

TRANSLATION

Dōgen's *Bendōwa*

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Introduction

LATE summer in 1231 at his Fukakusa retreat a short distance to the south of Kyoto, Dōgen Kigen,¹ a young man of thirty-two years, transmitter of the Dharma from Sung China, wrote *Bendōwa*, a treatise on the significance of zazen as the "right entrance" to the Dharma. It was his second work after *Fukan zazengi*² and his first in Japanese. It has been said with truth that all the ninety-five books of the *Shōbōgenzō* collection are in their essence contained in this, the first book. *Bendōwa* thus serves as an excellent basic introduction to Dōgen's work and thought as a whole.

In 1227, Dōgen returned to Japan from China where he had attained enlightenment under the guidance of the Chinese Zen master Ju-ching, bringing with him an ardent desire to establish the authentic Dharma in Japan by propagating the religious practice he had learned during his almost five-year stay on the continent. He met swift and strong opposition from the older Buddhist sects, especially the powerful Tendai church on Mount Hiei. The extent of the hatred in which he was held is revealed in a letter dating from this period addressed to the poet Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), in which the Hiei priesthood is depicted as contemplating destroying Dōgen's dwelling and driving him from the capital. Dōgen was not the only victim of this type of harassment. Other representatives of the new Buddhism that uprose with vigor in Kamakura times,

¹ 道元希玄 (1200–1253). See Heinrich Dumoulin, "The Zen Master Dōgen," *A History of Zen Buddhism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963).

² 普勸坐禪儀. See footnote 107. There is a German translation by Heinrich Dumoulin; "Allgemeine Lehren zur Förderung des Zazen von Zen Meister Dōgen," *Monumenta Nipponica*, XIV (1958/9), pp. 429–36.

Hōnen (1133–1212), Eisai (1141–1215), Shinran (1173–1262), and Nichiren (1222–1282), among the most venerated figures in the history of Japanese Buddhism, were also opposed by the great temple establishments of Hiei, Kōya, Nara, and Kyoto. It was a period of decay, and a period too of a religious revival unique in Japanese history.

In this context and with disappointment over the immoral behavior rife in Kennin-ji where he had lived since his return, Dōgen in 1230 left Kyoto and retired to the seclusion of Anyō-in,³ a small temple near Fukakusa (in present day Kyoto's Fushimi ward). There, isolated from worldly distractions and apart from the centers of doctrinal turmoil of the time, he decided to wait for more favorable conditions under which to actively promote *zazen*. Yet even during these first years students came to him in increasing numbers. *Bendōwa* was addressed to them and to those like them.

Bendōwa may be divided in two sections. The first, roughly one fourth of the whole, commonly referred to as the *jijuyū* samādhi portion, contains a concise exposition of the *jijuyū* samādhi, relates Dōgen's pilgrimage in search of the Dharma in Japan and in China, and outlines the historical transmission of this samādhi from Śakyamuni through the Chinese Zen masters of the T'ang dynasty, finishing with a section devoted to describing and explaining the working and the merit of the *jijuyū* samādhi. In the course of this presentation, Dōgen insists on the efficacy of *zazen* vis-a-vis other practices, and explains his reason for writing *Bendōwa*.

The remaining three-quarters of the work is arranged in a question and answer format that was popular in religious treatises of this nature. Here Dōgen gives and defends the reasons for his advocacy of *zazen*, and at the same time tries to counter questions that might arise in the minds of Buddhist acolytes. The questions also reflect such curiosity and doubts as might be found in the minds of adherents of other schools, those of the established centers as well as those of the new Buddhism.

Sbōbōgenzō 正法眼藏 (*Sbō*, right; *bō*, Dharma; *gen*, the all-seeing eye of enlightenment; *zō*, storehouse, collection) is the title given the collected discourses and sermons in Japanese that were delivered or written by Dōgen

³ 安養院

from 1231, when he was thirty-two, until his death in 1253 at age fifty-four. In its present form it consists of ninety-five fascicles or books arranged in chronological order. Dōgen himself is believed to have made the initial compilation of *Sbōbōgenzō*, followed by various others by Sōtō priests during the next four centuries. Though the number of books varied, none of these early redactions included *Bendōwa*.

For a period following Dōgen's death, a small number of Sōtō priests seem to have known of *Bendōwa*'s existence. It was then apparently forgotten, until its rediscovery in the Kambun period (1661–73) of the Tokugawa era. There are two or three versions, none of which are now verifiable, as to the manner and to the place in which this discovery took place. From what they tell us, it seems there was at least one copy of *Bendōwa* in Dōgen's own hand extant in Tokugawa times.

Bendōwa was first included in *Sbōbōgenzō* in the manuscript version compiled by the Tokugawa Sōtō priest Manzan Dōhaku⁴ (1635–1714) in 1684. Then in 1788 it was published in a single volume, woodblock edition by an abbot of Eihei-ji named Gentō Sokuchū⁵ (d. 1807). This was the first printed edition, the text of which, according to the preface, was based on Dōgen's manuscript copy. In most modern editions *Bendōwa* occupies a position at the beginning of *Sbōbōgenzō*, a location it first gained—by dint of being the earliest in point of time—in the chronologically arranged “Honzan” edition published between 1796 and 1811 by Eihei-ji, the head temple of the Sōtō sect.

Recently, a manuscript copy of *Bendōwa*, dated 1515 and based on a 1332 manuscript copy, was found in Shōbō-ji,⁶ a Sōtō temple in Iwate prefecture, by Ōkubo Dōshū. Since it differs considerably from previously known versions (for one thing, it has nineteen instead of eighteen questions and answers), it has been suggested Dōgen wrote more than one draft of the work, and that the Shōbō-ji text represents an early or perhaps original draft. Scholars generally agree that the other version, that included in the now standard ninety-five fascicle *Sbōbōgenzō*, represents a revised or final draft.

For the present translation we have taken the text contained in the recently

⁴ 叡山道白

⁵ 玄透即中

⁶ 正法寺

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published *Dōgen Zenji Zenshū*⁷ (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1969), edited by Dr. Ōkubo, as the basic text. It is based on the Gentō woodblock edition, critically revised in comparison with the Shōbō-ji text. Deviations from it are noted in the footnotes. Valuable suggestions for footnotes have been drawn from the many commentaries that have appeared since mid-Tokugawa times. Those found to be of particular value are: Nishiari Bokusan, *Sbōbōgenzō keitoki*⁸ (Tokyo: Yoyogi Shoin, 1941); Etō Sokuō, *Sbōbōgenzō jōsetsu*⁹ (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1959); *Sbōbōgenzō zuimonki, Sbōbōgenzō bendōwa, bōka*,¹⁰ ed. Nishio Minoru, *Koten nihon bungaku zenshū 14* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1964); and *Sbōbōgenzō, Sbōbōgenzō zuimonki*,¹¹ ed. Nishio Minoru et al., *Nihon koten bungaku taikai 81* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965). A partial English translation may be found in Masunaga Reihō, *The Soto Approach to Zen* (Tokyo: Layman Buddhist Society Press, 1958), pp. 133–161.

7 道元禪師全集

8 正法眼藏啓迪

9 正法眼藏序說

10 正法眼藏隨聞記 正法眼藏辨道話、他

11 正法眼藏、正法眼藏隨聞記

TRANSLATION

Buddha-tathāgatas¹ all have a wonderful means, which is unexcelled and free from human agency,² for transmitting the wondrous Dharma³ from one to another without alteration⁴ and realizing⁵ supreme and complete awakening.⁶ That it is only transmitted without deviation from buddha to buddha is due to the *jijuyū* samādhi,⁷ which is its touchstone.

Bendōwa 辨道話 means literally "Discourse on Negotiating the Way," with the characters *bendō* signifying "to carry out religious practice." The literal meaning of *ben* 辨 is "to transact," "to negotiate," "to put forth effort." "Dō" 道 is "Way" or "Tao," in this case indicating the Buddha Dharma.

¹ The terms *buddha* and *tathāgata* are here interchangeable. Dōgen often employs such near-duplicatives for emphasis. Tathāgata is one of the ten epithets used to describe buddhas; one who has "come from true suchness (Truth)." Here it is all buddhas in the ten directions of the universe, all tathāgatas of the three periods. For Dōgen, buddha-tathāgatas are all those who practice in the Buddha Way. In the present translation, "the Buddha" and "the Tathāgata" indicate the historical Buddha Śākyamuni.

² Free from human agency; *mui* 無為.

³ Dharma (*bō* 法); Truth, Law, the doctrine and teaching of the Buddha, Buddhism. In the present translation, "Dharma" refers to Truth, while "dharma(s)" refers to things, the elements of existence, phenomena.

⁴ The direct transmission from one to another without alteration (單傳 *tanden*). Buddhas transmit the undifferentiated Dharma from one to another, as water is passed from one bowl to another. For Dōgen, this is *yūibutsu yōbutsu* (唯佛與佛 "only buddha and buddha"), only between buddha and buddha can Truth be transmitted.

⁵ For Dōgen, "realize" (*shō* 證) implies testifying to, proving, confirming the highest Truth in oneself; the supreme enlightenment.

⁶ *anoku bodai*; 阿耨菩提 an abbreviation of a Chinese translation of *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*; perfect enlightenment, the unsurpassed wisdom of buddhas.

⁷ *Jijuyū* 自受用 means that an awakened one "receives" (*ju*) and "uses" (*yū*) the joy of awakening "in himself" (*ji*). *Jijuyū* samādhi thus refers to the samādhi in which this is realized and sustained. It is said Śākyamuni was immersed in the joy of enlightenment following his attainment. This self-enjoyment of one's awakening is *jijuyū*, and is distinguished from *rajuyū* 他受用, the activity that has others receive and use the joy of their awakening, i.e., an activity of saving others. Here, however, *jijuyū* is not distinguished from*

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To disport oneself freely⁸ in this samādhi, the right entrance is proper sitting in zazen.⁹ This Dharma is amply present in every person, but unless one practices, it is not manifested, unless there is realization, it is not attained. It is not a question of one or many; let loose of it and it fills your hands.¹⁰ It is not bounded vertically or horizontally; speak it and it fills your mouth. Herein¹¹ buddhas are always dwelling as masters, leaving no perceptions in any sphere or direction; herein all living beings are functioning everlastingly, with no sphere or direction appearing in any of their perceptions.¹²

The negotiation of the Way with concentrated effort I now teach makes myriad dharmas¹³ exist in realization, and, by transcending realization,¹⁴ practices a total Reality. When you go over the barrier, casting off all bondages, you are not affected by such segmented distinctions.

* *rajuyū*. It is used in its absolute sense, which includes both *jijuyū* and *rajuyū*. For *jijuyū* in its absolute sense is the basic source of *rajuyū*, including *rajuyū* in its own development. For Dōgen, the *jijuyū* samādhi is zazen, because zazen is the fundamental practice that includes both self-awakening and awakening for all beings in the universe. It is a key concept in Dōgen's religious thought.

⁸ *yuge* 遊戯 (Skt: *vikrīdita*). Here we follow the Shōbō-ji text. *Dōgen Zenji Zenbū* has *yuke* 遊化, which would make the text read, "To wander and convert others in this samādhi."

⁹ *sanzen sanzen* 端坐參禪; i.e., correct sitting in the realm of *jijuyū* samādhi. *Sanzen* means "to practice Zen under a master," "to devote oneself to Zen." For Dōgen, "*sanzen* is zazen." (SBGZ *zazengi* 坐禪儀). "*Sanzen* is casting off body and mind." (SBGZ *gyōji II* 行持).

¹⁰ It can never be grasped by conscious striving, yet since it is inherent in you, if you let loose of it, it fills your hands.

¹¹ In the spiritual realm of *jijuyū* samādhi.

¹² This indicates the two aspects of *jijuyū* samādhi that are essentially inseparable: the aspect of buddhas who dwell in this samādhi, having no attachment to any sphere of the objective world; the aspect of all living beings who function in the same samādhi, whose perceptions are not limited by any sphere of the objective world. Here, *perceptions* are not only those of the five senses, but include those of the conscious mind as well.

¹³ *banpō* 萬法; "the ten thousand dharmas," i.e., all phenomenal existences.

¹⁴ *sbusturo* 出路. As long as one remains within realization after transcending the world of differentiation, complete liberation is unachieved. Complete liberation requires the transcending of realization itself, to enter into the world of differentiation again in order to save others. "Total Reality" (一如 *ichinyō*) indicates the absolute oneness of Reality or Suchness (*satbata*), contrasted here with "myriad dharmas."

After the desire to seek the Way awakened in me, I went to all parts of the country, calling upon religious teachers, until I chanced to encounter the priest Myōzen¹⁵ of Kennin-ji. Swiftly passed the frosts and flowers of the nine years I stayed with him. During that time I learned something of the manner of the Rinzai school. Myōzen, the chief disciple of the patriarch Eisai,¹⁶ was the only of Eisai's disciples who genuinely transmitted the supreme Buddha Dharma. None of the others could compare with him.

In addition, I proceeded to great Sung China, where I visited some of the leading priests of Liang-chê,¹⁷ and learned of the different characteristics of the Five Gates.¹⁸ Ultimately, I went to T'ai-pai peak¹⁹ and engaged in religious practice under the Zen master Ju-ching,²⁰ until I had resolved the one great matter of Zen practice for my entire life.²¹ After that, the first year of the Shê-ting period of the Sung [1228], I returned home.²² As soon as I arrived, I vowed

¹⁵ Butsujubō Myōzen 佛樹房明全 (1184-1225). Studied in Mount Hiei, later becoming Eisai's disciple in Kennin-ji. In 1223 he went to China with Dōgen and others and stayed until his death a little over two years later at T'ien-t'ung shan 天童山 (Tendō-san).

¹⁶ Myōan Eisai (also Yōsai) 明庵榮西 (1141-1215), is regarded as the founder of the Zen school in Japan; the first chief priest of Kennin-ji in Kyoto.

¹⁷ 兩浙; a circuit division that included all of what is now Che-kiang province, in addition to some areas adjacent to it. In T'ang and Sung times, this area on both sides of the Chien-tang river and Hangchow Bay was the location of the Five Mountains of the Chinese Zen school. T'ien-t'ung shan was situated on the eastern side.

¹⁸ 五門; the Five Houses, the principal schools or branches of Chinese Zen. See footnote 33.

¹⁹ T'ai-pai feng 太白峰 (Taihaku-hō); another name for the monastery-complex of T'ien-t'ung shan.

²⁰ T'ien-t'ung Ju-ching 天童如淨 (Tendō Nyojō, 1163-1228). In the Ts'ao-tung 曹洞 (Sōtō) line. See Oscar Benl, "Der Zen-Meister Dōgen in China," *Nachrichten*, 79-80 (1956), p. 69. Perhaps the most thorough account of Ju-ching is Itō Keidō, *Dōgen Zenji Kenkyū I* (Tokyo, 1939).

²¹ *Issbō sangaku no daiji* 一生參學の大事; i.e., the great matter of one's birth-and-death. Dōgen resolved this in the meditation hall of T'ien-t'ung monastery, upon hearing Ju-ching shout at a sleepy monk, "Zen practice must be casting off body and mind. By only sleeping what can you accomplish!" *Kenzeiki I* 建齋記 (Dainihon bukkyō zensho, Vol. 115, Tokyo, 1922).

²² 紹定 (1228-34). Dōgen actually reached Kyūshū on his way home in autumn of the previous year (1227). In 1228, the first year of Shê-ting, he was safely "home," that is, in Kyoto.

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to spread the Dharma for the salvation of all beings; it was like carrying a heavy burden upon my shoulders.

In spite of this, to await the time when the Buddha Dharma might be uplifted, liberating my desire for its spread,²³ I am temporarily attempting to follow the manner of prior masters,²⁴ drifting from place to place like a cloud or water-plant. Yet what of those who decide not to concern themselves with gain or glory, who try to put their aspiration for enlightenment above all else, and who would authentically practice the Buddha Way? Being led vainly astray by mistaken teachers, they may arbitrarily impede right understanding, fruitlessly become drunk with their own confusions, and immerse themselves for long years in the realm of delusion. How, therefore, will the right seed of *prajñā*²⁵ grow up in them? What chance have they to attain the great Way? Since I am now leading a drifting life, what mountain, or what stream should they visit [to find an authentic teacher]? It is out of compassion for this situation that I make the right Dharma of Buddhism known to them. This I do by gathering, writing down, and leaving behind for those who desire to practice and learn the Way, the customs and regulations of the Zen schools in great Sung China which I personally saw and heard and the profound teachings of their masters which I succeeded to and have observed. This is the true essence.²⁶

²³ Another interpretation would render, "I will unburden myself of this desire to spread the Buddha Dharma. To await the time it might be uplifted, I am . . ." However we have taken the inflection *sen* (*semu*) in *bōge sen* 放下せん as a connective form continuing into the following *gekijō no toki* 激揚のとき; *bōge* accordingly would mean "liberate" or "release" rather than "abandon." Dōgen's resolve to spread the Dharma would seem to be something he would be unable to abandon even if he wanted to; his burden would be lifted, his desire to spread the Dharma liberated, only when external conditions allowed for the uplifting of the Dharma.

²⁴ The sixth patriarch Hui-nēng 慧能 (Enō, 638–713) went to the south of China and lived in seclusion after receiving the Dharma transmission from the fifth patriarch. *Cbing-tē ch'uan-tēng lu* 5 景德傳燈錄 (*Keitoku dentōroku*). Seng-ts'an 僧璨 (Sōsan, d. 606), the third patriarch, is said to have spent more than ten years on Huan-kung mountain; later, during a period of Buddhist persecution, he took refuge on Mt. Ssu-k'ung. *Cbing-tē ch'uan-tēng lu* 3.

²⁵ *Prajñā* 般若 (Wisdom).

²⁶ I.e., of the right Dharma.

At the assembly on Vulture Peak the great teacher Śākyamuni Buddha imparted to Mahakāśyapa the Dharma which has since been rightly transmitted from patriarch to patriarch,²⁷ finally reaching Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma went to China and there imparted the Dharma to Hui-k'o.²⁸ This was the initial transmission of the Buddha Dharma to an eastern land [i.e. China]. In direct, personal transmission, it was thus handed down to the sixth patriarch Ta-chien.²⁹ At that time, the genuine Buddha Dharma, beyond doubt, actually had spread extensively in China, where it appeared in its essence, unaffected by ramifying doctrinal formulations. The sixth patriarch had two superior disciples, Huai-jang of Nan-yüeh and Hsing-ssu of Ch'ing-yüan.³⁰ Together they possessed and transmitted the Buddha-seal,³¹ masters both for men and for devas.³² As their two schools spread, they developed into the Five Gates; the Fa-yen, Kuei-yang, Ts'ao-tung, Yün-mên and Lin-chi schools.³³ At present in the empire of the great Sung, only the Lin-chi school is found throughout the

²⁷ On Vulture Peak (Skt: *Gr̥dhrakūṭa*) Brahmā came and implored the Buddha to preach for the benefit of sentient beings. The Buddha held out a lotus flower before the assembly of devas and men, but none of them understood him except Mahakāśyapa, who smiled. Then the Buddha exclaimed, "I have the right Dharma eye, the wondrous Mind of nirvana . . . this I entrust to you Kāśyapa." According to the Zen school, this marks the beginning of the Zen transmission. This account, together with those telling of the Dharma transmission up to Hui-nêng, may be found in the *Lien-têng hui-yao* 聯燈會要 *Reitō eyō* [Zoku-zōkyō 2乙: 9. 3. 221].

²⁸ Hui-k'o 慧可 (Eka, 487-593); the second Zen patriarch.

²⁹ Ta-chien 大鑿 is one of the posthumous titles of Hui-nêng.

³⁰ Nan-yüeh Huai-jang 南嶽懷讓 (Nangaku Ejō, 677-744). Ch'ing-yüan Hsing-ssu 青原行思 (Seigen Gyōshi, d. 740). From Nan-yüeh and Ch'ing-yüan derive the Five Schools of Zen.

³¹ The Zen school, which is often called the "Buddha-mind sect," is said to "transmit mind by mind" 以心傳心. A master gives his *insha* ("seal of approval") to a disciple when he finds the disciple's mind in complete accord with his own. Buddha-seal (Buddha-mind seal, mind-seal) is the sign of the true transmission of the Buddha-mind, and may thus, as in this case, refer to the transmission of realization.

³² Devas 天 (*ten*). Those beings living in the heavenly realms, one of the six planes in which living beings transmigrate. The deva realm is the highest of the six realms, although its residents are in no sense omniscient or omnipotent, nor are they yet enlightened.

³³ Fa-yen 法眼 (Hōgen); Kuei-yang 歸仰 (Igyō); Ts'ao-tung 曹洞 (Sōtō); Yün-mên 雲門 (Ummon); Lin-chi 臨濟 (Rinzai).

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country. Though each of their Five Gates has its own peculiarities, they are all reducible to one Buddha-mind seal.³⁴

Beginning in the Latter Han dynasty in China, Buddhist scriptures were transmitted from the west and spread over the entire empire.³⁵ Yet it was never clearly determined which of the various teachings was best. After the Bodhi-dharma came from the west, these entangling debates were immediately severed at their roots, and the one Buddha Dharma, free from all impurity, spread. We must aspire for the same thing to occur in our own country as well.

Patriarchs and buddhas, who have maintained the Buddha Dharma, all have held that practice based upon proper sitting in *zazen* in *jijūyū* samādhi was the right path through which their enlightenment opened. In India and China, those who have gained enlightenment have all followed in this way of practice. It is based upon the right transmission of the wonderful means in private encounter from master to disciple, and their receiving and maintaining of its authentic essence.

According to the authentic tradition of Buddhism, this Buddha Dharma, transmitted rightly and directly from one to another,³⁶ is the supreme of the supreme. From the first time you meet your master and receive his teaching, you have no need for either incense-offerings, homage-paying, nembutsu, penance disciplines, or silent sutra-readings; only cast off body and mind in *zazen*.³⁷

³⁴ I.e., because there can be no deviation in the one Buddha-mind seal. According to Dōgen's Chinese diary, *Hōkyōki* 宝慶記, Dōgen's master Ju-ching, who belonged to the Ts'ao-tung tradition, denied the validity of the Five Houses appellation, taking Zen prior to the division into "Houses" as authentic. In the *Butsudō* 佛道 book of SBGZ, Dōgen writes, "Before I encountered my late master, my aim was the study of the profundities of the Five Schools. After encountering him, I came to know clearly that the 'Five Schools' appellation is irrelevant."

³⁵ The Latter Han Dynasty lasted A.D. 25-220. In the year 67, the Indian monks Kāśyapa-mātāṅga and Gobharana (Dharmarakṣa) arrived in Lo-yang with envoys sent by Emperor Ming Ti, and there translated (or possibly wrote) the *Sutra of Forty-two Sections*.

³⁶ I. e., transmission of the right Buddha Dharma, at first hand in its true form without recourse to *upāya*.

³⁷ According to the *Hōkyōki*, Dōgen received the following personal teaching from Ju-ching: "Commitment to Zen is casting off body and mind. You have no need for incense offerings, homage-paying, nembutsu, penance disciplines, or silent sutra readings; just sit singlemindedly."

When even for a short period of time you sit properly in samādhi, imprinting the Buddha-seal in your three activities [deeds, words, and thought],³⁸ each and every thing excluding none is the Buddha-seal, and all space without exception is enlightenment. Accordingly, it makes buddha-tathāgatas all increase the Dharma-joy of their original source,³⁹ and renew the adornments of the Way of enlightenment. Then, when all classes of all beings in the ten directions of the universe—the hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts, and animals; the fighting demons, men, and devas⁴⁰—all together at one time being bright and pure in body and mind, realize the stage of absolute emancipation and reveal their original aspect, at that time all things together come to realization in themselves of the true enlightenment of the Buddha, utilize the Buddha-body,⁴¹ immediately leap the confines of this personal enlightenment, sit properly beneath the kingly Tree of Enlightenment,⁴² turn simultaneously the great and utterly incomparable Dharma wheel,⁴³ and expound the ultimate and profound prajñā free from all human agency.

Since,⁴⁴ moreover, these enlightened ones in their turn enter into the way of imperceptible mutual assistance,⁴⁵ the man in zazen without fail casts off body and mind, severs the heretofore disordered and defiled thoughts and views emanating from his discriminating consciousness, conforms totally in himself

³⁸ 三業; the three categories of actions, by body, mouth, and mind that determine one's karma.

³⁹ *Honji* 本地: the fundamental ground of buddha-tathāgatas, from which they come and appear (*suijaku* 垂迹). It here refers to the spiritual realm of the *jijūyū* samādhi.

⁴⁰ The text has "the ten-direction universe, three paths and six ways . . ." that is, all beings of the universe in all directions (i.e., the eight points of the compass and the nadir and the zenith); the three paths (三途) being the Buddhist hells (*naraka*), the realms of animals (*tiryagyoni*), and hungry ghosts (*preta*). The six ways (六道) consist of the above three paths, and the realms of the fighting demons (*asura*), men, and devas.

⁴¹ "All things . . . utilize the Buddha-body (Buddhakāya)" expresses the same idea as ". . . all living beings are functioning everlastingly [in *jijūyū* samādhi]." (page 128).

⁴² The Bodhi tree, under which the Buddha attained enlightenment.

⁴³ I.e., to preach Buddha-truth.

⁴⁴ The previous paragraph describes the merits one zazen sitting imparts to others; now, those merits return to the zazen practitioner himself. This is Dōgen's idea of *dōji jōdō* (同時成道), simultaneous attainment of the Way.

⁴⁵ I.e., unknowable by the human consciousness.

to the genuine Buddha Dharma, and assists universally in performing the work of buddhas⁴⁶ at each of the various places the buddha-tathāgatas teach, that are as infinitely numberless as the smallest atom-particles—imparting universally the *ki* transcending buddha, vigorously uplifting the Dharma (*bō*) transcending buddha.⁴⁷ Then the land, the trees and grasses, fences and walls, tiles and pebbles, all the various things in the ten directions, perform the work of buddhas. Because of this, all persons who share in the wind and water benefits⁴⁸ thus produced receive the unperceived help of the buddhas' wonderful and incomprehensible teaching and guidance, and all manifest their inherent enlightenment. Since all who receive and employ this fire and water turn round and round the teaching of original enlightenment, all who dwell and talk together with them also join with one another in possessing inexhaustible Buddha-virtue, causing it to spread and spread ever wider, circulating the inexhaustible, unceasing, incomprehensible, and immeasurable Buddha Dharma, inside and outside throughout the universe. Yet such things are not mingled in the perceptions of one sitting in zazen, because [this⁴⁹ occurs] in the stillness of samādhi beyond human artifice, and is in itself realization. If practice and realization were two different stages as ordinary people consider them to be,

⁴⁶ All actions of enlightened practitioners, especially those of preaching to and enlightening others, are buddha-work (*butsuji* 佛事). For Dōgen, doing zazen is buddha-work.

⁴⁷ The *ki* transcending (or going beyond) buddha (*butsukōjō* 佛向上): True buddha is not abiding in buddha, but going beyond buddha to save others, free from the concepts and consciousness of buddha. There is no buddha apart from transcending buddha. In the SBGZ book entitled *Butsukōjōji* (佛向上事), Dōgen writes that “the so-called matter of transcending buddha is attaining buddha, proceeding, and seeing (into) buddha anew.” For Dōgen, “seeing buddha” 見佛 is “becoming buddha” 成佛. (SBGZ *Beika* 機事). Ultimately, transcending buddha is *jijnyū* samādhi.

Ki 機 is used here with *bō* 法. Simply stated, *ki* refers to the zazen-practicer, *bō* is the immutable Dharma, Reality. *Ki* is a spring, the motive principle, potentiality; occasion and opportunity. It is thus the dynamic, motive principle of all things of the phenomenal world. All this turns upon the zazen practitioner, who, by doing zazen, imparts this *ki* to all things. The Dharma is unchanging, and can manifest itself only in a dynamic situation in which the occasion is ripe and conditions are all provided.

⁴⁸ “Wind and water” (and the following “water and fire”) represent the four elements of which all things are made: earth, water, fire, and wind (or air). They permeate the phenomenal universe, and are continually being manifested spontaneously.

⁴⁹ I.e., the relationships of “unperceived mutual assistance” described above.

the one sitting in zazen and things should perceive each other.⁵⁰ To be associated with perceptions is not the mark of realization, because the mark of realization is to be beyond such illusions.

Moreover, although in realization the mind [of the zazen practitioner] and its objects both arise and disappear within the stillness of samādhi, since it occurs within the sphere of *jijuyū*, it does not disturb a single mote of dust, nor infringe upon a single phenomenon.⁵¹ It does great and wide-ranging buddha-work, and performs the exceedingly profound, recondite activities of preaching and enlightening. The trees, grasses, and land involved in this all emit a bright and shining light, and preach the profound and incomprehensible Dharma; and it is endless. Trees and grasses, wall and fence expound and exalt the Dharma for the sake of ordinary people, sages, and all living beings. Ordinary people, sages, and all living beings in turn preach and exalt the Dharma for the sake of trees, grasses, wall and fence. The dimension of self-enlightenment *qua* enlightening others⁵² basically is fully replete with the characteristics of realization, and causes the principle of realization to function unceasingly.

Because of this, when even just one person, at one time, sits in zazen, he

⁵⁰ The text has *ono-ono aikakuchi subekinari*, ("each should perceive the other"), which is taken by most commentaries as referring to "practice and realization" in the previous clause. However, since the present paragraph is concerned with the functioning of "imperceptible mutual assistance" and the circulation of the Buddha Dharma between man in zazen and the enlightened things around him, it has seemed more appropriate to interpret *ono-ono* as referring to the zazen practitioner and the things of the universe. Dōgen mentions the view that practice and realization are two different stages simply because he is attempting, in contrast to this view, to emphasize "direct realization" in which "imperceptible mutual assistance" takes place without things being "mingled in the perceptions of one sitting in zazen."

⁵¹ Samādhi is not dead stillness without perceptions or consciousness. The mind (perceptions and consciousness) of the zazen practitioner and its objects (the sphere of mind; 境 *kyō*) both arise and disappear more clearly than in an ordinary state. Since this occurs in the dimension of *jijuyū* samādhi, the arising and disappearing of mind and its object do not project upon any thing. This is the real stillness of samādhi, in which the zazen practitioner and things become one.

⁵² *Jikaku kakusa* 自覺覺他. Without enlightening others there is no self-enlightenment, and vice versa. This is the essence of Mahayana Buddhism, realized for Dōgen in the *jijuyū* samādhi that includes *tajuyū* samādhi (See footnote 7).

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becomes, imperceptively, one with each and all of the myriad things, and permeates completely all time, so that within the limitless universe, throughout past, future, and present, he is performing the eternal and ceaseless work of guiding beings to enlightenment. It is, for each and every thing, one and the same undifferentiated practice, and undifferentiated realization.⁵³ Only this is not limited to the practice of sitting alone; the sound that issues from the striking of emptiness is an endless and wondrous voice that resounds before and after the fall of the hammer.⁵⁴ And this is not all the practice of zazen does. Each and every thing is, in its original aspect, provided original practice—it cannot be measured or comprehended.

You must know that even if all the incalculable buddhas in the ten directions, as countless as are the sands of the Ganges, mustered all their might together, and by means of buddha-wisdom attempted to measure and totally know the merit of the zazen of a single person, yet they could not know the whole of its measure.

[Questions and Answers]

Question 1: Now I have heard and understand the sublime merits of zazen. [However] an unthinking person might have doubts and say, "There are many entrances to the Buddha Dharma. What is the reason for your advocacy of zazen alone?"

Answer 1: Because it is the right entrance to the Buddha Dharma.

Question 2: Why is it alone the right entrance?

Answer 2: The great teacher Śākyamuni Buddha, beyond doubt, rightly transmitted [zazen as] the wonderful means for attaining the Way. Also, the tathāgatas of the three periods⁵⁵ all attain the Way through zazen. That is

⁵³ This refers to the idea of self-enlightenment-*qua*-enlightening others.

⁵⁴ The merits of enlightenment are realized not only in zazen, but also before and after. Zazen is essential for realizing *śūnyatā* (emptiness), but the merits of *śūnyatā* are beyond zazen, and *śūnyatā* realized in and through zazen is not produced by zazen. From the beginningless beginning to the endless end emptiness is always emptiness, the fundamental reality of the universe. Its "wondrous voice" must be heard even before and after zazen.

⁵⁵ I.e., past, present, and future.

the reason they have transmitted it from one to another as the right entrance. That is not all. Patriarchs from the western skies of India to the eastern earth of China all have gained the Way through zazen. Therefore I now point it out to men and devas as the right entrance.

Question 3: It may be that [zazen as the right entrance] derives from the right transmission of the Tathāgata's wonderful means, or from following in the path of the patriarchs. It is truly beyond the minds of ordinary men. Though it may be so, [ordinary men believe] reciting sutras and nembutsu should naturally be causes effecting satori. But to sit idly, doing nothing—how can that be of help in gaining satori?

Answer 3: By picturing as you did a moment ago the unsurpassed, great Dharma and the samādhi of the buddhas as sitting idly and doing nothing, you malign the Great Vehicle.⁵⁶ Your illusion is indeed profound; it is like being in the middle of a great ocean and saying there is no water. Thankfully, buddhas are already sitting serenely in *jijuyu* samādhi. Does this not constitute extensive merit? It is to be pitied that your eye is not yet opened, that your mind is still drunk.

The spiritual realm of buddhas is totally incomprehensible. It is not to be reached by the workings of the mind; still less can it be known by a man of disbelief or inferior intelligence. Only a person of great capacity based on right faith is able to enter here. Even were a person of disbelief given teachings of it, he would find it difficult to receive them. Even on Vulture Peak there were some the Buddha allowed to leave.⁵⁷ If right faith arises in your mind, you should practice religious discipline and study under a master. If it does not arise, you should cease for a while, and regret the fact of not receiving the benefits of the Dharma from the past.⁵⁸

Besides, what do you know of the merits gained by such practices as sutra-

⁵⁶ I.e., the Mahayana.

⁵⁷ It is related in the *Hoben* section of the Lotus Sutra that as Śākyamuni was about to preach the most sublime and difficult Dharma teaching at the request of Śāriputra, nuns and monks and lay men and women numbering five thousand said they did not wish to hear a teaching different from what they had hitherto understood, and they began to leave. Śākyamuni made no move to stop them, saying that those who wished to leave might do so.

⁵⁸ I.e., from a previous existence.

recitation and nembutsu? To think merely moving your tongue or raising your voice has the merit of buddha-work is a truly futile notion. To attempt to compare them to the Buddha Dharma makes you all the more remote from it. Moreover, the opening of sutra-books should be to make clear to you the teaching set forth by the Buddha concerning the principles of the practices for sudden and gradual enlightenment,⁵⁹ and to assure realization if you practice according to that teaching. It should not be uselessly to waste yourself in speculations and discriminations, and then to liken them to merits that will gain you enlightenment. Intending to attain the Buddha Way by foolishly working your lips in incessant thousand or ten thousand-fold recitations is just like pointing the thills of your cart north when you want to go south, or like trying to fit a square piece of wood into a round hole. To read the words, unaware of the way of practice, is just like reading a medical prescription and overlooking to mix the compounds for it; it will be altogether worthless. Lifting your voice in endless recitation is like the frogs in the spring fields, croaking from morning to nightfall; no less than before, without benefit. How much more difficult is it to relinquish such things for those deeply deluded by profit and fame, this because of the extreme profundity of their covetousness. Such people were to be found in ancient times; there is no reason they should not be around today. They are especially pitiful.

Only you must know without fail that the wondrous Dharma of the Seven Buddhas⁶⁰ can be received and maintained with its genuine essence manifested if a practitioner whose mind is in accord with enlightenment closely follows and receives the right transmission from a clear-minded master who has attained the Way. There is no way for this to be known by a priest who studies only words. Therefore, you should have done with these uncertainties and illusions, negotiate the Way in zazen under the guidance of a true teacher, and gain complete realization of the *jijūyū* samādhi of the buddhas.

Question 4: The teachings of both the Hokke and Kegon schools that have been transmitted in Japan to the present time are the ultimate of the Mahayana

⁵⁹ According to their spiritual capacity, some attain enlightenment quickly, and others gradually. The Buddha therefore preached two different types of practice.

⁶⁰ The Seven Buddhas of the Past, i.e., Śākyamuni and the six Buddhas that appeared directly prior to him in the remote past. *Chodang chip* 祖堂集 (*Sodō-shū*).

teaching.⁶¹ Need I mention teachings like that of the Shingon sect, which was transmitted personally by Vairocana Buddha to Vajrasattva, and thus handed down from master to disciple without alteration.⁶² Centering its exposition upon the sayings “the mind in itself is buddha” and “this very mind attains Buddhahood,”⁶³ it teaches that the genuine enlightenment of the Five Buddhas⁶⁴ is attained in a single sitting, without going through many kalpas of practice. It could perhaps be termed the Buddha Dharma’s utmost sublimity. In light of this, what are the advantages of the practice you now speak of, that you advance it alone, ignoring all others?

Answer 4: You should know that for a Buddhist it is not a matter of debating the superiority or inferiority of one teaching or another, or of choosing the depth or superficiality of the teaching that matters; all we have to know is whether the practice is authentic or not. Men have flowed into the Buddha Way, drawn by grasses and flowers, mountains and running water; holding earth, rocks, sand, and pebbles they have grasped completely the Buddha-seal. Need it be said, vast and great words are imprinted on all things in nature, and are still abundant. A single mote of dust also is enough to turn

⁶¹ The Hokke (Lotus) school refers to the Tendai school, established in Japan by Saichō 最澄, who studied the Chinese T’ien-tai doctrines in China and brought them back to Japan. Dōgen himself studied at the school’s headquarters on Mt. Hiei before undergoing practice with Myōzen. The Kegon school (華嚴 Hua-yen) was introduced into Japan during the Nara period (646–794) by Chinese and Korean monks. An important school especially in Nara and Heian times.

⁶² Kūkai 空海 (774–835), better known as Kōbō Daishi, went to China and studied under the fourth patriarch of the Chên-yen (真言 Shingon) sect, returning to Japan to found the Japanese Shingon sect. Shingon’s chief object of worship is Vairocana Buddha (大日如來 Dainichi Nyorai), the Great Sun Buddha. Shingon tradition has the first transmission from Vairocana to Vajrasattva, through Nāgārjuna to Kōbō Daishi.

⁶³ I.e., in this earthly existence. It should be mentioned that although we have followed the text in using “mind” 心 (*shin*) here and in the above “the mind in itself is buddha,” it would be more appropriate to follow the “Honzan” text, which uses the word “body” 身 (*shin*), since the Shingon sect asserts that it is this *body* of ours that becomes buddha: *sokushin-jōbutsu* (即身成佛).

⁶⁴ In Shingon, Dainichi Nyorai is the center of worship, with four Buddhas at his four quarters. There are two sets of these, in the Vajradhātu (Diamond World) and in the Garbhadhātu (Wombstore World).

the great Dharma wheel. Because of this, the words "the mind in itself is buddha" are but the moon in the water; the heart of "sitting itself is attaining buddha" is likewise a reflection in a mirror. Do not get caught up in skillful words. Now, to advance the practice of direct realization of enlightenment, I indicate to men the wondrous way buddhas and patriarchs have of transmitting it from one to another, with the intention that they should become real men of the Way.

Moreover, in the receiving and transmitting of the Buddha Dharma it is absolutely necessary to take as teacher one who is stamped with realization. A word-counting scholar will not do, for that would be like one blind man leading a troupe of blind men. Now, all students who follow the right transmission of buddhas and tathāgatas are directed to revere the clear-sighted master who has attained Way and is in accord with realization, and to maintain the Buddha Dharma. Since this is so, the spirits of the realms of light and darkness⁶⁵ also come to him and take refuge; enlightened Arhats⁶⁶ as well come to seek the Dharma. None are excluded from being taught the means for illuminating the Mind. This is something unheard of in other teachings. Followers of Buddha should simply learn the Buddha Dharma.

You should also know that basically we lack nothing of highest enlightenment. Though we are forever endowed with it, since we are unable to be in complete accord with it we have a way of giving rise to random intellections, and by chasing them as if they were real,⁶⁷ we stumble vainly on the great Way. Because of these intellections, flowers in the air⁶⁸ of various kinds appear; thoughts of a twelve-linked chain of transmigration, or of realms of twenty-five forms of existence; views of three vehicles, five vehicles, buddha, no-buddha⁶⁹

⁶⁵ The spirit realms 神道 (*shindo*) are the transmigratory realms of devas, *asuras*, and *pretas*. The spirits of light are those of the deva-worlds, the dark spirits belong to the latter two.

⁶⁶ Those who have attained the fourth and highest stage in Theravāda Buddhism.

⁶⁷ *Dōgen Zenji Zenshū* has "thinking" (*omou*) for "chasing" (*ou*). Here we follow the *Gentō* text.

⁶⁸ 空華 *kūge*. Originally, flakes seen by those with eye disease; used in Buddhism to express what is imaginary and without basis in reality.

⁶⁹ The 12-linked chain of transmigration (十二輪轉) is the 12 causal links that bring about transmigration throughout the three worlds of past, present, and future. The 25^o

—they are endless. You should not think that learning such intellectualizations is the right path of practice in the Buddha Dharma. But when you now totally cast aside all things and single-mindedly do zazen in accordance with the Buddha-seal, then beyond the realms of illusion and enlightenment, sentiments and calculations, untouched by the difference of unenlightened and enlightened, you immediately walk at ease beyond established forms and regulations, and employ great enlightenment. What have those enmeshed in the traps and snares of words and letters to compare to this?

Question 5: Concentration (*samādhi*) is one of the three learnings;⁷⁰ meditation (*dhyāna*) is one of the six paramitas.⁷¹ Both of them are learned and practiced by all bodhisattvas from the beginning of their religious life, regardless of whether they are bright or dull-witted. The zazen you now preach would probably be included here as well. On what grounds do you say that the right Dharma of the Tathāgata is concentrated in zazen?

Answer 5: Your question is evoked because the appellation “Zen Sect” has been given to the right Dharma eye, the incomparable and great Dharma that is the Tathāgata’s one great matter.⁷²

Bear this well in mind: the appellation “Zen Sect” is met with in China eastward; it is not known in India. When the great teacher Bodhidharma was at the Shao-lin monastery of Sung-shan doing zazen facing a wall for nine years, the priests and laymen there, not knowing yet of the Buddha’s right Dharma, initially said he was an Indian monk who placed special emphasis on zazen.

*abodes of existence (二十五有) are the 25 divisions—including 14 desire realms, 7 realms of form, and 4 formless realms—in which unenlightened sentient beings transmigrate. The three vehicles are those which carry living beings across samsara (birth-and-death) to the shores of nirvana: *śrāvaka* (the hearer), *pratyeka-buddha* (the self-enlightened), and bodhisattva. The five vehicles are the three vehicles, man, and deva. “Vehicles” are teachings that bring people to each stage of attainment.

⁷⁰ The three forms of Buddhist learning: discipline (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*), thought to be the fundamental “studies” every Buddhist practitioner must undertake.

⁷¹ The six perfections or practices by which enlightenment can be attained: donation, precept-keeping, perseverance, assiduity, meditation, and wisdom.

⁷² The important matter for which the Tathāgata appeared in the world: man’s birth-and-death. See footnote 21.

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Afterward, for generation after generation, each of the patriarchs devoted himself to zazen exclusively. Seeing this, and not knowing the true circumstances, unthinking laymen spoke loosely of a "Zazen Sect." At present, the word *za* has been dropped and we speak of the Zen sect. Its essence is made clear in the recorded sayings of the patriarchs. Zazen should not be equated with the *dhyāna* or *samādhi* of the six paramitas or three learnings.

It is altogether clear this is the legitimate idea of the Buddha Dharma that has been directly transmitted. Many years ago, during the ceremony on Vulture Peak, the Tathāgata entrusted the right Dharma eye, wondrous mind of nirvana, to Mahākāśyapa alone. Some among the deva multitude now present in the heavens actually witnessed the ceremony.⁷³ [Therefore] there is no reason for any doubt. The Buddha Dharma as a matter of course is forever protected and maintained by the deva multitude; their efforts never slacken.

You may know without doubt that this [zazen] is the absolute way of the Buddha Dharma. It is incomparable.

Question 6: Why should Buddhists advocate Zen meditation, relying on sitting alone among the four attitudes (going, standing, sitting, lying) for entering realization?

Answer 6: It would not be possible to investigate thoroughly the way in which buddhas, one after another from long in the past, have practiced and entered realization. If you seek a reason for their having done this, you should know it is simply because it is the way employed by Buddhists. Reasons should not be sought elsewhere. Yet patriarchs have extolled it, saying that zazen in itself is the Dharma gate of repose and joy. In truth, is this not because among the four attitudes, sitting is joyful bliss? Indeed, this is not the way of practice of one or two buddhas. It is the way of all buddhas and all patriarchs.

Question 7: As to the practice of zazen, those who have not yet realized the Buddha Dharma in themselves can attain that realization through negotiating

⁷³ See footnote 27. The Buddha transmitted his teaching to Mahākāśyapa in the presence of a congregation of men and devas. For the devas known as *trāyastriṃśā* (仞利天 *tōriten*) one year is equal to 500 years in the human realm, making it possible for them to be still present in their heavenly realm.

the Way in zazen. [But] for those who have already realized the Buddha's right Dharma, what would be the use of zazen?

Answer 7: Although it is said one should not relate dreams in the presence of fools, or place boat-poles in the hands of woodsmen, I will give further instruction.

To think practice and realization are not one is a heretical view. In the Buddha Dharma, practice and realization are identical. Because one's present practice is practice in realization, one's initial negotiation of the Way in itself is the whole of original realization. Thus, even while one is directed to practice, he is told not to anticipate realization apart from practice, because practice points directly to original realization. As it is already realization in practice, realization is endless; as it is practice in realization, practice is beginningless. Thus Śākyamuni and Mahākāśyapa both were taken and used by practice within realization. Bodhidharma and patriarch Hui-neng likewise were drawn in and turned by practice in realization. The way of maintaining the Buddha Dharma has always been like this.

Practice is from its outset inseparable from realization; since fortunately we [practicers] transmit in ourselves our own wondrous practice, our negotiation of the Way as beginners acquires our own inherent original realization in a realm free of human agency. You should know that, in order to keep us from defiling this realization that is inseparable from practice, buddhas and patriarchs teach unceasingly that we must not abate our practice. If we cast off the wondrous practice, original realization fills our hands; if we transcend original realization, wondrous practice permeates our body.

I personally saw in great Sung China Zen monasteries in many areas, each built to include a meditation hall, wherein from five or six hundred, to one or two thousand monks were housed and encouraged to devote themselves to zazen day and night. The abbots of these monasteries, teachers who transmit the seal of the Buddha-mind, told me when I asked for the essence of Buddhism, that practice and realization are not two stages.

For this reason, I urge not only the practicers who come to me, but those of high ability who seek the Dharma, and those who desire the truth in the Buddha Dharma, without choosing between beginner and experienced practicer, without taking into account whether someone is enlightened or not, according to

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the teachings of buddhas and patriarchs, to follow the Way of the masters of Zen and to negotiate the Way in zazen.

Have you not heard that a patriarch has said, "It is not that there is no practice or realization, only that you must not contaminate them [by attaching to them]." ⁷⁴ Another has said, "Those who see the Way practice the Way." ⁷⁵ What is to be understood is that one must practice in realization.

Question 8: Why have the teachers who have spread Buddhism in former times in our country, ⁷⁶ when they went to China and became transmitters of the Dharma, transmitted only the doctrine and ignored zazen?

Answer 8: The teachers of men in the past did not transmit this Dharma [zazen] because the opportunity was not yet ripe for it.

Question 9: Did those teachers of earlier times comprehend this Dharma?

Answer 9: If they had comprehended it, they would have made it known.

Question 10: Some have said: "Do not grieve over birth-and-death. There is a way to rid yourself of birth-and-death promptly, by knowing the reason for the eternal immutability of the so-called mind-nature. The gist here is that although once the body is born it is inevitably destined to die, this mind-nature can never perish. If you realize that the mind-nature, which is not subject to birth-and-death, exists in your own body, you make it your fundamental nature. Therefore, the body is its temporary form, and it dies here and lives there, without termination. [Yet] the mind is forever immutable, unchanging throughout past, present, and future. It is said that to know this is to be free from birth-and-death. Those who know it will put a final end to the birth-and-death hitherto in effect, and when their body dies they enter the ocean of the *bbūtataṣṭatā*.⁷⁷ As they stream into this ocean they are endowed with wondrous virtue, like that of buddha-tathāgatas.

⁷⁴ Nan-yüeh Huai-jiang, in *Cbing-tê ch'uan-têng lu* 5.

⁷⁵ Pen-ching of Ssu-k'ung shan 司空山本淨 (Honjō of Shikūsan, 667-761), *Cbing-tê ch'uan-têng lu* 5.

⁷⁶ E. g., Kūkai and Saichō.

⁷⁷ The ocean of the *bbūtataṣṭatā* (性海 *shōkai*); the true nature of all things, termed "ocean" because of its all-containing, absolute nature.

Even if you understood this in your present existence, because your body is composed of the erroneous behavior of your past existences, you are different from the saints. Those who fail to grasp this are ever caught up in birth-and-death. Therefore, one must simply know without delay the significance of the mind-nature's immutability. What can come of spending one's whole life sitting quietly, doing nothing?" Do you think such an idea is truly in accord with the Way of buddhas and patriarchs?

Answer 10: The view you have just expounded is definitely not the Buddha Dharma, but the view of the Senika heresy.⁷⁸

This heresy holds that in one's body there is a spiritual intelligence. As occasions arise this intelligence readily discriminates likes and dislikes, yes and no; it knows pain and irritation, suffering and pleasure. They all proceed from this spiritual intelligence. However, when the body perishes this spiritual nature separates from the body and is reborn in another place. Therefore, while it seems to perish here, it has life elsewhere, and thus is ever immutable, never perishing. Such is the view of the Senika heresy.

But to learn this view and try to set it up as the Buddha Dharma is more foolish than picking up a roof tile or pebble and supposing it to be a golden jewel. The deplorability of such a foolish illusion is without parallel. Hui-chung⁷⁹ of the T'ang dynasty warned strongly against it. Is it not foolish to allow this false view—that the mind abides and the form perishes—to be equated with the wondrous Dharma of the buddhas; while thus producing the fundamental cause of birth-and-death to think you are freed from birth-and-death? It is to be greatly pitied. Just recognize that it is a false, non-Buddhist view, and do not lend your ear to it.

I am compelled by the nature of the matter, as well as for compassion's sake, to deliver you from your mistaken understanding. You should know that the Buddha Dharma from the first preaches that body and mind are not

⁷⁸ The Senika heresy (先尼外道 *senigedo*) was a heretical thought that appeared during the Buddha's lifetime, emphasizing the concept of a permanent self. It appears in the Nirvana Sutra, chapter 39.

⁷⁹ Nan-yang Hui-chung 南陽慧忠 (Nanyo Echū, 683–769). In the 28th chapter of the *Ching-tê ch'uan-t'eng lu*, the T'ang Zen master Hui-chung cautions a monk against this heresy. Dōgen deals with this again in *SBGZ sokuibirzebutsu* 即心是佛.

two, that substance and form are not two. This is equally known in India and in China, and there can be no doubt about it. Need I mention that in the [Buddhist] teaching of immutability all things are immutable, regardless of the difference between body and mind. In the [Buddhist] teaching of perishability all things are perishable, regardless of the difference of substance and form.⁸⁰ In this light, why speak of the body perishing and the mind abiding? Is it not contrary to the right and fundamental principle? Not only that, you must realize birth-and-death is in and of itself nirvana. Buddhism has never spoken of nirvana apart from birth-and-death. Indeed, by understanding that the mind, separated from the body, is immutable, you mistakenly estimate that it is the Buddha-wisdom free from birth-and-death. Yet the very mind that makes this discriminatory judgement is still subject to birth-and-death, and is simply not immutable. Is this not futile?

You should give this deep deliberation: the Buddha Dharma has always maintained the oneness of body and mind. Thus how is it that while your body is born and perishes, the mind alone, separated from the body, is not caught up in birth-and-death? If at one time body and mind were one, and at another time not one, the Buddhist teaching would surely be an empty lie. Moreover, to think that birth-and-death is something to be eliminated is a sin of hating the Buddha Dharma.⁸¹ You must guard against such thinking.

Understand this: the teaching in the Buddha Dharma that the mind-nature is the great and all-embracing characteristic of all phenomena, referring to the universe as a whole, does not make distinctions between form and nature, or speak of difference between birth and annihilation.⁸² Even enlightenment and nirvana are nothing other than this mind-nature. All dharmas—the myriad forms dense and close of the universe—are simply this one Mind, including all, excluding none. These various dharma-gates are all the same one Mind.

⁸⁰ Immutability and perishability are not attributes belonging separately to the nature of things. From the viewpoint of immutability, everything may be said to be immutable; from the viewpoint of perishability, everything may be said to be perishable. There is no difference in this respect between mind and body, form and substance.

⁸¹ Cf., "This birth-and-death in itself is the life of buddha. To reject it with distaste is to lose the life of buddha." (*SBGZ sbōji* 生死).

⁸² A similar statement, with slightly different wording, comes in *The Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana* (*Daijōkibinron* 大乘起信論), III, 1 [Taishō, 1666].

To speak of there being no disparity at all between them is the way Buddhists understand the nature of mind.

Thus, in this single Dharma should one be differentiating body and mind, and dividing birth-and-death and nirvana? We are all originally children of Buddha, so do not listen to the wagging tongues of madmen relating non-Buddhist views.

Question 11: Is it absolutely necessary for those who devote themselves to zazen to adhere strictly to [Buddhist] precepts?

Answer 11: Observing precepts, pure behavior, is a standard of the Zen school, and a characteristic of buddhas and patriarchs. [Yet] those who have not yet received the precepts, and those who break the precepts, are not without a share in this.⁸³

Question 12: May those who exert themselves in the practice of zazen combine it with practices of mantra and *shikan*?⁸⁴

Answer 12: When I was in China I asked the masters there for their true principle. They answered that they had never heard of any of the patriarchs, who have transmitted rightly the Buddha-seal from the past through the present in India and in China, engaging in such combined practice. Indeed, unless you concentrate on one practice, you cannot attain the one wisdom.

Question 13: Can this practice be undertaken as well by lay men and women? Or is it limited to priests alone?

Answer 13: The patriarchs teach that in the comprehension of the Buddha Dharma, there must be no distinction between man and woman, high and low.

⁸³ I.e., in the merits of zazen. For Dōgen, the precepts are all included and present in zazen. "When you are practicing zazen, what precept cannot be observed?" (*Sbōbōgenzō zaimonki*, II, 1).

⁸⁴ "Mantra" is used to render the word "shingon" 眞言 (true words), which refers to the practices of mantra and dhāraṇī employed in Esoteric Buddhism. By repeating these magic formulas or esoteric words the reciter receives various benefits and unity with Buddha. "Shikan" 止觀 (Skt: *śamatha-vipasyāna*) is a practice of contemplation in stages, used chiefly in the Tendai sect, that involves fixing the mind on a certain object and observing it with right Wisdom. The Zen teaching of Dōgen's teacher Eisai included the above two practices.

Question 14: When a man enters the priesthood, he at once rids himself of connections with secular life, and his negotiation of the Way in zazen is [thus] unimpeded. But in the pressures of secular life, how can one devote himself singlemindedly to practice and accord himself with the Buddha Way free from human agency?

Answer 14: All the buddhas and patriarchs, out of mercy, have opened for us the broad and vast gates of compassion. This is in order to bring all living beings to realization. In the realm of the devas, or among mankind, there has never been anyone unable to enter there. Because of this, if we survey from past to present we find much evidence for the above. To mention a few examples: Emperors Tai-tsung and Shun-tsung,⁸⁵ though heavily burdened with the myraid affairs of state, still negotiated the Way in zazen and penetrated to an understanding of the great Way of the buddhas and patriarchs. As high imperial aides serving at the right hand of the Emperor, Prime Ministers Li and Tang⁸⁶ negotiated the Way in zazen and attained realization in the great Way of the buddhas and patriarchs. It is simply a question of whether the will is there or not. It should not depend on whether one is layman or priest. What is more, those who discern profoundly the merits and demerits of things naturally have faith [in the Buddha Dharma]. Need I add, those who think mundane affairs hinder the Buddha Dharma know only that there is no Buddha Dharma in daily life; they do not yet know there are no "mundane affairs" in the Buddha Dharma.

A recent minister of the Sung, named Feng,⁸⁷ was yet another high official

⁸⁵ Tai-tsung 代宗 (reigned 763–79). Shun-tsung 順宗 (reigned 805). Tang dynasty.

⁸⁶ Li is said to be Li Ao (李翱 d. 844), who attained enlightenment under the Zen master Yüeh-shan Wēi-yen (Yakusan Igen, 745–828) during the period he was Prefect of Langchou. (*Ching-tē ch'uan-t'eng lu* 14). Tang's identity is also unclear, but he is thought to be an official named P'ei Hsiu 裴休, a student of Huang-po Hsi-yen (Obaku Kiun, c. 850) and possible compiler of the latter's recorded sayings.

⁸⁷ Feng-chieh (馮楫, d. 1153), whose lay Buddhist name was Pu-ting chü-shih 不動居士, went to various masters, gaining satori under Fo-yen Ch'ing-yuan 佛眼清遠 (Butsugen Seion, 1067–1120), and receiving the seal of approval of Ta-hui Tsung-kao 大慧宗杲 (Daie Sōkō, 1089–1163). He is said even after becoming prefectural governor never to have tired of zazen.

who excelled in the way of the patriarchs. Late in his life, he told of himself in a poem:

I enjoy my time away from public duties doing *zazen*;
 Rarely ever do I lie down to sleep.
 I thus appear to be a minister of state,
 But have become known all around as the elder monk.

Though he had little time left from his official duties, he attained realization because of the intensity of his determination in the Buddha Way. You should therefore consider your own situation in the light of others, and think of the present with an eye to the past.

At present in the great Sung, the Emperor and ministers, officials and citizens, men and women, are all interested in the Way of the patriarchs. Both soldier and civilian set their resolve in the study and practice of Zen. Certainly many of those who so resolve will awaken to the Mind. It is thus readily apparent that worldly affairs are no hindrance to the Buddha Dharma.

If the authentic Buddha Dharma is widely spread throughout a country, that land will constantly be protected by the buddhas and devas. This will result in a reign of tranquillity. If a wise reign of tranquillity prevails, the Buddha Dharma will gain in influence.

Moreover, in the time of the Buddha Gautama, law-breakers⁸⁸ and those holding false views attained the Buddha Way. Under Zen patriarchs, hunters and fuel-gatherers attained *satori*.⁸⁹ How much more possible is it for others. Simply it is necessary to seek the guidance of an authentic teacher.

Question 15: Even in these times of the evil, degenerate, latter day, can one attain realization if he practices *zazen*?

⁸⁸ I.e., those who commit the ten evils (*jūaku* 十惡; killing, stealing, adultery, lying, rough speech, saying one thing to one person and another to another person, slandering, equivocating, coveting, anger, false views) or five cardinal sins (*gogyaku* 五逆; killing one's father, mother, or a saint, injuring the body of a buddha, causing disunity in the monkhood.). E.g., Devadatta, Angulimāla.

⁸⁹ Probably Shih-kung Hui-ts'ang 石軍惠藏 (Sekkyō Ezō, d. 788), hunter and monk-hater converted at the hands of Ma-tsu Tao-i 馬祖道一 (Baso Dōichi, 709-788); *Cbing-té ch'uan-t'eng lu* 6. As a youth, the sixth patriarch Hui-n'eng sold firewood to support his mother. Upon hearing someone recite the Diamond Sutra he entered the Way, and visited the fifth patriarch Hung-j'en, whom he eventually succeeded.

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Answer 15: While doctrinal schools of Buddhism make much of names and forms, authentic Mahayana teaching does not differentiate right, semblance, and final Dharma.⁹⁰ It preaches that those who practice all attain the Way. Indeed, in this unvaryingly transmitted right Dharma, you receive and make use of your own treasured possession⁹¹ equally in entering and in transcending realization.⁹² Those who practice are themselves aware of their attainment or non-attainment, as one who uses water clearly knows himself whether it is warm or cold.

Question 16: Some say in the Buddha Dharma, if you thoroughly penetrate the meaning of “the mind in itself is Buddha,” even without vocal recitation of scriptures, or bodily practice in the Buddha Way, you will be assured of lacking nothing in the Buddha Dharma. Simply knowing that the Buddha Dharma exists intrinsically in oneself is attainment of the Buddha Way in its totality. It is not to be sought beyond this, in any other person. Is there, then, really any need to trouble oneself with negotiating the Way in zazen?

Answer 16: Such words are particularly meaningless. Were things as you portrayed them, would not all spiritually perceptive persons be able to understand if they were taught these words?

Understand that the Buddha Dharma consists, above all, in practice, quitting the view that differentiates between self and others. If the Way were attained by knowing that “self is buddha,” Śākyamuni long ago would not have under-

⁹⁰ The doctrine of right, semblance, and final 正像末 (*shō-zō-matsu*) Dharma concerns the three periods of the Dharma after the Buddha's decease. It was especially influential during the Heian and Kamakura periods. There are different views as to the duration of these periods. According to the one prevalent at this time, the first period, believed to last 1000 years, is called the right Dharma 正法 (*shōbō*), in which Buddhist doctrine, practices, and enlightenment all exist; the second period of 1000 years is the period of the semblance, or imitative Dharma 像法 (*zōbō*), in which doctrine and practices exist without enlightenment; the third and last period of 10,000 years is that of the latter or final Dharma (末法 *mappō*), in which only the doctrine remains. Since the advent of *mappō* fell during late Heian times (some Buddhists calculated the year 1052 as its commencement), there was no doubt a feeling of pessimism abroad that had considerable influence on the great evangelists of the time—Hōnen, Nichiren, Shinran, Ippen—who gained great followings.

⁹¹ “Treasured possession” refers to the Buddha-nature.

⁹² See footnote 14.

gone the hardships he did in guiding others to enlightenment. I will corroborate this briefly with an example of worthy priests of the past.⁹³

Formerly, a follower of the Zen master Fa-yen, a monk named Hsuan-ts'ao, was asked by the master, "Ts'ao, how long is it now that you've been with me?" "It's already been three years," he answered. "You are of the next generation. Why is it you have never asked me about the Buddha Dharma?" Ts'ao replied, "I must not deceive you. Formerly, when I was with the Zen master Ch'ing-feng, I thoroughly attained peaceful bliss in the Buddha Dharma." The master asked, "By what words did you attain that realm?" Ts'ao replied, "I once asked Ch'ing-feng, 'What is the self of a Buddhist disciple?' and he answered, 'Ping-ting t'ung-tzu⁹⁴ comes for fire.'" "Those are fine words. In fact, I am afraid you did not understand them," said Fa-yen. Ts'ao said, "I understand them to mean this: Ping-ting is characterized by fire. To look for fire with fire is like looking for the self with the self." The master said, "I was right. Indeed, you did not understand. If the Buddha Dharma were something such as you describe, it would not have come down to the present day."

Greatly perturbed, Hsuan-ts'ao left the monastery immediately. On his way, he thought, "The master is known far and wide for his competence. Moreover, he has five hundred disciples under him. There must be some merit in his having admonished me for my mistake." He returned to the monastery, where he repented and made his bows to Fa-yen. He asked him, "What is the self of the Buddhist disciple?" The master replied, "Ping-ting t'ung-tzu comes for fire." Hearing these words, Hsuan-ts'ao was greatly enlightened in the Buddha Dharma.

It is clear one cannot realize the Buddha Dharma by understanding that

⁹³ The following dialogue appears in a simpler version in the *Ching-tê ch'uan-t'eng lu* 25. In the *Hung-chih kuang-lu* 宏智廣錄 (*Wanshi Kōroku*), the Comprehensive Records of Hung-chih Ch'eng-chüeh, there appears a version identical with Dōgen's, allowing for its transposition from Chinese to Japanese. The main characters are Fa-yen Wên-i 法眼文益 (Hōgen Bun'eki, 885-958), founder of one of the Five Zen Houses; Hsuan-ts'ao 玄則 (Gensoku), Fa-yen's successor (in the text he is referred to by the title he held of temple-director); and the Zen master of Ch'ing feng 青峰 (Seihō), who is probably Po-chao Chih-yüan 白兆志円 (Hakuchō Shien).

⁹⁴ 丙丁童子 "fire-boy;" the boy who attends to the lamps in a Zen monastery.

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one's self is buddha. If this were the Buddha Dharma, the master would not have used such words to guide Hsuan-ts'ao, and would not have admonished him in the manner he did. From the first time you meet a good master, you ought simply to inquire as to the rules and regulations with regard to practice; then wholeheartedly negotiate the Way in zazen, and keep from letting your mind hold to superficial or partial knowledge. Then, the Buddha Dharma's wonderful means will not be unavailing.

Question 17: As we scan past and present in India and China, we find there was one who became enlightened upon hearing the sound of a pebble striking a bamboo, another whose mind was cleared upon seeing the color of flower blossoms.⁹⁵ Of course, not only did Śākyamuni realize the Way when he saw the morning star, and Ananda discern the Dharma when the pennet-pole fell,⁹⁶ from the time of the sixth patriarch, in the Five Houses many people have been enlightened by a single word or phrase. Yet were all of these, without exception, practitioners who negotiated the Way in zazen?

Answer 17: It should be understood that those very men of past and present whose minds were cleared by the sight of a color, or who were enlightened by hearing a sound, all negotiated the Way without calculating or comparing, and with that there was for them no duality.

Question 18: In India and China people are essentially sound and upright. As a result of their being the center of culture, when they are taught the Buddha Dharma they are unusually quick in understanding and realization. In

⁹⁵ Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien 香嚴智閑 (Kyōgen Shikan). The episode of Hsiang-yen's enlightenment upon hearing the sound of a pebble strike a bamboo is found in *Cbing-sē ch'uan-t'eng lu* 11, and translated by Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, First Series (London: 1958), pp. 242-3. Ling-yün Chih-ch'in's 靈雲志勤 (Reiun Shigon) enlightenment upon seeing the flowers of a peach tree, is found in *Cbing-sē ch'uan-t'eng lu* 11.

⁹⁶ The traditional Zen account has Śākyamuni attaining enlightenment when he saw the morning star (*Cbing-sē ch'uan-t'eng lu* 1). Ananda, the most learned of the Buddha's disciples, was talking with Mahākāśyapa when the latter said, "Will you take down the pennet-pole at the gate?" Upon receiving this order, Ananda's mind was illuminated. The entire dialogue is translated in Suzuki, *Studies in Zen* (London: 1957), p. 13.

Japan, from the past, benevolence and wisdom⁹⁷ have been lacking among men, and it has been difficult for the right seed to accumulate. This is because we are barbarians. It is regrettable. Moreover, our priests are not on a level with even the laymen of those great countries. Here all the people are dull-witted, their magnanimity small and narrow; they are deeply attached to worldly merit and relish good appearances. Even if they did *zazen*, could such people readily gain realization of the Buddha Dharma?

Answer 18: It is as you say. Benevolence and wisdom are still not widespread among our countrymen. Their dispositions are crooked, to boot. Even were the right and undistorted Dharma given them, its ambrosial nectar would likely turn to poison. They readily direct themselves toward fame and profit, and find it difficult to free themselves from the bonds of illusion. In spite of this, realization of the Buddha Dharma does not necessarily use the worldly knowledge of men and devas as a vessel for renouncing the world. Even in the time of the Buddha, one person realized the four stages to sainthood by means of a bouncing ball;⁹⁸ the great Way was illuminated for another by putting on a *kesa*.⁹⁹ Both these dull-witted creatures were foolish

⁹⁷ An allusion perhaps to the traditional Chinese virtues of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and sincerity.

⁹⁸ This story is found in the *Tsa-pao-tsang-ching* 9 (雜寶藏經 *Zōbōzō-kyō*) [Taishō 203]. An old monk, muddled by age, heard some young monks discussing the four stages to Arhatship, and was carried away by the envious desire to attain them himself. He asked them for instruction, and in jest they said they would oblige him if he treated them to a feast. When they finished their meal, they directed the old man to sit upright in a corner. He joyfully acquiesced, whereupon they began to bounce a ball against his head, saying, "That's the first stage." With this the old monk actually did attain the first stage toward his goal. They continued to bounce the ball against his head, each time in a different corner, each time assuring him he had reached the second, third, and finally the fourth stage. But the monk, each time the ball bounced from his head, really attained the second, third, and then, the highest of all, the fourth stage.

⁹⁹ Utpalavarnā 蓮華色比丘尼 (Rengeshiki bikuni), a nun-disciple of the Buddha who praised the virtues of the priesthood to all she encountered. She told them of her former life as a courtesan, how she used to put on different costumes and dance for customers. Running out of ideas, she decided to try a *kesa*, the Buddhist surplice; donning this robe became the occasion for her entrance into the Buddha Way, and subsequent attainment of highest enlightenment. The story is found in the *Ta-chih-tu-lun* 13 (大智度論 *Daicbi-*

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animals. Still, the path of deliverance from illusion is simply a matter of right faith. Again, seeing a foolish old monk sitting silently, the lay woman who was serving his meal gained satori.¹⁰⁰ This did not depend on wisdom or letters, upon words or stories; it was simply the result of right faith.

Moreover, the spread of Śākya's teaching to the three thousand worlds took only about two thousand years. The countries of this [3000 world] universe are diverse, not exclusively countries of benevolence and wisdom; their people, not necessarily astute or sagacious. Nevertheless, the right Dharma of the Tathāgata is possessed of an incomprehensible power that has great merit and virtue. When the time comes, the Dharma spreads in a land. If people just practice in right faith, regardless of whether they are keen-witted or not, they equally attain the Way. Do not think because ours is not a land of benevolence and wisdom, or because the people's knowledge and understanding is feeble, that the Buddha Dharma cannot be comprehended here. What is more, people all possess in abundance the right seed of prajñā. It appears only that, having rarely been in accord with it, our countrymen have as yet not realized and lived it.

[Epilogue]

In the foregoing exchange of questions and answers, the interchange of the questioner and the replier is quite random. How many flowers have been made to appear where they do not exist.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, in Japan the essentials of negotiating the Way in zazen have not yet been transmitted. Those who would

¹⁰⁰ *doron*). Dōgen uses it in two other books of SBGZ: *kesakudoku* 袈裟功德, and *sbukkudoku* 出家功德.

¹⁰⁰ A very sharp-witted woman believer used to provide food for monks in return for some words on the Dharma. One day a feeble-minded old monk came and partook of a fine meal. The woman expected a sermon as usual, but the witless monk had nothing in his head to give her. When she sat down and closed her eyes in anticipation of his talk, he grabbed the opportunity and fled. As she sat waiting, she attained the first stage of Arhatship. Overjoyed, she opened her eyes only to find the old monk gone. She searched him out and thanked him deeply. The monk was so repentant, he too attained the first stage. (*Zabōzō-kyō*, 9).

¹⁰¹ See footnote 68.

resolve to understand them are to be pitied. Hence I have collected what I could of what I saw and heard while abroad, and have written down the authentic principle of the clear-sighted masters there, in order to impart it to those who desire to practice it. I have not now had occasion, in addition to this, to indicate the standards of behavior in their monasteries, or the rules and regulations of their temples. Such things are moreover not subject to hurried explanation.

Japan, it is true, lies to the east of the Dragon Seas, remote behind clouds and smoke. Yet from the time of the Emperors Kimmei and Yōmei,¹⁰² the Buddha Dharma in the west advanced eastward, to our good fortune. But doctrinal names and forms and ritual matters have become overabundant and disordered, and there have been inadequacies regarding the place of practice. Now, as you take up life in a hermitage among the blue cliffs and white rocks with mended bowl and tattered robe, disciplining yourself in proper sitting, the matter transcending buddha is immediately manifest,¹⁰³ and the great matter of a lifetime practice forthwith penetrated to ultimate fulfillment.¹⁰⁴ Such is Lung-ya's instruction,¹⁰⁵ and the manner bequeathed by Mahākāśyapa.¹⁰⁶ The manner and principle of this zazen should be based on the *Fukanzazengi*,¹⁰⁷ which I compiled during the preceding Karoku period.

Although the spreading of the Buddha Dharma in a country should have the command of the king, if we think again of the message left on the Vulture

¹⁰² Kimmei 欽明 (reigned 539–571). Buddhism is traditionally said to have been introduced into Japan from Korea in A.D. 552 when the King of Kudara presented Kimmei with a bronze image of Śākyamuni, sutras, and other religious objects. It was during the reign of Yōmei 用明 (585–7), the fourth son of Kimmei and father of the famous Prince Shōtoku 聖德, Buddhism first gained prominence among the ruling circles.

¹⁰³ See footnote 14.

¹⁰⁴ See footnote 21.

¹⁰⁵ Lung-ya Chü-tun 龍牙居遁 (Ryūge Koton, 835–923). One of his poems helps highlight the contents of his "instruction": "Food uncooked, rude clothing, mind like the full moon;/Throughout life without a thought, without limit. If my contemporaries ask where I live . . . the green waters and blue mountains are my home." In *Shōbōgenzō zaimonki* (正法眼藏隨聞記 V, 10) Dōgen quotes Lung-ya: "Studying the Way is above all learning poverty. Study poverty, live in poverty, and immediately you are close to the Way."

¹⁰⁶ The text has *Keisoku* (雞足), "Cock-Leg," which signifies the period of Mahākāśyapa's life on Kukkuṭapāda (Cock-Leg Mountain) in Magadha during which he performed austerities and entered into nirvana.

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Peak, the kings, nobles, ministers, and generals who have appeared in innumerable lands all came to present existence by gratefully receiving the Buddha's command, never forgetting their cherished desire from previous existence to maintain and protect the Buddha Dharma.¹⁰⁸ Are not all the regions in which such influence prevails Buddha lands? Thus, having the occasion and choosing the place are not always necessary for the circulation of the Way of buddhas and patriarchs. Only never think you are starting from today.

Accordingly, I have gathered this together, to leave for the wise ones who desire the Buddha Dharma, as well as for those true practitioners who like floating clouds and drifting water-plants seek the Way.

Written, mid-autumn, Kangi 3 (1231), by the Dharma-transmitter Shamon Dōgen, who went to China.

¹⁰⁷ *Fukanzazengi* 普勸坐禪義 (Principles for the Universal Promotion of Zazen) was written the third year of the Karoku period (1227), immediately upon Dōgen's return from China.

¹⁰⁸ According to the Nirvana Sutra, Śākyamuni entrusted the Dharma to the patronage of kings, ministers, and others of great influence. Therefore, though the Dharma's spread should be left to the king's command, the Buddha's command is prior to that of kings and the like, who have come to their present existence for the purpose of preserving and transmitting the Dharma.