foregoing examples illustrate Dōgen’s existential and religious concerns with the “intra-subjective” reality of the realized now as well as with temporal passage. The deepest motive behind Dōgen’s metaphysic of time was a practical, not theoretical, interest that consisted of the activity of philosophizing, which for Dōgen was none other than the practice of the Way (*bendō*). Thus, we are neither enslaved by time, nor do we have to “kill time”; instead, we now use time freely and creatively.¹⁸³

My observations thus far concerning the self, the realized now, temporal passage, and so on—all of which constitute existence-time—might give the impression that Dōgen’s view of time was nothing but an affirmation of reality as the given in the here and now—that is, a completed reality. We have seen references to this aspect of realization (*genjō*) previously, and this impression seems to be partially justified. We are led to ask: Wasn’t Dōgen’s metaphysic of time all but static? Can we find any dynamic elements of transformation and progression in Dōgen? Such questions lead to another fundamentally important aspect of Dōgen’s view of time—his notion of the “perpetuation of the Way through activity” (*gyōji-dōkan*), which we have had occasion to touch upon previously.¹⁸⁴ Dōgen’s key passage runs as follows:

The great Way of the Buddhas and ancestors consists always in these supreme activities (*mujō no gyōji*), never interrupted in their continuation: the desire for enlightenment, practice, enlightenment, and nirvāṇa. These four activities never allow even a single interval between them. This is the perpetuation of the Way through activity (*gyōji-dōkan*). Consequently, supreme activity is neither a contrivance of the self nor that of others; it is activity undefiled. The power of such an activity sustains my self and others. Its import is such that all the heavens and the entire earth of the ten directions enjoy the merit of my activity. Even if neither the self nor others are aware of it, such is the case.¹⁸⁵

The merit, or power, of the progression of creative activity is clearly set forth here. As we have seen, creative activity is metaphysically primitive to such an

extent that we could rightly claim, “In the beginning was activity.” This well conveys what Dōgen meant by the following:

The sun, the moon, and the stars exist by virtue of such creative activities. The earth and the empty sky exist because of activities. Our body-mind and its environment are dependent on activities; so are the four elements and the five skandhas. Although activity is not what worldly people are likely to care for, it is every human’s only true refuge.... It should be examined and understood thoroughly that dependent origination (*engi*) is activity, because activity does not originate dependently.¹⁸⁶

Dōgen went beyond the conventional way of thinking in Buddhist philosophy by asserting that activity was more primitive than dependent origination. This was not to deny the significance of the latter, but to probe the nature of its conditions and causes—that is, to probe all things of the universe—in order to deepen our understanding of them as activities.¹⁸⁷ The crux of the matter was succinctly stated in the following manner:

That activity which realizes those activities—it is our activity now (*wareraga imano gyōji nari*). The now of activity (*gyōji no ima*) is not the self’s primordial being, eternal and immutable, nor is it something that enters and leaves the self. The Way, called now, does not precede activity; as activity is realized (*gyōji genjō suru*), it is called now.¹⁸⁸

It is evident that now is realized contemporaneously with activity. Or to put it another way, time is activity and activity is time. The realized now consists, not in a static timelessness that enables us to accept the given reality as it is, but rather in a dynamic activity that involves us intimately in time and hence transforms our deeds, speech, and thought. The realization of activity (*gyōji-genjō*) signals this element of transformation. But this element is in turn inseparably connected with the perpetuation of the Way (*dōkan*), comparable to the forward revolution of the wheel of Dharma—it advances in history, but is an advance in enlightenment (*bukkōjōji*). Thus, if we construe these observations as indicating the process of evolutionary becoming (as in a Hegelian dialectical development as proposed by some philosophically oriented students of Dōgen), our previous efforts toward establishing the primacy of discontinuity end in failure at this very point. For nowhere does

Dōgen advocate any evolutionary theory of time, as I have emphasized. Therefore, even when we appreciate the significance of transformation and progression in Dōgen's thought, we should do so in the context of the ultimacy of discontinuity.

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND BUDDHA-NATURE

As I have shown in the foregoing, Dōgen's thought has a specifically philosophical import and relevance even today—a fact that has often been pointed out by many students of Dōgen. This does not mean, however, that he endeavored to construct a philosophical system; such was alien to his orientation. Dōgen engaged in philosophical analyses, comments, and expositions due to the existential and religious exigency that confronted him in the particular situation of his time. He was primarily a religious thinker who regarded the act of philosophizing as an essential element of his religiousness. This can be shown, for example, in the fact that while Dōgen used such traditional Buddhist terms as mind-only, Dharma-nature, thusness, and Buddha-nature synonymously throughout his works, he regarded Buddha-nature as particularly fitting and central—perhaps because the term retained more personal, affective, and existential connotations as compared to the impersonal, speculative, and transcendental connotations of the other terms. This affective strand in his personality was as strong as his cerebral disposition and cultic rigorism—and might have been engendered by his mother's tender religious piety. In this respect, Buddha-nature became Dōgen's own mythopoeic vision and was no longer a cold metaphysical concept—this was loosely comparable in its religious intention, and strikingly similar in its emotive tones, to the Amitābha or Amida faith of Pure Realm Buddhism. As Dōgen made abundantly clear, Zen Buddhism was a religion, not a philosophy alone.¹⁸⁹

As we have reminded ourselves so often, Dōgen's philosophical and religious thought revolved around his search for the meaning and reason (*dōri*) of existence, specifically of human existence in the context of impermanence and ultimately of death. Dōgen wrote:

To understand birth-and-death lucidly is a matter of the greatest importance for a Buddhist.

An old sage [Śākyamuni Buddha] said: "When you are first born into the world, you are provided with the ability to expound Dharma."

The ability to expound Dharma is the power of Tathāgata's great discourse, or the great discourse itself.¹⁹⁰

His seriousness concerning the problem is well testified to by these remarks: "We are born in the world without knowing our beginning and our end. Although we do not know the bounds of the world, we still look at and tread upon this place."¹⁹¹ He further said:

If someone seeks Buddha outside birth-and-death, it is like orienting a cart toward the north in order to head for the province of Yüeh, or like facing toward the south in order to gaze up at Charles' Wain. The more we collect the conditions of birth-and-death, the further we go astray in finding the way of liberation. We understand that birth-and-death itself is *nirvāṇa*; thus we neither loathe birth-and-death nor long for *nirvāṇa*. Only then, for the first time, are we free in birth-and-death.¹⁹²

The meaning of impermanence is not prior to, or independent of, the fact of impermanence. They are mutually identical and interdependent. In other words, myth is reality and reality is myth. Dōgen did not believe, as the modern world does, in a dualism between reality and myth in which reality is construed as isolatable from myth so as to attain a progressively greater degree of objectivity; rather, his purport was to clarify, purify, and reinforce myth—that is, Buddha-nature—in order to see and touch reality as it was. What the mythopoeic vision of Buddha-nature produced was not clouded feelings and emotions that coated, hid, or soothed the inexorable reality of impermanence and death, but those feelings and emotions that cleansed in thusness and were embedded in and transparent to that reality.

Let us then examine Dōgen's criticism of the Senika view of the immortality and eternity of the soul. Dōgen's disciples asked:

Some people say: "We must not grieve over birth-and-death, for there is a very easy way to liberate ourselves from it—namely, to know the immortality of mind-essence (*shinshō no jōjū*). Its tenet is as follows: While this body, having already been born, shall be transferred by necessity to death, this mind never perishes. Knowing that mind-essence is not affected by birth-and-death but resides in the body, one construes it as the original being; accordingly, the body is a temporary carcass that suffers an endless series of births-and-deaths. Mind is permanent and

changeless throughout the past, present, and future. To understand this way constitutes liberation from birth-and-death. Those who know this truth endure the present life and, as our bodies dissolve, enter the realm of essence. As we merge into the realm of essence, we are endowed with wondrous virtues like Buddhas and Tathāgatas. Even if we know this truth in the present life, we are not equal to these sages, because of our bodily existences with their attendant karmic effects from previous lives. Those who do not know this tenet as yet shall ever wander in the cycles of birth-and-death. Therefore, you must understand, without losing a moment, the truth of the immortality of mind-essence. What do you expect to happen if you pass your life wastefully in idle sitting?" Is or is not such a view truly in accord with the Way of the Buddhas and ancestors?¹⁹³

The temporariness and temporality of bodily and phenomenal existence, in this view, are forfeited for the sake of an after-life in the ocean realm of mind-essence. Opposing this Senika view, Dōgen submitted his own case for the radical affirmation of human existence:

Nevertheless, to equate such an opinion with the Buddha-dharma is more foolish than grasping tiles and pebbles and believing they are golden treasures. Such a delusion is shameful. National Teacher Hui-chung (?–d. 775) of the great T'ang dynasty strongly warned against such a view. Despicable and pitiful are those who currently contrive an erroneous doctrine of the immortality of mind and perishability of form, identifying it with Buddhas' wondrous Dharma and thinking themselves to be liberated from birth-and-death, while creating the root cause of suffering in birth-and-death.... From the standpoint of changelessness, all things are changeless without exception, with no differentiation between body and mind. From the standpoint of unconditionedness, all existences are equally unconditioned, with no differentiation between essence and form. In view of all this, is it not unreasonable for some to assert that while the body perishes, the mind endures? What is more, it should be realized that this very birth-and-death itself is *nirvāṇa*; nobody can speak of *nirvāṇa* independently of birth-and-death.¹⁹⁴

What matters most in religion, as Dōgen saw it, is not a deferred realization of immortality in an after-life, nor an eternal recurrence of rebirths, but the

realization of enlightenment here and now. Hence, this present birth-and-death is the only absolute locus—discrete from before and after—in which we can speak of religion, that is, our liberation. In short, birth-and-death is the very locus in which the two possibilities of enlightenment and delusion are offered to every one of us. Thus, “in the midst of birth-and-death, an ordinary person wanders about in delusion, whereas a great sage is liberated in enlightenment.”¹⁹⁵ Life can either be a blessing or a curse; hence, we must choose either enlightenment or delusion, but not both. Dōgen’s view of religious life bore strictly on this life—no more, no less.

The meaning and reason of human existence cannot be adequately considered in isolation from nonhuman existence in view of their interdependence. Precious though it is, human existence can be adequately understood only in its cosmic context. In any ontology, human existence has the favorable status as a point of departure, at least from the human standpoint. However, this should not imply or lead to an exaggeration of the value of human existence in the total context. This cosmic orientation is apparent in the following:

The mind of a sentient being is destined to desire to know its own self. However, those whose eyes see their true selves are exceedingly rare indeed; Buddha alone sees it. Non-Buddhists vainly pine for that which is not the self. What Buddha means by the self is precisely the entire universe. Thus, whether one is aware of it or not, there is no universe that is not this self...

An ancient Buddha once said that mountains, rivers, the great earth, and all humans are born together; likewise, the Buddhas of the three periods and all humans have been endeavoring together. On this account, because I see mountains, rivers, and the great earth when a single person is born, it does not seem to be that he or she comes into being as an unessential element piled upon those mountains, rivers, and the great earth, which existed before that person’s birth.... We are born in the world without knowing our beginning and our end. Although we do not know the bounds of the world, we still look at and tread upon this place. Do not hold a grudge against mountains, rivers, and the great earth, because they are not like human life. You should clearly understand that [the previous saying] shows the oneness of the universe and my existence. Furthermore, the Buddhas of the three periods already exerted themselves to perfect the Way and realize enlightenment. How

should we understand this oneness of Buddha and the self? Observe the activities of Buddha for awhile. Buddha's activities take place with the entire great earth and with all sentient beings. If they are not with all existence, they are not yet the activities of Buddha.

Hence from arousing the desire for enlightenment to the attainment of enlightenment, Buddha is enlightened and conducts himself always with the whole world and with all sentient beings.¹⁹⁶

"To study the Way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be enlightened by all things of the universe."¹⁹⁷ Furthermore: "For the self to carry itself forward and practice/verify the myriad things is delusion; for the myriad things to advance and practice/verify the self is enlightenment."¹⁹⁸ While Dōgen conceived of human existence in the context of the world as does Heidegger in terms of "a being-in-the-world," he never asserted an excessive "mineness," as Heidegger does, at the expense of cosmic concern.¹⁹⁹ For Dōgen, the self and the world, anthropology and cosmology, were invariably interpenetrated in the total context of his ontology. Both the self and the world arose and perished together in the simultaneous realization of Buddhahood (*dōji-jōdō*).

It is against this general background that we must understand Dōgen's most pietistic statements, such as the following, which is almost indistinguishable from the sentiments of Pure Realm Buddhism:

This birth-and-death itself is the life of Buddha. If you loathe and abandon it, you will lose the life of Buddha; if you abide by it, clinging to birth-and-death, you will also lose the life of Buddha, being left with a mere shell of Buddha. When you neither loathe nor crave it, only then do you enter the heart of Buddha for the first time. But do not calculate it with your mind or explain it with words. When you cast off and forget your body and mind and plunge into the abode of Buddha so that Buddha may act upon you and you may devote yourself completely to him, you become Buddha, liberated from birth-and-death, without effort and anxiety.²⁰⁰

It is worth noting at this point that despite these pious statements, Dōgen's religiousness was radically different from Shinran's, primarily because of differences in the two thinkers' perceptions of human existence. Dōgen viewed it in the light of radical impermanence, whereas Shinran viewed it in the

light of radical sinfulness. As we shall see in the next chapter, Dōgen did not lack an awareness of sinfulness, in connection with confession, any more than Shinran lacked an awareness of impermanence, inasmuch as he lived in medieval Japan, which was thoroughly saturated with it. Nevertheless, no one can legitimately challenge the general validity of the above observation. Thus, in the case of Dōgen, death was viewed from the standpoint of impermanence, and in the case of Shinran, from the standpoint of sinfulness. Moreover, for Shinran, there was an unbridgeable gap between Amida and the common mortals, at least existentially, because of our moral wretchedness and utter incapacity to save ourselves except by the power of Amida's original vow (*hongan*). This view may have appeared to Dōgen as an exaggerated, rather than an accurate, description of the human condition. For both Dōgen and Shinran, our most serious limitations were our acts, rather than a lack of intuitive insight into our nature. For Dōgen, it was the failure to act, whereas for Shinran, it was the incapacity to act.

It was fashionable to speak of the dichotomies of faith and enlightenment, as well as of other-power (*tariki*) and self-power (*jiriki*), which in turn were applied too facetly to an understanding of the Pure Realm and Zen traditions in Buddhism. These distinctions were irrelevant and fruitless at a deeper level within the two traditions, despite their having a certain amount of usefulness. This was most strongly substantiated by the two thinkers' writings concerning nondual freedom and liberation—in the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity (*jijuyū-zammai*) for Dōgen, and in naturalness (*jinen-hōni*) for Shinran. Nevertheless, we should not obscure or minimize the fundamental differences between Dōgen and Shinran, some of which I have pointed out already.²⁰¹ Dōgen's occasional outpouring of pious sentiments should be understood in the context of his mythopoeic vision of Buddha-nature, which was significantly similar to, as well as significantly different from, that of Amida of Pure Realm Buddhism.

In his discourse on Buddha-nature, Dōgen wrote:

In exerting life you are not obstructed by life; in exerting death you are not obstructed by death. You should not be attached to life aimlessly, or be afraid of death unreasonably. [The body of the five skandhas] is already the locus of Buddha-nature, and both perturbation [by life] and abomination [of death] are un-Buddhist. When you understand that [the body of the five skandhas] is formed by various conditions at hand,

you are able to exert it unobstructedly. This is the supreme Buddha.
The abode of this supreme Buddha itself is the wondrous Pure Land.²⁰²

The logic of exerting (*shitoku suru*) birth-and-death is such that, as life is exerted totally, there is nothing but life in the entire universe. When this happens, life becomes no-life and negates itself (i.e., mentioning life is meaningless in the situation where there is nothing but life). This is the logic of total exertion, to which we have referred frequently, and also the logic of “total dynamism” (*zenki*) of the entire universe and of Buddha-nature.²⁰³ Total dynamism is equivalent to the principle of the total exertion of a single thing, the only difference being that it is now applied to the entire universe and Buddha-nature. When a single thing, say, the sound of flowing water, is totally exerted, the total realization of Buddha-nature is present in that single phenomenon. Thus, the principles of total exertion and total dynamism are two aspects of one and the same reality of subjectivity in Dōgen’s mystical realism. Loosely speaking, the former (total exertion) addresses itself primarily to the self, whereas the latter (total dynamism) speaks to the world. Both refer to the undefiled freedom and liberation of the self and the world as the self-expression of Buddha-nature.

We are now in a position to examine Dōgen’s idea of total dynamism in a little more detail. Dōgen wrote:

As it works consummately, the great Way of all Buddhas is liberation (*vōdatsu*) and realization (*genjō*). Liberation means that life becomes transparent to life itself and death becomes transparent to death itself. Thus, there is detachment from birth-and-death, as well as involvement in birth-and-death: both are the great Way of total exertion (*gūjin no daidō*). There is discarding of birth-and-death, and there is crossing of birth-and-death: they are equally the great Way of total exertion. Realization is life, life is realization. In such realization, life is nothing but its total realization; death is nothing but its total realization. This dynamic function (*kikan*) makes life what it is and death what it is. At the very time when this dynamic function is realized, it is not necessarily large, nor is it necessarily small; it is neither infinite nor finite; neither far nor near. Life now is in this dynamic function, and this dynamic function is in life now. Life is not coming, life is not going. Life is not manifestation, life is not formation. Nevertheless, life is the presence of total realization, death is the presence of total realization. You should

realize that among an infinite number of dharmas that constitute the self, there is birth and there is death.

Reflect quietly upon the following: This present life and all things coexistent therewith—do they or do they not share a common destiny? Not a single moment, not a single thing exists that is not with life; not a single event, not a single mind exists that is not with life.²⁰⁴

In what the existentialist would deem to be a person's existence, Dōgen would see as the total activity of the universe engaged in the common endeavor of creation. The entire universe suffers the pangs of a new creation in and through a person's existence.²⁰⁵ Dōgen's existential concern, as I have noted before, never went astray in an excessive assertion of personal concern. Instead, both the self and the world share their common destiny as the self-activities and self-expressions of Buddha-nature.

The same thesis is explicated in Dōgen's analogy of a boat, as quoted before:

Life is, for example, like sailing in a boat. Although we set sail, steer our course, and pole the boat along, the boat carries us, and we do not exist apart from the boat. By sailing in the boat, we make the boat what it is. Study assiduously [such an example of] this very moment. At such time, there is nothing but the world of the boat. The heavens, the water, and the shore—all become the boat's time; they are not the same as the time that is not the boat. Hence, I make life what it is; life makes me what I am. In riding the boat, one's body and mind, the self and the world are together the dynamic function of the boat. The entire earth and the whole empty sky are in company with the boat's vigorous exertion. Such is the I that is life, the life that is I.²⁰⁶

Dōgen then asserted the following, immediately after the above passage:

Teacher Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in [1063–1135] once said: "Life is the realization of total dynamism; death is the realization of total dynamism."

You should elucidate and penetrate this statement deeply. Penetrating it deeply means: Although the truth of "life is the realization of total dynamism," with no bearing on a beginning or an end, embraces the entire great earth and the entire empty sky, not only does it not obstruct life as the realization of total dynamism, but it does not obstruct death as the realization of total dynamism. Even though when

“death is the realization of total dynamism,” it embraces the entire great earth and the entire empty sky; it does not hinder death as the realization of total dynamism, nor does it hinder life as the realization of total dynamism. Therefore, life does not obstruct death, death does not obstruct life. The entire great earth and the entire empty sky alike are involved in life as well as in death. This does not mean, however, that any single [fixed] earth or any single [self-same] sky is totally working in life or in death. Though not identical, they are not different; though not different, they are not one; though not one, they are not many. Accordingly, in life are all dharmas that realize themselves in total dynamism; in death are all dharmas that realize themselves in total dynamism. The realization of total dynamism exists even in what is neither life nor death. Within the realization of total dynamism, there is life and there is death.²⁰⁷

The total realization of Buddha-nature does not obliterate the individual particularities and identities of events, things, and persons as though they are dissolved in an undifferentiated realm. True to the Hua-yen metaphysics of the “nonobstruction of all phenomena” (*jiji-muge*), based on the principle of “mutual identity and mutual penetration” (*sōsoku-sōnyū*), Dōgen maintained that the concrete particularities of dharmas, radically discrete spatially and temporally, are interpenetrated and unobstructed—each exerts total realization in its own right. Furthermore, in effect: “Though not identical, they are not different; though not different, they are not one; though not one, they are not many.” The particularities in question are not dissolved or fused in Buddha-nature. The all-inclusiveness of Dōgen’s mythopoeic vision should be understood in this manner.

On the other hand, Dōgen’s vision is exclusionary in that when life is totally exerted and realized, there is nothing but life, excluding everything else, and ultimately life itself becomes “meaningless.” At this point, the distinction between symbol and reality becomes liberatingly irrelevant. This exclusionary aspect of the mythopoeic vision of Buddha-nature demands that we choose, and commit ourselves to, a definite course of action at each moment—whatever that may be. Such an orientation is far from noncommittal, as Zen Buddhism is all too often misunderstood to be. A definite philosophic and moral choice, however, must be “undefiled” (*fuzenna*), totally exerted as the self-creation of Buddha-nature in the total freedom of the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity. These two characteristics, inclusionary

and exclusionary, are unobstructedly and nondually envisioned in Dōgen's mythopoeic vision of Buddha-nature.

We must now take into account the problem of time. The analogy of firewood and ash, which we discussed previously, can be applied to the problem of birth-and-death. Dōgen repudiated the popular conception of death as the termination of life, as if life became or changed into death: "It is a mistake to think that there is a transition from life to death."²⁰⁸ For Dōgen, the continuity of becoming between birth and death obscured the real crux of the problem, for birth and death were two discrete "positions of time." He wrote:

Thus, do not hold that life becomes death; this is an authoritative teaching of the Buddha-dharma. Accordingly, call it nonlife. Buddha's authentic sermon proclaims that death does not change to life; accordingly, call it nondeath. Life is a position of total time, death is a position of total time as well.²⁰⁹

The same thesis was stated in another place:

Life is a position of total time (*hitotoki*), having both before and after. Accordingly, in the Buddha-dharma, life itself is said to be nonlife. Likewise, extinction is a position of total time, having before and after. Hence, extinction itself is said to be nonextinction. When you speak of life, there is nothing but life; when you speak of extinction, there is nothing but extinction. For this reason, when life comes, you should surrender yourself solely to life; when extinction comes, you should surrender yourself solely to extinction. Do not hate them. Do not desire them.²¹⁰

When death was chosen totally by abiding in its Dharma-position, it was not a death among innumerable deaths, or death as opposed to life, but the death that was, paradoxically, nondeath; yet at the same time, it was supremely a death that no other death could replace.

Like Heidegger, who has characterized human existence as the "being-toward-death," Dōgen maintained that death was not some external power that visited at the close of human life, and consequently, could be dealt with indifferently. Rather, death was something co-present with our life: life and death interpenetrated one another in the structural whole of human existence.

Dōgen wrote: “Although we have not yet abandoned life, we already see death. Although we have not yet abandoned death, we already see life. Life does not obstruct death, death does not obstruct life.”²¹¹ Elsewhere he had this to say: “There is life in death, and there is death in life. There is death that is always in death; there is life that is always in life. This is not contrived by humans willfully, but Dharma comes to be like this.”²¹²

Dōgen developed the notions of the use of birth-and-death, and of the surrender of birth-and-death to birth-and-death, as follows:

You should know this: Birth-and-death is the daily activity of the Buddha-way; birth-and-death is the provision for a Buddhist. If you wish to use it, you should use it; if you desire to understand it, it shall be understood. All Buddhas clearly understand its various conditions and are skillful in using it freely. If you are uninformed of the conditions of this birth-and-death, who will call you a genuine Buddhist? Who will call you a person who understands life lucidly and penetrates death thoroughly (*ryōshō-tasshi no kan*)? [Thus, pay attention to the following admonitions:] Do not listen to the idea that you have sunk low in birth-and-death; do not think you are in [the dualistic world of] birth-and-death; do not believe birth-and-death is merely birth-and-death; do not fail to understand [birth-and-death]; do not fail to discern [birth-and-death]...

The great Way of understanding life lucidly and penetrating death thoroughly, as is unequivocally clear, [further] has a time-honored adage: The great sage surrenders (*makasu*) birth-and-death to the mind, surrenders birth-and-death to the body, surrenders birth-and-death to the Way, and surrenders birth-and-death to birth-and-death.²¹³

To freely use and totally exert birth-and-death was the only way to penetrate it thoroughly and radically. Dōgen insisted that there was no way other than by “grasping it by practice” (*gyōshu*), in the spirit of surrender. In short, to use and to surrender (or self-power and other-power, if you will) were one and the same. This was the “reason of total surrender” (*ninnin no dōri*), which enabled us to grasp by practice “our own home” (*jiko no kakyō*)—the nirvāṇa of birth-and-death.²¹⁴

5 MONASTIC ASCETICISM: THE WAY OF RITUAL AND MORALITY

CULTIC AND MORAL ENDEAVORS constituted one of two foci of Dōgen's *zazen-only* (*shikan-taza*); the other consisted of the philosophic and mythopoeic endeavors that we discussed in the preceding chapter. Dōgen, in the latter part of his life, gradually became more involved with the former orientation as he passionately pursued a rigorous and “puritanic” monastic asceticism, through the establishment of a monastic community and the education of monastics.

When Dōgen returned from China in 1227, he immediately wrote the *Fukan zazengi*, in which he attempted to correct the errors and shortcomings of Tsung-che's *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei*, and thereby restore the spirit of the monastic ideal as envisioned by Po-chang Huai-hai. Here again, we see Dōgen's fascination with, and aspiration to, the classical period of Zen history. He finally retreated from Kyoto to Echizen in 1243 and embarked upon the ambitious enterprise of establishing an ideal monastic community at the Eihei-ji temple in this remote region.

A deep love for the ascetic life characterized these two periods in Dōgen's life. The second, the Echizen period, was marked by a more intensive and full-fledged monastic asceticism; the passion and philosophy that motivated Dōgen at this time were fundamentally the same. For this reason, this period can be seen as a total retreat from the world, although only in the most superficial sense. In actuality, it was Dōgen's method of coping with his sense of pessimism toward the practicability of universal monasticism in the intractable secular context. As a challenge to the world, he became entirely

concerned with the education of a select few in order to exemplify his vision of an ideal community. In this regard, the ascetic endeavors of Dōgen and his followers were intensely social as well as personal. Indeed they were intended to transform the world as well as the self.

BACKGROUND OF ZEN MONASTICISM

Our present knowledge of the origins of Zen monasticism in China is rather obscure. According to a very reliable account,¹ up until the third ancestor Sêng-ts'an (d. 606), there was no formal communal life among the Zen followers of Bodhidharma (d. 532), the last of twenty-eight Indian ancestors and the first ancestor of Chinese Zen according to official Zen records. Zen teachers engaged in the ascetic practices of the mendicant's life and had no fixed place where they could live communally with their disciples. However, the situation changed significantly during the time of Tao-hsin (580–651) and Hung-jên (601–674), the fourth and fifth ancestors respectively, both of whom settled in fixed places and established monastic communities that were economically self-sufficient. Each of them was said to have had some five hundred disciples who cooperated in the maintenance of their communal life. This was impressive indeed, given that in China, government aid was not available in those days, the contributions of lay believers were scarce, and the mendicant's life was virtually impracticable, if not impossible. These special circumstances led Zen Buddhists to self-supporting activities such as the cultivation of land for growing grain and vegetables, woodcutting, water-carrying, and so forth. Such a life was evidently a violation of the Buddhist vinaya, yet this was the beginning of the sinicization of monastic life.² Thus various observances, rules, and regulations were established for the maintenance of a communal life. Such a practical change also led the monastics to regard manual labor as spiritual discipline; Zen was now equated with every aspect of daily living. The scriptural teachings were interpreted according to the spirit rather than the letter. In addition, Zen was opened up to the laity in general.³

Po-chang Huai-hai, though often said to be the originator of Zen monasticism (*sōrin kaibyaku no so*), was not in fact the originator as the foregoing cursory observations reveal, but rather the systematizer of the rules and practices of Zen monasteries that had been started by Tao-hsin. Not until Po-chang was the sinicization and institutional independence of Zen completed, along with Hui-nêng's doctrinal reformation of Zen thought. Prior to that

time, Zen had remained tied to the vinaya monasteries, and hence, its identity had been rather ambiguous. Po-chang's originality was therefore not so much doctrinal as it was institutional. He not only synthesized the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna vinaya, but created a vision of a monastic community that distinguished Zen from all other Chinese schools and sects of Buddhism, and produced a uniquely Chinese Zen monasticism.⁴

Po-chang's greatest contribution was his articulation of the Zen spirit in and through moral disciplines and spiritual practices (*ch'ing-kuei; shingi*), as illustrated in the following.⁵ Unlike the customary way of building a Buddha hall, Po-chang built a Dharma hall where the monastic head delivered lectures and sermons to the congregation. In addition to the Dharma hall that was of central focus in the community, there were the monastic head's living quarters, the monastics' hall where trainees carried out their meditation, eating, and sleeping, and an administrative building. In the morning, the monastics had individual interviews with their teacher for spiritual counseling, and, in the evening, the monastic head gave lectures before the assembly in the Dharma hall. Along with meditational sessions, they engaged in manual labor (*tso-wu; samu*) to maintain their economic sufficiency. A famous saying of Po-chang's states, "a day without work—a day without eating"; he himself abided by this dictum rigorously. Po-chang appointed ten monastic officers to oversee the monastic affairs through strict regulations that punished anyone who disturbed the harmony and peace of the monastery. These regulations were codified by Po-chang for the first time in the history of Chinese Zen.

The streak of classicism in Dōgen's thought was evident in his enthusiasm for and admiration of Po-chang's monastic ideal. Dōgen admonished students of Buddhism to observe the regulations and precepts of Po-chang with great diligence: "The Buddhist student should observe Po-chang's monastic rules with the utmost care."⁶ As I have noted before and we shall see presently, Dōgen aspired to the realization of this monastic ideal on Japanese soil, and was the first in the history of Japanese Zen Buddhism to succeed in this. The Kōshō-hōrinji temple, founded by Dōgen in 1233, was significant in that it was the first attempt ever made by the Japanese to clearly distinguish "pure Zen" (*junsui-zen*) from other non-Zen schools of Buddhism as well as from "mixed Zen" (*kenju-zen*), the most common Japanese Zen in those days.⁷ (One follower of mixed Zen was Eisai, the founder of the Kenninji temple.) Despite his insistence on pure Zen, Dōgen conceived it in a particularly Japanese context and, wherever and whenever necessary,

did not hesitate to modify it. For example, when someone asked him whether a monastic should beg for alms or not, Dōgen replied:

Yes, you should. In this matter, however, you must take into consideration the climate and customs [of a country in which you reside]. The reason is that you should be concerned with the extension of other beings' benefits and the development of your own practice. Regarding the method of alms begging, if you wear the monastic robe for walking on a dirty road, you will always soil it. Moreover, because of the poverty of the people, the prescribed way of begging [at seven houses] may not be practicable. Accordingly, your practice of the Way may retrograde, and benefits to others may be impeded. If you observe the customs of the country and practice the Way in a proper manner, people from all walks of life will offer alms unassumingly, and hence, the well-being of the self and others will be accomplished. In dealing with problems like this, while you are confronted with particular occasions and circumstances, you should ponder upon their meanings, disregard what others may think of you, forget about your own gains, and endeavor in whatever way to serve the Way as well as the good of all sentient beings.⁸

As I have previously noted, Dōgen's treatment of Tsung-che's *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei* reflected a similar critical attitude. Mention of other examples will be made later as our discussion continues.

At this juncture, it would be worthwhile for us to recall some of the historical circumstances under which Dōgen's thought, especially his monastic rigorism, developed. Dōgen's original question on Mt. Hiei, as we saw before, was concerned with the doctrines of original enlightenment and of this-body-itself-is-Buddha, which became the ideological foundation of the moral and religious crisis of the time. Coupled with the general ethos of the Age of Degenerate Law, these doctrines led too readily to the absolutization of the given, the pervasive sense of cynicism and fatalism, and the moral complacency of the time. The late Heian and early Kamakura periods abounded with examples, such as, to name just a few, the accumulation of wealth and properties by powerful monastics, the establishment of private temples by aristocrats for their personal and familial benefits, the degeneration of esoteric Buddhism into magico-religious indulgence, the fashionable trend of aristocrats to become monastics (ironically enough) in order to secure worldly success, the institution of armed

monastics contrary to the pacifist spirit of Buddhism, and the indulgence in aesthetic hedonism.

Under these circumstances, there emerged two different schools of thought concerning Buddhist precepts (*kairitsu*) in the Kamakura period. One advocated the observance of the precepts as primary in Buddhism, whereas the other repudiated this, or at best regarded observance of the precepts as secondary to the supremacy of faith. Roughly speaking, the former school of thought was associated with Zen Buddhism, the latter with Pure Realm Buddhism. These two trends existed side by side in Kamakura Buddhism.⁹ Needless to say, Dōgen belonged to the former tradition, as did Myōan Eisai, who was equally eager to restore unremitting observance of the precepts—in his case both the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna precepts.¹⁰ As a matter of fact, the hallmark of Kamakura Zen was the advocacy of the “primacy of precepts” (*kairitsu-isen*) and of the “unity of meditation and precepts” (*zenkai-itchi*). Both Eisai and Dōgen concurred on this fundamental point of Zen Buddhism.

Nevertheless, there were significant differences between them in several respects.¹¹ Very briefly stated, they were: (1) Dōgen advocated pure Zen, while Eisai advocated mixed Zen combined with the esoteric Buddhism of the time;¹² (2) Dōgen was more intent on the codification of the monastic rules and regulations than Eisai; (3) Dōgen interpreted the precepts in the context of his conception of zazen-only and subsumed them in it; hence, he was critical of both Eisai’s view of the precepts and the vinaya Buddhist view of the precepts, both of which regarded them as more or less independent of zazen; (4) Dōgen adopted only the bodhisattva (Mahāyāna) precepts as necessary and sufficient, whereas Eisai advocated both the bodhisattva precepts and the Hīnayāna precepts; and (5) regarding the relationship between the bodhisattva precepts and the monastic rules, Dōgen tried to implement the precepts in the rules by codifying the details of the monastics’ daily behaviors whereas Eisai did not.

This last statement is particularly significant for the purpose of our investigation, because it refers to the heart of Dōgen’s thought—the ritualization of morality. A prime characteristic of Dōgen’s thought lay in his passionate search for the translation of moral visions—and hence spiritual visions—into concrete and routine daily behaviors and activities of monastic life. In this sense, he differed from his Chinese, as well as Japanese, predecessors and contemporaries. Scrupulous instructions, exhortations, and admonitions with respect to rules, manners, virtues, and behavior were not codes that

bound the monastics' outward movements, but were ritualized expressions and activities of Buddha-nature and emptiness. Here we see the fundamental character of Dōgen's mystical realism, far from any kind of pedantic moralism.

PURITY AND PURIFICATION

The themes of purity and purification occupied a vitally important place in Dōgen's thought. In two major chapters of the *Shōbōgenzō*, namely "Semmen" and "Senjō," Dōgen expounded, admonished, and elaborated, meticulously and fastidiously, the rules, prescriptions, and instructions concerning washing the face; bathing the body; using the latrine; washing robes and bowls; cleansing the mouth, teeth, and tongue; taking care of fingernails, toes and hair; and even the acts of urination and excretion. All these cleansing activities—undoubtedly some might be seen as exemplifying an obsession with cleanliness—constituted an integral part of the right Dharma of the Buddhas and ancestors:

In the Buddha-dharma the principles of cleansing with water are always prescribed. To wash the body, to wash the mind, to wash the feet, to wash the face, to wash the eyes, to wash the mouth, to wash after the two acts of urination and excretion, to wash the hands, to wash a bowl, to wash a robe, or to wash the head—all these acts comprise the right Dharma of the Buddhas and ancestors of the three periods.¹³

Instead of going into all the details of these prescriptions, I will illustrate with just a few examples. Dōgen enjoined monastics to follow Buddha's advice (though the source is not clear) for bathing and incense burning. Monastics bathed their whole bodies in water, wore clothes as usual after bathing, kindled incense in a small incense burner, and fumigated their bosoms, robes, seats, and so forth. This cycle of bathing and fumigation was repeated three times, and was followed by obeisance to Buddha, silent *sūtra* reading, *zazen*, and walking after *zazen*. Before they resumed *zazen*, the monastics washed their feet.¹⁴ Dōgen was very proud of adding the wash-room (*goka*) to the monastics' hall for the purpose of washing the face, and especially for cleaning the teeth, which he greatly stressed. Dōgen wrote on this matter:

Although in the Zen monasteries of great Sung nowadays the use of the tooth cleaner has gone out of fashion and has not been transmitted for a long time, and hence, no place for it is provided, there is now a place for the use of the tooth cleaner here at the Eiheiiji temple on Mt. Kichijō. This is my new idea.¹⁵

Dōgen's enthusiasm on this matter, perhaps in direct proportion to his disappointment in China, which was strongly expressed, was such that he traced the use of the tooth cleaner (*yōji* or *shimoku*) to the *Brahmajāla sūtra* where it was one of the eighteen belongings (*jūhachi-motsu*) of a Mahāyāna monastic, declaring that "those who understand the meaning of the use or nonuse of this tooth cleaner are the bodhisattvas who understand the Buddha-dharma."¹⁶ When monastics used the tooth cleaner, they recited the following gāthās:

Holding the tooth cleaner in my hand,
May I vow with sentient beings,
To attain the right Dharma
And purity spontaneously.

And then:

Using the tooth cleaner every morning,
May I vow with sentient beings,
To attain teeth strong enough
To gnaw away all passions.¹⁷

Dōgen also underscored the importance of not growing long hair, fingernails, and toenails. Here again, Dōgen recounted his experience with the widespread practice of monastics in China to grow long hair and fingernails, and rebuked them for following the non-Buddhist way.¹⁸ Manners in the latrine (*tōsu*) were also minutely specified. Monastics were instructed to keep the latrine clean and tidy, to be silent and abstain from singing songs or conversing with others next to them, to be reverential and courteous to those waiting their turns, and so on. Dōgen's instructions were lengthy and scrupulous, yet we cannot fail to appreciate his compassionate concern for the harmony and peace of the monastic community and the mutual benefits of its members, and thereby for the sacredness of admittedly insignificant and

ignoble activities. Dōgen said that those with little learning in Buddhism think activities in the latrine do not belong to the “venerable demeanor of the Buddhas and ancestors” (*busso no iigi*), but that this is wrong because their observation is based on the dualistic assumption that the defiled land (*edo*) of this world is not like the Pure Land (*jōdo*). Dōgen compared the Pure Land with the defiled land of delusions and passions. And yet, the dualism did not apply to the venerable demeanor of the Buddhas and ancestors.¹⁹ Thus Dōgen boldly proclaimed: “Buddha finds an opportunity to turn the wheel of Dharma in the latrine.”²⁰ I could enumerate Dōgen’s obsession with minutiae ad infinitum.

The foregoing observations on cleansing can be adequately understood only in the context of Dōgen’s “metaphysic of purification,” which was consistent with his general thought pattern. He opened the subject of cleansing with reference to the undefiled unity of enlightenment and practice. He wrote:

Although the body and mind are undefiled, there is the teaching of cleansing the body and mind. Not only do you cleanse the body-mind, but you also cleanse countries and [the place of meditation] under a tree. The lands might not be covered with dust and dirt, yet it is the desire of Buddhas to cleanse them. Even after attaining the fruition of enlightenment, they do not retreat from nor abandon [their endeavors of cleansing]. Such a cardinal principle (*shūshi*) is difficult to comprehend completely. Ritual conduct (*sahō*) is the cardinal principle; the realization of the Way is ritual conduct.²¹

He also said:

In what we deem to be the genuine Dharma transmitted authentically through the Buddhas and ancestors, bathing the body, as it is put into action, cleanses instantly—both the inside and outside of the body-mind, the viscera, the personal and environmental rewards of karma, the inside, outside, and middle of the entire reality and the entire space. When you purify yourself by incense and flowers, the past, present, and future, all the karmic conditions, and all the activities of existence will be purified instantaneously.²²

In the same vein, Dōgen argued elsewhere:

As you bathe, even the four elements, even the five skandhas, and even indestructible nature will be clean and pure without exception. This should not be understood to mean that undefiledness is attained only after you cleanse the body with water. How can water be originally pure or impure? Even if it is originally pure or impure, you do not say it can make clean or unclean the place to which water eventually flows. Only when you maintain the practice and enlightenment of the Buddhas and ancestors, will the Buddha-dharma of washing and bathing be imparted. As you practice and confirm bathing, according to this principle, you transcend purity, surpass impurity, and cast off neither purity nor impurity.

Thus in spite of being not yet defiled, you bathe your body; although you are already supremely pure, you cleanse yourself. This truth is preserved only in the Way of the Buddhas and ancestors. None of the non-Buddhists know it.²³

This amounted, in the final analysis, to saying: “By way of using emptiness, you cleanse emptiness; by way of moving emptiness, you bathe your body-mind.”²⁴ Every act of cleansing and washing was not only ritualized, sacramentalized, and sanctified, but philosophized and rationalized in the unique logic of emptiness.

Purification was not an attempt to be liberated from pollutions, sins, or guilts, whether physical, moral, or spiritual, but was the self-affirmation of original purity or emptiness undefiled by dualism. It was neither the removal of impurity nor the seeking of purity—one was defiled only by a belief in the dichotomous existence of purity and impurity. Thus, the act of purification was fundamentally based on original purity, the former being the self-enactment of the latter. Only when this was realized did the rites of purification embody the undefiled unity of enlightenment and practice.²⁵ This was why Dōgen said: “What is significant in this [cleansing] is not cleaning one’s body with water so much as it is preserving the Buddha-dharma by the Buddha-dharma itself. This is called washing.”²⁶ Together, the body, the act of cleansing, and water comprised Dharma itself.

It is no wonder that Dōgen regarded the rites of purification with utmost seriousness. He warned his disciples against the commonsense view that bathing was nothing but the cleansing of the bodily surface; on the contrary, it was a rite in and through which the three periods and the ten directions of the universe, the Buddhas and ancestors, the interior and exterior of

the body-mind, the vital organs, and all existences—spiritual and temporal, and even beyond space and time—were purified. For this reason, the Pure Land, the sublime Buddha-land, was actualized here and now on this earth.²⁷ Dōgen's seriousness about this subject was well-reflected in the fact that he presented and explicated the "Semmen" chapter of the *Shōbōgenzō* on three different occasions—an emphasis unique to that particular chapter of his book.²⁸

The activities revolving around food, whether preparing meals or eating, were an integral part of the monastic life. The sanctity of these activities, manners, and attitudes with respect to preparing and taking meals was well-testified to in Dōgen's works. The monastic community had two main meals a day, the morning meal of gruel and the midday meal of cooked rice, and abstained from eating between midday and the following morning, though this was only in principle.²⁹ All the foods, prepared or taken, had to be pure. Dōgen's concern with absolute poverty was reflected in this case as well. He said:

Three types of food—the fruits of trees and plants, food obtained from begging, and food donated by the devotees—all these are pure foods (*shōjō-jiki*). The four types of food obtained through the means of farmers, merchants, warriors, and artisans are without exception impure foods (*fūjō-jamyō no jiki*) and not the monastics' foods.³⁰

Dōgen also wrote:

You should not arrange in advance for the supply of your clothing and food.

Even as regards the places of alms begging, to plan beforehand where and from whom to beg alms in case you should run out of food is tantamount to storing up provisions, and is the same as the defiled livelihood. Monastics are like the clouds and have no fixed abode; like flowing water, they have nothing to depend on—hence they are called monastics. Even if they each possess nothing other than a bowl and a robe, to rely upon even one supporter or to have in mind even one household of relatives is bondage for the self and others alike; hence the food is impure.

If one, whose body and mind are nourished by such unclean livelihood, desires to attain and understand the great Dharma of Buddhas' purity, it is altogether impossible.³¹

It is not known how consistently Dōgen maintained his alleged economic independence or his interpretation of pure food, given the ever-growing number of monastics at the Eihei-ji temple. Nevertheless, Dōgen's absolute poverty can certainly be seen as an ideal with respect to the problem of food and livelihood.³²

In the *Tenzo-kyōkun*, Dōgen took up the matter of cooking and gave minute instructions to his disciples, especially the chief cook of the monastery. This was in line with his ideal of restoring the monastic vision of Po-chang Huai-hai in Japan, as I have noted on several occasions. Dōgen frequently referred to and quoted from Ch'ang-lu Tsung-che's *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei* for guidance and inspiration, and also made references to Kuei-shan Ling-yu (771–853), Tung-shan Shou-ch'u (?–990), and Hsüeh-fêng I-ts'un (822–908), all of whom were said to have been chief cooks for some time during their monastic careers. Following the Chinese monastic practice of the Sung period, Dōgen regarded the chief cook as one of the six highest officers (*chiji*) in the monastery; this was unheard of in Japan at that time.³³

Drawing upon the *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei*, Dōgen set forth the functions and responsibilities of the chief cook. First and foremost, he was to nurture monastics and ensure their well-being and peace (*anraku*). Elsewhere, Dōgen used the phrase the “act of nurturing the holy womb” (*shōtai chōyō no gō*). The chief cook bore full responsibility for nourishing monastics not only physically, but also morally and spiritually. He was not just a cook or dietician in the modern sense, but was truly a religious leader. Every act of his duty was performed with the aspiration of enlightening and benefiting others (*dōshin*). This meant, in the final analysis, that the monastic meals were not merely a means to physical sustenance, or even to spiritual sustenance for that matter, but rather daily communal feasts that celebrated the enactment of the body-mind cast-off. Eating itself was a spiritual matter.³⁴

Some significant highlights of the cook's responsibility may be illustrated: (1) The handling and cooking of grains and vegetables had to be done with the utmost care and reverence. For example, the white water from washing rice was not wastefully thrown away. The chief cook inspected every minute process of food preparation with vigilance, sincerity, and diligence. Thus the chief cook was adept in distinguishing the six kinds of taste (bitter, sour, sweet, hot, salty, and insipid) and possessed the three virtues of cookery (mildness, cleanliness, and courteousness). Moreover, the chief cook had to cultivate the joyous mind (*kishin*) that was joyous for the opportunity of human existence; the solicitous mind (*rōshin*) that had the disposition of

parents taking care of their children; and the magnanimous mind (*daishin*) that was unbiased and fair to all beings. (2) Immediately after the midday meal, the chief cook consulted with all other officers on the menus and provisions for the next day, and announced the result on the bulletin boards in the monastic head's quarters and in the library. The implication was that eating was the business of the entire commune. (3) The chief cook was to live in the spirit of absolute poverty—absolute nonpossession—regardless of quality and quantity of food materials. “Day and night, allow provisions to enter and dwell in your mind; allow your mind to return to provisions and dwell in them. Together with the provisions in nonduality, you practice the Way assiduously.”³⁵ Richness was unlimited in such absolute poverty. (4) When food was prepared, the chief cook placed it on the table in the kitchen, wore the surplice, spread a rug on the ground, faced the monastics' hall (*sōdō*), burned incense, and bowed nine times. Only after this observance was food carried to the monastics' hall for consumption. (5) In preparing a meal, the chief cook was not concerned with delicacy, but with dispositions of the mind, no matter what materials were used. Dōgen wrote:

It is not necessarily good to prepare a refined dish of exquisite taste (*daigomi*), nor is it necessarily bad to cook a plain vegetable soup (*fusaikō*). When you pick and select vegetables, do so with a mind of fidelity, sincerity, and purity, just as you do in cooking the finest dish. The reason for this is that when monastics congregate in the great ocean of the pure Buddha-dharma, they are not concerned with exquisite taste, nor plain taste, but only with the taste of a single great ocean. Still more, in nourishing the buds of the Way (*dōge*) and nurturing the holy womb (*shōtai*), the refined dish and the plain soup are one thusness, not two. There is an ancient saying: “The mouth of a monastic is just like a cooking stove.” You should keep this in mind. Reflect upon this: Plain vegetables feed the holy womb and sustain the buds of the Way. You should not disdain or make light of them. Indeed, a spiritual leader of the heavenly world and the human world is the one who executes the transforming efficacy [for sentient beings] of plain vegetables.³⁶

This transforming efficacy was likened to “build[ing] a great temple by making use of a grass, and turn[ing] the great wheel of Dharma by entering into a particle of dust.” Dōgen further wrote: “You hold a vegetable and change it into Buddha's body of one *jō* and six *shaku*, and invite Buddha and alter him

into a vegetable. [The chief cook is] the one who brings forth miraculous powers and transformations, promoting Buddha's affairs and sentient beings' welfare."³⁷ This was precisely the religious-metaphysical significance of cookery as Dōgen conceived it. Lastly, (6) the monastic kitchen was often called "the department of fragrance" (*kōshakukyoku* or *kōjakukyoku*) in the Zen tradition; this reference was derived from the "Buddha-land of fragrance" where Tathāgata Kōjaku was said to reside. Dōgen admonished his disciples to exercise the utmost reverence and the most courteous language in relation to food. Decorum and speech worthy of the department of fragrance were strongly recommended. For example, Dōgen urged monastics to use honorific expressions such as *on-kayu*, *on-toki*, and *on-shiru*, when speaking of gruel (*kayu*), cooked rice (*toki*), and soup (*shiru*). Kitchen utensils were handled respectfully. When preparing a meal, the monastic recited scriptural passages or sayings of the ancestors, instead of engaging in worldly gossip.³⁸

Receiving and taking a meal in the monastic's bowl (*gyōhatsu*) was a solemn and joyous occasion in monastic life. Monastics reflected upon the "gāthās of five meditations" (*gokan no ge*), which were: (1) indebtedness to the pains of the people who provided food, (2) consideration of whether the monastics deserved to receive the food, (3) restraint from greed and excessive eating, (4) food as medicine to heal hunger and thirst and nourish the body, and (5) food as taken for the sake of the Way and enlightenment.³⁹ What was most noteworthy in connection with the ritual of eating was Dōgen's "metaphysic of eating." He said the following:

A sūtra [the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa sūtra*] says: "When you are nondual with your eating, all things are nondual as well; if all things are nondual, you are also nondual in your eating."

Just let Dharma be one with your eating, and let your eating be one with Dharma. For this reason, if Dharma is Dharma-nature, food is also Dharma-nature. If Dharma is thusness, food is also thusness. If Dharma is One Mind, food is also One Mind. If Dharma is enlightenment, food is also enlightenment.... Therefore, the act of eating constitutes the Dharma of all things. This can be fully comprehended only by and among Buddhas. At the very moment when you eat, you are of ultimate reality, essence, substance, energy, activity, and causation. So Dharma is eating, and eating is Dharma. This Dharma is enjoyed by Buddhas of the past and future. This eating is full of the joy of Dharma and the bliss of meditation.⁴⁰

Eating (*jiki*) was the celebration of Dharma (*hō*) with no hiatus between them in the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity (*jijuyū-zammai*) and in the samādhi of play (*yuge-zammai*).

Dōgen's treatment of the monastic's bowl (*hatsuu* or *hau*), originally the alms bowl, was also characteristic of his metaphysic of eating. He declared:

The Buddha bowl is the Buddha bowl—you should never regard it as [made of] stone or baked clay or iron or wood.

Indeed, the Buddha bowl is not an artifact; it neither arises nor perishes, neither comes nor goes, neither gains nor loses. It does not extend over new and old, nor does it concern itself with past and present.⁴¹

The bowl was called a “miraculous utensil (*kidoku no chōdo*)—miraculous, because it was used in a “miraculous event” (*kidoku no koto*), in a “miraculous occasion” (*kidoku no jissetsu*), and by a “miraculous person” (*kidoku no hito*). Thus, “On this account, where a miraculous event is realized, there is a miraculous bowl.”⁴²

Absolute simplicity, poverty, and purity were also epitomized in Dōgen's treatment of the monastic's robes. Traditionally, the Buddhist monastic was allowed to possess only three robes, called “tattered robes” (*funzōe* or *nōe*) because they were made of dirty, useless rags thrown away by the common people. The lowliest material, symbolic of worldly defilement, was transformed into the monastic's robes (*kesa*), the symbol of purity.⁴³ “What the world discards, the Way uses.”⁴⁴ Dōgen wrote:

Such materials, obtained from discarded clothes and/or through unde-filed livelihood, are neither silk nor cotton. They are not gold or silver, not gems or brocades, or the like; they are nothing other than tattered clothes. This tattered robe is neither for shabbiness nor for finery, but only for the Buddha-dharma.⁴⁵

Again and again, Dōgen exalted the mysterious merits and efficacies of the robe.⁴⁶ He observed that the monastic's robe was called the “robe of liberation” (*gedatsu-buku*), the “robe of the blessed field” (*fukuden'e*), the “robe of no-thought” (*musōe*), the “robe of great compassion” (*daiji-daihi-e*), and so on. The robe of liberation was the body-mind of the Buddhas and ancestors. He exalted the so-called ten victories or merits of the monastic's robe—for example, the covering and protection of the body. Furthermore, the robe

was the symbol of Buddha's purity (*hyōshiki*) in destroying, for the monastic as well as for others, passions, delusions, greed, and guilt.⁴⁷

Dōgen gave detailed instructions on how to make, wear, and wash robes and what materials to choose for them. Before monastics wore, took off, or washed their robes, they were advised to place them on their heads and recite, with the hands in *gasshō*, the following *gāthā*:

Great is the robe of liberation,
The robe of the blessed field and of no-thought.
Wearing it, we shall uphold the teachings of Tathāgata,
And liberate all sentient beings.⁴⁸

In Dōgen's thought, even the matter of monastics' clothing had a metaphysical significance. To him, what one wore was what one was. Unless this was the case, purity was not total. As I have mentioned already, a monastic's robe, which was "tattered," was a monastic's robe that assumed a unique significance, precisely because it did not depend on purity and defilement, or "silk and cotton." The tattered robe was undefiled by the duality of purity and impurity, of finery and shabbiness. Dōgen wrote, for instance:

For the materials [for making a monastic robe], you use silk or cotton according to circumstances. Cotton is not necessarily pure nor is silk necessarily impure. There is no reason why you should dislike cotton and select silk. It is a laughable thing to do. Buddha's traditional teaching on this matter is always that the tattered clothes are best.... Rejecting a [dualistic] view of silk and cotton, you must penetrate into the meaning of "tattered." ...

You should understand this: Among the tattered cloth you pick up, there may be some cotton-like silk and some silk-like cotton. People are all different and what they make and wear are hard to imagine. Your naked eyes cannot distinguish [different kinds of cloth from one another]. Upon obtaining such materials, you should not argue over whether they are silk or cotton: they are simply called tattered cloth.... When you accept faithfully the truth that tattered cloth is neither silk nor cotton, neither gold-silver nor gems, what tattered cloth truly is will be realized. Unless you cast off the [dualistic] understanding of silk and cotton, you will never understand [the true meaning of] tattered cloth in the slightest.⁴⁹

Elsewhere, Dōgen held: “This [purity] not only surpasses the limits of purity and impurity, but transcends the realm of enlightenment and delusion. It does not contend with the dualism of form and mind; it has no bearing upon merits and demerits.”⁵⁰ This purity was not a matter of clothes but of being; the monastic’s tattered robe was the embodiment of this being. Dōgen’s import was not a critique of materialism, though severe indictments of the materialism of the worldly minded in Kyoto and Kamakura in those days were by no means lacking in his writings. It is abundantly clear to us by now that Dōgen almost despaired at the insatiable and inveterate search for fame, wealth, power, knowledge, and so forth. Yet he himself did not fall into this pitfall of worldliness. The nondualistic metaphysic of clothing made possible a radical freedom from greed and delusion, in the material as well as spiritual life.

Zen monastics were called “clouds and water” (*unsui*) to symbolize their homelessness (*shukke*) and possession of only absolutely minimal necessities and belongings, like floating clouds and flowing water. “Monastics are like the clouds and have no fixed abode; like flowing water, they have nothing to depend on—hence they are called monastics.”⁵¹ The monastic dwelling for the community of monks and nuns, therefore, had to be consistent with this ideal of poverty, simplicity, and purity. As in other cases, Dōgen exalted the ancient tradition of living under a tree and in the forest, asserting its continuity in Zen monasticism.⁵² For example, Ejō attributed the following speech to Dōgen in the *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*:

Dōgen said: “When Zen teacher Fang-hui [992–1049] of Mt. Yang-ch’i became the head of the monastery, its buildings were so dilapidated that the monastics were quite worried about them. Then the officer in charge of the matter recommended to him: ‘The buildings should be repaired.’ Fang-hui said: ‘Even though the buildings are crumbling, it is still better than living in the open air or under the trees. If one place is damaged and the rain leaks in, you should sit in another where the rain does not leak in and practice zazen. If monastics’ enlightenment is dependent on building temples and edifices, they should be built even with gold and gems. Enlightenment does not depend on the quality of your dwelling-place but solely on how much you endeavor to do zazen.’ The next day he preached as follows: ‘When Yang-ch’i first became the monastery’s head, the roofs and walls were falling to pieces. Snowflakes were scattered on the floors like rare gems, and the monastics ducked their heads and sighed

in lamentation. We thought all the more of ancient sages who lived under the trees.'

"This is true not only of the Buddha-way but also of the way of government. Emperor T'ai-tsung [of the T'ang dynasty] did not build a new palace [but lived in the old one instead].

"Lung-ya Chü-tun [835–923] once said: 'To study the Way, it is imperative that you learn poverty before everything. Only after you study poverty and become poor can you become intimate with the Way.' Ever since the time of Buddha till today we have neither seen nor heard of any true student of the Way in possession of wealth."⁵³

Elsewhere, Dōgen admonished his disciples in connection with his exaltation of the deeds of Kuei-shan Ling-yu (771–853):

When you want to build a temple, do not exercise frail judgments, but strengthen the sustained practice of the Buddha-dharma. The ancient Buddhas' training hall was comprised of spiritual discipline, not of an edifice. The tradition of living in the open air and under the trees reverberates from the far-off days. Such places have become the fixed places [of the training hall] for ages. When there is even a single person's sustained practice, it is imparted to the training hall of Buddhas. So, the fools of these latter days should not be bent uselessly on the architectural splendors of temples. The Buddhas and ancestors have never desired temples and pavilions. Those fools aimlessly erect temples, edifices, and monasteries without the awareness of their primary purpose, which is not to consecrate abodes to Buddhas at all, but to make them the caves of their own fame and wealth.⁵⁴

For Dōgen, a shabby hut or a poor thatched cottage was most consistent with the tradition of living in the open air and under a tree; he considered such shelter to essentially be the training hall (*dōjō*—literally "the field of the Way"), with a boundary (*kekkaï*) founded upon radical emptiness. The sanctity of this boundary signified not so much a dualism of the sacred and profane as an expression of the nonduality of emptiness. Paradoxically, this boundary was an expression of *boundary-less-ness*. As Dōgen wrote, "When a quarter of land forms a boundary, the entire world is bounded by it."⁵⁵ Moreover, the dwelling he advocated was the prototype for both monastics and laity: "The ancients lived under the trees and

dwelled in the forest. Such is the abode both lay people and monastics love.”⁵⁶

The Zen monastery (*sōrin* or *zenrin*) was patterned after the ideal of a primitive Buddhist settlement (*vihāra*; *shōja*), culminating in Zen Buddhism in the form of seven halls (*shichidō-garan*). We are told: “The layout and structure of what we now call a Zen monastery are nothing other than the personal instruction of the ancestors, hence the direct transmission of the right heirs [of the Way]. Thus, the Seven Past Buddhas’ old rule is entirely embodied in a Zen monastery.”⁵⁷ Furthermore: “If you plan to build a training hall or establish a monastery, you shall follow the principles rightly transmitted by the Buddhas and ancestors.”⁵⁸ From these statements we can reasonably conjecture that Dōgen was faithful to the basic building pattern of the Zen monastery, particularly that of the Ching-tê-ssü monastery on Mt. T’ien-t’ung, where he had studied previously.⁵⁹

The basic layout of a seven-hall monastery consisted of the entrance (*sammon*), the Buddha hall (*butsuden*), the Dharma hall (*hattō*)—in ascending order on the central axis—and the latrine (*tōsu* or *shiijin*), the bath (*yokushitsu* or *yūshitsu*), the monastics’ hall (*sōdō*), and the kitchen (*kuri* or *kuin*)—on both sides of the axis. These halls were connected by corridors. The entrance to the monastery was called the “mountain gate” (*sammon*), symbolizing the entrance into the realm of purity, liberation, and emptiness through the purging of passions and delusions. It was also called the “three gates” (*sammon*) or the “gate of threefold liberation” (*sangedatsu-mon*). The Buddha hall was designed for the worship of the image of Śākyamuni Buddha and his two attendant bodhisattvas: Mañjuśrī (Monju) to his left and Samantabhadra (Fugen) to his right. The Dharma hall, behind the Buddha hall, was the place where lectures and sermons were given to the monks and nuns by the monastic head. Between the entrance and the Buddha hall were the bath to the right and latrine to the left, both of which epitomized the purification of bodily defilement; the use of these two was minutely specified as discussed before. Above these buildings were the monastics’ hall to the left and the kitchen to the right—both symbolizing the nourishment of mind and body. Incidentally, monastics were ordered to be silent in the monastics’ hall, the bath, and the latrine; thus they were called the “three halls of silence” (*sammokudō*). The physical layout of the monastery was analogous to the human body,⁶⁰ or according to Dōgen, represented the casting-off of the body-mind.

The actual buildings of the monastery were more than these seven halls, since there were additions to them. At the top of the central axis were the monastic head's quarters (*hōjō*), for example. Also prominent in the Sōtō tradition were the washroom (*goka*) at the back of the monastics' hall, and the library (*shuryō*), where monastics studied the sūtras and classics. These edifices were the functional equivalent of the shabby huts and poor thatched cottages that were the habitats of the ancient sages.

What distinguished Dōgen's Sōtō tradition from other Zen traditions, with respect to the problem of monastic building, was twofold: the restoration of the monastics' hall and the emphasis on the monastic library. Dōgen's conception of the monastic ideal of Po-chang Huai-hai revolved around a monastics' hall where trainees not only meditated but also ate and slept—that is, carried out their daily activities. When he founded the Kōshō-hōrinji temple, with the building of the monastics' hall in 1236, his was the first example in Japan of the Zen monastic tradition of Po-chang, which treated the monastics' hall as the center of the monastery.⁶¹ In contrast, the tradition of the meditation hall (*zendō*) arrangement dictated that sleeping and eating had to be done in separate halls and that the meditation hall was used strictly for zazen.⁶² Thus, there were significant differences between the monastics' hall and the meditation hall.

In Dōgen's monastics' hall, each trainee was assigned a seat (*zashō*) that occupied an absolutely minimal space for meditation, eating, and sleeping, and that was provided with a small closet (*kanki*) where belongings were stored. A portion of the edge of the seat (*jōen*) served as both a table for meals and a place to lay the head for sleeping. The monastics' hall enshrined Mañjuśrī as the holy mentor (*shōsō*)—not as an attendant of Śākyamuni Buddha, as in the Buddha hall, but as a spiritual guide for monastics. The monastics' hall adjoined the washroom, which was restored by Dōgen as the place for washing the face and hands, and particularly for cleaning the teeth with a tooth cleaner. As I have noted, Dōgen was especially proud of having restored the washroom.

Another important place in monastic life was the library (*shuryō*), where monastics engaged in the silent reading of Buddhist sūtras and Zen classics. (It was also used for occasional tea drinking and other activities, but they were secondary.) It represented the academic side of monastic life, but certainly did not solely support the scholarly pursuit of Buddhist scriptural and doctrinal studies, as we shall see later in a different context. In accordance with a family precept (*kakun*) of Zen—"the teaching of the ancient sages as

a guide to the illumination of the mind” (*kokyō-shōshin*)—its function was to guide monastics in reflecting on their minds and hearts through the study of the sūtras. This activity was carried out around the enshrined image of Avalokiteśvara (Kannon) as the “holy monastic of the library” (*shuryō no shōsō*). As Miyasaka points out, the monastic library was separated from the monastics’ hall probably during the Southern Sung period (1127–1279) when each major monastery in China had a large-scale library, indicating the rigor of scriptural studies in those days—an important factor that should not be forgotten. Dōgen’s introduction of the monastic library in Japan, following the lead of Chinese Zen, became the precursor of Zen educational institutions in modern Japan.⁶³

NATURE: THE MOUNTAINS AND WATERS

Dōgen once wrote:

From the timeless beginning have mountains been the habitat of great sages. Wise ones and sages have all made mountains their secret chambers and their bodies and minds; by them mountains are realized.... When sages and wise ones reside in mountains, mountains belong to them [i.e., there is no hiatus between them and mountains]; therefore, trees and rocks flourish in their luxuriance, birds and animals are full of divine auspiciousness. This is so because they enjoy the virtues of these sages and wise ones. You must know that mountains really take delight in wise ones and sages.⁶⁴

Dōgen chose a monastery near the mountains and waters (*sansui*) instead of near a city, with its worldly people and their activities. However, Dōgen’s relationship to “the mountains and waters” was not the romantic exaltation of them that we see, for example, in the religion of nature mysticism, any more than it was the scientific and technological manipulation and exploitation of nature. Temperamentally and culturally, Dōgen could not think of religion other than in the context of mountains and waters; yet this was not the same as a naive veneration or exaltation of nature, which was for him a defiled view of nature that enslaved humans in a new captivity. Hence, he was not a sort of nature mystic, as I shall show in what follows.

In the *Shōbōgenzō*, “Mujō-seppō,” Dōgen presented a rather unusual view of nature. Speaking of “discourse on Dharma” (*seppō*) and “insentient beings”

(*mujō*) in an extraordinary way, similar to his approach to other words and symbols, he wrote:

The way insentient beings expound Dharma should not be understood to be necessarily like the way sentient beings expound Dharma. On the basis of the voices of sentient beings and the way they expound Dharma, if you usurp the voices of the sentient and conjecture those of the insentient in terms of them, that is not the Buddha-way.... To see grasses and plants, tiles and pebbles, and construe them as the insentient is insufficient learning; to regard the insentient as grasses and plants, and tiles and pebbles is unsatisfactory as well.⁶⁵

Insentient beings are often conceived of as comprising the physical universe, or what we call nature, which we think of as actually dead, and only figuratively and anthropomorphically speak of in human terms. Human beings, unwittingly or selfishly, anthropomorphize nature but think that nature is, after all, lifeless. To put it another way, we draw a boundary between the sentient and the insentient, to the degree that we perceive and judge in a particular way with a particular nature. This might lead us to judge that the insentient is not able to communicate. Dōgen repudiated such a notion. From the standpoint of the Way, insentient beings did elucidate Dharma, not in human languages but through their own expressions (*dōtoku*). Indeed, they were “alive” in their own way; in Dōgen’s phraseology, insentient beings were “sentient.”⁶⁶ In line with his thesis that all existence was sentient beings, which we examined earlier, Dōgen’s use of the term “sentient beings” (*shujō* or *ujō*) subsumed both the sentient and insentient, constituting all existence and in turn, being one with Buddha-nature (*shitsu-busshō*). This was not the same as confounding the two as having a certain psychic commonality, in the fashion of panpsychism, but rather, seeing them within the context of Buddha-nature, which defied any metaphysical commitment to such a substantialistic resolution.

Dōgen told the story of Su Tung-p’o (1036–1101), a well-known Sung poet of China, who was enlightened one night by the sounds of brooks. The occasion was explained by Dōgen himself. One day Chao-chio Ch’ang-tsung (1025–1091), the Zen mentor of the poet, preached on the discourse of insentient beings and its great importance for poetic creativity, but Su Tung-p’o could not quite understand its full significance. One day when Su Tung-p’o visited the famous resort of Lu-shan and spent a night there, he was suddenly

awakened by the sounds of mountain brooks flowing in the silence of the night. This was the moment of his enlightenment; he composed the following poem:

The sounds of the streams are [Buddha's] long, broad tongue
[i.e., his discourse on Dharma],
The sights of the mountains are his pure body;
Eighty-four thousand gāthās throughout the night—
How can I expound them to others some day? ⁶⁷

And Dōgen commented:

The night when this lay poet was enlightened is [related to the fact] that previously he heard from Teacher Ch'ang-tsung about insentient beings' sermons on Dharma. Although he was not immediately enlightened by his teacher's discourse, the stream sounds struck him as if raging waves were soaring into the sky. Thus the stream sounds now awaken Su Tung-p'o. Is this the working of the stream sounds, or is it Chao-chio's discourse flowing into [the ears of Su Tung-p'o]? I suspect that Chao-chio's talk on the sermon of insentient beings, still reverberating, may secretly be intermingled with the nightly sounds of streams. Can anyone dare to understand [what entered Su Tung-p'o's ears]—a pint of water, or an ocean into which all rivers enter? Ultimately speaking, is it the poet that is enlightened or is it the mountains and waters that are enlightened? Those who have the discerning eyes should never fail to understand Buddha's long, broad tongue and his pure body. ⁶⁸

Here, Chao-chio's discourse and the stream sounds were inseparably inter-fused so as to make Su Tung-p'o's enlightenment possible. As Dōgen observed, it was very difficult to say whether this was Su Tung-p'o's enlightenment or the enlightenment of the mountains and waters. ⁶⁹ Humanity and nature, however, mutually partook of each other and worked with one another as the twin activities of Buddha-nature and emptiness; they were not two separate entities, but one. Nature was alive in its own right and spoke in its own way, in and through us. Thus:

When you endeavor in right practice, the sounds and sights of the streams and the sights and sounds of the mountains, together with you,

bounteously deliver eighty-four thousand gāthās. Just as you are unsparing in surrendering your fame and wealth and your body-mind, so are the streams and mountains.⁷⁰

In short, humans and nature co-created “eighty-four thousand gāthās” by being enlightened together and by becoming Buddha contemporaneously.

Dōgen dealt with many subjects of nature in his works, such as mountains, waters, flowers, the moon, and the four seasons. However, he used these common words or metaphors in a way in which their ordinary meanings were not extended or expanded to describe extraordinary events other than themselves; instead, their ordinary meanings were radicalized through the logic of the total exertion of a single thing (*ippō-gūjin*) within his mystical realist framework. A mountain, for example, was affirmed not in the ordinary sense of the mountain as an object of knowing by a subject; a mountain, which could be perceptually or intellectually manipulated, was not the mountain Dōgen had in mind. He said:

You should realize this: Mountains are neither of the human world nor of the heavenly world. Do not judge mountains by human standards. If you do not apply the human view of flowing to them, who can entertain a doubt about the flowing or not-flowing of mountains?⁷¹

In the radical living of total exertion, the ordinary metaphor of a mountain was undefiled by subject-object dualism and realized the totality of the universe in the single moment or event of thusness. In this total exertion, one lived one thing at a time, in its total thusness and nothing else. This was why Dōgen quoted the following from Yün-mên Wên-yen (864–949): “A mountain is a mountain; water is water.” This statement represented the essence of Zen itself. It was a special way of life that rendered, to nonhuman and nonliving beings, their full-fledged metaphysical and religious status, and saw to it that these insentient beings were, ultimately speaking, regarded as neither sentient nor insentient, neither created nor uncreated, just like human beings. After all, all existence was empty and unattainable (*fukatoku*) according to Dōgen’s thought.⁷²

The logical structure of Dōgen’s view of nature, explained above, can be amply substantiated by illustrations from his works. Dōgen wrote:

Consequently, water is the palace of the true dragon [the truly enlightened]. It does not flow downward (*ruraku*) [the word has the connotation of sinking in fortune]. To regard water as only flowing is tantamount to slandering water. In other words, [that view] will force you to [dualistically] say not-flowing. Water is water only in its true nature of thusness (*nyoze-jissō*): this is the virtue of “water is water.” It is not flowing. As you penetrate the flowing and not-flowing of a single drop of water, the ultimate character of all things is instantly realized.⁷³

Here, water was not ordinary water as spoken of in ordinary conversation; it was “ultimate water,” so to speak. For this reason, Dōgen held that water flowed upward and downward, freely in all directions.⁷⁴ Water, as we perceive and name it from the human perspective, was dependent on the conditions and causes of the total situation in which we presently live. What humans designate as water was seen by a fish as a palace, by a heavenly being as a jeweled necklace, and by a hungry spirit as raging flames or thick blood.⁷⁵ Hence, the water in question was not that water which we humans named, but that water—empty and indeterminate—out of which all these possibilities were created according to given conditions and causes. Primordial water in its emptiness was what Dōgen apprehended in and through ordinary water. Dōgen wrote: “Water is neither strong or weak, wet or dry, dynamic or static. Nor is it warm or cold, being or nonbeing, enlightenment or delusion.”⁷⁶ It goes without saying that such an ultimate water, or Water, was not the denial of ordinary water so much as it was the radicalization of it in its total exertion, or rather the *de-anthropocentricization* of water if you will.

Having such a perspective, Dōgen was not disquieted by such statements as “The Eastern Mountain moves on the water.”⁷⁷ The miraculous and extraordinary were quite natural in his eyes. A “love” of nature, in Dōgen’s thought, was not a deification of nature, but the radicalization of nature in its selflessness. Only then was nature undefiled and natural. This was the reason that Dōgen was not inhibited from making such fantastic statements as “mountains ride on the clouds and walk in the heavens.”⁷⁸ The mountains and waters became absolutely ordinary only in their thusness.

Such was the case of Dōgen’s view of the moon. “A step of the moon is Tathāgata’s perfect enlightenment; Tathāgata’s perfect enlightenment is the moon’s movement.”⁷⁹ When Dōgen observed the moon, all things of the universe became the moon (*sho-getsu*).⁸⁰ In speaking of moonlight, Dōgen

asserted that when the universe is lit by moonlight, the dualism of the universe and moonlight is overcome and duality becomes undefiled. “Both light (*kō*) and environment (*kyō*) go away (*kō-kyō tomoni bōzu*).”⁸¹ As I have touched on previously in a different context, metaphor in Dōgen’s sense was not that which pointed to something other than itself, but that which pointed to itself so as to overcome and realize itself. This was quite evident in his analysis of the moon reflected on the water:

Śākyamuni Buddha said: “The true Dharma-body of Buddha is like the empty sky, and it manifests itself according to sentient beings like the moon [reflected] on the water.” The “like” in “like the moon [reflected] on the water” should mean the water-moon (*sui-getsu*) [i.e., the non-duality of the moon and the water]. It should be the water-thusness (*sui-nyo*), the moon-thusness (*getsu-nyo*), thusness-on (*nyo-chū*), and on-thusness (*chū-nyo*). We are not construing “like” as resemblance—“like” (*nyo*) is “thusness” (*ze*).⁸²

Dōgen was well aware of the difference between likeness and thusness and warned against the confounding of the two. Yet ultimately, likeness was thusness as the former was radically naturalized in its total exertion. Thus, Dōgen said: “The moon’s movement is certainly not a metaphor; therefore, it is the essence and form of solitary perfection.”⁸³

Tung-shan Liang-chieh (807–869) was asked by a monastic one day: “When cold or heat comes, how can I escape it?” “Why don’t you go to a place where there is no cold or heat?” said the teacher. “What is it like in a place where there is neither cold nor heat?” asked the monastic. The teacher’s answer was: “When it is cold, it makes you exceedingly cold; when it is hot, exceedingly hot.”⁸⁴ Dōgen used this *kōan* as a text for the exposition of his view on the four seasons, commenting as follows: “This cold or heat means total cold or total heat, being cold or heat just as it is (*kansho zukara*).”⁸⁵ “Cold or heat just as it is” was precisely the place where there existed no cold or heat. While living in cold, the enlightened person lived in cold in total freedom; while living in heat, one lived in the same way.⁸⁶ It was not an escape but a choice—the choice of duality, though not dualism, undefiled and free. Therefore, this statement followed: “Where there is the body-mind cast-off, there is an escape from cold and heat.... You know the signs of this cold and heat, live in the seasons of cold and heat, and make use of cold and heat.”⁸⁷

One day in the eleventh month of 1243, three feet of snow fell on the compound of the Kippōji temple where Dōgen was staying. Recollecting Ju-ching's sermons on the old plum blossoms, Dōgen wrote: "When an old plum tree blooms unexpectedly, just then the world unfolds itself with the flowering."⁸⁸ Dōgen saw the whole world in terms of the old plum blossoms blooming in their total exertion. That is, the blossom shared its merits with its five petals within itself, and with countless other blossoms without itself, yet it did not boast of its own efficacy. Both within and without constituted the unfolding of one and the same plum blossom, which was in turn the locus of the realized now (*nikon no tōsho*); thus, it regenerated and restored all things of the universe. This renewal, however, was that which cast off even the "new" as opposed to the "old" in ordinary dualism.⁸⁹

The thusness of the blossoms blooming (*kakai*) and of the world unfolding (*sekaiki*) was compared to Buddha's holding up an *udumbara* (*udonge*) flower before the multitude of congregations on Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa. The *udumbara* flower was said to bloom once in three thousand years; hence, it was the symbol of extreme rarity.⁹⁰ Thus, all things were *udumbaras* at the moment of thusness. Moreover, they were the "flowers of emptiness" (*kūge*), originally interpreted as the "flowers blooming in the sky"—the illusory flowers or perceptions attributed to the epistemological errors of humans owing to their diseased eyesight.⁹¹ Dōgen argued that what others viewed as illusory were, in reality, the flowers of emptiness, and that the ignorance of the perceivers was based on their ignorance of emptiness. For this reason, the flowers of nothingness might be a contradiction in terms, but "the flowers of emptiness" was not. "The flowers of emptiness open and disclose both the earth and the sky."⁹² Things, events, and beings, sentient and insentient, were each an *udumbara*—an incomparably rare occasion to meet, grow, and create.

You must surely know that emptiness is a single grass; yet, this emptiness never fails to bloom, like other hundreds of grasses that bloom. To grasp this truth, the Tathāgata-way speaks of emptiness as "originally having no flower." Although originally having no flower, it now has flowers—peaches and damsons are all like this, and plums and willows are all like this. It is like saying that a plum tree that has no flowers as yet will bloom when spring comes. When the time comes, it unfailingly blooms. It is the time of flowers and flowers have arrived. At the very moment of the flowers' arrival, nothing contrary to the fact happens. The blossoms of

plum trees or willow trees flower always on the plum trees or the willow trees. Seeing the blossoms, we tell the plum from the willow; when we see the plum and the willow, we distinguish between them by their flowers. No blossoms of peaches or damsons ever bloom on plum trees or willow trees. The flowers of plum trees or willow trees bloom on the plum trees or the willow trees; those of peach trees and damson trees bloom on the peach trees and the damson trees. Indeed, the way the flowers of emptiness bloom is also like this. They bloom on no other plants, flower on no other trees.⁹³

Such flowers of emptiness were beyond birth and death, beyond past, present, and future, beyond beginning, middle, and end.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, the following was also true: “Seeing a dazzling variety of the flowers of emptiness, we understand an infinity of the fruits of emptiness (*kūka*). We should observe the bloom and fall of the flowers of emptiness and learn the spring and autumn of the flowers of emptiness.”⁹⁵ All in all, “nirvāṇa and birth-and-death are none other than the flowers of emptiness.”⁹⁶

It is clear from the foregoing observations that Dōgen did not approach nature from the standpoint of human beings, science, or nature mysticism. His approach was neither the humanization of nature, the mechanistic, scientific manipulation of nature, nor the romantic, paradisiac absorption into nature. Whether he spoke of humans or nature, Dōgen inevitably (and quite consistently) returned to the nondualistic soteriology of Buddha-nature, radically conceived with the logic of realization rather than the logic of transcendence. Humans and nature, in myriad configurations and forms, while existing and perishing, shared their destinies as the flowers of emptiness. They were characterized in Dōgen’s favorite expression as “the whole body of emptiness leaping out of itself” (*konshin-chōshutsu*) and left no traces behind, like birds flying in the sky. Such was Dōgen’s “radical love” of nature.⁹⁷

THE BODHISATTVA IDEAL

The essence of bodhisattvahood resides in the bodhisattvas’ aspirations for self-perfection in enlightenment (*jōgu-bodai*), as well as in their descent to and remaining among sentient beings to liberate them for their well-being (*geke-shujō*). The bodhisattva’s four great vows (*shi-guzeigan*) resound again and again throughout the writings of Mahāyāna Buddhism, summarizing the bodhisattva ideal:

However innumerable sentient beings are,
 I vow to save them;
 However inexhaustible the passions are,
 I vow to extinguish them;
 However limitless Dharma-teachings are,
 I vow to master them;
 However supreme the Buddha-way is,
 I vow to perfect it.⁹⁸

These vows are recited, reflected upon, and meditated on, by monastics, day and night, to such an extent that the lives of monastics are, in essence, the embodiment of vows. The noblest expression of the selfless bodhisattva's wisdom and compassion is found in the phrase, "nirvāṇa with no fixed abode" (*mujūsho-nehān*). Accordingly, the bodhisattva abides neither in the realm of birth-and-death (out of wisdom) nor in the realm of nirvāṇa (out of compassion). The life of the bodhisattva personifies the nonduality of wisdom and compassion.

The bodhisattva has been variously interpreted in the Buddhist tradition. For Dōgen's part, there was evidence that he distinguished, for example, between the Seven Past Buddhas, the twenty-eight Indian ancestors, and the six Chinese ancestors (from Bodhidharma to Hui-nēng), and regarded the latter categories as bodhisattvas rather than Buddhas.⁹⁹ Doctrinally speaking, bodhisattva differed from Buddha, as we see in the scheme of the fifty-two stages of bodhisattvahood (*gojūni*), in which the stage of approaching Buddhahood (*tōgaku*) and the stage of Buddhahood itself (*myōgaku*) were clearly differentiated.¹⁰⁰ Dōgen seems to have followed, occasionally and advisedly, some such conception of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, in a manner similar to his approach to the doctrine of the Age of Degenerate Law. However, this was not his real view. This was made clear by the fact that, throughout his writings, Dōgen was most emphatic in denying the traditional distinction between the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. He contended:

All bodhisattvas are all Buddhas. Buddhas and bodhisattvas are not different types of beings. Old and young, superior and inferior do not obtain. Even though this bodhisattva and that bodhisattva are not two beings, nor are they distinguished by the self and other, or by the past, present, and future, to become a Buddha (*sabutsu*) is the supreme model for the practice of the bodhisattva-way. At the time of the initial desire

for enlightenment, one becomes a Buddha (*jōbutsu*), and at the final stage of Buddhahood one [still] becomes a Buddha. There are some bodhisattvas who became Buddhas countless billions and billions of times. The assertion that after becoming a Buddha, one should discontinue spiritual discipline and engage in no further endeavor, is due to an ordinary person's view that does not yet understand the way of Buddhas and ancestors.¹⁰¹

Furthermore, Dōgen had this to say: "All bodhisattvas are the original forebears of all Buddhas; all Buddhas are the original mentors of all bodhisattvas."¹⁰² The view of the bodhisattva as a provisional stage to Buddhahood was flatly rejected, as Dōgen contended, since expediency or provisionality in this traditional scheme had to be seen in the light of thusness; that is, the expedient, the provisional, and the like were not means to the end of enlightenment, but rather the "supreme merit of enlightenment" (*bukka no mujō-kudoku*), as the following statement indicates:

The gate of skillful means (*hōben-mon*) is the supreme merit of enlightenment. Dharma abides in its Dharma-position; and the [momentary and shifting] aspect of life is permanent and lasting. The gate of skillful means is not concerned with a temporary skill; it is a study that involves the whole world—that study which makes use of all things themselves as ultimate reality (*shohō-jissō*). Even if such a gate of skillful means comes to be known and embraces the whole world by being one with it (*jin-jippōkai no gaijippōkai-su*), no one except bodhisattvas can use it freely.¹⁰³

It seems perfectly legitimate for Dōgen to maintain this position once we recall his fundamental view of Buddha-nature: that being Buddha and becoming Buddha were contemporaneous and nondual.

The bodhisattva can be considered in two different contexts: one is the person of the bodhisattva as the object of faith and devotion; the other, the way of the bodhisattva as the model for the Mahāyāna believer's life.¹⁰⁴ Dōgen gave his most explicit view on this matter in his exposition on the myth of Avalokiteśvara (Kannon), one of the most popular bodhisattvas in East Asia. He defined Kannon, the bodhisattva of great compassion (*daihi-bosatsu*), as the bodhisattva who responded to sentient beings' recitation of his name (*kanzeon-bosatsu*), as well as the bodhisattva who observed and

liberated sentient beings (*kanjizai-bosatsu*).¹⁰⁵ In this regard, Dōgen took up a Zen kōan, attributed to Yün-yen T'an-shêng (780–841) and Tao-wu Yüan-chih (769–835). Yün-yen one day asked Tao-wu: “What does Avalokiteśvara use his numerous arms and eyes for?” Tao-wu answered: “It is like a person who gropes at night for a pillow by reaching behind him/her.” “I understand! I understand!” exclaimed Yün-yen. “How do you understand it?” asked Tao-wu. “Arms and eyes are all over the body,” was the answer. Tao-wu said: “Well said. You hit the mark well.” Yün-yen then asked, “That is my answer, but how about you, Brother?” “The whole body is nothing but arms and eyes,” was Tao-wu’s answer.¹⁰⁶ Dōgen analyzed this kōan and reasoned as follows:

As we attempt to examine Tao-wu’s remark “groping at night for a pillow by reaching behind him/her,” we should properly understand that the eyes in question see things freely at night. The arms grope for a pillow, but no bounds are yet touched. If the arms reaching behind are wondrously working, there should also be the wondrous working of the eyes reaching behind. You must clearly understand the night eyes.... Having said this, we ask: What does the bodhisattva of arms and eyes (*shugen-bosatsu*) use myriad bodhisattvas of great compassion (*daihi-bosatsu*) for? You should realize that although the arms and eyes do not impede one another, “for what use?” (*yō-somo*) means “thusness that uses” (*immo-yō*) and “to use thusness” (*yō-immo*).¹⁰⁷

Avalokiteśvara’s arms and eyes (traditionally a thousand arms and a thousand eyes) were not something attached to his body, in which case, they would have been two separate entities. Nor were the “body” and “arms and eyes” just two different designations for something underlying them, say, great compassion. Dōgen reasoned:

When Yün-yen says, “The arms and eyes are all over the body,” he does not mean that the arms and eyes cover the whole body. “All over” (*hen*) may be understood as entirety, as in the “entire world” (*henkai*), yet, at the time when the body is comprised of nothing but the arms and eyes, “all over” is not an objectified omnipresence.... For this reason, Yün-yen’s saying should be: “The entire body itself is the arms and eyes” (*henshin-ze-shugen*); it is not that the arms and eyes become the entire body. You must study this.¹⁰⁸

By the same token, Tao-wu's statement was understood nondualistically as "the whole body is nothing but arms and eyes" (*tsūshin-ze-shugen*). Yün-yen's "all over the body" and Tao-wu's "the whole body" pointed to the same truth—the mystery of Avalokiteśvara's compassion (and that of all bodhisattvas and humans for that matter) in its dynamic operation throughout the universe, in which infinite compassion, myriad arms and eyes, and body-mind were one indivisible thusness. Avalokiteśvara in this view was not an object of faith that the ordinary individual believed in, but the way of bodhisattvahood that everyone could exemplify. In brief, Avalokiteśvara was not the object, but the subject, of faith. The object of faith and the model of living in question were not two discrete concerns, but one and the same in the nonduality of infinite compassion and in the thousand arms and thousand eyes of Avalokiteśvara.¹⁰⁹

In view of the foregoing observations and others made before, it is clear that Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and ancestors were one and the same and, in turn, were characterized in the context of Dōgen's "active Buddha" (*gyōbutsu*).

The "longevity" of the way of the bodhisattva was limitless and beyond time.¹¹⁰ Dōgen wrote:

The religious asceticism of infinite kalpas is the efforts and movements of the Buddha-womb and the Buddha-abdomen, and of Buddha's skin-flesh-bones-marrow. We have already been told: "It never, never ends." Reaching Buddha, it is ever more assiduous; even after it has been transformed into myriad worlds, it advances further.¹¹¹

Such a spiritual evolution was not construed in a futuristic framework, with the image of the bodhisattva steadily progressing toward the other shore (*pāramitā*; *higan*). Dōgen ingeniously reinterpreted this metaphor of "reaching the other shore" (*tō-higan*), and turned it around by saying "the other shore has arrived" (*higan-tō*).¹¹² He wrote:

Haramitsu [*pāramitā*] means "the other shore has arrived." Although "the other shore" [nirvāṇa] is not something that is conventionally associated with forms and traces, "arrival" is realized. Arrival is a *kōan*. Do not ever think that your practice will let you reach the other shore. Because there is practice in the other shore [i.e., in enlightenment], the other shore "has arrived" if you practice the Way. For this practice is unfailingly possessed of the ability to realize the entire universe.¹¹³

In short, “the other shore” was realized here and now, in and through the practice of bodhisattvahood; it was not a matter of the future, but a matter of the present.

The essence of the bodhisattva ideal was great compassion (*mahākaruṇā; daihi*). It was essentially the reconciliation of the dualistic opposites of self and nonself, sentient and insentient, Buddhas and sentient beings, man and woman, and so forth. As Dōgen stated, “The way of the bodhisattva is ‘I am thusness; you are thusness.’”¹¹⁴ The identity of “I” and “you” in thusness, rather than identity in substance, status, or the like, was the fundamental metaphysical and religious ground of great compassion.¹¹⁵ This was why Dōgen said that when we study ourselves thoroughly, we understand others thoroughly as well; as a result, we cast off the self and the other.¹¹⁶

The self-other nonduality was most eloquently expressed in Dōgen’s exposition on the four virtues of the bodhisattva (*bodaisatta-shishōhō*), which were (1) giving (*fuse*), (2) loving speech (*aigo*), (3) service for the welfare of all beings (*rigyō*), and (4) identity with others (*dōji*).¹¹⁷ Giving, material and spiritual, was expounded by Dōgen as follows:

What we call giving means nongreed. Nongreed is not to crave. Not to crave speaks of what people ordinarily regard as the opposite of flattery. Even if you govern the four continents [the whole world], you should be in no way greedy so that you may edify the people in accordance with the right Way. For example, it is likened to people who give strangers the treasures they abandon. [They are neither attached to the treasures nor expectant of receiving any return from the strangers.] Let us offer the flowers of distant mountains to Tathāgata or share the treasures of past lives with sentient beings.

In spiritual teachings as well as in material things, each and every giving is innately provided with the merit that corresponds to it. It is true that if a thing is not one’s own possession, it does not hinder one’s act of giving. It does not matter whether a thing is cheap or small; its merit must be authentic. When the Way is surrendered to the Way, you attain the Way. Upon being enlightened, you necessarily let the Way come through itself. When riches are what they truly are, they invariably become giving. The self gives the self for the sake of giving the self; the other gives the other for the sake of giving the other. [Giving is purposeless and noninstrumental.] The karmic force of such giving prevails as far as the heavenly world and the human world, and

reaches out as far as the wise ones and sages who attained the fruits of enlightenment. The reason is that in the act of giving, one who gives and one who receives form a connection with each other. ...you must give even a phrase or a gāthā of Buddhist teachings; it will become the seeds of goodness in this life and in coming lives. Offer even a penny or even an unimportant bit of wealth, and it will germinate the roots of goodness in the present life, as well as in the next. Spiritual teachings are material wealth; likewise, material wealth is spiritual teachings. [Which you choose] should be considered according to one's desires and preferences....

To row a boat, or to construct a bridge over a river is equally the bodhisattva's practice of giving. If you study giving carefully, [you realize that] living as well as dying are both giving. To be sure, to make a living and regulate a business is none other than giving. Flowers trust to the wind, and birds trust to the seasons—these too are the feats of giving....

Indeed, by reason of being originally gifted with the power of giving, one's present self came into being.¹¹⁸

Dōgen advocated the act of giving, free and undefiled of dualism, between the giver and receiver, between Dharma and wealth, between mind and matter. In this view, our birth-and-death itself was a supreme example of the nonduality of giving and receiving for the sake of the self's, as well as the other's, liberation.

Loving speech was explained as follows:

Loving speech means that as you meet sentient beings, you first arouse the sense of compassion in your mind and treat them with considerate, affectionate words. It is altogether devoid of any violent and spiteful language.... When you talk, keep your mind on the thought that Buddha cares for sentient beings tenderly as if he was handling babies. This is loving speech. Praise the virtuous, and have compassion for the wicked. As you take delight in affectionate words, they will gradually flourish; then even those loving words which were hitherto unknown and unperceived will show themselves. As long as your present life lasts, you should take pleasure in speaking compassionately. Generation after generation, let us exert ourselves unremittingly. Compassionate speech is fundamental to the pacification of enemies and the reconciliation of rulers....

You should ponder that thoughtful words arise from the mind of loving kindness. The mind of loving kindness has compassion as its seed. Consider this: loving speech [of remonstrance] has the power to influence even the imperial mind. It is not just to speak highly of others' strengths and achievements.¹¹⁹

In this connection, as I have alluded to before, philosophic endeavors in words and letters were no longer to be feared, but were rather to be cultivated as part of loving speech. What we need, Dōgen would have said, is a compassionate philosophy or a philosophic compassion in which wisdom and compassion are nondually practiced.

Dōgen also spoke of service for the welfare of all beings:

Working for the welfare of all beings means that you contrive ways to benefit all sentient beings, high and low. In other words, you carefully investigate others' distant and near futures, and think of the various means which will be the most congenial to their well-being. Commiserate with a turtle in trouble, and take care of a sparrow suffering from injury. When you see the distressed turtle or watch the sick sparrow, you do not expect any repayment for your favor, but are moved entirely by your desire to help others.

Fools may think that if another's benefit is given priority, their own good must be lost. This is not the case. The practice of benefiting others is a total truth (*ippō*), hence, it serves both self and others far and wide....

Therefore, serve enemies and friends equally, and assist self and others without discrimination. If you grasp this truth, [you will see that] this is the reason that even grasses and trees, wind and water are all naturally engaged in the activity of benefiting others, and your understanding will certainly serve others' benefit. You should endeavor single-mindedly to save foolish minds.¹²⁰

And lastly, regarding identity with others, Dōgen had this to say:

Identity with others is nondifference. This applies equally to the self and to others. For example, Tathāgata was born into the human world and lived a human life. In view of his identity with human beings, we know that this principle of identity holds true of the other nonhuman

worlds. As we understand identity with others, self and others are one indivisible thusness.

[Po-Chü-i's] lute, poetry, and wine make friends of human beings, heavenly beings, and gods. We humans make friends of the lute, poetry, and wine. The lute, poetry, and wine turn themselves into friends, humans turn themselves into friends, heavenly beings turn themselves into friends, and gods turn themselves into friends. In such a truth lies the learning of identity with others.

In other words, *ji* [in *dōji*, "identity with others"] refers to manner, dignity, and posture. There is a truth that after self assimilates others to itself, self lets itself be assimilated by others. The relationship of self and others is infinitely [varied] according to circumstances.

You should realize this [as stated in the *Kuan-tzū*]: The sea does not refuse water because of its identity with water. You should further understand that water is also fully prepared with the virtue of not refusing the sea. On this account, water gathers itself, flowing into the sea, and earth piles up, forming a mountain.¹²¹

Underlying these cardinal virtues was the principle of the nonduality of self and others in the context of which, alone, the selfless activities of the bodhisattva became undefiled, free, and natural.¹²² The hallmark of great compassion lay in this. Yet, as we examine Dōgen's thought more closely, we note distinctive characteristics of his view of compassion. He observed: "To have the desire for enlightenment means that before one crosses to the other shore of nirvāṇa, one makes a vow to carry all sentient beings there, and endeavors accordingly. Even if one's personal appearance is lowly, upon being awakened to this mind, one is already a guide of all sentient beings."¹²³ This meant, in the final analysis, that individual liberation was a contradiction in terms; liberation was fulfilled only in the context of social liberation. Dōgen's monastic ideal can be adequately interpreted only in light of such a social interpretation of liberation.

In apparent contradiction, Dōgen's view of compassion was unique because of his emphasis on Dharma for the sake of Dharma, rather than on applying Dharma to the needs of the common people; thus he underscored an exclusive elitism. Such an exclusionary attitude is usually construed as contradictory to the spirit of universal compassion as advocated in the bodhisattva ideal. This conclusion, however, is premature. It is true that Dōgen chose monasticism instead of city life and congregated with a select few

instead of the common folk; this elitism was undeniably clear in the latter half of his life. It is also true that Dōgen once wrote to the effect that the Buddhas and ancestors were not without the bonds of worldly affections and obligations, yet abandoned them resolutely.¹²⁴ There was not the slightest concern with making accommodations to the mediocre or inferior capacities of the masses in the cities and villages. And yet, as I have pointed out previously, such an elitism represented not so much the absence of compassion as a mode of great compassion. Dōgen's relentless rigorism and disciplinarianism, though not without a tinge of authoritarianism, were motivated by the search for Dharma for the sake of Dharma, which in turn was the core of his view of compassion because it held up as an example to the common people.

THE PROBLEM OF GOOD AND EVIL

Monastic asceticism was based on moral precepts (*śīla*; *kai*) and monastic rules (*vinaya*; *ritsu*) that were carefully formulated by Dōgen in many of his writings. They were designed not for legalistic conformity or authoritarian regimentation, but for the practice of the Way (*bendō*) with the realization of and faith in Buddha-nature. As Dōgen put it, they represented the reenactment of the "ancient Buddhas' daily activity" (*kobutsu no anri*) or the "ancient teachers' daily activity" (*kosen no anri*). Thus, the Buddhist monastic order (*samgha*; *sōgya*) was the religious and educational community of seekers, in which the teacher and the disciples challenged one another in a shared search for the Way. Dōgen's warning was this: "Those who have believing minds and give up desire for worldly fame and gain shall enter. Those who lack sincerity shall not join; entering mistakenly, they shall depart after due deliberation."¹²⁵ It was an exclusive community of religious elite with unflinching determination to become members of a "family" in the tradition of the Buddhas and ancestors (*busso no kafu*). In his passionate pursuit of the utopian vision of monastic idealism, Dōgen placed increasing emphasis on the minute specifications of monastic life, rather than on the general principles that characterized his earlier writings of the Kōshōji period (1233–1243).¹²⁶

It is imperative for us to understand the nature of moral precepts and their relation to monastic rules prior to our examination of Dōgen's view of morality. The word *kairitsu*, which is frequently used in Chinese and Japanese Buddhist writings, is compounded by the two characters *kai* and *ritsu*. The

original Sanskrit word for *kai* is usually rendered *śīla*, whereas that for *ritsu*, *vinaya*. *Kai* refers to moral precepts that should be followed by all Buddhists, and *ritsu* to the rules that maintain the order of the monastic community. While the latter are accompanied by some provisions of punishment for violators, the former (*kai*) are not. That is to say, moral precepts are guidelines that are dependent upon a monastic's motive, disposition, and conscience as a Buddhist believer. On the other hand, monastic rules have to do primarily with external regulations regarding a monastic's behavior and conduct. Telling a lie, for example, can be considered from the two standpoints of legality and morality: according to the legal standpoint, telling a lie may be an evil act regardless of the situation in which the act is committed and the motive of the person who committed it; on the other hand, from the moral standpoint, the same precept can be interpreted flexibly in the spirit of understanding and compassion. In short, the monastic rules, though indispensable to the monastic way of life, tend to induce legalism, conformism, and heteronomy, in contradistinction to the spirit of moral precepts, which take heed of individual moral autonomy and freedom.¹²⁷

These two separate concepts are combined in the compound word *kairitsu* which, though frequently used in Chinese and Japanese sources but not in Indian sources, is rather obscure in its origin and precise meaning. Hirakawa observes that the compound word, while retaining the meanings of its components, emphasizes that monastic rules must be subordinate and contributory to moral precepts and that a tension between the two—between freedom and order—must be creatively maintained.¹²⁸

Dōgen's approach to this matter bore some similarities to Hirakawa's interpretation. Although relentlessly rigorous about every minute aspect of a monastic's deeds and words, which had to be consistent with the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma as he interpreted it, Dōgen's intention was anything but the inducement of legalism, conformity, or heteronomy. What he intended to do, as I have remarked briefly before, was implement the spirit of the precepts in the rules of actual monastic life—in other words, to ritualize morality. Furthermore, Dōgen endeavored to subsume both precepts and rules under the umbrella of *zazen-only* (*shikan-taza*), which in turn liberated the two—cult and morality.

As I have pointed out frequently, Dōgen firmly believed in the indispensability of monasticism, though this did not necessarily contradict his equal concern with the spiritual welfare of the laity. He often approvingly quoted, from Ch'ang-lu Tsung-che's *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei*, the statement that

enlightenment is attained only in the monastic's life, and monastic precepts and rules should be given priority in the practice of the Way.¹²⁹ He wrote:

Wherever the Dharma of Buddhas and ancestors is transmitted, whether in India or in China, there is always the rite of receiving the precepts at the beginning of initiation into Dharma. Without receiving the precepts, you are not yet the disciples of Buddhas nor the children of ancestors. To avoid mistakes and ward off evils constitute the study and practice of the Way. Indeed, [Tsong-che's] saying that the precepts be given priority (*kairitsu-isen*) is already the treasury of the true Dharma eye (*shōbō-genzō*).¹³⁰

The transmission of Dharma was inseparably connected with the precepts. The latter, however, were not so much commandments or codes as they were vows that were accepted by the monk or nun who was initiated into the Way.

Although the bodhisattva precepts (*bosatsu-kai*) were variously adopted by different Māyāyanists in place of the Hīnayāna precepts (*biku-kai* or *gusoku-kai*),¹³¹ Dōgen conceived them to be the sixteen precepts or vows: (I) the three precepts of faith (*san-kie-kai*): (1) faith in Buddha (*kie-butsu*), (2) faith in Dharma (*kie-hō*), and (3) faith in Saṃgha (*kie-sō*); (II) the three precepts of purity (*sanju-shōjō-kai*): (1) to eradicate all evils (*shōritsugi-kai*), (2) to exert oneself for all things that are good (*shōzembō-kai*), and (3) to liberate all sentient beings (*shōshujō-kai*); (III) the ten major precepts (*jū-jūkin-kai*): (1) not to destroy life (*fusesshō-kai*), (2) not to steal (*fuchūtō-kai*), (3) not to commit sexual acts (*fuin'yoku-kai*), (4) not to lie (*fumōgo-kai*), (5) not to deal in intoxicating liquors (*fukoshu-kai*), (6) not to report the wrongdoings of anyone among the four groups (monks, nuns, male lay-believers, and female lay-believers) (*fusetsu-zaike-shukke-bosatsu-zaika-kai*), (7) not to praise oneself or slander others (*fu-jisan-kita-kai*), (8) not to covet (*fukendon-kai*), (9) not to be stirred to anger (*fushin'i-kai*), and (10) not to revile the three treasures (Buddha, Dharma, and Saṃgha) (*fubō-sambō-kai*).¹³²

These precepts were given and received between the administrator of ordination (and initiation) and the monastic who was ordained (and initiated) in compliance with prescribed manners before the congregation of monastics in a reverential setting. The receiving of the bodhisattva precepts signaled a radical parting with the secular world—a rite of passage from the secular life to the monastic's life as a chosen path, which meant “leaving home” (*shukke*) in order to live the life of the homeless. Dōgen exalted

the day of receiving the precepts as the day of supreme enlightenment for all sentient and insentient beings, for the well-being of the self and others.¹³³ The initiation into monasticism, however, was not the ordinary path of withdrawal from the world—the path on which so many contemporaries of Dōgen trod—but the path of the pathless, so extraordinary indeed that it transcended one and many, identity and difference, self and other.¹³⁴ As Dōgen wrote, “The inheritance of Dharma transcends past, present, and future; the vow of enlightenment continues in unbroken succession for all ages.”¹³⁵

The precepts reflected Buddhist moral and spiritual aspirations and visions of embodying the way of the bodhisattva, with the intent of liberating all sentient beings through acts of wisdom and compassion. But these precepts were not always observed consistently and faithfully, due to Zen monastics’ ambiguity and vulnerability, of which they were acutely aware. Inasmuch as the Zen monastery was called the “community of purity” (*shōjōsō*), defilement by sins and guilts had to be cleansed and purified as well. It is well known that the gāthā of repentance was recited by Zen monastics at confession:

All the evil karmas ever committed by me since of old,
On account of greed, anger, and folly, which have no beginning,
Born of my body, mouth, and thought—
I now make full open confession of it.¹³⁶

The matter of repentance, confession, and forgiveness (*sange* or *keka*) became very important in Dōgen’s thought.¹³⁷ Dōgen stated:

When both your mind and flesh are in idleness or disbelief, you should confess in utter sincerity to the Buddhas who are before you. When you repent in this manner, those Buddhas who are before you will liberate and purify you through the meritorious power of your confession. This merit will richly nurture pure faith and spiritual endeavor, which are unobstructed. As your pure faith is realized, you yourself and all others will be transformed; sentient and insentient beings shall enjoy its benefits far and wide.¹³⁸

Immediately after this assertion, Dōgen continued, regarding the efficacy of confession:

The leading thought [of confession] is a sincere desire that, although I may have many obstacles to the Way due to evil karmic effects accumulated from the past, the Buddhas and ancestors who were enlightened through the Buddha-way will have compassion for me, will deliver me from karmic shackles, and will eliminate any hindrances to my learning of the Way, and that they will make the Dharma-gate of their merits completely pervade and fill the boundless universe and apportion this compassion to me....

If you repent in this way, you will certainly have the invisible assistance of the Buddhas and ancestors. Confess your thoughts and deeds, disclose yourself in words, relate them before Buddhas, and your sins shall be altogether rooted out.¹³⁹

Coming from a Zen Buddhist context, these words on the efficacy of repentance, confession, and forgiveness might surprise some of us.¹⁴⁰ Yet these were integral, not extraneous, to the right practice and the right faith.

Zen Buddhists are acutely aware of the finitude and ambiguity of human existence, and their sorrow for their sins is as profound as that of other Buddhists or religious persons. Yet, the metaphysical and religious context of confession in Dōgen's case was radically different from that of others. These acts of repentance and confession were performed in the context of the non-duality of the "I" who confessed and the Buddhas who received the confession. The phrase "before (to) Buddhas" became "before (to) one's self," and hence, ultimately one confessed, repented, and was forgiven in the nondual purity of self and Buddha. The purity of a contrite heart in its confession was identical to the confession of Buddha-nature in its purity. The act of confession was the disclosure of original purity. For this reason, the guilt intrinsic to Buddha-nature became "guiltless" and "pure" (*isshiki no*).¹⁴¹

Thus far, we have been gradually preparing ourselves for an examination of the problem of religion and morality in Dōgen's thought. Before we plunge into this matter, let us make the following preliminary observation: The problem of enlightenment cannot be properly understood without considering the problem of morality and ethics. Morality and enlightenment were inseparably related to one another, so much so that one without the other was not authentic so far as Dōgen was concerned. For nirvāṇa was not beyond good and evil as it is usually—indeed, too often—interpreted in the popular parlance, but was rather a mode of existence with a definite moral commitment that was realized in and through the realm of good and

evil (and of cause and effect as well), and yet was undefiled by them. The secret to this undefiled freedom lay in the method of the total exertion of a single thing (*ippō-gūjin*), which appropriated the traditional Buddhist ideas of emptiness and nonduality, existentially, practically, and religiously, rather than theoretically. Unadulterated spiritual freedom, the authenticity of which was tested by the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity, paradoxically demanded an equally unadulterated moral commitment of those who interpreted Zen as beyond good and evil. In brief, spiritual freedom and moral commitment were inseparably intertwined in Zen, as far as Dōgen was concerned.

One of the clues to Dōgen's view of this problem was his treatment of the traditional Buddhist idea of causation, or more exactly, moral causation (*inga* or *goppō*).¹⁴² Dōgen gave his comments on one of his favorite kōans, which runs something like this: In the monastery where Po-chang Huai-hai presided, there was an old man, who had been attending Po-chang's lecture sessions with other monastics. One day after the lecture, the old man stayed in the Dharma hall instead of retiring from the hall with others as he usually did. Noticing the man, Po-chang asked: "Who is this man who is standing in front of me?" The old man said, recounting his past: "I am not a man, though I appear to be. I had been the head of this monastery on Mt. Po-chang ever since the time of Kāśyapa Buddha, one of the Seven Past Buddhas. However, one day when someone asked me whether or not persons of great spiritual discipline fall into causation, I answered by saying that they do not fall into causation (*furaku-inga*). As a result of the sin of saying this, I have been a fox throughout five hundred rebirths. Please deliver me from this misery with your mighty words." Po-chang answered: "The persons of great spiritual discipline do not obscure causation (*fumai-inga*)." The old man was instantly enlightened and freed from the state of a fox.¹⁴³ Dōgen analyzed the terms "not falling into causation" and "not obscuring causation" as such: the former was a denial of moral causation, whereas the latter was an affirmation of it. Dōgen's own view on this matter was traditional to a certain extent, but went beyond the conventional.

One of the hallmarks of Buddhism from its inception has been its advocacy of the law of causation in the moral sphere. In its simplest formulation, the law holds that "evil deeds cause evil consequences" (*akuin-akka*), and "good deeds cause good consequences" (*zen'in-zenka*). The inexorable law of cause and effect governs the succession of rebirths through our deeds, speech, and thought. Both the fate and hope of humanity lie in the domain of our own responsibility; in this sense, the law is deeply personal despite its impersonal

appearance as an iron rule. Accordingly, we cannot escape the consequence of our actions, words, and thoughts, be they good or evil. A most devoted Buddhist, Dōgen showed his appreciation for the profundity and mystery of causation when he wrote:

Foremost in the study of the Buddha-dharma is to comprehend the law of causation. An act, such as the denial of causation, is tantamount to trying to arouse a wild, erroneous view in order to eradicate the root of goodness.

Indeed, the truth of causation is manifestly impartial: the evil person lapses, the good one evolves. There is absolutely no exception.¹⁴⁴

Dōgen profoundly deplored the state of affairs in Buddhism that ignored the fundamentality of causation, which resulted in moral laxity, complacency, and antinomianism.¹⁴⁵

From such a perspective, Dōgen subscribed to the traditional interpretation of “not falling into causation” as the view rejecting the law of causation, and “not obscuring causation” as the one advocating a deep faith in it. Thus, he repudiated the attempt to identify and confound “not falling into” and “not obscuring” with one another.¹⁴⁶ There was no doubt about Dōgen’s faith in the law of causation as inexorable, relentless, and impartial—as well as his faith in our inescapable responsibility for what we feel, think, and do. Dōgen used the phrase “causation of common world” (*kugai no inga*) to refer to the impartiality and justice that prevailed in the universe.¹⁴⁷ Elsewhere he wrote: “The law of causation is neither an original being, nor something that emerges at a particular time; it is not the case that causation, as something unavailing, waits for us.”¹⁴⁸ If such is the case, how can we conceive of our moral and spiritual freedom in such a “deterministic” framework?

In the *Shōbōgenzō*, “Daishugyō,” Dōgen offered a different interpretation of the aforementioned problem. In this chapter, he attempted to expound the “great spiritual discipline” (*daishugyō*) as that discipline which transcended the law of causation. He underscored:

“Not falling into causation” is traditionally construed as entailing a rejection of causation and consequently, as lapsing into [a fox]. This view is groundless, and is what the ignorant person says.... Also, some, speaking of “not obscuring the law of causation” in its conventional sense, hold that great spiritual discipline transcends cause and effect,

and hence, liberates [the old man of Mt. Po-chang] from the body of a fox. But this also misses the mark.¹⁴⁹

Thus, Dōgen contended:

Great spiritual discipline, as we probe its meaning, is none other than the great law of cause and effect. Because this causation consists unfailingly of the realized cause and the realized effect, there can never be any argument about “falling into” or “not falling into,” or about the way of “obscuring” or “not obscuring.”¹⁵⁰

This position might appear contradictory to the previous one, which was based on the conventional and commonsensical interpretation. However, Dōgen at this point interpreted the law of causation from an entirely different perspective in which the realized cause and the realized effect were spoken of. That is, cause and effect were arranged not temporally or linearly in terms of before and after, but as ultimate discrete events or moments, each of which abided in its own Dharma-position and total exertion. Causation was viewed not merely as a moral category, but as a soteriological one.¹⁵¹ This was explicitly expressed in the following:

Cause is not before and effect is not after; the cause is perfect and the effect is perfect. Cause is nondual, Dharma is nondual; effect is nondual, Dharma is nondual. Though effect is occasioned by cause, they are not before or after, because the before and the after are nondual in the Way.¹⁵²

Thus, Dōgen called them the “wondrous cause” (*myōin*) and the “wondrous effect” (*myōka*), or the “Buddha cause” (*butsuin*) and the “Buddha effect” (*bukka*).¹⁵³

This view can be further elucidated by considering Dōgen’s analysis and interpretation of the three stages of time for karmic retribution (*sanjigō*). Traditionally interpreted, the karmic effects of our actions, speech, and thought will be received (1) in the present life (*jungenhōjugō*), (2) in the next life (*junjishōjugō*), and (3) during rebirths after the next life (*jungojijugō*).¹⁵⁴ This doctrine is an extension of moral causation in a larger scheme, that is, in the framework of the Buddhist doctrine of rebirth (*samsāra*; *rinne*). Deeds are bound to have their results, according to the law of causation, though differing in the time of their maturity in the spiritual journey through the three

worlds and the six realms of existence. The scheme of things in which we are destined to reap what we have sown was, to Dōgen, part of his conception of reason and reasonableness (*dōri*). He said that those who committed the five cardinal sins (killing a father, killing a mother, killing an arahat, injuring the body of Śākyamuni Buddha, and destroying the Buddhist order) would be sent to the avīci hell (*muken-jigoku* or *abi-jigoku*) immediately after their death, where they would endure incessant suffering and torture.¹⁵⁵ On the other hand, bodhisattvas who practiced the six perfections for three asaṃkhyeya-kalpas and one hundred kalpas (*sangi-hyakkō*), in order to attain the thirty-two distinguishing marks and the eighty minor characteristics of Buddha, would receive their fruits during the innumerable rebirths after the next life.¹⁵⁶ As is evident from these observations, Dōgen seems to have believed in the fact, or myth, of rebirth as traditionally understood in Buddhism.

Dōgen, however, was not interested in any theoretical involvement with the problem of rebirth, but simply accepted the doctrine and used it practically as a mythopoeic framework for our moral freedom and responsibility in determining our own destiny. He stated: "It is a pity that even if you remember a thousand or ten thousand lives [of your own past], it is not necessarily the Buddha-dharma. The non-Buddhists already know [the rebirths of] eighty thousand kalpas; still it is not yet thought to be the Buddha-dharma."¹⁵⁷ Good deeds for the sake of acquiring good results or for the sake of avoiding bad results, in the conventional understanding of cause and effect as a means and an end (and certainly heavens and hells loomed largely in ordinary minds in this connection), became utterly irrelevant in Dōgen's thought. Cause and effect were radically discontinuous moments that were at once cause and effect, in the sense that in each were realized all the causes and all the effects of the three periods of the past, present, and future. Cause was the cause of thusness, effect the effect of thusness. In a very special sense, no sooner did one choose and act according to a particular course of action than the results thereof (heavens, hells, or otherwise) were realized in it. Only when we realized this could we be thoroughly transparent to the "falling into" and the "not falling into" regarding the law of causation.¹⁵⁸

The moment of action, as a cause and/or effect, was the moment lived in thusness. This was the meaning of what has been quoted already: "Cause is not before and effect is not after." Dōgen wrote further, "That effect which exists for its own sake (*kaka no ka*) is not the effect of causation (*inga no ka*); accordingly, the effect of causal law is the same as the effect for effect's

sake.”¹⁵⁹ We live in the midst of causation from which we cannot escape even for a moment; nevertheless, we can live from moment to moment in such a way that these moments are the fulfilled moments of moral and spiritual freedom and purity in thusness. This was exactly what Dōgen meant by using (*shitoku suru*) birth-and-death, and the law of causation for that matter, yet not being hindered or defiled by them.¹⁶⁰ Thus, returning to Po-chang’s kōan, the “not falling into” and the “not obscuring” were penetrated, and nonduality was realized. Here, causal necessity and spiritual freedom were reconciled in a uniquely paradoxical way, in Dōgen’s mystical realism.

At long last we are prepared to proceed to the investigation of Dōgen’s view of good and evil, which was inseparably related to the problem of moral causation. As we might well expect of him, in light of various observations I have made in the foregoing, Dōgen was vehemently opposed to a popular interpretation of Buddhist ethics as “beyond good and evil.” Ejō quoted Dōgen as saying:

What is good and what is bad are difficult to determine. They say that it is good to wear silk garments and embroidered brocades, and bad to wear those clothes made of discarded and tattered rags. However, the Buddha-dharma regards the tattered ones as good and pure, and gold, silver, silk and brocade as bad and soiled. In the same manner, this holds true of all other things without exception.

Someone like me writes a few rhymed verses and composes prose one way or another; some secular people speak of this as quite proper, while others criticize me for knowing such things as these despite being a monastic who studies the Way. How can we determine what is to be accepted as good and what is to be rejected as bad?

It is said in a sūtra: “Things that are praised by people and reckoned among things pure are called good; things that are disparaged by people and included among things impure are called evil.”

Also it is written: “To undergo suffering as karmic consequence is evil, whereas to invite joy is good.” In this way you should judge carefully, and thereby practice what you deem to be truly good and discard what you find to be really bad.

Because monastics come from the midst of purity, they consider as good and pure those things which do not arouse thirst and craving on the part of humans.¹⁶¹

Matters of good and evil are indeed difficult to determine, as Dōgen acknowledged here. Moral norms and values are relative to the biological makeup of the species, personal preferences, social customs, cultural patterns, and so on. Dōgen was aware of this situation when he observed:

More about various evils: The evils of this world and those of other worlds have similarities and dissimilarities; evils are alike as well as different according to the times preceding and following; the evils of heavenly beings and those of human beings are at once similar and dissimilar—not to speak of the tremendous differences between the good, evil, and neutral of the Buddha-way and [those of] the worldly way.¹⁶²

One undeniable facet of values is their relativity to the conditions of a given situation; quite often “good is understood differently in different worlds.”¹⁶³

A perennial question in Dōgen’s thought was “What particular course of action am I to choose here and now in this particular situation?” Dōgen himself was acutely aware of the enormous difficulties involved in answering the question. Ejō, referring to Myōzen’s journey to China with Dōgen and others, despite his teacher Myōyū’s earnest request to nurse him on account of his critical condition,¹⁶⁴ asked Dōgen the following question:

In order to truly seek Dharma, it is a matter of course to renounce the bonds and encumbrances of parents and mentors in this world. However, even if we completely cast aside obligations and affections towards our parents, when we reflect further upon the bodhisattva way of life, should we not set aside our own benefits and give priority to others’ welfare? When [Myōyū] was old and sick, and there was no one to nurse him, and [Myōzen] was the only person who was in a position to help him—under such circumstances, was it not contrary to the compassionate act of a bodhisattva to think only of his own spiritual matter and not take care of Myōyū? Moreover, a bodhisattva must not discriminate in his good deeds. Should we not understand the Buddha-dharma according to particular conditions and particular circumstances? Following this reasoning, should Myōzen not have stayed and helped his teacher? What do you think about this matter?¹⁶⁵

Dōgen replied as follows:

In both the act of benefiting others and the way of one's own discipline, to discard the inferior and adopt the superior comprises the good deeds of a bodhisattva. To offer a diet of beans and water in an effort to save the old and infirm merely caters to the misguided love and deluded passions of this brief life. If you turn your back on them and study the Way of liberation, even though you may have cause for some regret, you will have a good opportunity for an enlightened life. Consider this well, consider this well!¹⁶⁶

Here we get a glimpse of a typically Dōgen-like view of compassion that was as stern and unrelenting as it could have been almost to the point of cruelty. Yet we should not miss his rather “impersonal” search for moral excellence in Dharma for the sake of Dharma. To be sure, moral precepts, norms, and values were the concrete expressions of the way of bodhisattvahood, governed by wisdom and compassion. Fundamental as they may have been, these norms were not fixed values to which we legalistically conform, but living expressions of the bodhisattva's free and pure activities in accordance with circumstances and occasions. This was why Dōgen said, consistent with the Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination:

The human mind is originally neither good nor evil. Good and evil arise in accordance with circumstances. For instance, when you have the thought of enlightenment and enter the forest, you think that the forest life is good and the secular life is bad. On the other hand, when you depart from the forest as a result of your discouragement, you see it as bad. That is to say, the mind has no fixed form and becomes either good or evil depending on the given circumstances. Hence, the mind becomes good when it meets good conditions, bad when it approaches bad conditions. So do not think your mind is inherently bad. Only follow good circumstances.¹⁶⁷

Be that as it may, Dōgen never forgot to admonish his disciples to discard the inferior and adopt the superior—he relentlessly pushed them toward moral and spiritual excellence. Any conformity to worldly values such as power, wealth, fame, and knowledge was a sign of betrayal and disloyalty; any compromise with the bonds of worldly affections and obligations was a sign of sentimentality and moral weakness. Filial piety, for example, was not confined to one's parents but extended to all sentient beings.¹⁶⁸ Herein lay an

important characteristic of Dōgen's sense of moral reason (*dōri*), which radically rejected "human feelings" (*ninjō*) compounded by the bonds of affections and obligations.¹⁶⁹

Morality did not end there however. For moral excellence was not enough. Buddhism's unique philosophical contribution was that it went beyond moral excellence. The problem was how to save morality from legalism, conformism, and moralism so as to attain authenticity, freedom, and purity without retreating from moral involvement. For Dōgen's part, he considered the famous "Hymn for the Seven Past Buddhas' Precepts" (*shichibutsu-tsūkaige*), which read:

Not to commit any evil,
To do everything good,
And to purify one's mind,
This is the teaching of all the Buddhas.¹⁷⁰

As explained earlier in this section, good and evil are the temporary, not illusory, results of circumstances, conditions, causes, motives, and so forth, of given situations, having no self-identical nature of their own. Like any phenomena, good and evil come and go as circumstances and conditions change in the impermanent scheme of things. Relationality seems to be an inevitable characteristic of these values; accordingly, the ultimate nature of moral values is emptiness. However, this recognition did not lend itself to moral relativism or anarchism so far as Dōgen was concerned, because his concern was with how to live out relativity without falling into the trap of relativism, or how to realize spiritual freedom and purity amid radical relationality. Dōgen said:

Each of the evils now under investigation belongs to one of the three moral natures—good, evil, and neutral. Their nature is unborn (*mushō*). Although the good nature, the neutral nature, and so on are also unborn, undefiled, and ultimately real, there are many particular forms [of moral values] in these three natures.¹⁷¹

The moral values of good, evil, and neutral did not exist in themselves or for themselves with any independent metaphysical status, because they were nothing more than the temporary configurations resulting from infinitely complex interactions of conditions. In brief, good and evil did not have the

self-same metaphysical ground or source; they were without self-nature (*mujishō*) and were the unattainable (*fukatoku*), to use customary Buddhist phraseology.¹⁷²

Dōgen continued:

Thus, when you study supreme enlightenment by hearing the teachings, practicing the Way, and attaining the fruits of enlightenment, it is profound, lofty, and wondrous. You hear about this supreme enlightenment through good teachers or through the sūtras. Then, from the beginning, “not to commit any evil” is heard. If it is not heard, that is not the right Buddha-dharma, but rather a demon’s teaching.

You should understand that what is heard as “not to commit any evil” is precisely the right Dharma of Buddhism. This “not to commit any evil” is not something which the ordinary person contrives [through his/her moral deliberation]. Rather, when you hear and teach enlightenment, in its concrete expression, it is naturally heard as this [“not to commit any evil”]. This is so because it is the direct expression of supreme enlightenment itself. It is unmistakably the talk of enlightenment; accordingly, it speaks of enlightenment. Supreme enlightenment expresses itself and is heard, whereby one is moved by the desire “not to commit any evil” and to live “not to commit any evil.” Where evil is no longer committed, the power of spiritual discipline is realized at once. This realization is attained by the entire earth, the entire world, for all time and all dharmas. The limits of this attainment are none other than those of “not-committing.”¹⁷³

“Not to commit any evil” was intrinsic to enlightenment and enlightenment was biased toward “not to commit any evil.” In other words, to commit evil was incompatible with enlightenment, contrary to what was thought by those students of Zen who might have been vulnerable to the charge of “evil nondualism” (*akumuge*).¹⁷⁴ From the standpoint of the contemporaneity of being-Buddha (Buddha-nature) and becoming-Buddha (moral efforts), it was contradictory to commit evil while one was enlightened; yet this did not imply denial of the human propensity for failure and guilt. The ideal of “not to commit any evil” and the reality of human guilt were paradoxically conjoined in the structure of enlightenment. “Not to commit any evil” was the moral, as well as the transmoral, sensibility that was intrinsic to enlightenment.

We must still live with our native existential and moral ambiguity and vulnerability—that is, our karma-boundness—but we are no longer bound by them, because of the total freedom and purity in the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity. We must live with the law of causation as well as with human nature, owing to our particular stage in evolution. Morality cannot escape this fact.¹⁷⁵ This is why, as I have noted before in this chapter, we must constantly repent and be forgiven. Though it may sound paradoxical, confession is an essential part of enlightenment, not a condition prior to enlightenment. Perhaps the problem may be clarified better from a slightly different angle. In the course of his comments on the famous kōan of the killing of a cat by Nan-ch'üan P'u-yüan (748–835),¹⁷⁶ Dōgen maintained that Nan-ch'üan's killing of the cat was at once a sinful act (*zaisō*) and a Buddha act (*butsu-gyō*). Dōgen went on to qualify this by saying that the Buddha act and the sinful act coexist in one and the same act—in this case, the killing of the cat. This is why an act that is a flagrant violation of a Buddhist precept can be used transmorally as a kōan, or as a decisive word for enlightenment (*ittengo*)—rendering liberation to those who know how to use it.¹⁷⁷ Good and evil, ideality and actuality, means and end—and all the accompanying conflicts and contradictions—are very real and never illusory; yet it is the transmoral quality of life that liberates and authenticates them. When we incorporate this observation into the present context, it follows that while “not to commit any evil” is an intrinsic part of enlightenment, which disavows any possibilities of committing evil from the purview of Buddha-nature, enlightenment is such that the good and evil of the existential states of the human being become absolutely transparent to Buddha-nature and emptiness. As such, the enlightened person is able to freely use evil for the ultimate good. Dōgen said:

Even though such people of thusness, when authentically enlightened, appear to live, come, and go in the environment that is conducive to evil, or encounter circumstances that engender evil, or are associated with those who commit evil, they no longer commit evil. Because the efficacious power of “not to commit [any evil]” unfolds itself, evil loses its character as evil, being deprived of its grounds.¹⁷⁸

In this respect, “Good and evil are Dharma, but Dharma is not good or evil. Dharma is nondual, evil is nondual; Dharma is nondual, good is nondual.”¹⁷⁹ Therein lies the mystery of evil.

Thus, Dōgen declared:

[The principle of] cause and effect in [the context of] good and evil is realized by virtue of our practice of the Way. This does not mean, however, that we can alter causes and effects or create new ones. Rather, by virtue of causation, we are able to practice the Way. The original countenance of such causation is unambiguously clear, precisely because of [the original] “not to commit,” which is birthless and impermanent, as well as of “not obscuring” [causation] and of “not falling into” [causation]: [causation] is completely cast off.

As we investigate the matter in this way, it becomes clear to us that “all evil” has always been this [original] “not to commit.” Aided by such a realization, we clearly see [the true meaning of] “not to commit any evil,” thereby cutting off [all delusions] through *zazen*.

At such a time, the beginning, middle, and end [of our practice and enlightenment] are actualized as “not to commit any evil.” Consequently, evil does not arise from direct and indirect causes, but is solely of “not to commit”; evil does not perish by direct and indirect causes, but is solely of “not to commit.” If all evil is nondual, all dharmas are nondual as well. Pitiful are those who know that evil is produced by various causes, but who fail to see that these causes are intrinsically [within the vow power of] “not to commit.” Since the seed of Buddhahood arises from conditions, the conditions arise from the seed of Buddhahood.

Evil is not nonexistent, but simply of “not to commit”; evil is not existent, but only of “not to commit.” Neither is evil formless, but is of “not to commit,” nor is it form, but is of “not to commit.” Ultimately speaking, evil is not so much “thou shalt not commit” as it is simply [the original vow of] “not to commit.”...

Such an understanding of the problem [of evil] constitutes the *kōan* realized—the *kōan* realizes itself. The problem is examined from the standpoint of subject as well as from the standpoint of object. That being the case, even if you feel remorse for having committed what you ought not to have committed, you are never alienated [from the original vow of “not to commit”], for this very feeling is unmistakably the striving power of “not to commit” itself.¹⁸⁰

The essence of the foregoing statements is that “not to commit any evil” is neither the heteronomous “Thou shalt not” nor the autonomous “I ought

not,” but is non-contrivance. Morality, if it is to be authentic, should and can arise spontaneously from enlightenment. Morality and enlightenment should not be conceived in terms of cause and effect, nor in terms of a means and an end. At this level of discourse, morality is not a contrivance of the ordinary mind (*ushin no shukō*). Both morality and enlightenment are intrinsic to the structure of Dharma. When morality becomes effortless, purposeless, and playful, it becomes a nonmoral morality that is the culmination of Zen practice of the Way in which morality, art, and play merge together.¹⁸¹ When *ought* becomes *is* in the transparency of thusness, only then do we achieve the highest morality. When *ought* becomes an expression of thusness, only then does it reach the highest morality. Moral excellence, as such, does not constitute spiritual freedom and purity, from the religious and metaphysical standpoint. To Dōgen, as to Shinran, the ultimate height humanity could hope for in morality was fidelity to thusness.¹⁸²

The logic of morality outlined in the foregoing was also applied to the problem of goodness. “To do everything good” (*shuzen-bugyō*) was similarly expounded:

The “everything good” here under investigation refers to good nature as one of the three [moral] natures. Although all good exists in good nature, there is not a single instance of good actualized prior to, and in anticipation of, one who does [good]. At the very moment when a good deed is accomplished, all good invariably comes forth. Formless as the myriad kinds of good may be, a good act, wherever it is done, assembles them all, faster than a magnet attracts iron. Its force is stronger than a stormy wind that destroys everything in the universe. Even the great earth, mountains and rivers, even the world, countries and lands, as well as karma-accelerating forces, cannot hinder this confluence of all good.¹⁸³

Furthermore, Dōgen argued:

Even though “everything good” consists in “what one does,” [doing good] is not for one’s self nor is it known to this self; it is neither for others, nor is it known to them. The intellectual understanding of self and other concerns our judgments as well as our perceptions; and yet, precisely for this reason, each and every person’s living eyeball [essence] involves them, uninterruptedly: such is the meaning of [the original]

“doing” [in “to do everything good”]. At the very moment of [the original] “doing,” the kōan is realized. This does not mean, however, that the kōan is now actualized for the first time or has endured as a fixed entity. If such were the case, [“doing”] would not deserve to be called the original activity.... “Good” is neither being nor nonbeing, neither form nor formlessness, but is solely of “doing.” Wherever and whenever realized, it is invariably of “doing.” In this “doing” is “all good” unmistakably realized. Although the realization of “doing” is itself the kōan, it is neither birth nor extinction, neither direct conditions nor indirect conditions. The same holds true for the entering, dwelling, and departing of “doing.” As you endeavor to do even a single good act among many forms of good, all dharmas, all bodies, the true state [of enlightenment], and all the rest will be realized in and through this “doing” (*bugyō seraruru nari*). The causes and effects of such goodness are each the kōan realized in life.¹⁸⁴

Good was not an entity that the moral agent treated as an object. The moral agent and the value of good partook in the event of valuational creation, which was said to be neither coming into being nor coming out of being, nor even reducible to the outcome of dependent origination.¹⁸⁵ Here again, “to do everything good” was play, in the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity, that transcended *ought* and *is*. This was a radical ritualization of morality, amounting to the liberation of morality. In this spirit, we can understand the “four right efforts” (*shishōgon* or *shishōdan*): (1) to prevent the evil that has not yet arisen, (2) to abandon the evil that has already arisen, (3) to produce the good that has not yet arisen, and (4) to promote the good that has already arisen.¹⁸⁶ Cult and morality were indistinguishably fused in Dōgen’s conception of the practice of the Way.

MONASTIC EDUCATION

The monastic order is the community of bodhisattvas who seek and realize the Way through a communal life of discipline, reflection, and efforts—not to mention fears and hopes, joys and sorrows—and who share a common fate and destiny. Although there are divisions of labor and differentiations of function, for the sake of an economy of life, these are reconciled in the egalitarian, shared status of the seekers and fulfillers of the Way. Even the status of teacher and disciple become ultimately insignificant, for “Everyone must

be enlightened without a teacher” (*mushi-dokugo*), despite there being so much emphasis placed on meeting a right teacher (*shōshi*) and on mutual assistance between teacher and disciple (*shishi-sōjō*) in Zen Buddhism. Each member is ultimately alone and solitary in this communal setting.

Since the monastic community is the community that seeks and realizes truth (*shinjitsusō*)—the meaning of truth, or Dharma, being wisdom and compassion in emptiness—the monastic life constitutes the educational community in which individuals are trained in wisdom and compassion, or in the compassion of wisdom and the wisdom of compassion. This educational process, which we will now examine, is deeply personal and social.

Dōgen wrote:

As one studies the Way by following the sūtras or becoming a teacher’s disciple, one is enlightened without a teacher (*mushi-dokugo*). To be enlightened without a teacher is due to the work of Dharma-nature (*hosshō*). Even though you are possessed of natural knowledge (*shōchi*), you must always seek a teacher’s spiritual guidance for the Way. Even if you are not in possession of natural knowledge (*mushōchi*), still you must study and practice the Way. Who is not endowed with natural capacity (*shōchi*) [for Dharma-nature]? Yet you must follow the sūtras and teachers as far as you realize the Buddha-fruition of enlightenment.¹⁸⁷

Dōgen modified the meaning of the Confucian idea of natural knowledge (*shōchi*) in the sense that all beings were naturally capable of realizing Dharma-nature. He argued that even if we encounter Dharma-nature and are instructed by the sūtras and teachers, we cannot understand Dharma-nature unless we are already fully prepared for it; this natural capacity was to encourage Zen students to practice with preparedness and not be complacent about it, as will become clearer in the course of our investigation.¹⁸⁸ To follow a right master and study the sūtras—a personal encounter and an intellectual enterprise—were the two most important conditions that made Dharma-nature flower in a person’s life.

The study of the sūtras must be understood in the context of what we have previously observed in connection with Dōgen’s view on Buddhist teachings and sūtras, that is, his conception of the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma. We noted that Dōgen rejected the distinctions between Tathāgata Zen and Ancestral Zen, between the Zen sect and other Buddhist sects, between Silent-illumination Zen and Kōan-introspection Zen, and so

forth, and that he attempted to restore the classical Zen tradition that thrived during the T'ang period. Although the vicissitudes of sūtra study in the history of Zen Buddhism are indeed intriguing,¹⁸⁹ at this point, we can only make note of this rather unique problem in view of the peculiarities of Zen history.

In the history of Zen, a wholesome skepticism concerning intellectual learning (*gaku*) and an emphasis on spiritual practice (*gyō*) tended, more often than not, to be so dichotomized that intellectual learning was rejected entirely; this rejection was even regarded as the hallmark of Zen. Toward the end of the T'ang period, Lin-chi I-hsüan (d. 850?), Tê-shan Hsüan-chien (780–865), and Yang-shan Hui-chi (807–883) seem to have been largely responsible for this extreme position.¹⁹⁰ The literalistic, dogmatic interpretation of the two Zen principles, “a special tradition outside the sūtras” (*kyōge-betsuden*) and “no dependence upon words and letters” (*furyū-monji*), went so far as to cause the burning of sūtras and images for their utter uselessness. As time went on, the so-called Kōan-introspection Zen discussed in Chapter 3 of this book—the predominant form of Zen in the Sung period—replaced scriptural study with the kōan method, with its accompanying strengths and weaknesses. What is worthy to note, however, is that although Zen Buddhists used kōans as a meditational method, in the course of time they engaged in the study of kōans (consisting of selected stories, parables, and sayings from the sūtras and primarily ancestral records), which became the Zen substitute for the scriptural study of other Buddhist schools and sects. The kōan method was a form of sūtra study.¹⁹¹ It seems as though even Zen could not avoid words and letters, no matter how vigorously it may have opposed them. Thus, by virtue of the peculiar turns in its history, Zen Buddhism constantly confronted the problem of how to deal with the sūtras and kōans, with language and symbols, and with intellectual endeavors in general, in a more acute way than any other school of Buddhism. The role of language and intellect in Zen was at question here—and was an educational issue at that.

In light of this background, the building of the monastic library, and the codification of monastics' attitudes and conduct in connection with it, revealed Dōgen's response to this issue. It is true that in following the Zen tradition, Dōgen emphasized the spirit rather than the letter of the sūtras. No one could have been more vehement in denouncing the futility of “counting words and letters” (*monji o kazouru*) and the foolishness of those “teachers of dead letters” (*monji no hosshi*) than Dōgen.¹⁹² On the other hand,

Dōgen was also aware of the fact that the spirit in question did not function in a vacuum, but rather only by its interaction with words and letters. Thus, Dōgen detected in the Zen extremists' view the fundamental weakness that alienated spirit and letter, or Zen Buddhistically speaking, Buddha-mind (*bushin*) and Buddha-word (*butsugo*).¹⁹³ Spirit could be activated only by symbols; symbols could be redeemed only by spirit. Therefore, Dōgen saw the necessity of sūtra studies, provided they were understood in and through the practice of the Way.¹⁹⁴ This was what he called actional understanding (*gyōge*) in contrast to intellectual understanding (*gakuge*), as we observed earlier in this study. In this respect, the study of sūtras acquired a legitimate status equal to meditation in the practice of the Way, as symbolized by the monastic library and the monastics' hall in the architectural setting of the monastery. Together, meditation and sūtra studies constituted the substance of wisdom. This inclusion of sūtra studies in wisdom had far-reaching significance in the history of Zen Buddhist education.¹⁹⁵

For Dōgen, the sūtras were not confined, as had often been seen, to the corpus of sacred texts and ancestral records of Buddhism, but included the languages and expressions of sentient and insentient beings, things, phenomena, and events of the universe. The language and kōan of the universe awaited deciphering by humans. From this viewpoint, Dōgen's selection of Echizen, the remote mountainous region, as the site of his monastery had educational significance. Although education in the mountains and waters (*sansui*) was not his original idea,¹⁹⁶ Dōgen was deeply committed to the mountains and waters, which provided an ideal educational environment for monks and nuns. In a sense it meant that a complete change in value orientation was required for such a radical education as the one envisioned by Dōgen; it meant a radical detachment from the secular world that was helplessly obsessed with and enmeshed in power, fame, wealth, and knowledge. More than this, however, it meant that the mountains and waters represented not only the habitat of the sages and wise ones, but also the kōan realized in daily activities (*genjō-kōan*). The mountains and waters were not only the living sūtras waiting to be deciphered, but also the embodiment of the sages' and wise ones' way of life. Dōgen said:

The mountains and waters, here and now, are the realization of the ancient Buddhas' way. They equally abide in their own Dharma positions, and fulfill the merit of exerting themselves totally. Because this is the primordial fact prior to the kalpa of nothingness [of the four kalpas

of the world], it is the living affair of their realized now. Because this is the self prior to the timeless incipience, it is the realization of their liberation. As the virtues of the mountains are lofty and pervasive, the way and power of riding on the clouds [spiritual freedom] always reach out from the mountains; the wondrous workings of following the breeze [spiritual guidance] surely become liberative through the mountains.¹⁹⁷

Thus, the monastic library for scriptural studies and the mountains and waters as the cosmic sūtra or kōan realized in life, were essential to Dōgen's vision of monastic education.

Let me briefly touch upon the subject of a teacher's role in monastic education. Dōgen's admonition for receiving the spiritual guidance of a right teacher is familiar to us by now. Again and again, he tirelessly repeated the crucial importance of meeting the right teacher. For example, he stated:

Students of the Way should not hold obstinately to their personal views. Even though they may have a grasp of the matter, they should reason that this understanding may not necessarily be a good one, or that there might be views superior to it, and accordingly, should visit good teachers widely, and also examine the sayings of old teachers. However, they must not cling even to the sayings of old teachers. The old teachers too may be wrong, and while trusting them, they should be cautious. Thinking this way, they are to follow better views according to their quality.¹⁹⁸

Right teachers were compared to artisans who molded artifacts out of the material of their disciples. The two were indispensable to one another.¹⁹⁹ Once you found the right teacher, you had to be absolutely obedient. The disciple's total dedication to the teacher, however, was not a blind obedience, but was based on the view that Dharma was invariably embodied in and transmitted through a concrete person. Dharma and person were one.²⁰⁰ For Dōgen, the teacher, as the person embodying Dharma, was entitled to demand from the disciple absolute obedience that was devoid of sentimentality, the bonds of worldly affections, and obligations. Both were dedicated to Dharma, for the sake of Dharma.

When this responsive communion (*kannō-dōkō*) took place between the two, Dharma blossomed in its myriad forms. Teacher and disciple engaged in a deeply personal dialogue (*mondō* or *shōryō*) in the search for truth, which

could be closely compared to the Socratic dialogue (*dialektikē*) in the West.²⁰¹ The Zen dialogue employed all possible means, such as words (including paradoxes and nonsense), bodily gestures (even apparently rough and cruel means such as slaps, kicks, shouts, etc.), and significantly enough, silence. These educational devices (*upāya*; *hōben*) were skillfully used by the teacher, with compassion and understanding, whenever and wherever necessary and desirable for the disciple's self-awakening. Although some of these means have fallen into disrepute in Zen training today, the point remains that all these means were compassionately and judiciously used in order to guide the disciple to self-enlightenment. By necessity, the relationship between the teacher and disciple became intensely personal, in order to facilitate the decisive event at the right moment and occasion. Zen Buddhism compared this situation to a chick and a hen simultaneously tapping a shell from both inside and outside, to enable the chick to emerge from its shell at the opportune moment (*sottaku-dōji*).²⁰² Disciples' sharing of observations and opinions had to be matched by their teacher's effective employment of opportune chances (*tenji-tōki*).²⁰³ However, the teacher was the one who was always aware of the fact that although the disciple's search resembled a quest, it was the Way in actuality.²⁰⁴ As we see in the question "What is this that comes thus?" (which was addressed to Nan-yüeh Huai-jang by Ta-chien Hui-nêng), "What" was always asked with the formless presupposition of "thusness"; accordingly, the purpose of education was to explicate and authenticate the What, in the transparency of thusness, through the joint efforts of teacher and disciple.²⁰⁵

Dōgen's view on the educational environment went beyond the sūtras and teachers. He said: "A person's attainment of the Way depends always on many conditions (*shuen*). Although individuals may be sharp in their own way, their practice of the Way relies on the strength of many persons (*shuriki*); accordingly, monastics now should practice and seek the Way with one accord."²⁰⁶ Myriads of conditions and persons were involved in the education of a person from delusion to enlightenment. Hence, Dōgen was severely critical of those who retreated to their huts and pursued their studies or their own predilections alone, free from worldly preoccupations and worries. This was nothing but a self-conceit indicating complacency and arrogance (*zō-jōman*).²⁰⁷ By contrast, the monastic life was deeply communal and social in that its practitioners (*hindei*), as bodhisattvas, worked together for the common cause of growth in wisdom and compassion. This was a social effort to redirect physical and human resources toward a utopian

vision of society; this effort did not simply cater to individual indulgences in avocations and pleasures. Education was essentially a social enterprise.

This accounts for Dōgen's admonitions about manners and attitudes—not only on the part of monastics but also on the part of monastic leaders—which were specified in detail.²⁰⁸ Monastic leaders were urged to exercise fairness, harmony, compassion, joyfulness, and truthfulness, whereas inferiors exercised respect, obedience, propriety, and so forth.²⁰⁹ Those who led and those who were led, though functionally different, were equals as members of the community and were responsible to each other for maintaining the ideal environment of harmony and peace (*wagō*) through selfless participation in communal activities. Such a communal life was likened to the blending of milk and water or to crossing the ocean aboard a single boat.²¹⁰ Initially, members might have joined the community separately, but gradually realized that they were born of the common root of emptiness; hence they were not an assemblage of isolated individuals but the children and flowers of emptiness. Monastic education was intended to help each of them realize this common root in emptiness.

As we turn to the personal aspects of monastic education, the problem becomes much more complicated and difficult to understand. Foremost among the personal aspects is the earnest desire and aspiration for, and thought of, enlightenment (*dōshin*, *bodaishin*, *mujōshin*, *hosshin*, etc.). It is the mind's resolution to cast aside all worldly and selfish concerns, and to devote itself to benefiting others, following the exemplary model of the bodhisattva ideal. Such a desire is predominantly, if not solely, a practical concern, rather than an intellectual or theoretical one. One's intellectual ability is not a factor in this matter, any more than are one's wealth, status, and the like. The criterion of educability for the monastic education is a desire for and thought of enlightenment, as well as the willingness to serve others with selflessness—rather than an intellectual aptitude for abstraction and theorization. Without this decisive factor, one is ignorant and deluded in selfishness and egocentricity, however deep one may be in abstruse learning. Despite their various idiosyncrasies and diversity in personality, background, education, and so on, the monks and nuns of the monastery all share this quality of educability for bodhisattvahood. In this sense, the monastics are a matchless elite in selflessness.

How does this thought of enlightenment arise? Is the thought innately endowed to all humans, or is it socially acquired? Dōgen said: "Who has the thought of enlightenment from the beginning? Only when, in this way, you

arouse what is difficult to arouse, and practice what is difficult to practice, will it develop naturally. Everyone has Buddha-nature without exception; do not vainly abase yourself.”²¹¹ Dōgen also discussed the Confucian idea of innate knowledge, to which I referred earlier, commenting on this by saying that if there was such a native endowment of intellectual superiority at all, it would mean the repudiation of the law of moral causation; needless to say, Buddhism firmly rejected such an interpretation.²¹² (Dōgen seems to be saying here that any “native endowments,” whether individual or collective, are entirely the result of what we have earned individually and/or collectively through the law of moral causation.)

In any event, the thought of enlightenment, according to Dōgen, needed to be learned, cultivated, and actualized in and through a multitude of conditions—among others, personal and social efforts and exertions. Religious sentiment in this respect was personally and socially acquired, rather than universally given or endowed with certain definable forms, principles, or potentialities. In short, the thought of enlightenment was something one had to choose under favorable conditions; without such conditions it might never be aroused, and accordingly it might never be expressed. In this respect, we can appreciate Dōgen’s persistent reminder of the importance of a teacher’s guidance and of sūtra study, despite Zen’s basic tenet of self-enlightenment without a teacher.

However, inasmuch as the thought of enlightenment is related to Buddha-nature and Dharma-nature, its mystery deepens profoundly. As we have seen before, Buddha-nature does not come into or out of existence “in proportion to” or “co-extensive with” human consciousness, or even with all existence, despite the doctrine of “All existence is Buddha-nature.”²¹³ Further, we are told that the thought of enlightenment transcends time and space, though it is not hindered by them, and hence is awakened freely in any particular place and time; for this reason, its arising is due neither to environment nor to our native power.²¹⁴ An important clue can be found where Dōgen related the whole matter to the mysterious phenomenon of “cosmic resonance” (*kannō-dōkō*):

This mind [the thought of enlightenment (*bodai shin*)] does not exist intrinsically or rise suddenly now in a vacuum. It is neither one nor many, neither spontaneous nor congealed. [This mind] is not in one’s body, and one’s body is not in the mind. This mind is not all-pervasive throughout the entire world. It is neither before nor after, neither

existent nor nonexistent. It is not self-nature or other-nature; nor is it common nature or causeless nature. Despite all this, arousing the thought of enlightenment occurs where cosmic resonance is present. It is neither conferred by the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, nor acquired by one's own effort. Because the thought of enlightenment is awakened through cosmic resonance, it is not spontaneously generated.²¹⁵

Dōgen's view on the mystery of the thought of enlightenment (comparable to the mystery of evil and ignorance in human existence) was crystallized in these remarks. We can see that the whole problem of the arising of the thought of enlightenment (and the arising of religious sentiment or religiousness, for that matter) is far more complicated than initially anticipated. At this level of discourse, the thought of enlightenment is neither endowed nor acquired, in the simple sense of these words. What is significant here is Dōgen's attributing the mystery to the cosmic resonance of Buddhas and sentient beings and all existence, whose primordial urge and desire for enlightenment resonate in unison throughout the universe, which in turn exerts itself totally in this shared enterprise. Education must take into account this mystery of the thought of enlightenment, or in other words, the mystery of the human being as *homo religiosus*. Without doing so, education is not complete.

Thus, in the monastic education, personal and social conditions work together to provide wholesome conditions (*ryōen* or *zen'en*) that lead a monk or nun to awakening. Yet this is simply the affirmation of their own innermost being, that is, Buddha-nature or Dharma-nature. As Dōgen wrote:

Properly speaking, the direct and indirect conditions of the arising of the thought of enlightenment do not come from without, but rather by stirring the desire for enlightenment itself, one is awakened....

In this way, the conditions of eighty thousand things and phenomena are always involved in one's awakening. Some were awakened in a dream and then enlightened. Others began to aspire for enlightenment in the state of drunkenness and attained the Way. Still some others have the thought of enlightenment and realize the Way in the midst of flying flowers and falling leaves, or through peach blossoms and emerald bamboos. Or again, some in the heavens, others in the sea. All these amount to awakening the thought of enlightenment within the thought of enlightenment.²¹⁶

This is also the meaning of self-enlightenment without a teacher. The conditions and factors we discussed do not constitute any elements of new knowledge, but are simply regarded as germane to the embodiment of what already and always has been. Fundamentally speaking, nothing has been added or subtracted by the monastic education. In this sense, Dōgen admitted the use of the “samādhi of self-enlightenment” (*jishō-zammai*).²¹⁷

The ultimate goal of monastic education lies in this self-awakening; its success is found in effectively helping and promoting, paradoxically enough, the realization that nothing has been taught or learned. Only then is education life itself, not a means to life. Education is enlightenment itself and emptiness itself.

The ideal image of humanity in Dōgen’s thought was called the “person of thusness” (*immonin*), Dōgen’s favorite phrase, which was comparable to the “original countenance” (*honrai no memmoku*) or the “person of no rank” (*mui-shinjin*).²¹⁸ The alpha and omega of education was to realize this person of thusness throughout its processes. However, as we might expect, Dōgen’s emphasis was placed on a particularity in total freedom. In his critique of Lin-chi’s “person of no rank,” he referred to the “person of a particular rank” (*ui-shinjin*) as a certain concrete individual who found fulfillment in the process of individuation.²¹⁹ Personal and social conditions and cosmic resonance all constituted concerted efforts to define this indefinable mystery of thusness, in a concrete socio-cultural and historical situation.

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGY OF DŌGEN'S LIFE

Events in parentheses are those of importance in understanding the historical context of Dōgen's life and thought.

- 1185 (Final defeat of the Taira family by the Minamoto.)
- 1191 (Eisai transmits Rinzai Zen to Japan.)
- 1192 (Minamoto Yoritomo founds the Kamakura shogunate.)
- 1198 (*Senchaku hongan nembutsu-shū* by Hōnen and *Kōzen gokoku-ron* by Eisai.)
- 1200 Dōgen is born in the first month in Kyoto.
- 1202 Father, Koga Michichika, dies. (Eisai founds the Kenninji temple in Kyoto.)
- 1207 Dōgen's mother dies. (Hōnen and Shinran are banished from Kyoto; the Kamakura regime continues to suppress Pure Realm Buddhism.)
- 1212 Dōgen visits Ryōkan Hōgen (or Ryōken Hōgen?), his uncle on mother's side; enters the Senkōbō at Yokawa-hannyadani on Mt. Hiei. (*Hōjōki* is completed by Kamo no Chōmei; Hōnen dies.)
- 1213 Kōen administers the initiation ceremony for Dōgen.
- 1214 Dōgen is troubled by the question concerning original enlightenment and spiritual practice; visits Kōin of the Onjōji temple in Miidera; studies Rinzai Zen at the Kenninji temple; travels extensively to seek a right teacher.
- 1215 (Eisai dies.)
- 1217 Dōgen settles at the Kenninji temple and studies under Myōzen.
- 1220 (*Gukanshō* by Jien.)
- 1221 Formal teacher-disciple relationship with Myōzen begins. (The Jōkyū War.)
- 1223 Dōgen, Myōzen, and others arrive in China in the fourth month; Dōgen meets an old chief cook of the Mt. A-yü-wang monastery on board the ship; enters the Ching-tê-ssü temple on Mt. T'ien-t'ung in the seventh month. (Nichiren is born.)
- 1224 Dōgen sets out on a journey to various Zen monasteries in winter. (Shinran writes *Kyōgyōshinshō* and founds the Shin sect.)

- 1225 Dōgen becomes a disciple of Ju-ching; experiences the decisive moment of enlightenment sometime during the *geango*; Myōzen dies.
- 1226 Dōgen continues to study under Ju-ching and composes *Hōkyōki*.
- 1227 Dōgen receives the ancestral seal of the Ts'ao-tung (Sōtō) sect from Ju-ching; returns home in the fall and enters the Kenninji temple; writes *Fukan zazengi*.
- 1228 Ju-ching dies.
- 1230 Dōgen moves to the An'yōin temple in Fukakusa. (Famine and natural calamities wreak havoc upon the entire country.)
- 1231 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bendōwa.” (Those dead by starvation fill Kyoto.)
- 1233 Dōgen founds the Kōshō-hōrinji temple in Yamashiro; *Shōbōgenzō*, “Makahannya-haramitsu” and “Genjō-kōan.”
- 1234 *Eihei shōso gakudō yōjinshū*; Ejō becomes Dōgen's disciple.
- 1236 The monastics' hall opens, and Ejō is appointed the head monastic.
- 1237 *Tenzo kyōkun*.
- 1238 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Ikka-myōju”; Ejō completes *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*. (Jōkō constructs the statue of Amida Buddha at Kamakura.)
- 1239 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sokushin-zebutsu,” “Senjō,” and “Semmen”; *Kannon-dōri Kōshō-gokokuji jūundōshiki*.
- 1240 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Raihai-tokuzui,” “Keisei-sanshoku,” “Shoaku-makusa,” “Sansuikyō,” “Uji,” “Kesa-kudoku,” and “Den'e.”
- 1241 Ekan, Gikai, Giin, Gijun, Gien, and others become disciples; *Shōbōgenzō*, “Busso,” “Shisho,” “Hokke-ten-Hokke,” “Shin-fukatoku,” “Kokyō,” “Kankin,” “Busshō,” “Gyōbutsu-iigi,” “Bukkyō” (34), and “Jinzū.”
- 1242 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Daigo,” “Zazenshin,” “Bukkōjōji,” “Immo,” “Gyōji,” “Kaiin-zammai,” “Juki,” “Kannon,” “Arakan,” “Hakujushi,” “Kōmyō,” “Shinjin-gakudō,” “Muchū-setsumu,” “Dōtoku,” “Gabyō,” and “Zenki.”
- 1243 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Tsuki,” “Kūge,” “Kobutsushin,” “Bodaisatta-shishōhō,” and “Kattō” at the Kōshōji temple and the Rokuharamitsuji temple between the first month and the seventh month; Dōgen moves to Shihinoshō in Echizen; *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sangai-yuishin,” “Butsudō,” “Mitsugo,” “Shohō-jissō,” “Bukkyō” (47), “Mujō-seppō,” “Menju,” “Semmen” (second presentation), “Hosshō,” “Baika,” “Jippō,” “Kem-butsu,” “Hensan,” “Zazengi,” “Ganzei,” “Kajō,” “Ryūgin,” “Sesshin-sesshō,” and “Darani” at the Kippōji temple and Yamashibu in Echizen. (Enni Ben'en becomes the head of the Tōfukuji temple.)
- 1244 The Daibutsuji temple opens; *Shōbōgenzō*, “Daigo” (second presentation), “Soshi-seirai,” “Udonge,” “Hotsu-mujōshin,” “Hotsu-bodaishin,” “Nyorai-zenshin,” “Zammai-ōzammai,” “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō,” “Tembōrin,” “Jishō-zammai,” “Daishugyō,” and “Shunjū” at the Kippōji temple; *Taidaiko goge jarihō*.

- 1245 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kokū,” “Hatsuu,” “Ango,” “Tashintsū,” and “Ōsaku-sendaba.”
- 1246 The name is changed from the Daibutsuji to the Eiheiji temple; *Nihonkoku Echizen Eiheiji chiji shingi*; *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shukke.” (Lan-hsi Tao-lung, namely, Rankei Dōryū arrives in Japan.)
- 1247 Dōgen visits Hōjō Tokiyori in Kamakura in the eighth month.
- 1248 Dōgen returns to Echizen in the third month.
- 1249 *Kichijōzan Eiheiji shuryō shingi*.
- 1250 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Semmen” (third presentation).
- 1252 Dōgen suffers from ill health.
- 1253 *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sanjigō” and “Hachi-dainingaku”; Dōgen moves to Kyoto for medical treatment; dies in the eighth month. (Nichiren founds the Nichiren sect; Rankei Dōryū founds the Kenchōji temple in Kamakura.)

Note to Appendix A

This chronology does not include the following chapters of *Shōbōgenzō* because the dates and places of their presentation or composition are not certain: “Shukke-kudoku,” “Jukai,” “Kuyō-shobutsu,” “Kie-buppōsōbō,” “Jinshin-inga,” “Shime,” “Shizenbiku,” “Ippya-kuhachi-hōmyōmon,” “Yuibutsu-yobutsu,” and “Shōji.”

APPENDIX B

MAJOR WORKS BY DŌGEN

1. *Hōkyōki* (*Memoirs of the Hōkyō Era*). One volume. This is the oldest of Dōgen's works, memoirs that consist of questions and answers on various matters exchanged between Ju-ching and Dōgen. The book bears its name because it was written in the Hōkyō (Chinese: Pao-ch'ing) era (1225–1227) of the Sung dynasty when Dōgen was studying under Ju-ching on Mt. T'ien-t'ung. *Hōkyōki* was discovered in 1253 by Ejō, while he was arranging Dōgen's works; later it was edited and published by Menzan Zuihō (1683–1769).
2. *Fukan zazengi* (*General Advice on the Principles of Zazen*). One volume. This work was written perhaps immediately after Dōgen returned home in 1227 from his four-year period of study in China. It attempts to propagate the method and virtue of zazen-only as the rightly transmitted Buddha-dharma. It may be regarded, with *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa," as the manifesto of Dōgen's view of Buddhism. According to his *Fukan zazengi senjutsu yurai* (*Reasons for Writing Fukan zazengi*), Dōgen evidently intended to modify and improve the principles of zazen expounded by Tsung-che in the eighth volume of his *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei* (1103) and thereby to restore the spirit of the monastic ideal envisioned by Po-chang Huai-hai. There exists a copy of *Fukan zazengi* in Dōgen's own handwriting called the "fair copy edition" (*jōsho-bon*), dated 1233. This manuscript is considerably different in its content and style from the popular edition (*rufu-bon*) which we see in *Eihei Gen-zenji goroku* (1358) and *Dōgen oshō kōroku* (or *Eihei kōroku*; 1672). It is the general consensus among scholars that Dōgen wrote the original copy immediately after his return from China and revised it during his subsequent career, and that the present popular edition is the more refined and mature version of *Fukan zazengi*.¹
3. *Shōbōgenzō* (*Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*). Ninety-two chapters. This is Dōgen's magnum opus, written between 1231 and 1253. The currently popular ninety-five-chapter edition was edited in 1690 by Kōzen (1648–1693), who arranged each chapter according to the chronological order of its oral presentation and/or writing. Traditionally well known and prior to the appearance of the Kōzen-bon were Ejō's seventy-five-chapter edition, Giun's sixty-chapter edition (1329), and Bonsei's eighty-four-chapter edition (1419). According to Mizuno Yaoko's recent textual studies based on the oldest extant manuscripts,² the total picture of the formation of *Shōbōgenzō* seems significantly different. Mizuno maintains that the following four were the oldest: (1) the seventy-five-chapter edition, (2) the sixty-chapter edition, (3) the twelve-chapter edition, and (4) the twenty-eight-chapter edition. Dōgen undertook, sometime toward the end of his life, the composition of a hundred chapters altogether for *Shōbō-*

genzō, by adding some new chapters to the old manuscripts and revising the old ones at the same time. In all probability (so conjectures Mizuno) this was the seventy-five-chapter edition, which had been projected and arranged by Dōgen himself with Ejō's assistance. When he died in 1253, Dōgen had completed only twelve new/revised chapters, which comprised the twelve-chapter edition, and had still been working on the aforementioned seventy-five-chapter corpus. In short, Dōgen died prematurely without seeing the completion of his projected one-hundred-chapter version of *Shōbōgenzō*. In view of the fact that Dōgen attempted to arrange the chapters of the two editions systematically, not chronologically, in terms of the contents of his thought, they deserve serious attention from anyone attempting to understand his thought. On the other hand, the sixty-chapter and the twenty-eight-chapter editions, according to Mizuno, belonged together, complementing each other in their contents, and both might have been derived from a common hypothetical source, very possibly copied by Ejō. According to this interpretation, the eighty-four-chapter edition, the ninety-five-chapter edition, and others are construed as derivatives from these four oldest editions. Of the four, the seventy-five-chapter edition and the twelve-chapter edition seem to reflect Dōgen's original intention most truly.³

4. *Eihei shosho gakudō yōjinshū* (*Advice on Studying the Way*). One volume. The work consists of ten sections that treat, systematically, various problems of faith, zazen, and many other subjects. It was probably written in 1234 when Dōgen stayed at the Kannon-dōriin temple in Yamashiro. It is surmised by some scholars that its present form was collected and edited by Ejō. However, this is still open to further investigation. The book was published in 1357—the earliest of Dōgen's works to be published—indicating that it was very highly regarded by sectarians in the Sōtō tradition.⁴
5. *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* (*Gleanings from Master Dōgen's Sayings*). Six volumes. This is a collection of Dōgen's talks given to Ejō after the latter became a disciple in 1234. They were recorded and edited by Ejō himself (c.1235–38). The work has been regarded as the best introduction to the understanding of Dōgen's life and thought as a whole. It was not until 1651 that the book was published for the first time in the Keian edition (Keian-bon). Later, in 1770, the so-called popular edition (*Meiwa-bon* or *rufu-bon*), with the preface by Menzan Zuihō, was published and was the most widely used edition thereafter. However, Ōkubo Dōshū, a leading authority on Dōgen's life, discovered the manuscript now called the Chōenji edition (Chōenji-bon), at the famous Chōenji temple in Aichi prefecture in 1941. This edition (1644) was allegedly based on a manuscript dated 1380. A number of issues and problems surrounding *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* have been clarified since the discovery of the Chōenji edition.⁵
6. *Tenzo kyōkun* (*Instructions to the Chief Cook*). One volume. This was written in 1237, admonishing monastics in general and the chief cook in particular to regard every detail of cookery as sacred. Dōgen exhorted the sanctity of the apparently ignoble duty of cooking in monastic life.
7. *Taidaiko goge jarihō* or *Taidaiko no hō* (*Instructions on Revering the Monastic Superiors*). One volume. It was written in 1244 at the Kippōji temple in Echizen, and consisted of sixty-two rules and instructions for inferiors' conduct toward their superiors (*taiko*).
8. *Bendōhō* (*Rules for the Practice of the Way*). One volume. Detailed instructions on zazen,

washing the face, wearing the robe, and so on. Written between 1244 and 1246 at the Daibutsuji temple in Echizen.

9. *Nihonkoku Echizen Eiheiiji chiji shingi* (*Instructions for Eiheiiji Administrators*). One volume. Written in 1246 at the Eiheiiji temple. Six administrators (*chiji*) of the monastery were instructed with respect to the treatment of monastics and inferiors. In contrast to *Taidaiko goge jaribō*, this work was written for monastic leaders.⁶
10. *Fushukuhampō* (*Rules for Table Manners*). One volume. Written between 1246 and 1253. It gave minute instructions for table manners and other related conduct.
11. *Kichijōzan Eiheiiji shuryō shingi* (*Rules for the Eiheiiji Library*). One volume. *Shuryō*, separate from the monastics' hall, was a special building for the reading of the sūtras and Buddhist classics; accordingly, it was the center of Buddhist studies in the monastery. The book was comprised of rules of conduct in the library. Written in 1249 at the Eiheiiji temple.
12. *Dōgen oshō kōroku* (*The Extensive Record of Teacher Dōgen's Sayings*). Ten volumes. This work is a collection of Dōgen's sermons, lectures, sayings, and so forth, which were edited by Ejō, Senne, and Gien perhaps immediately after Dōgen's death. It also includes *Fukan zazengi* and "Zazen-shin." There are three different editions of the text of *Dōgen oshō kōroku*: (1) the Rinnōji edition copied in 1598, (2) the popular edition printed in 1672 by Manzan Dōhaku (1636–1714), and (3) the Sozan edition (*Sozan-bon*), a manuscript discovered at the Eiheiiji temple in 1937, which has been proven to be older than the Rinnōji edition. An increasing number of students of Dōgen in the post-war period feel that the work is comparable in its importance to *Shōbōgenzō*, and hence, must be investigated thoroughly. Research in this regard has been progressing very vigorously in recent years.⁷
13. *Eihei Gen-zenji goroku* (*The Record of Dōgen Zenji's Sayings*). One volume. This work contains Dōgen's sayings from the Kōshōji and Eiheiiji periods, and also *Fukan zazengi* and "Zazenshin." Its contents were selected from the original version of *Dōgen oshō kōroku* (or *Eihei kōroku*) by Wu-wai I-yüan of China, as requested by Dōgen's disciple, Giin, in 1264. About one-tenth the size of *Kōroku*, it was first published in 1358, and was reprinted on several occasions. Of these editions, the Shōhō edition, extant at the Tōzenji temple in Aichi prefecture, was probably the oldest and was printed no later than 1649.⁸

Notes to Appendix B

1. Ōkubo Dōshū, ed., *Dōgen zenji goroku*, pp. 207–14; idem, ed., *Dōgen zenji zenshū*, vol. 2, pp. 519–22.
2. Mizuno Yaoko, "Shōbōgenzō no shohon sono ta ni tsuite," in Nishio Minoru and others, eds., *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*, pp. 34–56; see also Ōkubo, *Zenshū*, vol. 1, pp. 789–810.
3. *Shōbōgenzō* in Ōkubo's *Zenshū* reflects the foregoing findings of recent research in this area. See Appendix C of the present work.
4. Ōkubo, *Goroku*, pp. 215–22; idem, *Zenshū*, vol. 2, pp. 524–28.

5. Mizuno Yaoko, "Kaisetsu," in Nishio Minoru and others, eds., *Shōbōgenzō Bendōwa Shōbōgenzō zuimonki hoka*, pp. 306–22; idem, "Chōenji-bon Shōbōgenzō zuimonki no hommon ni suite," *Bungaku*, vol. 29, no. 6 (June 1961), pp. 100–108; Ōkubo, *Zen-shū*, vol. 2, pp. 551–54.
6. In the Zen monastic community, there were two groups of leaders who supported and cooperated with its head (*jūji*): (1) the six administrative leaders (*chiji*)—head supervisor (*tsūsu*), supervisor (*kansu*), accountant (*fūsu*), clerk (*ino*), chief cook (*tenzo*), and maintenance manager (*shissui*); (2) the six disciplinary leaders (*chōshu*)—head monastic (*shuso*), secretary (*shoki*), head librarian (*chizō*), head of reception (*shika*), manager of the bath (*chiyoku*), and manager of the worship hall (*chiden*). The administrative leaders constituted the "Eastern Order," whereas the disciplinary leaders constituted the "Western Order." See Jimbo Nyoten and Andō Bun'ei, eds., *Zengaku jiten*.
7. Itō Shunkō, ed., *Eihei kōroku chūkai zensho*, 3 vols. (1961–63), and many other books and articles on *Kōroku*.
8. Ōkubo, *Goroku*, pp. 222–28.

APPENDIX C

NAMES OF THE NINETY-TWO CHAPTERS OF THE SHŌBŌGENZŌ¹

I. THE SEVENTY-FIVE-CHAPTER EDITION

1. *Genjō-kōan* (The Kōan Realized in Life)
2. *Maka-hannya-haramitsu* (The Perfection of Great Wisdom)
3. *Bussbō* (Buddha-Nature)
4. *Shinjin-gakudō* (Understanding the Way with the Body-Mind)
5. *Sokushin-zebutsu* (This Mind Itself Is Buddha)
6. *Gyōbutsu-iigi* (The Active Buddha's Venerable Demeanor)
7. *Ikka-myōju* (One Luminous Pearl)
8. *Shin-fukatoku* (The Mind Unattainable)²
9. *Kobutsushin* (The Mind of the Ancient Buddha)
10. *Daigo* (Great Enlightenment)
11. *Zazengi* (The Method of Zazen)
12. *Zazenshin* (Admonitions for Zazen)
13. *Kaiin-zammai* (The Ocean-Reflections Samādhi)
14. *Kūge* (The Flowers of Emptiness)
15. *Kōmyō* (The Radiant Light)
16. *Gyōji* (I and II) (Activity)
17. *Immo* (Thusness)
18. *Kannon* (Avalokiteśvara)
19. *Kokyō* (The Primordial Mirror)
20. *Uji* or *Yūji* (Existence-Time)
21. *Juki* (The Assurance of Enlightenment)
22. *Zenki* (Total Dynamism)
23. *Tsuki* or *Toki* (The Moon)

24. *Gabyō* or *Gabei* (The Painted Picture of a Cake)
25. *Keisei-sanshoku* (Stream Sounds, Mountain Sights)
26. *Bukkōjōji* (Going beyond Buddha)²
27. *Muchū-setsumu* (Expounding a Dream within a Dream)
28. *Raihai-tokuzui* (Attainment of the Marrow through Reverence)
29. *Sansuikyō* (The Mountains-and-Waters Sūtra)
30. *Kankin* (Sūtra Reading)
31. *Shoaku-makusa* (Not to Commit Any Evil)
32. *Den'e* (Transmission of the Robe)
33. *Dōtoku*. (Expression)
34. *Bukkyō* (Buddha's Teachings)³
35. *Jinzū* (Supranormal Powers)
36. *Arakan* (Arahat)
37. *Shunjū* (Spring and Autumn)
38. *Kattō* (Entwined Vines)
39. *Shisho* (The Genealogical Records)
40. *Hakujushi* (Cypress Trees)
41. *Sangai-yuishin* (The Triple World Is Mind-Only)
42. *Sesshin-sesshō* (Discourse on Mind and Its Essence)
43. *Shohō-jissō* (All Things Themselves Are Their Ultimate Reality)
44. *Butsudō* (The Buddha-Way)²
45. *Mitsugo* (Intimate Words)
46. *Mujō-seppō* (Sermons of Insentient Beings)
47. *Bukkyō* (The Buddhist Sūtras)³
48. *Hosshō* (Dharma-Nature)
49. *Darani* (Spells)
50. *Semmen* (Washing the Face)²
51. *Menju* (Face-to-Face Transmission)
52. *Busso* (The Buddhas and Ancestors)
53. *Baika* (Plum Blossoms)
54. *Senjō* (Washing and Cleansing)

55. *Jippō* (The Ten Directions)
56. *Kembutsu* (Meeting the Buddhas)
57. *Hensan* (Extensive Pilgrimages)
58. *Ganzei* (The Eyeball)
59. *Kajō* (Everyday Life)
60. *Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō* (Thirty-seven Qualities of Enlightenment)
61. *Ryūgin* (Dragon Song)
62. *Soshi-seirai* (The Meaning of Bodhidharma's Coming from the West)
63. *Hotsu-mujōshin* (Awakening the Supreme Mind)
64. *Udonge* (The Udumbara Flower)
65. *Nyorai-zenshin* (Tathāgata's Whole Body)
66. *Zammai-ōzammai* (The Samādhi of Samādhis)
67. *Tembōrin* (Turning the Wheel of Dharma)
68. *Daishugyō* (Great Spiritual Discipline)
69. *Jishō-zammai* (The Samādhi of Self-Enlightenment)
70. *Kokū* (Empty Space)
71. *Hatsuu, Hau, or Hou* (An Alms Bowl)
72. *Ango* (The Monastic Retreat)
73. *Tashintsū* (The Power of Knowing Other Minds)
74. *Ōsaku-sendaba* (The Ruler Seeking the *Sendaba*)
75. *Shukke* (The Monastic's Life)

II. THE TWELVE-CHAPTER EDITION

1. *Shukke-kudoku* (Merits of the Monastic's Life)
2. *Jukai* (Receiving the Precepts)
3. *Kesa-kudoku* (Merits of the Monastic's Robe)
4. *Hotsu-bodaishin* (Awakening the Thought of Enlightenment)
5. *Kuyō-shobutsu* (Honoring All the Buddhas)
6. *Kie-buppōsōbō* (Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures)⁴
7. *Jinshin-inga* (Deep Faith in Causation)
8. *Sanjigō* (Karmic Retribution in the Three Stages of Time)²
9. *Shime* (The Four Kinds of Horses)

10. *Shizenbiku* (A Monastic in the Fourth Dhyāna)
11. *Ippyakuhachi-hōmyōmon* (One Hundred and Eight Teachings)⁵
12. *Hachi-dainingaku* (The Eight Awarenesses of Great Persons)

III. OTHERS

1. *Bendōwa* (Discourse on the Practice of the Way)²
2. *Bodaisatta-shishōhō* (Four Virtues of the Bodhisattva)
3. *Hokke-ten-Hokke* (The *Lotus Sūtra* Turning Itself)
4. *Shoji* (Birth and Death)
5. *Yuibutsu-yobutsu* (Only between a Buddha and a Buddha)

Notes to Appendix C

1. See Appendix B on *Shōbōgenzō*.
2. These chapters have variant versions (*betsubon*) with the same titles. Of them, the variant chapter of “Shin-fukatoku” corresponds with “Go-shin-fukatoku” or “Shin-fukatoku II” of the ninety-five-chapter edition, and that of “Butsudō” with “Dōshin.”
3. “Bukkyō” (34) and “Bukkyō” (47), which signify the thirty-fourth and the forty-seventh chapters of the seventy-five-chapter edition, respectively, are adopted in the present study, because they are homophones.
4. This chapter is called “Kie-sambō” or “Kie-sanhō” in the ninety-five-chapter edition.
5. This chapter is not included in the ninety-five-chapter edition. Likewise, two chapters of that edition, “Jūundōshiki” (Rules for an Annex to the Monastics’ Hall) and “Jikuimmon” (Manners at the Monastic Kitchen), are not included in the seventy-five-chapter edition. See Ōkubo Dōshū, ed., *Dōgen zenji zenshū*, vol. 2 for these two works, which Ōkubo thinks were not originally intended to be part of *Shōbōgenzō*. Their full titles are: *Kannon-dōri Kōshō-gokokuji jūundōshiki* and *Eiheiji jikuimmon*.

NOTES

PREFACE TO THE WISDOM EDITION

1. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002. This work is a collection of the translations that first appeared in the issues of *The Eastern Buddhist*. See also Waddell's "Dōgen's Hōkyōki" in *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 10, no. 2 (October 1977), pp. 102–39; vol. 11, no. 1 (May 1978), pp. 66–84.
2. *How to Raise an Ox* (Los Angeles: Center Publications, 1978); *Sounds of Valley Streams* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).
3. "Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō Sansuikyō: Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Book XXIX, The Mountains and Rivers Sutra," in Michael C. Tobias and Harold Drasdo, eds., *The Mountain Spirit* (Woodstock: The Overlook Press, 1979), pp. 37–49; the translation of "Zazenshin" fascicle appears in his *Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988).
4. *Moon in a Dewdrop* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1985); *Enlightenment Unfolds* (Boston & London: Shambhala, 2000).
5. New York & Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1976. Yokoi also has the following works of translations: *The First Step to Dōgen's Zen: Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* (Tokyo: Sankibō, 1972); *Eihei Genzenji shingi: Regulation for a Monastic Life by Eihei Dōgen* (Tokyo: Sankibō, 1973).
6. Some other translations of Dōgen in English are: Thomas Cleary, *Record of Things Heard: From the Treasury of the Eye of the True Teaching. Shōbōgenzō-zuimonki, Talks of Zen Master Dōgen, As Recorded by Zen Master Ejō* (Boulder: Prajna Press, 1980); idem, *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986); Steven Heine, *The Zen Poetry of Dōgen: Verses from the Mountain of Eternal Peace* (Boston: Tuttle Publishing, 1997); Takashi James Kōdera, *Dōgen's Formative Years in China: An Historical Study and Annotated Translations of the Hōkyō-ki* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980); Taigen Daniel Leighton and Shohaku Okumura, *Dōgen's Pure Standards for the Zen Community: A Translation of Eihei Shingi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996); Thomas Wright, *Refining Your Life: From the Zen Kitchen to Enlightenment* (New York & Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1983).
7. See note 6 above.
8. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993. Bodiford's work is not directly concerned with Dōgen's Zen as such, but I include it here because of its significance for Dōgen studies.

9. "Recarving the Dragon" in William R. LaFleur, ed., *Dōgen Studies* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), pp. 21–53; *Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation* is cited in note 3 above.
10. Translated, with an Introduction by Jan Van Bragt; Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982.
11. *Zen and Western Thought*, ed. by William R. LaFleur (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985); *A Study of Dōgen*, ed. by Steven Heine (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).
12. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1981.
13. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990.
14. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985.
15. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.
16. John C. Maraldo, "Questioning Nationalism Now and Then: A Critical Approach to Zen and the Kyoto School," in James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo, eds., *Rude Awakening: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), pp. 333–62.
17. See *ibid.*, p. 362.
18. LaFleur, *op. cit.*, pp. 54–82.
19. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.
20. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
21. The most important primary sources for Critical Buddhism are as follows: Hakamaya Noriaki, *Hongaku shishō hihan* (Tokyo: Daizō shuppan, 1989); *idem*, *Hihan Bukkyō* (Tokyo: Daizō shuppan, 1990); Matsumoto Shirō, *Engi to kū—nyōraizō shishō hihan* (Tokyo: Daizō shuppan, 1989); Ishii Shūdō, "Recent Trends in Dōgen Studies," *Komazawa daigaku zen kenkyūjo nempō*, no. 1 (March 1990), pp. 219–64. For the Western scholars' discussion of Critical Buddhism, see: Jamie Hubbard and Paul L. Swanson, eds., *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm over Critical Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997); Jacqueline I. Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999). Stone's book is especially instructive for understanding the complex historical background in which Tendai *hongaku* discourse developed in medieval Japan. As for the controversy over the two *Shōbōgenzō* texts referred to here, see Steven Heine, "Critical Buddhism and Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*: The Debate over the 75-Fascicle and 12-Fascicle Texts," in Hubbard and Swanson, *op. cit.*, pp. 251–85.
22. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986. McRae's book and Faure's *The Will to Orthodoxy* (note 23 below) complement each other in their treatments of the formation of early Chinese Zen.
23. *The Rhetoric of Immediacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); *Chan Insights and Oversight* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); *The Will to Orthodoxy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

24. See note 16 above.
25. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.
26. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.
27. See note 21 above.
28. Speaking of “old” Buddhism, Shingon and the Nara schools are not Stone’s immediate concerns in her present work.
29. Lopez, op. cit., pp. 107–60.
30. See his *Chan Insights and Oversights*, and “The Kyoto School and Reverse Orientalism,” in Fu and Heine, op. cit., pp. 245–81.

FOREWORD TO THE PREVIOUS EDITION: THE WAY OF DŌGEN ZENJI

1. Simon Pétrement, *Simone Weil: A Life*, trans. by Raymond Rosenthal. (New York: Pantheon, 1976), pp. 39–40.
2. This and subsequent passages which I quote from the *Genjō Kōan* do not appear in Dr. Kim’s text, and are my own translations.
3. This story was told during a talk at the Koko An Zendo by Yamada Kōun Rōshi.
4. Cf. Kōun Yamada, *Gateless Gate* (Los Angeles: Center Publications, 1979), p. 45.
5. Dōgen Kigen, *Kyōjūkaimon*. See Robert Aitken, *The Mind of Clover: Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984), p. 50.

CHAPTER ONE:

TOWARD A TOTAL UNDERSTANDING OF ZEN

1. Masunaga Reihō, *Eihei Shōbōgenzō—Dōgen no shūkyō*, p. 3.
2. These quotations are from Tanabe Hajime, *Shōbōgenzō no tetsugaku shikan* (1939), reprinted in Nishitani Keiji and others, eds., *Tanabe Hajime zenshū*, vol. 5, pp. 445–94.
3. Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, p. 174.
4. This essay was carried in *Shin-shōsetsu* and *Shisō* between 1920 and 1923, and was later published in his *Nihon seishinshi kenkyū*, pp. 251–404. It was reprinted recently in Nishio Minoru, ed., *Shōbōgenzō Bendōwa Shōbōgenzō zuimonki hoka*, pp. 325–77.
5. For my summary of the history of Dōgen studies, I am indebted to the following works: Kagamishima Genryū, “Dōgen zenji kenkyū no kaiko to tembō,” *Bungaku*, vol. 29, no. 6 (June 1961), pp. 109–17; Kaganishima Hiroyuki, “Dōgen zenji kenkyū no dōkō kaiko,” *Dōgen zenji kenkyū*, vol. 1, no. 1 (January 1941), pp. 341–68; Takeuchi Michio, “Saikin no Dōgen ni kansuru kenkyū ni tsuite,” *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, no. 4 (May 1958), pp. 46–55; Fueoka Jishō, “Saikin ni okeru Dōgen zenji kenkyū sangyō no kaiko,” *Dōgen zenji godenki*, vol. 1, no. 1 (June 1949), pp. 132–49; Ikebe Minoru, “Dōgen kankei kenkyū bunken mokuroku,” *Bungaku*, vol. 29, no. 6 (June 1961), pp. 742–67; Ōkubo Dōshū, “Dōgen zenji sangyō no rekishi-teki kaiko,” in his *Dōgen zenji-den no kenkyū*

- (revised edition), pp. 470–500; Okada Gihō, “Shōbōgenzō no hensan narabini chūso-shi,” and “Shōbōgenzō no kenkyū bunken ni tsuite,” in his *Shōbōgenzō shisō taikēi*, vol. 1, pp. 12–43 and vol. 8, pp. 431–40, respectively; Jimbo Nyoten and Andō Bun’ei, “Shōbōgenzō chūkai-zensho naiyō shomoku kaidai,” in their *Shōbōgenzō chūkai-zensho*, vol. 11, pp. 7–78.
6. Akamatsu Toshihide and others, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, vol. 2, pp. 199–210; Imaeda Aishin, *Zenshū no rekishi*, pp. 151–87; Ōkubo Dōshū, op. cit., 406–68; Kurebayashi Kōdō, “Dōgen Keizan ryōso igo ni okeru Sōtō-shūgaku no shuryū,” *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 6, no. 2, (March 1958), pp. 12–20. Concerning Gozan Zen, see Akamatsu and others, op. cit., pp. 173–96; Imaeda, op. cit., pp. 72–150.
 7. For this period, see Imaeda, op. cit., Chapter 5; Tamamuro Taijō and others, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, vol. 3, *Kinsei-kindai-hen*.
 8. See Kishimoto Hideo, ed., *Japanese Religion in the Meiji Era*; Tamamuro and others, op. cit.
 9. Kagamishima Hiroyuki, “Dōgen zenji kenkyū no dōkō kaiko,” *Dōgen zenji kenkyū*, vol. 1, no. 1 (January 1941), p. 345.
 10. Loc. cit., where Kagamishima observes that only two works, namely Murakami Sensei’s *Bukkyō tōitsu-ron* (1901) and Ōkawa Shūmei’s *Nihon bummei-shi* (1921), discussed Dōgen but then only very briefly.
 11. *Keiteki* is a collection of Nishiarī’s lectures on twenty-nine chapters of *Shōbōgenzō*, which were recorded by his disciple, Toyama Soei, and which were later edited by Kurebayashi Kōdō in 1930. It is one of the best commentaries on *Shōbōgenzō*.
 12. This book was originally designed to be a manual for Sōtō believers’ daily devotional life. However, the task of making the work required some unexpectedly painstaking efforts relative to linguistic, textual, and literary studies of *Shōbōgenzō*. These efforts gave an impetus in the subsequent years to genuinely scholarly and systematic endeavors for basic research. Kagamishima Hiroyuki, “Dōgen zenji kenkyū no dōkō kaiko,” pp. 364–67.
 13. Akiyama later wrote another work of importance, *Dōgen zenji to gyō*, in 1940.
 14. Tanabe also writes: “Viewed from the philosophical standpoint, Dōgen’s *Shōbōgenzō* is matchless in its command of Japanese language and logic, with the power to realize the ineffable in and through speech and discourse.”
 15. The subsequent volumes 2, 3, and 4 appeared in 1940, 1944, and 1950, respectively. Hashida viewed Dōgen’s thought as providing science with a metaphysical foundation.
 16. Kagamishima Genryū, “Dōgen zenji kenkyū no kaiko to tembō,” *Bungaku*, vol. 29, no. 6 (June 1961), pp. 111–13.
 17. The element of faith in Dōgen’s thought is also emphasized by Kurebayashi Kōdō in his *Dōgen-zen no kenkyū* (1963), and it has been a general tendency on the part of the sectarian circle to emphasize (or overemphasize, as some critics would say) this aspect of Dōgen’s thought. The problem will be treated later in this study.

A notable activity of the sect during this period was the establishment of Dōgen

- zenji sangyōkai in 1936, and the publication of *Dōgen zenji kenkyū*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1941), a culmination of the members' scholarly efforts in the field.
18. Some additional works of importance in the post-war period: Nakamura Hajime, *Tōyōjin no shii-hōhō*, part 2 (1949); Masunaga Reihō, op. cit. (1956); Kurebayashi Kōdō, op. cit. (1963); Miyasaka Tetsubun, *Zen ni okeru ningen keisei* (revised edition; 1970); and numerous articles and essays in the *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, *Journal of Sōtō Studies*, *Komazawa daigaku kenkyū kiyō*, etc.
 19. The broadly philological studies have produced numerous works, of which the following are notable: Okada Gihō, op. cit., 8 volumes (1953); Andō Bun'ei and Jimbo Nyoten, eds., *Shōbōgenzō chūkai-zensho*, 11 volumes (originally published in 1913–14, and reprinted in 1956–57); Katō Shūkō, ed., *Shōbōgenzō yōgo sakuin*, 2 volumes (1962–63). Concerning other articles and works, see the aforementioned articles by Takeuchi Michio, Kagamishima Genryū, Kagamishima Hiroyuki, Fueoka Jishō in note 5 above.
 20. The following are some of the works on Dōgen and translations of his works in Western languages: Masunaga Reihō, *The Sōtō Approach to Zen*; idem, *A Primer of Sōtō Zen: A Translation of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*; Katō Kazumitsu, "The Life and Teaching of Dōgen" (an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation); Philip Kapleau, *The Three Pillars of Zen*; Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, pp. 151–74; idem, "Das Buch Genjōkōan Aus dem Shōbōgenzō des Zen-Meisters Dōgen," *Monumenta Nipponica*, vol. 15, nos. 3–4 (October 1959–January 1960), pp. 217–32; Oscar Benl, "Die Anfänge der Sōtō-Mönchsgemeinschaften," *Oriens Extremus*, vol. 7 (1960), pp. 31–50; idem, "Der Zen-Meister Dōgen in China," *Nachrichten der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur und Volkerkunde Ostasiens*, nos. 79–80, pp. 67–77; Jiyy Kennett, *Selling Water by the River: A Manual of Zen Training*; those translations referred to in note 22 below. Nakamura Hajime in his *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples* quotes and translates extensively from Dōgen's works. The following anthologies contain some translated passages from Dōgen: Tsunoda Ryūsaku and others, comp., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*; William Th. de Bary, ed., *The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan*; Wing-tsit Chan and others, comp., *The Great Asian Religions: An Anthology*.
 21. Masunaga Reihō, *The Sōtō Approach to Zen*, p. 193.
 22. For example, *The Eastern Buddhist* has carried a series of translations by Norman Waddell and Abe Masao of some important chapters of *Shōbōgenzō*, and promises to carry further translations in the future issues. Those which have appeared thus far are: "Bendōwa," vol. 4, no. 1 (May 1971), pp. 124–57; "Ikka-myōju," vol. 4, no. 2 (October 1971), pp. 108–18; "Zenki" and "Shōji," vol. 5, no. 1 (May 1972), pp. 70–80; "Genjōkōan," vol. 5, no. 2 (October 1972), pp. 129–40; "Zazengi" (and *Fukan zazengi*), vol. 6, no. 2 (October 1973), pp. 115–28; "Zammai-ōzammai," vol. 7, no. 1 (May 1974), pp. 118–23.
 23. Alan Watts, *Beat Zen, Square Zen, and Zen* for some aspects of Western appropriation of Zen Buddhism.
 24. See, for example, Yamaguchi Susumu and others, *Bukkyō-gaku josetsu*; Miyamoto Shōson, ed., *Bukkyō no kompon shinri*; Kenneth W. Morgan, ed., *The Path of the Buddha*;

Sangharakshita, *A Survey of Buddhism*; and others, for growing efforts on the part of Buddhists to see Buddhism in its diversity as well as its unity. This is a significant departure from sectarian isolationism.

25. There are so many works relevant to methodological problems of the history of religions in general. To cite only a few: Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa, eds., *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*; J. M. Kitagawa, ed., *The History of Religions: Essays on the Problem of Understanding*; Mircea Eliade, *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion*; Robert N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World*; Wilfred C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*; J. M. Yinger, *The Scientific Study of Religion*.
26. See Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* for religion and play; the human being as *animal symbolicum* is expounded in Ernst Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* and *An Essay on Man*, and Susanne Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, etc.
27. I can cite just one example in this connection. Wilfred C. Smith, in his essay, "Comparative Religion: Whither—and Why?" (Kitagawa and Eliade, op. cit., pp. 31–58), rightly calls for the personalist approach to religious phenomena, and in a similar vein, distinguishes, in his *The Meaning and End of Religion*, between "cumulative tradition" and "personal faith," maintaining that, while both are dynamic and diverse, the former is historically intelligible, and the latter not amenable or reducible to such intelligibility. Smith writes: "The traditions evolve. Men's faith varies. God endures" (ibid., p. 173). This is no doubt salutary to our deeper understanding of religious faith. On the other hand, Smith seems to suggest that cumulative tradition is extraneous to, while personal faith is involved with, transcendence (i.e., God to Smith); hence, personal faith should be the key concern of any understanding of religion. Here, Smith is unduly distrustful of any religious expressions that constitute cumulative tradition—and by implication, of any historical and cultural investigations of religion. His analysis does not provide us with an examination of the interrelation and interpenetration of history and faith. Faith, in my view, not only "varies" but also "evolves" just as cumulative tradition does.

CHAPTER TWO: DŌGEN'S LIFE

1. There are several biographies of Dōgen traditionally known in the Sōtō sect. However, their materials are uncritical, full of pious frauds and apologetic embellishments, and hence, must be critically scrutinized and assessed. As to these traditional biographies, see Ōkubo Dōshū, *Dōgen zenji-den no kenkyū*, pp. 20–35. For my subsequent investigation of Dōgen's life I am greatly indebted to Ōkubo's work and Takeuchi Michio's *Dōgen*.
2. Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince*, p. 180. The following observations of Morris's are particularly significant in this connection: "The composition, exchange, and quotation of poems was central to the daily life of the Heian aristocracy, and it is doubtful whether any other society in the world has ever attached such importance to the poetic versatility of its members" (p. 177). And: "Not only did the rule of taste extend to every sphere of life and apply to the smallest details, but (with the single

exception of good birth) it took primacy over all else. Artistic sensibility was more highly valued than ethical goodness. Despite the influence of Buddhism, Heian society was on the whole governed by style rather than by any moral principles, and good looks tended to take the place of virtue. The word *yoki* ('good') referred primarily to birth, but it also applied to a person's beauty or to his aesthetic sensibility; the one implication it lacked was that of ethical rectitude. For all their talk about 'heart' and 'feeling,' this stress on the cult of the beautiful, to the virtual exclusion of any concern with charity, sometimes lends a rather chilling impression to the people of Genji's world" (p. 195).

3. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 108ff. and pp. 195ff. The declining fate of aristocracy was lyrically depicted in a clear relief against the vigor of the rising samurai class in *Heike monogatari*. In *Hōjōki* by Kamo no Chōmei (1153–1216), it was written: "The flow of the river is ceaseless and its water is never the same. The bubbles that float in the pools, now vanishing, now forming, are not of long duration: so in the world are man and his dwellings." Donald Keene, comp. and ed., *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, p. 197. Such examples of the ethos and pathos of the age were replete in the Heian and Kamakura literature.
4. Ienaga Saburō, *Nihon dōtoku shisō-shi*, pp. 36–55.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 72–85.
6. *ibid.*, pp. 97–101. Ienaga associates such an awareness of the samurai class with Shinran's famous statement "Even the virtuous can attain rebirth in the Pure Land and how much more so the wicked" (*Tannishō*, III).
7. E. O. Reischauer, *Japan, Past and Present*, p. 53.
8. Murai Yasuhiko, "Shōen sei no hatten to kōzō," Ienaga Saburō and others, eds., *Nihon rekishi*, vol. 4, pp. 41–87; Watanabe Sumio, "Kōbu kenryoku to shōen-sei," Ienaga and others, eds., *Nihon rekishi*, vol. 5, pp. 179–226.
9. Morris *op. cit.*, p. 75. See also George B. Sansom, *Japan: A Short Cultural History*, note on p. 273 concerning land holdings of the Tōdaiji temple and the Shimazu family as examples.
10. Ienaga Saburō and others, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, vol. 1, pp. 346–51; Charles Eliot, *Japanese Buddhism*, pp. 244–47.
11. Ienaga and others, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, vol. 1, pp. 241–58.
12. There were different theories of the lengths of the Three Ages of Right Law, Imitative Law, and Degenerate Law—e.g., 500, 1,000, and 10,000 years, respectively, or 1,000, 1,000, and 10,000 years. In Japan the latter scheme was adopted and calculated from 949 B.C.E., the presumed date of Buddha's death. *Mappō* thought was popular in China from the sixth century on and in Japan from the tenth century on.
13. For example, see Shinran's "Hymn on the Three Ages" in *The Shinshū Seiten*, pp. 236–37.
14. Reischauer's following observation is noteworthy: "It is, indeed, a curious fact that the popular Buddhism of feudal Japan had in many ways come to resemble Christianity more than historic Buddhism. Reversing the basic pessimism of the early faith, it had come to stress a real afterlife and salvation through faith. And the early feudal religious

reformers, in their translations of the scriptures, their creation of lay congregations, their marriage of the clergy, their militant sectarianism, and their nascent nationalism, resembled to a surprising degree the Protestant reformers of Europe. These religious trends, coupled with the development of a feudal system which found much closer parallels in medieval Europe than in East Asia, make the early feudal period in Japan a time for startling comparisons with Europe and strong contrasts with other countries in the Far East." Op. cit., p. 60.

15. *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*, I:2. Hereafter I shall refer to this work as *Zuimonki* in the present study. Cf. *ibid.*, V:6. Dōgen often employed the doctrine in his writings. For example, he wrote: "In the ancient Ages of Right Law and Imitative Law, Buddha's disciples all knew this truth, and they practiced and studied it. Nowadays, amongst a thousand monastics, not a single person knows these eight awarenesses of great persons (*hachidainingaku*). It is a pity—nothing is comparable to the degeneration of these latter days" (*Shōbōgenzō*, "Hachi-dainingaku"). See also *ibid.*, "Kesa-kudoku," "Den'e," "Shisho," etc.
16. *Zuimonki*, III:20 and I:8.
17. Dōgen said: "Worldly people would probably say: 'Although we earnestly desire to study the Way, it is the Age of Degenerate Law—we are degraded, and our capacity to understand the teachings of Buddhism is low. We cannot undergo spiritual discipline according to Dharma. We should simply be contented with our lot, follow an easy path, think of having a connection with Buddha, and hope to attain enlightenment in a subsequent existence.' What has just been said is altogether mistaken. In the Buddha-dharma, to advocate the divisions of the Three Ages of Right Law, Imitative Law, and Degenerate Law is a provisional means of instruction, but not the true teaching of the Way. If you practice according to the teachings, you will be enlightened without fail. Monastics during Buddha's lifetime were not necessarily superior; in fact some of them were unimaginably wretched and of low character. When Buddha set forth various rules and precepts, they were all for wicked and despicable people. Each of us is capable of realizing the Buddha-dharma; do not ever think you are unfit. If you follow the teachings in your practice, you will surely attain the Way. Once you have the right intention, you are capable of discriminating between good and evil. You have your hands and feet, and lack for nothing, in order to join your palms or walk. In the practice of the Buddha-dharma, make no distinction between classes or ranks. Indeed the life of all humans is endowed with all the capacity that is absent in the life of other beings, such as animals." *Ibid.*, V:12.
 Elsewhere, Dōgen stated in a similar vein: "While the doctrinal schools of Buddhism are preoccupied with names and appearances, in the true teachings of the Mahāyāna there is no distinction between Right Law, Imitative Law, and Degenerate Law. It teaches that whenever one practices the Way, one surely attains it. Indeed, in this authentically transmitted Dharma, whether you enter Dharma or emerge from it, you use your native treasure all the same. Whether you are enlightened or not is known by you who practice the Way; it may be likened to a person who uses water, and thereby knows by himself/herself whether the water is cold or warm." *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa."
18. Hori Ichirō, *Folk Religion in Japan*; *idem*, *Minkan shinkō*.

19. Hori, *Folk Religion in Japan*, p. 103. See also pp. 101–10.
20. *Ibid.*, passim.
21. Ienaga and others, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, vol. 1, pp. 258–63; Watsuji Tetsurō, *Nihon rinri shisō-shi*, vol. 1, pp. 373–420.
22. For these subjects, see Hori's two cited works; Nakamura Hajime, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, part 4; *Proceedings of the XIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions*, vol. 2: *Guilt or Pollution and Rites of Purification*; etc.
23. Concerning the family traditions of Dōgen's parents, see Ōkubo, op. cit., pp. 44–73; Takeuchi, op. cit., pp. 5–20.
24. *Zuimonki*, III:17.
25. *ibid.*, III:14.
26. Ōkubo, op. cit., pp. 75–76.
27. Loc. cit. See also *Zuimonki*, V:8. In *Kannon-dori Kōshō-gokokuji jūundōshiki* (hereafter *Jūundōshiki* in this study), Dōgen stated: "Father and mother are temporary parents in this life."
28. For example, *Zuimonki* and *Eihei shōso gakudō yōjinshū* (hereafter *Gakudō yōjinshū* in this study).
29. Takeuchi, op. cit., p. 27.
30. In *Sanso gyōgōki*, one of the biographies of Dōgen, the name of Ryōken appears instead. See Takeuchi, op. cit., p. 28. As to Ryōken, see Ōkubo, op. cit., pp. 64, 76–77.
31. *Zuimonki*, III:25.
32. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Gyōji."
33. *Zuimonki*, VI:2. In *Gakudō yōjinshū*, 4, Dōgen said: "The Buddha-dharma should never be practiced for one's own sake, not to mention for the sake of fame or gain. You should practice it solely for the sake of the Buddha-dharma."
34. Ōkubo doubts this because the regulation at Hiei concerning the bodhisattva ordination (*bosatsukai*) was that it was given when one reached the age of twenty. Op. cit., pp. 77–78.
35. *Zuimonki*, II:18.
36. *Ibid.*, II:19. Cf. III:22.
37. *Ibid.*, II:25. Cf. III:20.
38. *Ibid.*, III:23.
39. *Ibid.*, V:8.
40. Ōkubo, op. cit., pp. 78–80.
41. For example, *The Awakening of Faith* (trans. Yoshito S. Hakeda), pp. 37ff.

42. Tamura Yoshirō, *Kamakura shin-Bukkyō shisō no kenkyū*, pp. 369–474.
43. See *ibid.*, pp. 451–74 for the characteristics of the doctrine of original enlightenment.
44. Tamamuro Taijō, *Dōgen*, pp. 26–28.
45. Ōkubo, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
46. As for Kōin himself, he increasingly became dissatisfied with the Tendai school and finally turned to Hōnen's Pure Realm Buddhism in his later life. In view of this, it is puzzling that Kōin recommended Zen rather than the Pure Realm tradition to Dōgen. We can only surmise that Kōin, a wise teacher, perceived, perhaps correctly, the advisability for Dōgen of studying Zen in view of his temperament and interests. It is also said that Kōin at this time may have recommended Dōgen to go to China for study immediately. *Ibid.*, pp. 81–82. Dōgen referred to Kōin in *Zuimonki*, III:8.
47. *Ibid.*, V:8.
48. Ōkubo, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–109.
49. *Hōkyōki*, 1. See Ōkubo's defense for the significance of this passage of *Hōkyōki* that suggests a possibility of meeting between Eisai and Dōgen. Ōkubo, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–102. Concerning this issue, see Takeuchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–55.
50. *Zuimonki*, III:2–3 and I:14, in which Dōgen spoke of Eisai reverently. Concerning the relationship of Dōgen's thought to Eisai's, see Etō Sokuō, *Shūso to shite no Dōgen zenji*, pp. 69–114.
51. See *Zuimonki*, V: 8. Also in *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bendōwa,” Dōgen said: “Ever since my initiation into Buddhism to seek Dharma, I had visited teachers extensively all over Japan.”
52. *Ibid.*, “Bendōwa.”
53. *Zuimonki*, V:8.
54. *Gakudō yōjinshū*, 5.
55. Takeuchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 61–69. See also his article, “Dōgen no rekishi-teki seikaku,” *Bungaku*, vol. 29, no. 6 (June 1961), pp. 42–50.
56. According to *Zuimonki*, VI:15, Myōyū, Myōzen's teacher on Mt. Hiei, realizing that his time had come, sent a message to Myōzen, asking for the postponement of the latter's departure so that he could administer his teacher's death-watch. Myōzen was greatly agonized by this request—he was in a dilemma as to whether he should accede to the old mentor's request, as human compassion prompts, or leave for China to seek the truth of Buddhism. Myōzen consulted with his disciples about this matter. The majority of them earnestly recommended that he defer the journey for the following year, while Dōgen was the only person who urged him to leave for China immediately as they had planned. Myōzen finally followed Dōgen's advice and went to China.
57. *Ibid.*, VI:19. Dōgen recalled: “Years ago when I was crossing the sea to enter China, I suffered while aboard from severe diarrhea. When the whole ship was in a great turmoil owing to a terrible storm, I forgot the illness and found myself healed.”

58. The question as to why Dōgen stayed on board for a full three months cannot be answered.
59. *Tenzo kyōkun*. In this document, written fourteen years after this incident, the sanctity of cooking in the monastic kitchen was exhorted. We shall consider this problem later in chapter 5.
60. Tsuji Zennosuke, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, vol. 3, p. 272.
61. *Tenzo kyōkun*.
62. Ibid.
63. Kenneth K. S. Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 389–400.
64. Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, p. 123.
65. Ibid., pp. 123ff.
66. Ibid., p. 124.
67. Ch'en, op. cit., p. 403.
68. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Den’e.”
69. Ibid., “Jishō-zammai.”
70. Ibid., “Kembutsu.”
71. Ibid., “Shohō-jissō.” On the same subject, see also ibid., “Bukkyō” (47).
72. Ibid., “Bendōwa.”
73. Concerning Tsung-kao, see also ibid., “Jishō-zammai” and “Ōsaku-sendaba.” Dōgen’s attitude toward Rinzaï Zen was somewhat puzzling, not always free from his sectarian consciousness and sense of rivalry with that dominant sect. In this connection, see Rikukawa Taiun, “Dōgen zenji no Daie zenji hihan ni tsuite,” *Zengaku kenkyū*, no. 55 (February 1966), pp. 56–70; Tamamura Takeji, “Eihei Dōgen no Rinzaï-shū ni taisuru kanjō,” *Nihon rekishi*, no. 47 (April 1952), pp. 26–31; Furuta Shōkin, *Nihon Bukkyō shisō-shi no shomondai*, pp. 145–61. Although Ju-ching’s relationship with Rinzaï Zen was difficult to determine, Tamamura conjectures that Dōgen’s hostility to Rinzaï Zen might have been influenced by Ju-ching, whereas Furuta thinks that Ju-ching had no anti-Rinzaï sentiments and hence Dōgen’s hostility had to do with his sense of rivalry with the opposing sect, particularly around 1243 and thereafter. Concerning Dōgen’s mistaken observations of Tsung-kao, see Rikukawa Taiun’s aforementioned article.
74. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Busshō.” Dōgen described his visit in the fall of 1223 to the Kuang-li-sū temple on Mt. A-yü-wang where the aforementioned chief cook had once stayed, and where Dōgen was thoroughly disappointed. It was during this period that Dōgen had the quite unusual privilege of seeing the genealogical documents (*shisho*) of various sects, along with that of his mentor, Wu-chi Liao-p’ai. The genealogical documents represented the Zen Buddhist version of “apostolic succession” and were not shown except to very special persons on exceptional occasions. See ibid., “Shisho.”
75. Takeuchi, op. cit., pp. 128–48. Between the winter of 1224 and the fifth month of 1225,

Dōgen visited, among others, Che-wêng Ju-yen at the Ching-shan Wan-shou-ssū temple and Yüan-tzū at the Wan-nien-ssū temple in P'ing-t'ien.

76. Ibid., p. 147.

77. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Menju.”

78. Ibid., “Gyōji.”

79. Ibid., “Baika.” Dōgen later wrote: “How fortunate was I! A nameless monastic from a remote foreign country, I was not only permitted to become his disciple, but was also allowed to access his private quarters, to witness his reverend face, and to listen to his discourse on the Way! Slow-minded as I was, this was a precious opportunity that I could not possibly waste.”

80. *Gakudō yōjinshū*, 5.

81. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Hotsu-bodaishin.”

82. *Gakudō yōjinshū*.

83. The verb “to meet” (*au*, *ou*, *aiou*, etc.) was used by Dōgen not only with respect to person but also with respect to Dharma, the Way, the sūtras, the seasons, and so on. Thus he often used such phrases as “to meet Dharma,” “to meet the sūtras,” and “to meet the seasons.”

84. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Mitsugo.”

85. The other line was the one of Hung-chih Chêng-chüeh (1091–1157), which was transmitted to Japan by Tōmyō E'nichi (1272–1340) in 1309.

86. Ibid., “Gyōji.”

87. *Zuimonki*, III:30.

88. Ibid., II:9. Dōgen also reminisced: “One day Ju-ching's attendants told him: ‘Monastics in the monastics' hall are suffering from fatigue and insufficient sleep, which might damage their health as well as morale. This seems due to the long practice of zazen. We would like to ask you to shorten the zazen practice.’ However, Ju-ching sternly admonished them: ‘You are mistaken. Those who do not have earnestness in zazen and just nominally appear in the monastics' hall will, after all, doze after even a short while. Those who have the willingness to practice zazen with a believing mind, on the other hand, will be glad to discipline themselves no matter how long it may last. When I was young, I presided over various monasteries and advised in this manner, and struck drowsing monastics so hard I almost broke my fist. Now I am advanced in age and weakened in physical strength, so I cannot strike others as hard as before; consequently, good monastics have not been produced. Because leaders of various monastic communities, likewise, are too easy on their students in the practice of zazen, the Buddhadharma is on the decline. I ought to strike more than ever.’ That was all.” Ibid., III:30.

89. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Gyōji.”

90. Ibid., “Gyōji.”

91. Ibid., “Gyōji.” Dōgen observed: “An ancient sage once said that we should not care a

bit about gold, silver, or jewels. Even if monastics appreciate gold and silver, it is best for their way of life to not receive them. I witnessed this in my deceased teacher and no others.”

92. Ibid., “Butsudō.”

93. Ibid., “Butsudō.”

94. Ibid., “Shohō-jissō.” Concerning Dōgen’s own view on this matter, see particularly ibid., “Shizenbiku.”

95. The relationship between Ju-ching’s and Dōgen’s thought is still very much a moot question in Dōgen studies, primarily owing to the scarcity of historical materials on Ju-ching. Many of Dōgen’s observations and claims revealed more of Dōgen himself than of Ju-ching. This is Nakamura Hajime’s contention. For example, he writes in the context of his discussion of Dōgen’s *Hōkyōki*: “It is commonly considered that Dōgen’s religion is a faithful continuation of its Chinese counterpart. But the fact that the thought of the *Shōbōgenzō* coincides with the teachings of Ju-ching, as recorded in the *Hōkyōki* ... does not justify this opinion.... It is feared that in the sayings of Ju-ching quoted there, Dōgen’s wishful interpretations have probably been added.” Op. cit., p. 672, note 229; see also p. 667, note 163. Furuta Shōkin is of the opinion that, judging from the records of Ju-ching’s acts and sayings, he appears to have been inclined rather to kōan Zen. This is contrary to Dōgen’s insistence that Ju-ching advocated zazen-only. See “The Development of Zen Thought in Japan,” *Philosophical Studies of Japan*, vol. 3 (1961), pp. 41–42.

As to Ju-ching’s thought, see the following: Itō Keidō, *Dōgen zenji kenkyū*, vol. 1; Ōkubo Dōshū, op. cit., pp. 502–38; Ui Hakuju, *Zenshū-shi kenkyū*, vol. 3, pp. 463–67; Nukariya Kaiten, *Zengaku shisō-shi*, vol. 2, pp. 403–20.

96. *Gakudō yōjinshū*, 5.

97. For example: “In the past two or three hundred years of the great Sung dynasty, there appeared no old Buddha like my deceased teacher.” *Shōbōgenzō*, “Hensan.” Elsewhere: “In the past four or five hundred years, my deceased teacher alone gouged out the eyeball [which elucidated and verified the wisdom] of the Buddhas and ancestors and sat in meditation with their eyeball. Few can compare with him in China. It is rare indeed to find those who comprehend clearly that sitting in zazen is the Buddha-dharma, and the Buddha-dharma is sitting in zazen. Even if one may understand sitting in zazen as the Buddha-dharma, no one has yet penetrated sitting as sitting [for the sake of sitting], much less maintained the Buddha-dharma as the Buddha-dharma.” Ibid., “Zammai-ōzamai.”

98. In this connection, see Nakamura, op. cit., pp. 452–54. Nakamura contends that absolute devotion to a specific person cannot be found even in the feudalistic societies of India and China but is unique to Japan. In this respect Dōgen differed from Ju-ching.

99. *Zuimonki*, I:1.

100. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kattō.” Cf. ibid., “Menju.” See Takeuchi, op. cit., pp. 161–63.

101. *Zuimonki*, II:16.

102. Jimbo Nyoten and Andō Bun'ei, eds., *Zengaku jiten*, "ango."
103. Takeuchi, op. cit., pp. 167–69; Ōkubo, op. cit., pp. 154–55.
104. Etō Sokuō, *Shūso to shite no Dōgen zenji*, pp. 162–63.
105. This is kept at present as a national treasure in the repository of the Eiheiiji temple.
106. In Zen Buddhism there was a traditional custom that teachers gave succeeding disciples their own portraits with eulogies as tokens of the transmission of Dharma.
107. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa."
108. With respect to the Kenninji temple specifically, Dōgen observed: "As I compare what I saw when I entered the Kenninji temple for the first time with what I saw some seven or eight years later, some subtle changes were noticeable. Monastics made elaborate closets in each of their huts, had personal belongings, cared for beautiful clothes, amassed fortunes, enjoyed licentious talks, and defaulted on greetings and worship. From this, I could surmise the situation of other temples." *Zuimonki*, IV:4. See also II:21.
109. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa."
110. *Fukan zazengi*.
111. Ōkubo, op. cit., pp. 185ff.; Takeuchi, op. cit., pp. 198–203.
112. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa." In those days zazen was novel, and curious believers valued it highly. Tsuji, op. cit., pp. 275–76.
113. *Shuso* functioned as assistant abbot of the monastery.
114. Shōkū was Dōgen's elder brother and one of the ablest disciples of Hōnen. He later founded the Kōmyōji temple.
115. *Zuimonki*, III:12. "People nowadays are apt to think that the propagation of the Buddha-dharma consists of making Buddha images, building pagodas, and the like. This is a mistake. Even though a soaring temple inlaid with gems and plated with gold boasts of a grand view, one cannot attain the Way by it.... Even if in a hut or under a tree you contemplate upon a phrase of Dharma or practice zazen even for a short while, that is the way to true prosperity of the Buddha-dharma." Loc. cit.
116. *Ibid.*, V:5.
117. *Kannon-dōriin sōdō konryū kanjinsho*.
118. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa."
119. *Ibid.*, "Shōji."
120. *Zuimonki*, II:2.
121. *Ibid.*, III:20.
122. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa."
123. *Ibid.*, "Bendōwa."
124. *Ibid.*, "Shukke-kudoku." Such a strong repudiation of laity in favor of monasticism is

- expressed also in *ibid.*, “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō,” “Shukke,” “Jukai,” and “Kie-buppōsōbō.”
125. *Ibid.*, “Shukke-kudoku.”
126. As to Dōgen’s view on this problem, see Hosaka Gyokusen, “Shukke-Bukkyō zaikē-Bukkyō to Dōgen zenji no tachiba,” *Komazawa daigaku kenkyū kiyō*, no. 15 (March 1957), pp. 1–14; Tamura Yoshirō, *Kamakura shin-Bukkyō shisō no kenkyū*, pp. 315–24.
127. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Den’e.”
128. *Ibid.*, “Bendōwa.”
129. *Ibid.*, “Raihai-tokuzui.”
130. *Ibid.*, “Raihai-tokuzui.”
131. *Ibid.*, “Raihai-tokuzui.” Cf. *ibid.*, “Shukke-kudoku”: “There is also the notion that women can attain Buddhahood, but this too is not the authentic teaching.”
132. *Jūundōshiki*.
133. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bendōwa.”
134. *Ibid.*, “Bendōwa.”
135. Satō Tetsugen, *Dōgen no shōgai*, pp. 142–43. *Zuimonki*, III:13 records Dōgen’s conviction on this matter: “Also someone approached Dōgen and advised him to visit the province of Kantō for the propagation of the Buddha-dharma. Dōgen replied: ‘No. If people have the will to study Dharma, they should come and study even though they must cross mountains and rivers and oceans. If I go out to counsel those who have no such intent, I am not so sure whether they will accept it at all. Then is it merely for the purpose of deceiving them to obtain material help for myself and to acquire riches? Since it brings me nothing but pains, I feel I need not go.’” Who “someone” in this quotation was is not certain. This may have been Hatano Yoshige as Tsuji conjectures. See Tsuji, *op. cit.*, p. 284.
136. Cf. Ōkubo, *op. cit.*, pp. 184–98; Takeuchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 254–55; Tsuji, *op. cit.*, pp. 278–79.
137. Furuta Shōkin, *Nihon Bukkyō shisō-shi no shomondai*, pp. 145–61.
138. Kenzei, *Kenzeiki*. Quoted in Nakamura, *op. cit.*, p. 251.
139. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sansuikyō.”
140. Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, pp. 367–87; Hori, *Folk Religion in Japan*, pp. 141–79.
141. It is noteworthy, in this connection, that Dōgen advised his disciples to shun talks on politics, public order of the country, and other secular matters. Dōgen was completely apolitical. Moreover, he cautioned the monastics against keeping or owning bows, arrows, swords, or any other weapons. He emphatically prohibited the possession of all weapons for immoral purposes in the monastic compound.
142. Nakamura, *op. cit.*, pp. 407–530, in which he discusses the Japanese tendency to stress

a limited social nexus. As to the traditional folk belief and practice of *dōzoku*, which was the foundation of the sentiment of loyalty to a limited social nexus, see Hori, *Folk Religions in Japan*, pp. 52–63.

143. Takeuchi, op. cit., pp. 284–86.

144. Ibid., pp. 285–86.

145. Cf. Tsuji, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi no kenkyū zokuben*, pp. 93–111; Ōkubo, op. cit., pp. 259–79; Takeuchi, op. cit., pp. 290–91.

146. Takeuchi, op. cit., pp. 306–307.

147. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Hachi-dainingaku.”

CHAPTER THREE:

ACTIVITY, EXPRESSION, AND UNDERSTANDING

1. The *Dhammapada*, Verse 372. Adapted for gender-free diction.
2. The *Nirvāṇa sūtra*. Quoted in Philip Yampolsky, trans., *The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*, p. 135, note 54.
3. The tension between meditation and wisdom has been perennial since the inception of Buddhism on Indian soil. As E. Conze observes, this tension can be seen already in the canonical texts such as the *Samyutta-Nikaya* in which the “people of trance” and the “people of wisdom” are represented by Musila and Narada, respectively. Both the people of trance and the people of wisdom have been equally vital forces in the development of Buddhist thought. See Conze, *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*, pp. 161–62.
4. Zen Buddhism was called the school of the Buddha-mind because Dharma was transmitted from mind to mind or through personal encounter, without depending on the doctrines and scriptures. Other Buddhist sects belonged to the school of the Buddha-word because the transmission of Dharma, according to Zen interpretation, relied heavily upon the study of the scriptures and doctrines. As for Dōgen’s attack on this distinction, see *Shōbōgenzō*, “Butsudō.”
5. According to the classification of meditation by Kuei-fêng Tsung-mi (780–841), there were five types: (1) Non-Buddhist Zen (*gedō-zen*), (2) Ordinary Person’s Zen (*bombu-zen*), (3) Lesser Vehicle Zen (*shōjō-zen*), (4) Great Vehicle Zen (*daijō-zen*), and (5) Highest Vehicle Zen or Tathāgata Zen (*saijōjō-zen* or *nyorai-shōjō-zen*). In this scheme, Tathāgata Zen was superior to the other types of meditation. Yang-shan Hui-chi (807–883) probably first made the distinction between Tathāgata Zen and Ancestral Zen, but the distinction became widely accepted by Zen Buddhists in the Sung period. The result was an exaltation of Ancestral Zen, which was allegedly taught by Bodhidharma and transmitted by the ancestors who followed him, in opposition to Tsung-mi’s Tathāgata Zen, which was regarded as quietistic, doctrinal, and scriptural.
6. I. Miura and R. F. Sasaki, *Zen Dust*, pp. 13–14, 171–72.
7. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Butsudō.”

8. Ibid., “Butsudō.” See also *ibid.*, “Bukkyō” (47) and “Kembutsu.” For his criticism of the doctrine of the Five Ranks, see “Shunjū.” For the Five Houses of Chinese Zen, see H. Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, pp. 106–22.
9. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Butsudō.”
10. Miyasaka Tetsubun, *Zen ni okeru ningen keisei*, pp. 102–45 for Zen thought on the scriptural studies.
11. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bukkyō” (34).
12. Ibid., “Bukkyō” (47).
13. Ibid., “Bukkyō” (47). In the same chapter, Dōgen also wrote: “In the country of great Sung today, some people hold the title of Teacher and function in the position of Zen teacher, and yet, because they are utterly shameless, they absurdly distort the Buddha-way, so much so that the Buddha-dharma hardly exists. These elders say in unison: ‘The original intention of the Buddha-way resides not in the sūtras but in the ancestral tradition through which its uniqueness and profundity have been imparted.’ Such a statement is wretched stupidity to the extreme and a lunatic’s allegation. In the authentically transmitted ancestral tradition, there is not a single word or phrase that is genuine and still in discord with the sūtras. Both the sūtras and the ancestral way have been rightly imparted and disseminated from Śākyamuni Buddha. The ancestral heritage is simply an uninterrupted succession from him. For this reason, how can [the ancestors] fail to understand the sūtras? How can they fail to elucidate them, and read and recite them?”
14. See *ibid.*, “Bukkyō” (34), “Immo,” etc.
15. Ibid., “Zazenshin.”
16. Etō Sokuō, *Shūso to shite no Dōgen zenji*, pp. 269–72.
17. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Raihai-tokuzui.”
18. Ibid., “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō.”
19. Ibid., “Arakan.”
20. Ibid., “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō.” Cf. Etō, *op. cit.*, pp. 275–78 concerning Dōgen’s view of Hīnayāna Buddhism.
21. Ibid., “Bendōwa.” In this sense, the distinction between the two forms of samādhi was similar to the distinction between esoteric and exoteric Buddhism that was made by Kūkai (774–835). However, in the context of Dōgen’s thought, the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity was realized in the concrete historical body of Buddha, which defied any interpretation in terms of traditional “trinitarian” categories of the Buddha-body. As an unconditioned freedom, the samādhi of self-fulfilling activity was also extremely akin to Shinran’s “naturalness” (*jinen-hōni*), the spontaneous working of Tathāgata’s vow-power without human contrivance.
22. Ibid., “Bendōwa.” This statement was made as a criticism of the Tendai, Kegon, and Shingon schools of Buddhism; Dōgen clearly emphasized practice rather than doctrine. Cf. Etō, *Shōbōgenzō josetsu*, pp. 175–85.

23. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bendōwa.”
24. Yampolsky, op. cit., sections 13 and 15.
25. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shizen-biku.” The passage in this chapter raised considerable controversy among Dōgen students concerning his interpretation of Hui-nēng. See works cited in note 26 below.
26. See Sakai Tokugen, “Rokuso Dankyō ni okeru jushō ni tsuite,” *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 7 (April 1965), pp. 35–41; idem, “Rokuso Dankyō ni okeru kenshō no igi,” *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 6 (April 1964), pp. 18–26; Harada Kōdō, “Rokuso Dankyō no jishō no shisō to Dōgen zenji no tachiba,” *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 8 (April 1966), pp. 115–20; Kurebayashi Kōdō, “Dankyō no hannya-shisō to Dōgen zenji,” *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 6 (April 1964), pp. 5–11; Ōkubo Dōshū, “Dōgen-shobon Rokuso Dankyō (Kaga Daijōji zōhon) no kenkyū,” *Dōgen zenji-den no kenkyū*, pp. 539–63; Nakagawa Takashi, “Dōgen zenji to Rokuso Dankyō,” *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1 (January 1956), pp. 212–15.
 It was traditionally believed that the present Daijōji edition of the *Platform Sūtra* was copied by Dōgen himself from an unknown Sung edition and was brought to Japan. However, this has been generally refuted. The edition or text of the sūtra Dōgen read cannot be determined at the present time, but Ōkubo maintains that Dōgen’s text was different from all other editions—the Tun-huang, Daijōji, Kōshōji, and popular editions.
27. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kobutsushin.”
28. Kagamishima Genryū, “Honshō-myōshu no shisō-shi-teki haikai,” *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 7 (April 1965), pp. 24–29. See also in this connection, Tamura Yoshirō, “Nihon Tendai hongaku-shisō no keisei-katei,” *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2 (March 1962), pp. 661–72; and his *Kamakura shin-Bukkyō shisō no kenkyū*; Ōkubo Dōshū, “Sōtō-shū no taisei to Tendō Nyojō no shimpū,” *Dōgen zenji-den no kenkyū*, pp. 502–38.
29. Conze, *Buddhist Meditation*, p. 11.
30. Masunaga, *Zenjō shisōshi*, p. 23.
31. Nakamura, “Unity and Diversity in Buddhism,” Morgan, ed., *The Path of the Buddha*, p. 400.
32. The historical and cultural background of Buddhist meditation is an enormously complex and difficult subject, which I do not wish to treat in this work in detail. Nevertheless we should always keep in mind this vast background against which Dōgen’s thought was operative. Buddhism was deeply indebted to the yogic tradition of pre-Buddhist India. Śākyamuni Buddha himself was acquainted with the yogic traditions, and the practice of yogic exercises by his followers was recorded in the earliest canonical texts of Buddhism. See Eliade, *Yoga*, pp. 162ff. and Thomas, *The History of Buddhist Thought*, p. 17 and pp. 42–57. As to Buddhist meditation, the following works in addition to those already cited above are important: Hauer, *Der Yoga: Ein indischer Weg zum Selbst*; Heiler, *Die Stufen der buddhistischen Versenkung*; Nyanaponika Thera, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*; Conze, *Buddhist Meditation*; Masunaga, *Zenjō shisōshi*; Reichelt, *Meditation and Piety in the Far East*; the works of D. T. Suzuki.

33. Cf. Kishizawa Ian who once said: "The ninety-five chapters of *Shōbōgenzō* are footnotes on zazen-only." Etō, ed., *Shōbōgenzō*, vol. 3, p. 328.
34. This point is made quite clearly in his *Fukan zazengi senjutsu yurai*.
35. *Fukan zazengi*. Instructions on zazen are also given in *Shōbōgenzō*, "Zazengi" and "Zazenshin," and in *Gakudō yōjinshū*, *Eihei shingi*, *Hōkyōki*, etc.
36. As regards comparative studies of Dōgen's *Fukan zazengi* and Ch'ang-lu Tsung-che's "Tso-ch'an-i" in the *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei*, see Kinoshita Jun'ichi, "Fukan zazengi no kenkyū," *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 7 (April 1965), pp. 132–37.
37. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa": "As the authentic transmission of the Buddhist tradition says, this Buddha-dharma which has been imparted authoritatively from teacher to disciple is the very best of all. From the beginning of your training under a teacher, do not ever use incense burning, worship, nembutsu, confession, or recitation of the sūtras, but sit intently in zazen and attain the casting-off of body and mind." The same view appears also in *Hōkyōki*, *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*, *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bukkyō" (47), "Gyōji," etc.
38. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Zammai-ōzammai."
39. Ibid., "Bendōwa."
40. Ibid., "Bendōwa." See also *Fukan zazengi*.
41. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa," in which Dōgen said: "When you regard the samādhi of Buddhas, the supreme Dharma, as just sitting idly for nothing, you are guilty of slandering the Great Vehicle. Your abysmal delusion is like that of those who find no water in the middle of a great sea."
42. Ibid., "Bendōwa."
43. Ibid., "Bendōwa."
44. Kinoshita, "Fukan zazengi no kenkyū." According to Kondō Ryōichi, Ch'ang-lu Tsung-che advocated a mixed Zen in which nembutsu and zazen were recommended, though the former was a preparatory step to the latter for an attainment of a higher spiritual goal. See Kondō, "Chōrō Sōsaku ni tsuite," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 14, no. 2 (March 1966), pp. 280–83.
45. Kinoshita, "Fukan zazengi no kenkyū"; Furuta Shōkin, "Fukan zazengi ni tsuite," *Nihon Bukkyō shisō-shi no shomondai*, pp. 137–44; Ōkubo Dōshū, *Dōgen zenji goroku*, pp. 207–14.
46. Kinoshita, "Fukan zazengi no kenkyū"; Kiyono Munemoto, "Dōgen zenji no busso-shōden-kan no ichi-kōsatsu—Fukan zazengi ni kanren shite—," *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 6 (April 1964), pp. 145–52; Yamanouchi Shun'yū, "Zazengi to Tendai shōshikan," *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 8 (April 1966), pp. 29–50.
47. *Fukan zazengi*. See also *Shōbōgenzō*, "Zazengi."
48. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Zazenshin."

49. The story in the *Ching-tê ch'uan-têng lu*, vol. 14 ran: A monastic asked Yüeh-shan: "What must I think in zazen?" The teacher answered: "Think of not-thinking." Then the monastic asked again: "How can I think of this not-thinking?" "Nonthinking," was the answer. Thinking, not-thinking, nonthinking were expounded in *Shōbōgenzō*, "Zazengi," "Zazenshin," "Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō," *Fukan zazengi*, *Dōgen oshō kōroku*, etc.
50. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Zazenshin."
51. Cf. Itō Shungen, "Hi-shiryō no kaishaku ni tsuite," *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 5 (April 1963), pp. 84–91; Etō Tarō, "Dōgen tetsugaku to Heidegger," *Risō*, no. 349 (June 1962), pp. 1–11 for comparison of Dōgen and Heidegger in connection with the former's idea of nonthinking.
52. *Zuimonki*, III:31.
53. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Kokū."
54. *Ibid.*, "Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō."
55. Cf. Itō, "Hi-shiryō no kaishaku ni tsuite"; Sakai Tokugen, "Shōbōgenzō ni okeru shimo no igi," *Komazawa daigaku kenkyū kiyō*, no. 15 (March 1957), pp. 112–26. Sakai, in this essay, holds that the logic of interrogation is to overcome the logic of negation that was characteristic of Indian Buddhism.
56. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa." The authenticity of zazen was also characterized in terms of "killing the Buddhas" (*setsubutsu*). This meant killing the Buddhas besides, beyond, in front of, outside, or apart from, the actuality of sitting in meditation, which was itself enlightenment.
57. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Genjō-kōan" and "Zazenshin." See Furuta Shōkin, "Genjō-kōan no igi," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 5, no. 1 (January 1957), pp. 102–107; *idem*, "Kōan no rekishiteki hatten keitai ni okeru shinri-sei no mondai," in Miyamoto Shōson, ed., *Bukkyō no kompon shinri*, pp. 807–40; Takahashi Masanobu, *Dōgen no jissen-tetsugaku kōzō*, pp. 98–126. I will have more to say on this subject later: see note 112 in this chapter.
58. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa" and others.
59. *Ibid.*, "Sesshin-sesshō."
60. *Ibid.*, "Bendōwa." Dōgen called his Zen "the boundless gate of compassion" and "the easy path" that was wide open to everyone in the mundane life.
61. *Gakudō yōjinshū*, 9. It continued as follows: "Its manner and principle are such that they cut off your working consciousness and prevent you from heading down the path of intellectual understanding. This is precisely a method of inducement for the beginner. Thereafter, they enable you to cast off your body and mind and let go of delusion and enlightenment. This is the second stage. Generally speaking, it is the hardest thing for us to meet those who believe they are in the Buddha-way. If you undoubtedly believe you are in the Way, you will naturally understand the passage and blockage of the great Way and comprehend the reasons for delusion and enlightenment. So experiment with cutting off your working consciousness, and eight or nine times out of ten, you will be able to find the Way instantly."

A few illustrations in relation to Dōgen's view of faith are quoted in the following: "Indeed the realm of Buddhas is incomprehensible and beyond the reach of the mind and consciousness, let alone those minds with unbelief and inferior apprehension. Only a person of great capacity and right faith can legitimately enter it. A person of no faith, even if he/she is instructed, has difficulty in accepting it. Even on the Vulture Peak [where Buddha is said to have expounded the *Saddharma-puṇḍarika sūtra*] there were those who were allowed to leave the congregation. Thus when right faith arises in your mind, you should practice and study; otherwise, you should quit for a while, and regret for yourself the want of Dharma's benefits from the past" (*Shōbōgenzō*, "Bendōwa"). "When both your mind and your flesh may be at times in idleness or in unbelief, you should confess in utter sincerity to the Buddhas who are before you. When you repent in this manner, those Buddhas will liberate and purify you, through the meritorious power of your confession. This merit will richly nurture pure faith and spiritual endeavor, which are unobstructed. As your pure faith is realized, you yourself and all others will be transformed; the sentient and insentient beings shall enjoy its benefits far and wide" (ibid., "Keisei-sanshoku"). "What we call *kie* means this: *ki* is surrender, and *e* dependence. Thus we call them *kie*. The characteristic of surrender is, for instance, like a son returning to his father. Dependence is likened to the subject's reliance on the ruler. *Kie* means salvation. We take refuge in Buddha because he is a great teacher; we take refuge in Dharma because it is a good medicine; and we take refuge in Saṃgha because it is a superior fellowship" (ibid., "Kie-buppōsōbō"). "We honor the Buddhas of the past, renounce the mundane life, and follow their way of life—such acts surely enable us to become Buddhas. One becomes a Buddha by virtue of the merit of one's honoring all Buddhas. How can any sentient being that has never honored a single Buddha attain Buddhahood? Without cause no Buddhahood shall be attained" (ibid., "Kuyō-shobutsu"). "Even during Buddha's lifetime there were an old monk who attained the Four Fruits by [being hit by jesting young monks'] handballs, and a nun who attained the great Way as a result of wearing a surplice [in her previous life as a prostitute]. Both were wretchedly idiotic persons, being as good as insane brutes. Only through the assistance of right faith is there a way to be severed from delusion. Furthermore, a devout woman, who served a meal to a senile monk [in order to hear a sermon from him], saw his silent sitting in meditation [which he pretended, because he did not know anything to preach], yet she was enlightened. These cases did not depend on knowledge or letters; nor did they wait for words or speeches. They were aided solely by right faith" (ibid., "Bendōwa"). Cf. *Zuimonki*, II:15. In these illustrations Dōgen's view of faith in terms of trust, obedience, dependence, surrender, and commitment is clear.

62. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō."

63. As a result, Pure Realm Buddhism is often construed by some as a deviation from the fundamental Buddhist religion.

64. As Etō Sokuō observes, the element of faith is almost entirely overlooked in the study of Zen. *Shūso to shite no Dōgen zenji*, pp. 221–29. See also Yamanouchi Shun'yū, "Dōgen zenji ni okeru shingyō no mondai," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1 (January 1965), pp. 80–85; idem, "Sōtō-shū ni okeru shin-Bukkyō no tenkai ni tsuite," *Shūgaku kenkyū*, no. 7 (April 1965), pp. 63–72; Kurebayashi Kōdō, *Dōgen-zen no kenkyū*.

65. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Gabyō.” See also *ibid.*, “Shoaku-makusa.”
66. The *Ching-tê ch’uan-têng lu*, vol. 5. Dōgen dealt with this story in some detail in *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kokyō” and “Zazenshin.”
67. *Ibid.*, “Kokyō.” See also *ibid.*, “Zazenshin,” and *Zuimonki*, III:28.
68. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bendōwa.”
69. *Ibid.*, “Busshō.”
70. *Ibid.*, “Busshō.”
71. *Ibid.*, “Genjō-kōan.”
72. *Ibid.*, “Genjō-kōan.”
73. *Zuimonki*, I:6. Cf. *ibid.*, III:28.
74. Nagao Gajin, “On the Theory of Buddha-Body (*Buddha-kāya*),” *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 6, no. 1 (May 1973), pp. 25–53.
75. Sangharakshita, *op. cit.*, p. 281. Cf. E. Conze, *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*, p. 38. Conze says: “To the Christian and agnostic historian, only the human Buddha is real, and the spiritual and the magical Buddha are to him nothing but fictions. The perspective of the believer is quite different. The Buddha-nature and the Buddha’s ‘glorious body’ stand out most clearly, and the Buddha’s human body and historical existence appear like a few rags thrown over this spiritual glory.” Quoted in Sangharakshita, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
76. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Ango”; *Fushukuhampō*.
77. Concerning the importance of the historical Buddha and related matters, see Yamada Reirin, “Dōgen zenji no butsumen sōjō-kan,” Miyamoto, ed., *Bukkyō no kompon shinri*, pp. 1169–90, especially, 1173–78. See also Abe Masao, “A Buddhism of Self-Awakening Not a Buddhism of Faith,” in J. Tilakasiri, ed., *Añjali: Papers on Indology and Buddhism*, pp. 33–39.
78. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”
79. This was most clearly shown in his discussion of the relation between Kāśyapa Buddha (the sixth of the Seven Past Buddhas) and Śākyamuni Buddha. From the “historical” standpoint, Śākyamuni Buddha inherited Dharma from Kāśyapa Buddha, but from the religious standpoint, the order was reversed. See *ibid.*, “Shisho.”
80. *Ibid.*, “Shisho” and “Jinzū.”
81. *Ibid.*, “Sokushin-zebutsu,” “Kembutsu,” and “Hokke-ten-Hokke.”
82. *Ibid.*, “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”
83. *Ibid.*, “Yuibutsu-yobutsu.” See also *ibid.*, “Shinjin-gakudō,” “Sangai-yuishin,” “Hensan,” and other chapters.
84. *Ibid.*, “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”
85. *Ibid.*, “Yuibutsu-yobutsu.”

86. Ibid., “Hotsu-mujōshin.”
87. Ibid., “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”
88. Ibid., “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”
89. Ibid., “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”
90. Ibid., “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”
91. Kōchi Eigaku, “Dōgen-zen no busshin-ron,” *Komazawa daigaku Bukkyō-gakubu kenkyū kiyō*, no. 19 (March 1961), pp. 34–47. Kōchi suggests similarities between Dōgen and Shingon thought on the problem of Buddha-body. The doctrine of “This mind itself is Buddha” was the Zen counterpart of “This body itself is Buddha” of Tendai and Shingon esotericism.
92. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bendōwa.”
93. Ibid., “Gyōji.”
94. Cf. Nakayama Nobuji, *Bukkyō ni okeru toki no kenkyū*, pp. 177–78.
95. *Shōbōgenzō*; “Gyōji.”
96. Ibid., “Gyōji.”
97. Ibid., “Gyōji.”
98. Ibid., “Bukkyō” (47).
99. Ibid., “Hokke-ten-Hokke.” Cf. *ibid.*, “Kankin”: “Thus the deluded mind is turned by the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka sūtra*; the enlightened mind turns it. Furthermore, when mind transcends both enlightenment and delusion, the *sūtra* turns itself.” Elsewhere Dōgen went so far as to say that even the *Śurāṅgama sūtra*, which he regarded as “apocryphal,” could be “extraordinary words”—the words of the Buddhas and ancestors. See *ibid.*, “Tembōrin.” In addition to the *Śurāṅgama sūtra*, Dōgen regarded the *Engaku-kyō* as apocryphal as well.
100. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bukkyō” (47).
101. Ibid., “Jishō-zammai.” Cf. *ibid.*, “Nyorai-zenshin” and “Hotsu-mujōshin.”
102. Ibid., “Bendōwa.”
103. Ibid., “Hokke-ten-Hokke.”
104. Ibid., “Bukkyō” (47).
105. Ibid., “Nyorai-zenshin.” “Reflect quietly upon this: Life does not last long. To express the words of the Buddhas and ancestors, even just two or three of them, is tantamount to expressing the Buddhas and ancestors themselves. The reason is that because their bodies and minds are one, a phrase or two constitutes their warm body-mind. That body-mind comes forth and expresses my body-mind. In such a moment, that expression comes forth and embodies our body-mind. [As an ancient teacher once suggested], in this present life you ought to express all of your accumulated lives through your liberation. For this reason, becoming the Buddhas and ancestors means surpassing the

Buddhas and ancestors. The same applies to the practice of two or three phrases [of the Buddhas and ancestors]" (Ibid., "Gyōji").

106. Ibid., "Kembutsu."

107. Ibid., "Bukkyō" (47).

108. Ibid., "Bendōwa."

109. *Jūundōshiki*.

110. For example, see Miyasaka Tetsubun, op. cit., pp. 125–30.

111. For my observations on the following problem, I am indebted to Furuta, "Genjō-kōan no igi" and "Kōan no rekishi-teki hatten-keitai ni okeru shinrisei no mondai," both of which were cited previously.

112. Furuta observes in the above-cited essays that both Ta-hui Tsung-kao and Hung-chih Chêng-chüeh used *kosoku-kōan* in the light of *genjō-kōan* and also adopted *zazen* as essential; in short, both masters used *kōan* and *zazen*, freely. Furuta further observes that to distinguish between *Kōan-introspection Zen* and *Silent-illumination Zen* on the basis of the use or non-use of *kōan* was rather erroneous and historically unfounded; the distinction arose from the practice of abuses of both *kōan* and *zazen* which became rather conspicuous later in the Sung period. It is interesting to note in this connection that Ta-hui burned the *Pi-yen lu* when he realized the detrimental effects of the *kōan* method, and that Hung-chih edited the *Ts'ung-yung lu*, another important collection of *kōans*, despite or because of his supposed association with *Silent-illumination Zen*. All in all, sectarian conflicts between the two traditions have been unduly exaggerated by Zen Buddhists themselves as well as by the historians of Zen.

Regarding Dōgen's view on this matter, see further *Zuimonki*, III:15 and VI:27.

113. This was quite evident in Dōgen's extensive use of *kōans* in *Shōbōgenzō* and other works. Dōgen also compiled and edited three hundred important *kōans* in his *Shōbōgenzō sambyakusoku*, the authenticity of which was definitively established as a result of the discovery in 1935 of the second of the three-volume work at the Kanazawa bunko.

114. Dōgen's high praise of Yüan-wu and denunciation of Ta-hui Tsung-kao (e.g., in *Shōbōgenzō*, "Jishō-zammai"), who both belonged to *Kōan-introspection Zen*, and his adoption of the idea of "total dynamism" (*zenki*), which was Yüan-wu's and to which Dōgen devoted a chapter in *Shōbōgenzō*, indicated that Yüan-wu had great influence upon Dōgen's thought. See Furuta, "Genjō-Kōan no igi."

115. Furuta, "Genjō-koan no igi."

116. Cf. D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Second Series, pp. 17–211 for his exposition of the *kōan* method from historical, psychological, and systematic standpoints. The following statement, for example, is suggestive of Suzuki's interpretation: "Zen has its definite object, which is 'to open our minds to satori' as we say, and in order to bring about this state of consciousness a *kōan* is held out before the mental eye, not to meditate on, nor to keep the mind in a state of receptivity, but to use the *kōan* as a kind of pole with which to leap over the stream of relativity to the other side of the Absolute." Ibid., p. 99, note 1.

117. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Mitsugo.”

118. L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, I, 23. See also J. L. Austin, “Performative Utterances,” in *Philosophical Papers*, pp. 220–39; idem, *How to Do Things with Words*, ed. by J. O. Urmson. From the standpoint of the analysis of ordinary language, Austin explores numerous possibilities for “doing things with words,” in contrast to the conventional function of language, as describing and reporting some state of affairs and, hence, as being either true or false. Although vastly different from Austin in his philosophical and religious orientation and method, Dōgen was also aware of the limitations of a traditional Buddhist view of language (that was comparable to Austin’s descriptive or constative fallacy) and pointed to the performative possibilities of words in the realm of religion.

119. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kaiin-zammai.”

120. Ibid., “Dōtoku.” Cf. ibid., “Kaiin-zammai” concerning the three-year-old’s expressions.

121. Ibid., “Dōtoku.”

122. Ibid., “Mujō-seppō.” Cf. ibid., “Ikka-myōju” and “Kobutsushin.”

123. This aspect of Buddha-nature will be further explored in connection with the analysis of the Buddha-nature of expression (*setsu-bussō*) in Chapter 4.

124. See ibid., “Shōhō-jissō,” in which Dōgen expounded the idea of provisionality of symbols, doctrines, ideas, and so on (*upāya*; *hōben*)—a notion prominent in the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka sūtra*, as well as another notion that events and expressions themselves were ultimate reality (*jissō*), also prominent in the sūtra. In his view the means and the end were nondualistically conceived. More will follow in the subsequent pages.

125. Ibid., “Tsuki.”

126. Ibid., “Muchū-setsumu.” See also ibid., “Tsuki.”

127. Ibid., “Mitsugo.”

128. Ibid., “Mitsugo.”

129. Ibid., “Bukkōjōji.”

130. Ibid., “Bukkōjōji.”

131. Ibid., “Bukkōjōji.”

132. Ibid., “Bukkōjōji.”

133. Cf. H. Bergson who maintains in his *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* that “complete mysticism is action” but who nevertheless regards language as antithetical to action. Both Dōgen and Bergson would concur in recognizing action or activity as fundamental in mysticism, but the former parts with the latter in viewing language and activity as not antithetical to each other. Dōgen viewed the use of language and symbols as linguistic and symbolic activity.

134. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Jippō.”

135. Ibid., "Ōsaku-sendaba."
136. Ibid., "Muchū-setsumu."
137. Ibid., "Muchū-setsumu."
138. Ibid., "Muchū-setsumu."
139. Ibid., "Muchū-setsumu."
140. Ibid., "Kūge."
141. Ibid., "Kūge."
142. Ibid., "Kūge."
143. Ibid., "Kūge."
144. Ibid., "Gabyō."
145. Ibid., "Gabyō."
146. Ibid., "Gabyō."
147. Ibid., "Gabyō."
148. Dōgen wrote the "Jinzū" and "Darani" chapters of *Shōbōgenzō* on these subjects.
149. Ibid., "Dōtoku."
150. J. Wisdom, *Philosophy and Psycho-analysis*, p. 50. Cf. the following statements of Wittgenstein: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent." *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 7. "There is indeed the inexpressible. This *shows* itself, it is the mystical." Ibid., 6.5222.
151. To express at all is an impossible task, hence a most miraculous event, just as we see in the kōans of Tê-shan's "thirty blows if you cannot speak, thirty blows if you can" and Fêng-hsüeh's speech and silence.
152. Concerning loving speech, see chapter 5.
153. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Dōtoku."
154. Ibid., "Dōtoku."
155. Ibid., "Dōtoku."
156. Watsuji's essay "Shamon Dōgen" deals with this aspect of Dōgen's thought from the standpoint of the idea of logos. However, he does not distinguish logos clearly enough from Dōgen's conception of expression that was firmly rooted in the Buddhist idea of emptiness. In the history of Western philosophy the notion of logos has been associated with the immutable intelligible order of everchanging nature. Such an absolute immutability of the intelligible order has often tended to divorce itself from its original roots in nature and to claim its own metaphysical status independent of nature.
 If Heidegger's analysis of the fate of the logos in the history of Western philosophy is correct, what he calls the "secession of the logos" (which took place in Plato and Aristotle and was completed in Hegel) has resulted in a complete separation between

thought and reality and is responsible for the hegemony of reason and thought. M. Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, pp. 98–164.

Expression in Dōgen was impermanent—arising and perishing in accordance with the dependent origination of the universe; hence it was empty—having no self-nature and absolute validity. However, as will become clearer later, Dōgen radicalized the Buddhist idea of emptiness by eliminating every possible vestige of idealism, monism, and pantheism.

157. I am indebted to Watsuji's aforementioned essay for some aspects of the observations made here with respect to *dōtoku* and *kattō*.
158. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Kattō." Cf. *ibid.*, "Genjō-kōan": "When our bodies and minds are not fully filled with Dharma, we believe that it is already sufficient. If Dharma fills our bodies and minds, we think something is still missing. For example, if you take a boat out to the vast expanse of a sea, where no mountains are visible, and look around in all directions, only the roundness of the expanse will strike you and no other characteristics whatever will be seen. However, this great ocean is neither round nor square; its other characteristics are inexhaustible. It is like a palace for some beings and like jewels for others. Only as far as our vision can reach does it appear to be round for the time being. Analogously, this holds true of all things. Although the world is pregnant with myriad characteristics, mundane or otherwise, we see and understand only to the extent of our power of penetration and vision. In order to understand the ways of all dharmas, we must realize that in addition to what appears to be round or square, other features of oceans and mountains are indeed infinite, and that there are many worlds on all sides. You should realize that the environment around us, the spot right beneath our feet, and even a drop of water are exactly like this."
159. *Ibid.*, "Kattō."
160. *Ibid.*, "Kattō"
161. *Ibid.*, "Kattō."
162. Compare this with the following statements selected at random: D. T. Suzuki: "The truth can be reached when it is neither asserted nor negated. This is indeed the dilemma of life, but the Zen masters are ever insistent on escaping the dilemma." *Zen Buddhism* (ed. by W. Barrett), p. 118. E. Conze: "Nothing is more alien to the mentality of the sage than to fight or contend for or against anything. This peacefulness of the true sage is the germ of the Mādhyamika dialectics." *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*, p. 136. Sangharakshita: "So long as the mind oscillates between contradictory statements, trying to determine which of them is true and which false, the aspirant remains immured within the mundane; but no sooner does he embark upon a bold identification of opposites than, bypassing the intellect, he disappears from the phenomenal plane and reappears in the Transcendental, in the domain and dimension of Emptiness." *Op. cit.*, p. 218. Despite their legitimate intention, Suzuki, Conze, and Sangharakshita do not adequately cope with the question of how dilemmas and conflicts (unmistakably real, not illusory in life) can be legitimately accepted in the enlightened life. From this standpoint, Dōgen's Zen was governed not by the logic of transcendence so much as by the logic of realization.

163. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kattō.”

164. *Ibid.*, “Kattō.”

165. *Ibid.*, “Kattō.”

166. Such a view of philosophic activity was comparable to Asaṅga’s “acquired wisdom” (*tat-prṣṭha-labdha-jñāna*), which referred to that wisdom which was no longer just beyond the expressions of human thought, but was embedded within them and regarded as superior to mere silence or ineffability. See Ueda Yoshifumi, “Thinking in Buddhist Philosophy,” *Philosophical Studies of Japan*, vol. 5 (1964), pp. 69–94. It was also comparable to the dynamic relationship between the sixth Perfection (*prajñā*) and the tenth Perfection (*jñāna*) of bodhisattvahood, in which wisdom was not replaced by knowledge, or vice versa, but the two were functionally interdependent in the structure of the bodhisattva’s awareness or in the activities of both the going aspect (*ōsō*) and the returning aspect (*gensō*). In this connection, see D. T. Suzuki, “Reason and Intuition in Buddhist Philosophy,” in his *Studies in Zen*, pp. 85–128. In this treatment, Suzuki emphasizes the dynamic nature of *prajñā* and the static and passive nature of *vijñāna*, but fails to show a dialectical interplay of the two in the structure of Buddhist awareness.

167. Conze, *Buddhism*, p. 97. Conze further writes: “The truth is within the body, and arises out of it.” *Ibid.*, p. 199.

168. For example, Buddhaghosa’s comment on the “thirty-two parts” of the body in his *Visuddhi-magga*, which is quoted in Conze, *Buddhist Meditation*, p. 95.

169. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō.”

170. *Ibid.*, “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō.”

171. *Ibid.*, “Shinjin-gakudō.”

172. *Zuimonki*, III:31. Dōgen sometimes, though not often, doubled the character *shin* (body), thus using the phrase “body-body” (*shinjin*) in place of “body-mind” (*shinjin*). See for example, *Shōbōgenzō*, “Jishō-zammai.”

173. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Juki.”

174. A. N. Whitehead is perhaps most vocal in recognizing the metaphysical importance of the body. As he rightly observes, bodily participation is always implied in any human experience. For instance, although we do not usually say we see things with our eyes unless unusual circumstances arise, it is a truism that we see things with our eyes. *Modes of Thought*, p. 156. See also pp. 155 and 158.

175. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bendōwa.” Cf. “Sokushin-zebutsu.”

176. *Ibid.*, “Hotsu-mujōshin.”

177. *Ibid.*, “Yuibutsu-yobutsu.”

178. Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*, p. 221.

179. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Semmen.” This was why every minute act of bodily cleansing became so crucially important in the monastic life. Dōgen wrote the “Semmen” and “Senjō” chapters of *Shōbōgenzō* for this purpose.

180. Dōgen wrote in *Shōbōgenzō*, “Busshō”: “‘If you want to know the meaning of Buddha-nature’ is not solely a matter of knowing. You can also say: ‘if you want to practice it ...’ ‘if you want to realize it ...’ ‘if you want to elucidate it ...’ ‘if you want to forget it ...’ and so on.”
181. Ibid., “Shinjin-gakudō.”
182. Ibid., “Shinjin-gakudō.” Concerning these three minds, see also ibid., “Hotsu-bodaishin.” Apparently, Dōgen adopted this classification of the mind from Tendai Buddhism. However, except for the conscious mind, they were ambiguous in their exact meanings. See Okada Gihō, *Shōbōgenzō shisō taikēi*, vol. 6, pp. 110–12.
183. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Hotsu-bodaishin.”
184. Ibid., “Shinjin-gakudō.”
185. Ibid., “Genjō-kōan.”
186. Ibid., “Genjō-kōan.”
187. *Gakudō yōjinshū*, 9.
188. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kembutsu.”
189. Ibid., “Kembutsu.”

CHAPTER FOUR: THE RELIGION AND METAPHYSICS OF BUDDHA-NATURE

1. Karaki Junzō, *Karaki Junzō zenshū*, vols. 5 and 7, to which I am greatly indebted for the following observations.
2. Karaki observes that *Hōjōki*, *Heike-monogatari*, and the first half of *Tsurezure-gusa* represented this view of impermanence.
3. Karaki, op. cit., vol. 7, “Mujō no keijijō-gaku.”
4. Karaki maintains that when the Japanese talked about impermanence, they became notably eloquent, and that Dōgen was no exception in this respect. Ibid., p. 143. This was so, despite Dōgen’s discouragement of rhetoric in his *Zuimonki*, as noted before.
5. According to Katō Shūkō, *Shōbōgenzō yōgo-sakuin*, *dōri* appears 272 times and *kotowari* (which also means reason) 12 times—hence the total of 284 times in *Shōbōgenzō*. This is an unusual frequency for the use of any single notion.
6. Watsuji Tetsurō, *Nihon rinri shisō-shi*, vol. 1, pp. 319–49, where he discusses *Gukanshō* (1223) by Jien or Jichin (1155–1225), *Jōei shikimoku* (1232), *Heike monogatari* (1198?), and other works, and delineates the evolution of the idea of reason in medieval Japanese thought. Cf. Muraoka Tsunetsugu, *Nihon shisō-shi kenkyū*, vol. 2, pp. 111–209 for his interpretation of *Gukanshō* and *Jōei shikimoku*.
7. Tamura Yoshirō, *Kamakura shin-Bukkyō shisō no kenkyū*, p. 237.
8. See ibid., pp. 234–55 concerning the general conception of the reason of naturalness in Kamakura Buddhism.

9. Cf. Miyamoto Shōson's comments on the so-called Japanese irrationality in Charles A. Moore, ed., *The Japanese Mind*, pp. 60–65. For better or worse, the activity of philosophizing is often attributed solely to the Western mind, or depending on one's conception of philosophy, also to the Chinese and the Indian minds, but not to the Japanese mind. The latter may not have produced philosophical systems, but has never lacked a capacity for philosophizing, and hence, for reasoning, in its own way. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 290–93.
10. See Charles A. Moore, ed., *The Indian Mind*, p. 15.
11. The *Dhammapada* (S. Radhakrishnan's translation), pp. 58–59.
12. William Th. de Bary, ed., *The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan*, p. 100. Adapted for gender-free diction.
13. Nyanaponika Thera, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*, p. 21.
14. Jean Felliozat in his "The Psychological Discoveries of Buddhism" attributes to Buddhism "the discovery of the importance of the unconscious element of the psychism and the composite nature of the whole psychic being, manifesting both conscious mental phenomena as well as unconscious continuing potentiality." *University of Ceylon Review*, vol. 13, nos. 2 and 3 (April–July 1955), p. 78.
15. We shall not get into the discussion of these matters in this study. Detailed discussion is presented in Katsumata Shunkyō, *Bukkyō ni okeru shinshiki-setsu no kenkyū*.
16. See Ueda Yoshifumi, *Yuishiki-shisō nyūmon*, pp. 9–52 concerning the use of "idealism" in the context of Buddhist philosophy and religion.
17. D. T. Suzuki observes that the doctrine expounded in the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra* and the *Avataṃsaka sūtra* was mind-only (*citta-mātra*; *yuishin*) in contrast to the consciousness-only (*viññāna-mātra*; *yuishiki*) or representation-only (*viññapti-mātra*; *yuishiki*) of the Yogācāra school of Mahāyāna Buddhism. See *Studies in the Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, p. 181 and pp. 279–82. On the other hand, mind-only (the Buddhist equivalent of idealism) could be interpreted in such a way as to subsume under it the doctrine of "the triple world is mind-only" of the *Avataṃsaka sūtra*, the doctrine of "manifestation of one's own mind" (*svacitta-dṛśya-mātra*) of the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, the doctrine of the original purity of mind (*jishō-shōjōshin*) of *tathāgata-garbha* thought, the doctrine of the store-consciousness of the Yogācāra school, etc.
18. Surendranath Dasgupta, *Indian Idealism*, p. 74.
19. As to these different theories, see Katsumata, op. cit., pp. 513–59; E. Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, pp. 122–34.
20. Katsumata, op. cit., pp. 568–89. Cf. Conze's observations on this matter: "The climax of this combination of the uncombinable [to combine the doctrine of 'not-self' with the almost instinctive belief in a 'self'] reached in such conceptual monstrosities as the 'store-consciousness' ... which performs all the functions of a 'self.' The 'store-consciousness' is a fine example of 'running with the hare, and hunting with the hounds.'" Op. cit., pp. 133–34.
21. Suzuki, *Studies in the Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, pp. 258–60.

22. Ibid., p. 181 and pp. 279–82.
23. Katsumata, op. cit., pp. 593–637.
24. Ibid., pp. 464–73. To what extent the primitive Buddhists considered two other possibilities—the mind as originally both pure and defiled, and the mind as originally neutral, though phenomenally both pure and defiled—was not too clear, according to Katsumata.
25. Ibid., pp. 473–84.
26. Ibid., pp. 504–506.
27. Ibid., pp. 485–511.
28. Ui Hakuju, *Bukkyō shisō kenkyū*, pp. 207–8. Vasubandhu in his *Buddhatva-śāstra* gave three meanings of *tathāgata-garbha*: (1) Tathāgata covered by illusions (*ompuku-zō*), (2) Tathāgata embracing sentient beings (*shoshō-zō*), and (3) Tathāgata's merits as contained in the minds of sentient beings (*nōshō-zō*). See Masunaga Reihō, “Dōgen's Idea of Buddha-nature,” *Komazawa daigaku kenkyū kiyō*, no. 18 (March 1960), p. 13; idem, *Bukkyō ni okeru jikan-ron*, p. 177.
29. Katsumata, op. cit., pp. 631–32.
30. Yoshito S. Hakeda, trans., *The Awakening of Faith*, pp. 36–37.
31. Ibid., pp. 43–45.
32. Ibid., pp. 47–48.
33. Ibid., pp. 50–51.
34. Ibid., pp. 37ff.
35. Ibid., pp. 45–46.
36. Ibid., pp. 56–64.
37. Ibid., p. 64.
38. Ibid., p. 59.
39. It is well known that Fa-tsang (643–712), the third ancestor of the Chinese Hua-yen sect and a most important systematizer of Hua-yen philosophy, was the first to note the importance of the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition, along with the Mādhyamika and the Vijñānavāda school in Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism. He regarded this tradition as central in his interpretation of Hua-yen idealism. See K. Kawada and H. Nakamura, eds., *Kegon shisō*, pp. 279–81. In this connection, see Takahashi Jikidō's article, “Kegon kyōgaku to nyorai-shisō—Indo ni okeru shōki-shisō no tenkai—,” *ibid.*, pp. 277–332, which delineates the historical relationship between the *Tathāgatōtpattisaṃbhava-nirdeśa sūtra*, one of the oldest independent sūtras, which was later incorporated into the *Avatamsaka sūtra*, and various sūtras and treatises of the *tathāgata-garbha* tradition, in the light of the idea of “manifestation of essence” (*gotra-saṃbhava; shōki*).
40. Ibid., p. 280. Concerning the interpretations of this tenet by the Hua-yen thinkers, see Tamaki Kōshiro, “Yuishin no tsuikyū—shisō to taiken no kōshō—,” *ibid.*, pp. 335–416.

41. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sesshin-sesshō.”
42. Ibid., “Sokushin-zebutsu,” “Shin-fukatoku,” “Kokyō,” “Busshō,” “Tsuki,” “Kobutsushin,” “Sangai-yuishin,” “Sesshin-sesshō,” “Hosshō,” “Hotsu-bodaishin,” “Hotsu-mujōshin,” “Tashintsū,” and other chapters.
43. Concerning Dōgen’s view of mind, see Akiyama Hanji, *op. cit.*, pp. 85–105.
44. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sokushin-zebutsu,” “Shinjin-gakudō,” “Busshō,” “Sangai-yuishin,” etc. In addition he refers to mind in various ways: “walls, tiles, and stones” (“Sangai-yuishin,” “Kobutsushin”); “birth and death, coming and going” (“Sokushin-zebutsu,” “Sangai-yuishin”); “the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow” (“Sangai-yuishin”); “the three periods” (the variant chapter of “Shin-fukatoku”).
45. Ibid., “Immo.”
46. Ibid., “Immo.” Immediately after this, Dōgen also commented on the *kōan* in which, when two monastics were arguing about whether a banner moves or the wind moves, Hui-nēng observed that the mind moves. He made essentially the same point as we have seen in the case of the bell. Warning against a subjectivistic interpretation, Dōgen interpreted Hui-nēng’s “the mind moves” as meaning the movement of thusness that transcends the banner, the wind, and the mind—subject and object.
47. Ibid., “Bendōwa.” Dōgen applied this view to Dharma-nature and observed that Dharma-nature had to do with the flow of water, the growth and decay of trees, and the blooming of flowers and falling of leaves.
48. Ibid., “Sokushin-zebutsu.” See also “Bendōwa.”
49. Ibid., “Busshō.”
50. Ibid., “Bendōwa.”
51. In this connection, Akiyama observes, in his *op. cit.*, pp. 80–81, that Dōgen’s view of the nondualism of body and mind was connected with his repudiation of rebirth and the immortality of the soul. This observation is correct, though there was, as Akiyama himself concedes, some minor evidence contrary to it. (We shall examine Dōgen’s view of moral causation and rebirth on a later occasion.) Dōgen’s assertion of the nondualism of body and mind, which was firmly grounded in the ideas of dependent origination and emptiness, did not necessarily exclude the possibility of some “ethereal” or “spiritual” mode of existence quite different from the present makeup of the human mind-body. However, such a mode of existence had to be interpreted differently from those interpretations given in the conventional doctrines of rebirth/reincarnation and the immortality of the soul. But this problem was not Dōgen’s focal concern.
52. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sesshin-sesshō.”
53. Ibid., “Sesshin-sesshō.”
54. Ibid., “Sesshin-sesshō.”
55. Nakagawa Takashi, “Dōgen zenji to Rokuso Dankyō.”
56. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sesshin-sesshō.”

57. Akiyama, op. cit., pp. 81–85. A similar dualism appears in Conze, *Buddhist Meditation*, pp. 17–18 and pp. 22–23.
58. Kurebayashi Kōdō, “Dōgen-zen ni okeru shin ni tsuite,” *Komazawa daigaku Bukkyō-gakubu kenkyū kiyō*, no. 20 (March 1962), pp. 1–11. This essay tries to show that Dōgen’s view of mind should not be interpreted as “the ground of being.”
59. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sokushin-zebutsu.”
60. Ibid., “Hotsu-bodaishin.”
61. Ibid., “Sesshin-sesshō.”
62. Ibid., “Sangai-yuishin.”
63. Ibid., “Sangai-yuishin.”
64. Ibid., “Sangai-yuishin.”
65. Ui Hakuju, *Bukkyō shisō kenkyū*, pp. 12–14. In Ui’s view, to construe the idea of dependent origination as a kind of causation was highly misleading. He thinks that the misplaced and exclusive emphasis of early Buddhism on moral causation (karma and rebirth), which influenced the subsequent history of Buddhist thought, was erroneous, and that the doctrine of karma and rebirth (*rinne*) was not a fact but a religious postulate and, therefore, should not have been overly emphasized in Buddhism. What was pivotally important, according to Ui, was a religious discernment of dependent origination rather than a strictly moral causation. Ibid. pp. 87–103.
66. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shin-fukatoku” and its variant version. Dōgen criticized the assumption of an old woman who addressed a question to Tê-shan Hsüan-chien (780/2–865) about a passage in the *Diamond Sūtra*: “The past mind is unattainable, the present mind is unattainable, and the future mind is unattainable.” The old woman then asked Tê-shan: “Which mind would you nourish with refreshments?”
67. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Hensan.”
68. Ibid., “Genjō-kōan.”
69. In Buddhism, expressions such as *ekō-henshō* and *kyakka-shōko*, meaning “self-illumination” or “illuminate thy self,” are frequently used. They are the Buddhist equivalents of the dictum “Know thyself.”
70. Ibid., “Busshō.”
71. The Buddhists adopted the idea of *gotra* (family, lineage, class, race, etc.) from Hinduism, but it was free from any implications of the caste system. However, as time went on, they were not always consistent with the original spirit, as we see in the theory of the five groups. Har Dayal says: “The Buddhist philosophers developed the theory of *gotra* in order to explain why all persons do not try or desire to become *bodhisattvas*.” *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, p. 53.
72. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Busshō.”
73. Ibid., “Busshō.”

74. Ibid., “Busshō.”

75. Ibid., “Busshō.”

76. Cf. Akiyama, op. cit., pp. 108–109.

77. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Zenki.”

78. If we were forced to classify Dōgen’s religious and philosophical position, panentheism might be the term we would have to choose. But even this term should be discreetly and judiciously used when we apply it to Dōgen’s thought. Concerning panentheism, see C. Hartshorne and W. L. Reese, eds., *Philosophers Speak of God*, particularly pp. 1–25, pp. 499–514.

79. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Busshō.”

80. Ibid., “Sangai-yuishin.”

81. See Okada Gihō, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 156–58.

82. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sangai-yuishin.”

83. Ibid., “Busshō.”

84. In addition to his rejection of the theory of the five groups (*goshō*), Dōgen did not subscribe literally to the theory of the six realms, which arranged sentient and insentient beings biocentrically or anthropocentrically in a hierarchical model, although he often used this traditional theory as he did with respect to other traditional concepts. Dōgen’s religious and philosophical thought as a whole was highly antagonistic to models of hierarchies, layers, levels, degrees, strata, etc., although this did not mean the denial of their limited usefulness and validity. Dōgen’s view of sentient beings also differed from the so-called panpsychism; this is quite clear from our expositions of mind and Buddha-nature.

85. The living dynamism of the one-many relationship in connection with Buddha-nature was discussed in his exposition of the ocean-reflections samādhi (*kaiin-zammai*), in which Dōgen referred to Ts’ao-shan Pên-chi’s kōan of the great sea that was said to neither “keep a corpse” nor “retain the expired.” More specifically, Dōgen referred to Ts’ao-shan’s statement “[The sea] includes all existence” (*hōgan-ban’u*), and commented as follows: “Teacher’s [Ts’ao-shan’s] ‘*hōgan-ban’u*’ signifies the sea. Its import does not imply that a person or a thing embraces all existence, but that inclusion (*hōgan*) itself is all existence (*ban’u*). It does not mean the great sea contains all existence; the great sea only embodies inclusion-itself-is-all-existence... inclusion-itself-is-all-existence means that inclusion includes inclusion-itself-is-all-existence (*hōgan-u-hōgan-ban’u*).” Ibid., “Kaiin-zammai.” The net result was: Inclusion included inclusion—a theoretical question was transformed into a soteriological realization without losing its theoretical import.

86. Ibid., Busshō.”

87. Ibid., “Kattō.”

88. Ibid., “Sesshin-sesshō.”

89. Ibid., “Busshō.”

90. Ibid., Sesshin-sesshō. Cf. *ibid.*, “Busshō”: “You should always devote yourself to the way of the Buddha-nature of nonexistence. Do not recoil from it.” “At the initial stage of meeting Buddhas and hearing Dharma, the most difficult thing to grasp and heed is the notion that sentient beings are the Buddha-nature of nonexistence. While following a teacher or studying the sūtras, this truth is a joyful thing to hear. Unless in your learning and apprehension you are thoroughly filled with the truth of all the sentient beings as the Buddha-nature of nonexistence, you have not yet learned or apprehended Buddha-nature.... You must be aware that to understand and hear the Buddha-nature of nonexistence is the right path to becoming a Buddha. Consequently, at the very moment when the Buddha-nature of nonexistence is realized, you attain Buddhahood. If you do not see, hear, or utter the Buddha-nature of nonexistence, you have not become a Buddha yet.”

91. Ibid., “Busshō.”

92. Ibid., “Busshō.”

93. Ibid., “Busshō.” In the same chapter, Dōgen also wrote: “Furthermore, to think that Buddha-nature exists only in life but not in death is an opinion of little learning and superficial understanding. The Buddha-nature of existence and the Buddha-nature of nonexistence are both in life and in death. When you talk about the formation or nonformation of wind and fire [of the four elements], you are dealing with the formation or nonformation of Buddha-nature itself. Even the time of nonformation is Buddha-nature as existence and Buddha-nature as nonexistence. The time of formation is Buddha-nature as existence and Buddha-nature as nonexistence, as well. It is un-Buddhist to construe Buddha-nature as either existing or not existing according to whether it moves or not, or as spiritually working or not working according to human consciousness or unconsciousness, or as mutable or immutable according to human knowing or not knowing.”

94. Throughout the present work, I have belabored this point and will do so in subsequent pages. In reference specifically to emptiness, Dōgen wrote: “Inasmuch as the Buddhas and ancestors fulfill the Way, whereby it is authentically transmitted, the total being of the skin-flesh-bones-marrow is suspended in emptiness. Emptiness is not the kind that is characterized by twenty-modes and the like. After all, should emptiness have only twenty modes? It can have eighty-four thousand modes, and many more.” Ibid., “Kokū.”

95. Ibid., “Kokū.”

96. Ibid., “Kokū”

97. Ibid., “Immo.”

98. Ibid., “Busshō.”

99. Ibid., “Busshō.”

100. Ibid., “Busshō.”

101. Ibid., “Busshō.”

102. Ibid., “Busshō.”
103. Ibid., “Busshō.”
104. Ibid., “Maka-hannya-haramitsu.” Also in the same chapter Dōgen said: “As this truth [of prajñā] unfolds and realizes itself, it tells us that form is emptiness, emptiness is form; form is form, emptiness is emptiness.”
105. Abe Masao compares Dōgen’s view of the relationship between all existence and Buddha-nature to Heidegger’s “ontological difference” (*ontologische Differenz*) between Being (*Sein*) and beings (*Seiendes*) and “ontic difference” (*ontische Differenz*) among beings, and denies ontological difference in Dōgen’s case. See “Dōgen on Buddha Nature,” *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 4, no. 1 (May 1971), pp. 50–51. An opposite interpretation is presented by Sugimori Mamoru, “Dōgen to Heidegger: Hosshō to son-zai—josetsu,” *Risō*, no. 369 (February 1964), pp. 35–43.
106. In *Shōbōgenzō*, “Busshō,” Dōgen discussed these seven categories of Buddha-nature. For a general discussion of them, see Akiyama, op. cit., pp. 101–43; Masunaga Reiho, “Dōgen’s Idea of Buddha-nature,” pp. 1–14; Abe, “Dōgen on Buddha Nature.”
107. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sesshin-sesshō.”
108. Ibid., “Busshō.”
109. Ibid., “Busshō.”
110. Ibid., “Busshō.”
111. Ibid., “Busshō.”
112. Ibid., “Busshō.”
113. Ibid., “Busshō.” Cf. ibid., “Hakujushi.”
114. Ibid., “Busshō.”
115. Ibid., “Busshō.”
116. Ibid., “Busshō.” See also ibid., “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō.”
117. Ibid., “Sansuikyō.”
118. Ibid., “Uji.”
119. Dōgen’s vision was extremely akin to Alfred N. Whitehead’s metaphysical vision of what he phrases as the “creative advance of the universe into novelty” from moment to moment which emerges from the interaction of actualities. Unity in multiplicity in Whitehead’s vision is not a static completed state of being but a dynamic process of becoming. Dōgen would have concurred with Whitehead in this general metaphysical vision of the universe. See Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, passim.
120. For example, Nakamura Hajime’s analysis of “the phenomenal world as absolute” in his *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples* does not refer to this aspect, that is, the logic of negation, which is crucially important, especially in Dōgen’s thought. Cf. Yūki Sazuku, “Nihon Bukkyō no rinri-sei,” in Miyamoto Shōson, ed., *Bukkyō no kompon shinri*, pp. 933–50; Ienaga Saburō, *Nihon shisō-shi ni okeru hitei no ronri no hattatsu*.

121. See Karaki Junzō, *Chūsei no bungaku*; Nishio Minoru, *Nihon bungeishi ni okeru chū-seiteki na mono*. Karaki and Nishio are most vocal in stressing Dōgen's place in the history of Japanese literature. From this standpoint they appraise Dōgen's use of Japanese in his writings.
122. Karaki Junzō, *Mujō*, pp. 5–130. Karaki observes that *hakanashi* or *hakanaki*, etymologically speaking, had the meaning of the failure to “measure” the pace of environmental changes by certain standards or norms. The sense of transience, despair, and emptiness was intimately related to such an “anomic” state of mind as well as the state of affairs.
123. *Ibid.*, pp. 294–302.
124. A rather crude attempt at speculating on time appeared in *The Questions of King Milinda*, II.2.9 and 3.1–2 in which the distinction between the three periods and that between the “time which exists” and the “time which does not” were made. In this view, the root of time consisted in ignorance, and liberation evolved from “the time which exists” to “the time which does not.”
125. Nakayama Nobuji, *Bukkyō ni okeru toki no kenkyū*, passim. I am greatly indebted to this work for my historical review of the concept of time in Buddhism, as well as my exposition of Hua-yen philosophy of time, which follows it.
126. The distinction between *kāla* and *samaya* (both of which meant time) and the Buddhist's preference for the latter indicated this typically Buddhistic sensibility very well. A well-known analogy to the substantialist view was a fruit in a pot.
127. Andre Bareau, “The Notion of Time in Early Buddhism,” *East and West*, vol. 7, no. 4 (January 1957), pp. 353–64, discusses the various views of early Buddhist schools. See also Nakayama, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–49.
128. *Ibid.*, pp. 50–79.
129. *Ibid.*, pp. 80–100. See also F. Streng, *Emptiness: A Study in Religious Meaning*, pp. 49–50.
130. For a general discussion of Hua-yen philosophy in English, see D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Third Series, pp. 21–214; Takakusu Junjirō, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, pp. 108–25; Garma C. C. Chang, *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hua Yen Buddhism*; Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, pp. 339–59.
131. Chang, *op. cit.*, pp. 141–70 as to the four dharma-realms of (1) phenomena, (2) principles, (3) the nonobstruction of principles and phenomena, and (4) the nonobstruction of all phenomena; especially pp. 153ff. Cf. Nakayama, *op. cit.*, pp. 101ff.
132. Chang, *op. cit.*, pp. 136–40.
133. *Ibid.*, pp. 121–24.
134. *Ibid.*, pp. 155–67 for the exposition of the ten mysteries.
135. These notions were taken from the new version by Fa-tsang (643–712) who revised the previous ones originating from Tu-shun (558–640) and Chih-yen (602–668).

136. Nakayama, op. cit., pp. 112–15.
137. Chang, op. cit., pp. 160–61.
138. Nakayama, op. cit., pp. 124–28.
139. Ibid., pp. 128–29.
140. Ibid., pp. 138–46.
141. Fa-tsang, *Hua-yen i-hai pai-men*. Translated by Chang in his op. cit., p. 160.
142. This thesis is quite clearly expounded in Takahashi Masanobu, *Dōgen no jissen tetsugaku kōzō*.
143. Tamaki Kōshiro, “Bukkyō no jikanron,” *Risō*, no. 460 (September 1971), pp. 64–78.
144. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Uji.”
145. Ibid., “Uji.”
146. Ibid., “Uji.” See Takahashi, op. cit., pp. 299–301 concerning different interpretations of the word “interval.” It was often taken to mean the interval between different times, but Takahashi thinks the word signified the interval between self and time.
147. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Uji.”
148. Ibid., “Uji.” One *jō* and six *shaku* are equivalent to about sixteen feet.
149. Ibid., “Uji.”
150. Ibid., “Kūge.”
151. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.”
152. Ibid., “Uji.”
153. Ibid., “Uji.”
154. Here we note a striking similarity between Dōgen and Heidegger, who maintains “the temporality of spatiality” in his *Being and Time*. Heidegger writes: “Because Dasein is ‘spiritual,’ and *only because of this*, it can be spatial in a way which remains essentially impossible for any extended corporeal Thing.” Thus, “Dasein takes space in.” Ibid., p. 419.
155. Takahashi, op. cit., pp. 287–92.
156. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Uji.” In this translation I follow Takahashi’s interpretation of *ware* as self rather than time. See op. cit., pp. 278–81.
157. The personal and existential emphasis of Dōgen’s treatment is hinted at in Takahashi’s commentary on the “Uji” chapter (op. cit., pp. 271–92) but not stressed as much as it should be. In this respect, Nakayama’s treatment (op. cit., pp. 167–79) does more justice to the intention of Dōgen’s view of time.
158. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Uji.”
159. Ibid., “Uji.” *Waga* in this passage was interpreted as referring to existence-time by

some and to the self by others. See Akiyama, op. cit., pp. 129–30; Takahashi, op. cit., pp. 335–38; Masunaga, *Bukkyō ni okeru jikanron*, pp. 214–21.

160. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Daigo.”

161. Ibid., “Shukke-kudoku.” Dōgen used the conventional figures of *setsuna* and *tanji* but had no interest in speculating on the exact length of these notions, as some earlier Buddhists did. In this connection, a single thought (*ichinen*) was said to be equivalent to 1/60 or 1/400 *tanji*. As to the Buddhist tenet of “everything perishes as soon as it arises,” see also ibid., “Hotsu-bodaishin” and “Kaiin-zammai.”

162. Ibid., “Gerjō-kōan.” Cf. ibid., “Den’e,” “Kūge,” “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō,” “Juki,” etc. In his discussion of the notion of arising and perishing (*kimetsu*), Dōgen wrote: “For this reason, arising and perishing mean that while the self arises in and of itself (*ga-ga-ki*) and the self perishes in and of itself (*ga-ga-metsu*), it never halts. This never-halting should be understood in such a way that arising or perishing is allowed to be totally arising or perishing (*kareni ichinin shite*).... Speaking of not-opposing (*fusōtai*) and not-anticipating (*fusōtai*), you should realize that arising is nothing but arising in its beginning, middle, and end. [As Yün-chū Tao-ying said,] officially not a single needle is admitted, but privately horses and vehicles pass through. In its beginning, middle, and end, it neither awaits nor confronts perishing. Even if Dharma arises abruptly after a preceding perishing, it is not the arising of [that preceding] perishing but an arising of Dharma. Because it is Dharma’s arising, it neither opposes nor anticipates anything (*futaidaisō nari*). Moreover, a perishing and another perishing do not expect one another nor stand in opposition to one another. Perishing is nothing but perishing in its beginning, middle, and end as well.” Ibid., “Kaiin-zammai.”

163. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.” Cf. “Gabyō,” “Genjō-kōan,” “Zazenshin.”

164. Ibid., “Genjō-kōan.” This could be compared with Hua-yen’s “mystery of the co-existence of concealment and disclosure” (*ommitsu-kenryō-kujō-mon*). On this particular “mystery,” see Chang, op. cit., pp. 162–64.

165. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Zenki.”

166. The primacy of discontinuity is well emphasized by Takahashi, op. cit., following the tradition of Nishiyari Bokusan’s *Keiteki*, a well-known and important commentary on Dōgen’s *Shōbōgenzō*. This position is highly critical of those taken by Tanabe Hajime, Hashida Kunihiro, and other philosophers, who would see Dōgen’s view of time primarily in terms of time and eternity—in which case continuity becomes primary.

167. *Shōbōgenzō* “Uji.”

168. Ibid., “Uji.” See Takahashi, op. cit., p. 357 and pp. 353–54 on Dōgen’s special use of the word “obstruction” in this instance.

169. This is one way to convey Dōgen’s intention in English. But this is only an approximation, which I think is very useful. Thus any noun can be converted into a verb form, and we can say, for example: “Eating eats eating, and thereby eating realizes itself” (in which the single activity of eating exerts itself totally to such an extent that the eating subject and immediate environment—certainly the whole universe—are “darkened,” yet embodied in and through it by virtue of their mutual identity and

mutual penetration). Similarly, “Dōgen dōgen-s Dōgen, and thereby Dōgen realizes himself,” and so forth. In this way, the subject and the predicate interpenetrate one another in *activity*, and thus: “Activity acts activity, and thereby activity realizes itself.” Paradoxically, obstruction in Dōgen’s thought meant total freedom in the non-obstruction of self-obstruction.

170. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Uji.”

171. *Ibid.*, “Uji.”

172. Inasmuch as the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka sūtra* and its central doctrine of “all things themselves are ultimate reality” (*shohō-jissō*) occupied a crucially important place in Dōgen’s thought in general, we can claim a direct affinity of his theory of time with that, as Takahashi does. But as Takahashi himself concedes, we cannot deny an intimate relationship between Dōgen’s view of time and Hua-yen philosophy. See Takahashi, *op. cit.*, pp. 5–69, especially p. 69, note 2.

173. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Tsuki.”

174. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, p. 107.

175. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Juki.” Elsewhere the unity of the three periods was described in this way: “The past is the mind, the present is hands, the future is the brain.” *Ibid.*, “Kem-butsu.”

176. *Ibid.*, “Busshō.”

177. *Ibid.*, “Busshō.”

178. *Ibid.*, “Busshō.”

179. Cf. Takahashi, *op. cit.*, pp. 109–17.

180. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Uji.”

181. *Ibid.*, “Uji.”

182. *Ibid.*, “Uji.”

183. *Ibid.*, “Kokū,” “Daigo,” “Shin-fukatoku.”

184. Regarding the relationship between time and activity, I am indebted to Nakayama, *op. cit.*, pp. 172–79 for his insights into the matter. However, the following exposition of mine is based on a different perspective than that of Nakayama.

185. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Gyōji.”

186. *Ibid.*, “Gyōji.”

187. Cf. Nakayama, *op. cit.*, pp. 177–78.

188. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Gyōji.”

189. Thus for example, the “Shōji” chapter, which had a striking affinity to Pure Realm thought, was construed by some as spurious, or as Dōgen’s instruction intended for Pure Realm Buddhists. See *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 5, no. 1 (May 1972), pp. 79–80, note 7.

190. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shoaku-makusa.”
191. Ibid., “Yuibutsu-yobutsu.”
192. Ibid., “Shōji.”
193. Ibid., “Bendōwa.”
194. Ibid., “Bendōwa.”
195. Ibid., “Shinjin-gakudō.”
196. Ibid., “Yuibutsu-yobutsu.”
197. Ibid., “Genjō-kōan.”
198. Ibid., “Genjō-kōan.”
199. This point may be clarified by considering Martin Buber’s criticism of Heidegger’s anthropology. See Buber, *Between Man and Man*, pp. 163–81. Buber says that Heidegger’s view of human existence, despite its emphasis on existence in the world, is based on one’s relation to oneself; one’s relation to other selves is regarded solely as derivative from this individualistic conception of human existence. Heidegger’s human existence is essentially “monological.” In Buber’s view, the essential nature of the self is derived from its embeddedness in the matrix of communal selves. We are born not only into the world but with the world. Being is essentially social and only existentially individual, not vice versa.
200. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shōji.”
201. Ienaga Saburō considers one of the lasting contributions of Pure Realm Buddhism, especially of Shinran, to have been a profound sense of sinfulness, and thinks that hope for Buddhism in the future lies in the cultivation of this sensibility. *Chūsei Bukkyō shisō-shi kenkyū*, pp. 230–32.
202. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Busshō.”
203. To translate *zenki* into English is a difficult task. Waddell and Abe translate it as “total dynamic working,” and also occasionally, as “total dynamism.” See *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 5, no. 1 (May 1972), pp. 70–80. I would like to translate *zenki* variously as “total dynamism,” “total function,” “total working,” and so forth.
204. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Zenki.”
205. In this connection, it is significant to observe what A. N. Whitehead says in a surprisingly similar vein: “Each task of creation is a social effort, employing the whole universe.” *Process and Reality*, p. 340. He also writes: “The whole world conspires to produce a new creation.” *Religion in the Making*, p. 99.
206. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Zenki.”
207. Ibid., “Zenki.”
208. Ibid., “Shōji.”
209. Ibid., “Genjō-kōan.”

- 210. Ibid., “Shōji.”
- 211. Ibid., “Shinjin-gakudō.”
- 212. Ibid., “Yuibutsu-yobutsu.”
- 213. Ibid., “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”
- 214. Ibid., “Gyōbutsu-iigi.”

CHAPTER FIVE:

MONASTIC ASCETICISM: THE WAY OF RITUAL AND MORALITY

- 1. Ui Hakuju, *Zenshū shisō-shi*, vol. 1, pp. 1–90.
- 2. See Kenneth K. S. Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 241–57 as regards the socioeconomic background of the Buddhist monastic order in general in those days.
- 3. Ui, op. cit., pp. 81–90.
- 4. Ui, *Zenshū shisō-shi*, vol. 2, pp. 327–423; idem, *Bukkyō shisō kenkyū*, pp. 628–45.
- 5. Hīnayāna Buddhism had the two divisions of the vinaya: one was the division of the inhibition of evil (*shiaku-mon*), and the other the division of the promotion of good (*sazen-mon*). The former consisted of the so-called precepts of seven types of Buddhists (*shichishu-kai*), that is, the precepts of monks, nuns, women who observed the six precepts, male novices, female novices, laymen, and laywomen. The latter (the division of the promotion of good) consisted of such ritual observances as receiving the precepts, *uposatha* (*fusatsu*), and monastic retreats. By contrast, the Mahāyāna counterpart of the vinaya was comprised of the ten major precepts (*jū jūkinkai*) and the forty-eight minor precepts (*shijūhachi kyōkai*) and included virtually nothing in the area of the promotion of good. Po-chang's contribution to the Mahāyāna division of the promotion of good in the total structure of monastic discipline must be appreciated. See Ui, *Zenshū shisō-shi*, vol. 2, pp. 390–93.
- 6. *Zuimonki*, II:1.
- 7. Concerning the differences between pure Zen and mixed Zen, see Imaeda Aishin, *Zenshū no rekishi*, chapters 2, 3, and 4.
- 8. *Zuimonki*, II:26.
- 9. Furuta Shōkin, in his *Nihon Bukkyō shisō-shi no shomondai*, analyzes these two trends in Kamakura Buddhism. Furuta observes that Hōnen's thought on this matter was only apparently opposed to the traditional observance of the precepts as the path of sages (*shōdōmon*). Hōnen's famous statement “In the Age of Degenerate Law there is neither the observance of precepts nor the violation of precepts,” according to Furuta, implied that his nondualistic conception of the precepts—which transcended observance and violation—was subsumed in the sole act of the recitation of the holy name of Amida (*shōmyō-nembutsu*). See *ibid.*, pp. 3–17.
- 10. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–35 concerning Eisai's view on the precepts. Eisai once wrote: “Zen Buddhism has the precepts as its beginning and meditation as its goal” (*Kōzen gokokuron*).

Compare this with Dōgen's recollection of the Kenninji temple when he studied there prior to his study in China, in *Zuimonki*, V:10.

11. See Furuta, op. cit., pp. 36–56.
12. In those days Zen was largely dependent on Tendai and Shingon Buddhism and was content with reinforcing the established order of the old Buddhism. See Imaeda, op. cit., p. 14.
13. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Semmen.”
14. Ibid., “Semmen.”
15. Ibid., “Semmen.”
16. Ibid., “Semmen.”
17. Ibid., “Semmen.”
18. Ibid., “Senjō.”
19. Ibid., “Senjō.” Cf. Shinran's view of the “rightly established state” (*shōjōju*) in which all the followers of the eighteenth vow of Amida were supposed to reside, and by virtue of which they were assured of the birth in the Pure Land and of the realization of enlightenment in the after-life. See *Kyōgyō-shinshō*, IV. This notion, together with his denial of the esoteric Buddhist doctrine of “This body itself is Buddha” (*sokushin-jōbutsu*) in *Tannishō*, XV, showed that there was a significant difference between Shinran and Dōgen in their treatments of the defiled land and the Pure Land.
20. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Senjō.”
21. Ibid., “Senjō.”
22. Ibid., “Semmen.”
23. Ibid., “Semmen.”
24. Ibid., “Semmen.” A similar view with respect to the washing of clothes was presented in ibid., “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō.”
25. As for the theme of purification, see *Proceedings of the XIth International Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions*. Particularly, Abe Masao's statement: “There is no ‘being pure’ apart from ‘becoming pure’” (ibid., p. 150), which reflects Dōgen's view well.
26. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Senjō.”
27. Ibid., “Senjō.”
28. Dōgen expounded the chapter in 1239, 1243, and 1250. In addition to this chapter, Dōgen presented “Daigo” on two occasions in 1242 and 1244. See Okada, *Shōbōgenzō shisō taikēi*, vol. 6, p. 340.
29. Besides these two meals, monastics were allowed to take the “evening meal,” usually gruel, only in the snowy winter season. Strictly speaking, this practice was a deviation from the Buddhist vow not to eat after midday. See *Eiheiji koku-shijimon*.

30. *Zuimonki*, I:3.
31. Ibid., VI:25. In *Chiji shingi* Dōgen referred to the traditional Buddhist notions of “four impure foods” and “five improper means of livelihood.” The former were: (1) food obtained by going only among the rich and the powerful families, (2) food obtained by means of divination and fortune-telling, (3) food obtained by means of astrological practices, and (4) food obtained by means of land cultivation and selling medicines (instead of going for alms). The latter (five improper means of livelihood) were: (1) to assume different appearance, (2) to boast of one’s own merits, (3) to engage in fortune-telling and divination, (4) to harass and bully others, and (5) to spread the news of alms and offerings. Dōgen gave strict regulations for the administration of public grain (*kugaimai*) in *Eiheiji kuin seiki*.
32. Takeuchi conjectures that the monastic economy of the Eiheiiji temple must have been in very straitened circumstances. See his *Dōgen*, pp. 295–97; Ōkubo Dōshū, *Dōgen-zenji-den no kenkyū*, chapter 9.
33. In his *Tenzo kyōkun*, note Dōgen’s severe criticism of the Japanese monastics as well as his high praise for the Chinese counterparts, with respect to the status and functions of the chief cook in their monastic life.
34. Cf. D. T. Suzuki, *The Training of the Zen Buddhist Monk*.
35. *Tenzo kyōkun*.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. *Eiheiji jikūimmon*.
39. *Fushukuhampō*.
40. Ibid.
41. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Hatsuu.”
42. Ibid., “Hatsuu.”
43. Sanskrit *kaśāya* for *kesa* referred originally to the spoiled, yellowish-red color of the Buddhist robe. It was chosen to signify nonattachment to clothing.
44. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Den’e.”
45. Ibid., “Kesa-kudoku.”
46. Ibid., “Kesa-kudoku” and “Den’e.”
47. Ibid., “Kesa-kudoku.”
48. Ibid., “Kesa-kudoku” and “Den’e.” Dōgen recounted that in China he was greatly moved when he witnessed a monk’s reverential handling of his robe.
49. Ibid., “Kesa-kudoku.”
50. Ibid., “Den’e.”

51. *Zuimonki*, VI:25.
52. The twelvefold practice of asceticism (*dvādaśa dhūtaguṇāḥ; jūni-zudagyō*) was meant to purify one's body and mind by shaking off all forms of attachment to clothes, food, and dwelling. They were: (1) dwelling in the forest, (2) taking any seat that might be offered, (3) living on alms, (4) observing the rule of using only one seat for meditation and eating, (5) wearing coarse garments, (6) not eating after the time when one should cease eating, (7) wearing clothes made of rags taken from a dust heap, (8) having only three robes, (9) living in or near a cemetery, (10) living under a tree, (11) living in the open air, and (12) using the sitting posture for sleeping. See Daitō shuppansha, *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary*, "Jūni-zuda" on p. 152; Taya Raishun and others, eds., *Bukkyō-gaku jiten*, p. 288.
53. *Zuimonki*, V:14.
54. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Gyōji."
55. Ibid., "Raihai-tokuzui."
56. Ibid., Gyōji." Dōgen referred to the legendary emperors of China, such as Huang-ti, Yao, and Shun, who were said to have lived in meager thatched huts.
57. *Hōkyōki*, 29.
58. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Senjō."
59. H. Yokoyama, "Zenshū no shichidō garan," *Zen bunka*, vol. 2, no. 4 (1956), pp. 40–45; idem, "Dōgen-zen to kenchiku," in Iida Toshiyuki, ed., *Dōgen-zen*, vol. 4, pp. 218–30. Yokoyama observes that the Eihei-ji temple in Echizen was completed after Tetsū Gikai (1219–1309), the third abbot of the temple, visited China from 1259–1262 to study Zen monasteries, particularly the Ching-tê-ssū temple.
60. See Yokoyama's aforementioned essays.
61. Iida, op. cit., pp. 220–21. See also *Zuimonki*, II:6 concerning Dōgen's discourse on this matter. Instructions about manners in the monastics' hall were given in *Bendōhō*.
62. Iida, op. cit., pp. 226–30.
63. Miyasaka Tetsubun, *Zen ni okeru ningen keisei*, pp. 168–75. See *Shuryō shingi* and *Shōbōgenzō*, "Kankin."
64. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Sansuikyō."
65. Ibid., "Mujō-seppō."
66. Ibid., "Sansuikyō."
67. Ibid., "Keisei-sanshoku." Here "a long, broad tongue" (*kōchōzetsu*) referred to one of the thirty-two major characteristics of Buddha, and in turn, to the discourse of Buddha.
68. Ibid., "Keisei-sanshoku."
69. Ibid., "Keisei-sanshoku."
70. Ibid., "Keisei-sanshoku."

71. Ibid., “Sansuikyō.” Dōgen wrote: “For the reason that the mountain’s walking should be like human’s walking, and yet, if it fails to look like it, you should not entertain a doubt about the mountain’s walking” (ibid., “Sansuikyō”). This referred to the statement of Fu-yung Tao-k’ai (1043–1118): “A blue mountain is always walking; a stone image of woman gives birth to a baby at night.”
72. Ibid., “Mujō-seppō.”
73. Ibid., “Sansuikyō.”
74. Ibid., “Sansuikyō.”
75. Ibid., “Sansuikyō.” This illustration was also used in ibid., “Genjō-kōan.”
76. Ibid., “Sansuikyō.”
77. Yün-mên Wên-yen (864–949) was once asked by a monastic the question “Where did Buddhas come from? Yün-mên’s answer was “The Eastern Mountain walks on the water.”
78. Ibid., “Sansuikyō.”
79. Ibid., “Tsuki.”
80. Ibid., “Tsuki.”
81. Ibid., “Tsuki.”
82. Ibid., “Tsuki.”
83. Ibid., “Tsuki.”
84. Ibid., “Shunjū.”
85. Ibid., “Shunjū.”
86. Ibid., “Shunjū.”
87. Ibid., “Shunjū.”
88. Ibid., “Baika.”
89. Ibid., “Baika.”
90. Ibid., “Udonge.”
91. Ibid., “Kūge.”
92. Ibid., “Kūge.”
93. Ibid., “Kūge.”
94. Ibid., “Kūge.”
95. Ibid., “Kūge.”
96. Ibid., “Kūge.”
97. Hori Ichirō discusses the significance of mountains in the history of Japanese religion in his *Folk Religion in Japan*, chapter 4. Dōgen’s fascination with the mountains and waters was not just what he inherited from Ju-ching but was deeply rooted in Japan-

ese culture, although his view was, as we have seen in this study, mediated by the logic of Buddha-nature and emptiness.

98. The vows, or “original vows” (*pūrva-praṇidhāna*; *hongan*), were classified traditionally in two categories: (1) The universal vows (*sōgan*) were applicable to all bodhisattvas universally and formulated in the form of the “four universal vows” (*shi-guzeigan*). The original form of the four universal vows appeared in the *Saddharma-puṇḍarika sūtra*. And (2) the special vows (*betsugan*) were various formulations particular to different Buddhas and bodhisattvas—e.g., Amitābha’s forty-eight vows, Bhaisajyaguru’s twelve vows, Samantabhadra’s ten vows.
99. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Busso” and “Hotsu-bodaishin.” The twenty-eight Indian ancestors were called “great superiors” (*dai-oshō*), whereas the six Chinese ancestors were called “ancestral teachers” (*soshi*).
100. The fifty-two stages of bodhisattvahood consisted of (1) the ten stages of faith (*jusshin*), (2) the ten stages of security (*jūjū*), (3) the ten stages of practice (*jūgyō*), (4) the ten stages of devotion (*jūekō*), (5) the ten stages of development (*jūji*), (6) the stage of approaching bodhisattvahood (*tōgaku*), and (7) the stage of Buddhahood (*myōgaku*).
101. Ibid., “Shohō-jissō.”
102. Ibid., “Shohō-jissō.” Cf. ibid., “Kannon,” in which Kannon was said to be the parent of all Buddhas (*shobutsu no bumo*).
103. Ibid., “Shohō-jissō.”
104. Miyamoto, op. cit., pp. 235–40. Roughly, these two aspects of the bodhisattva ideal can be construed as analogous to the division of other-power (*tariki*) and self-power (*jiriki*) in Pure Realm Buddhism.
105. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kannon.”
106. This kōan was taken up by Dōgen in ibid., “Kannon.” It was originally the fifty-fourth case of the *Ts’ung-yung lu* (1223).
107. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kannon.”
108. Ibid., “Kannon.”
109. Ibid., “Kannon.” See also Dōgen’s interpretation of the arahat as Buddha, which was rather unorthodox in Buddhist thought. Ibid., “Arakan.” As to the problem of the arms and eyes in relation to Dōgen’s notion of “arising and perishing” (*kimetsu*), see ibid., “Kaiin-zammai.”
110. Ibid., “Nyorai-zenshin.”
111. Ibid., “Nyorai-zenshin.”
112. Ibid., “Bukkyō” (34).
113. Ibid., “Bukkyō” (34).
114. Ibid., “Kembutsu.” Cf. ibid. “Gyōbutsu-iigi,” in which Dōgen argued that because of thusness, we transcend self and other, and hence, are Buddhas.

115. Cf. Nishitani Keiji, "On the I-Thou Relation in Zen Buddhism," *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1969), pp. 71–87.
116. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Jishō-zammai."
117. Ibid., "Bodaisatta-shishōhō." These four virtues were originally advocated by the Mahāyānists as part of skillfulness in the choice of means and methods, the seventh perfection of the bodhisattva's career. In other words, the Mahāyāna Buddhists taught that a bodhisattva needed three areas of skillfulness for helping and converting the people: (1) four virtues, (2) four thorough knowledges, and (3) charms and spells. The four virtues under investigation belonged to (1) of this classification. See Dayal, op. cit., pp. 251–69.
118. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bodaisatta-shishōhō." As to the fundamental nature of giving and its relation to the Buddhist ideas of compassion and the transfer of merit, see Dayal, op. cit., pp. 172–93.
119. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Bodaisatta-shishōhō."
120. Ibid., "Bodaisatta-shishōhō."
121. Ibid., "Bodaisatta-shishōhō."
122. On the theme of the bodhisattva, see further ibid., "Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō" and "Hachi-dainingaku"; *Zuimonki*, passim; the three minds (*sanshin*) in *Tenzo kyōkun*; etc.
123. *Shōbōgenzō*, "Hotsu-bodaishin."
124. Ibid., "Gyōji." See also *Zuimonki*, III:6.
125. *Jūundōshiki*.
126. Miyasaka, op. cit., pp. 31–32; Furuta, op. cit., pp. 36–56; Kondō Ryōichi, "Dōgen ni okeru shisō tenkai no ichi kōsatsu—hokuetsu nyūsan o keiki to shite—," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1 (January 1964), pp. 243–46.
127. Hirakawa Akira, "Kairitsu yori mitaru Bukkyō shinrikan," Miyamoto, op. cit., pp. 259–84.
128. Ibid., especially pp. 268–69, 271–83. According to Hirakawa, both terms were well distinguished by the primitive Buddhists and their relation was recognized.
129. For example, see *Shōbōgenzō*, "Jukai," "Shukke," and "Shukke-kudoku."
130. Ibid., "Jukai"; *Busso-shōden bosatsukai kyōjukaimon* (hereafter *Kyōjukaimon*).
131. The term *Hinayāna* here and elsewhere in this work is employed advisedly. As it is widely known today, the term has been used by some Mahāyāna Buddhists with pejorative connotations to designate Southern Buddhism or Theravāda Buddhism in the Southeast Asian countries. On the other hand, Mahāyāna Buddhists also used the term to designate all early Buddhist schools and sects other than the Mahāyāna. It was accordingly much broader than the term Theravāda Buddhism.
132. Ibid., "Jukai"; *Busso shōden bosatsukai sabō* and *Eihei soshi tokudo ryaku-sabō* for detailed instructions for the bodhisattva ordination.

133. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shukke.”
134. Ibid., “Shukke.”
135. *Kyōjukaimon*.
136. D. T. Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism*, p. 13.
137. The problem of confession has occupied a very important place in Buddhism from its inception. Ordinary confession (*sange* or *keka*) could be made at any time, as it was required, whereas *uposatha* (*fusatsu*) was held every fifteen days and a confessional (*pavāraṇa*; *jishi*) was held at the end of the monastic retreat (*ango*). As regards the practice of these rites in various Japanese Buddhist sects, see M. W. de Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, 2 volumes. Heinrich Dumoulin discusses this problem in connection with Zen Buddhism in his essay “Technique and Personal Devotion in the Zen Exercise,” in Joseph Roggendorf, ed., *Studies in Japanese Culture*, pp. 17–40.
138. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Keisei-sanshoku.”
139. Ibid., “Keisei-sanshoku.”
140. Dumoulin makes the following observation of contemporary Zen: “In the commonly accepted classification of Buddhism, Zen is placed in the category of those sects that insist on salvation through ‘one’s own endeavor’ (*jiriki*) while other schools, especially the Amidists, rely on ‘another’s strength’ (*tariki*). Zen is thus defined because of its consistently monistic illuminationism. That is, at any rate, the impression received from much of the literature about Zen. Suzuki Daisetsu, for example, likes to recount the anecdotes of ancient Zen masters who would burn Buddha images or sūtra scrolls in order to demonstrate dramatically that the Buddha was not to be sought outside but within the heart. In reality, such episodes are not much more [than] exceptional cases; they do not permit the conclusion that Zen is in effect iconoclastic or opposed to sacred cult. No Zen master has, in the final analysis, reneged on the radical monism of Zen metaphysics. Nevertheless, the actual atmosphere of many Zen monasteries is characterized by a devotional reverence comparable to that of Amida temples.” Roggendorf, op. cit., p. 30. Dumoulin’s interpretation of Zen as “monistic illuminationism” or “radical monism” can be challenged. Without subscribing to this we can appreciate this noteworthy antidote to the currently much misunderstood picture of Zen.
141. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Keisei-sanshoku.” There were two types of confession: repentance with regard to the facts of existence (*jisan* or *ji no sange*) such as sins, ambiguities, and frailties, and repentance with regard to the nature of the facts of existence (*risan* or *ri no sange*), namely, that sins, ambiguities, and frailties were originally and ultimately empty.
142. Cf. Ui Hakuju, *Bukkyō tetsugaku no kompon mondai*, pp. 1–35. Ui points out that when the Buddhist spoke of the law of causation, it was primarily the law of moral causation; although the law of physical causation—a predominant concern on the part of Western philosophers and scientists—was implied, but generally receded into the background. Dōgen’s view reflected this traditional view. In this study “causation” refers to the law of moral causation.
143. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Daishugyō” and “Jinshin-inga”; *Dōgen oshō kōroku*, I and III.

144. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Jinshin-inga.”
145. Ibid., “Jinshin-inga,” “Sanjigō,” “Daishugyō,” “Shoaku-makusa.”
146. Ibid., “Jinshin-inga” and “Sanjigō.” As will become clearer in the following exposition, Dōgen presented two different interpretations of this problem in “Jinshin-inga” and “Sanjigō” on the one hand and in “Daishugyō” on the other. See G. Okada, *Shōbōgenzō shisō-taikei*, vol. 7, p. 463.
147. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Kūge.”
148. Ibid., “Daishugyō.”
149. Ibid., “Daishugyō.”
150. Ibid., “Daishugyō.”
151. Akiyama, op. cit., pp. 163–83.
152. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shoaku-makusa.”
153. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.”
154. Ibid., “Sanjigō.”
155. Ibid., “Sanjigō.” The avici hell was one of the eight hot hells (*hachi-daijigoku* or *hachi-netsujigoku*).
156. Ibid., “Sanjigō.”
157. Ibid., “Jinshin-inga.”
158. Ibid., “Ikka-myōju.”
159. Ibid., “Shohō-jissō.”
160. Ibid., “Busshō.” Cf. S. Tachibana, *The Ethics of Buddhism*, pp. 66–67 concerning Buddha’s position on this issue.
161. *Zuimonki*, V:11.
162. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shoaku-makusa.”
163. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.”
164. *Zuimonki*, VI:15.
165. Ibid., VI:15.
166. Ibid., VI:15.
167. Ibid., VI:17.
168. Ibid., III:25.
169. See ibid., III:6. In a similar vein Dōgen also interpreted *on* (favors, obligations, debts, etc.) in ibid., III:25.
170. *Dhammapada*, XIV:183.

171. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shoaku-makusa.”
172. Ibid., “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō.”
173. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.”
174. This is similar to “presuming upon Amida’s original vow” (*hongan-bokori*) to which Shinran referred in his *Tannishō*, XIII.
175. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shoaku-makusa.”
176. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.”
177. *Zuimonki*, II:4. The kōan ran as follows: Once, when the monastics of the western and eastern halls were quarrelling about a cat, Nan-ch’üan, holding up the cat, said, “You monastics! If any of you can speak a word of Zen I will spare the cat, otherwise I will kill it!” No one could answer, so Nan-ch’üan killed it. In the evening, Chao-chou came back from somewhere, and Nan-ch’üan told him what had happened. Chao-chou thereupon took off his shoe, put it on his head, and walked off. Nan-ch’üan said, “If only you had been there, I could have saved the cat!” Adapted from R. H. Blyth’s translation in his *Mumonkan (Zen and Zen Classics*, vol. 4), pp. 120–21. Dōgen in his comments held that it was better not to kill the cat as a way of leading monastics to enlightenment.
178. *Zuimonki*, II:4.
179. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shoaku-makusa.”
180. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.”
181. D. T. Suzuki once said: “Zen finds its inevitable association with art but not with morality. Zen may remain unmoral but not without art.” *Zen and Japanese Culture*, p. 27. Suzuki here may not be asserting a downright antinomianism, yet comes very close to it. From Dōgen’s standpoint what Suzuki has to say characterizes the transmoral aspect of enlightenment but hardly, if at all, the moral expression of it. Morality is to be liberated, not belittled, much less abandoned.
182. At this point Dōgen’s thought was almost indistinguishable from Shinran’s, that envisioned “naturalness” (*jinen-hōni*) as its culmination in his *Mattōshō*, *Jinen-hōni-shō*, and so forth. Naturalness here meant the spontaneous unfolding of Amida’s vow-power without human calculation or contrivance. This was also called the “reason of no reason” (*mugi o motte gi to su* or *gi naki o gi to su*)—which referred to the transcendent rationality of effortlessness, meaninglessness, purposelessness—the reason of non-duality. Cf. *Tannishō*, VIII.
183. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shoaku-makusa.”
184. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.”
185. Ibid., “Shoaku-makusa.”
186. Ibid., “Sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō.” The four right efforts were a part of the thirty-seven qualities of enlightenment (*saptatrimśad bodhipākṣikā dharmāḥ*; *sanjūshichihon-bodaibumpō*), which were very important, along with the ten perfections, in the total

- scheme of the bodhisattva's career. See Dayal, *op. cit.*, pp. 80–164 concerning the thirty-seven qualities.
187. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Hosshō.” The idea of “natural knowledge” was mentioned by Confucius in his *Analects*, XVI:9, which read: “Confucius said, ‘Those who are born with knowledge are the highest type of people. Those who learn through study are the next. Those who learn through hard work are still next. Those who work hard and still do not learn are really the lowest type.’”
 188. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Hosshō” and “Daigo.” In “Daigo” Dōgen wrote: “Therefore, you should realize that there is not a single sentient or insentient being that is incapable of natural knowing. Where there is natural knowing, there is natural enlightenment, natural verification, and natural practice.”
 189. See Miyasaka, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–67 for the historical delineation of Zen thought on the problem of scriptural studies.
 190. *Ibid.*, pp. 125–30.
 191. Concerning the significance of kōan as “a form of the sūtra study” and the “resuscitation of words and letters” in Zen Buddhism, see *ibid.*, particularly pp. 140–41.
 192. See *Shōbōgenzō*, “Bendōwa,” “Hokke-ten-Hokke,” “Kankin,” “Bukkyō” (47), and *Jūundōshiki* on words and letters.
 193. *Ibid.*, “Bukkyō” (34) and “Bukkyō” (47) on this point.
 194. *Ibid.*, “Bukkyō” (34).
 195. Miyasaka, *op. cit.*, pp. 152–61, 168–75.
 196. See Karasawa Tomitarō, *Chūsei shoki Bukkyō kyōiku-shisō no kenkyū*, pp. 339–52 about Saichō and Kūkai, who initiated the education of monastics in the mountains, that is, Mt. Hiei and Mt. Kōya, respectively, in contrast to Nara Buddhism, the activities of which centered around the city of Nara. This meant, according to Karasawa, an emphasis on monastic discipline rather than doctrinal theorization, avoidance of politics and other-worldly involvement, and the formation of an ideal Buddhist community.
 197. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Sansuikyō.”
 198. *Zuimonki*, V:1.
 199. *Gakudō yōjinshū*, 5.
 200. *Ibid.*, 5.
 201. The Socratic dialogue attempted to attain universalistic definitions of ideas such as “justice,” “courage,” and “love” through its dialectical progression, as we see in Platonic dialogues. By contrast, the Zen dialogue (*mondō*; literally, “question and answer”) always took place in the existential situation of personal encounter between teacher and disciple (*kien*), who together endeavored to attain enlightenment. This was a soteriological concern. And yet, it is highly significant that both traditions employed dialogue as a pedagogic method for the discovery and realization of truth.
 202. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Menju,” where this analogy was applied to the direct transmission of

Dharma through the personal encounter of teacher and disciple. Such a personal encounter was said to be the *sine qua non* of the transmission of Dharma.

203. Ibid., “Shinjin-gakudō” and “Gabyō.”
204. Ibid., “Dōtoku.”
205. “A question is an expression of the Way” (*monsho no dōtoku*) referred to this problem. Jimbo and Andō, eds., *Zengaku jiten*, p. 1425.
206. *Zuimonki*, V:5.
207. Ibid., V and VI, passim; *Dōgen oshō kōroku*, V.
208. See *Chiji shingi*, *Tenzo kyōkun*, *Taidaiko goge jarihō*, and so forth, for this aspect of monastic life.
209. Cf. Karasawa, op. cit., pp. 381–96.
210. *Zuimonki*, V:13; *Jūundōshiki*.
211. *Zuimonki*, II:20.
212. *Shōbōgenzō*, “Shizen-biku.”
213. Ibid., “Busshō.”
214. Ibid., “Shinjin-gakudō.”
215. Ibid., “Hotsu-bodaishin.” Cf. “Shinjin-gakudō,” “Kie-buppōsōbō,” and so forth, for cosmic resonance or responsive communion.
216. Ibid., “Hotsu-mujōshin.”
217. Ibid., “Jishō-zammai.”
218. Ibid., “Immo.”
219. Ibid., “Sesshin-sesshō.”

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C. ARTICLES

Abbreviations:

<i>EB</i>	<i>The Eastern Buddhist</i>
<i>JIBS</i>	<i>Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies</i>
<i>KDBK</i>	<i>Komazawa daigaku Bukkyō-gakubu kenkyū-kiyō</i>
<i>KDK</i>	<i>Komazawa daigaku kenkyū-kiyō</i>
<i>MN</i>	<i>Monumenta Nipponica</i>
<i>PSJ</i>	<i>Philosophical Studies of Japan</i>
<i>SK</i>	<i>Shūgaku kenkyū (Journal of Sōtō Studies)</i>

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