

普勸坐禪儀

Dōgen's  
Manuals  
of Zen  
Meditation

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Carl Bielefeldt

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# Abbreviations and Conventions

DNBZ	<i>Dai Nihon bukkyō zensho</i> 大日本仏教全書. 150 vols. Tokyo, 1912–22.
DZZ	<i>Dōgen zenji zenshū</i> 道元禪師全集. Ed. by Ōkubo Dōshū 大久保道舟. 2 vols. Tokyo, 1969–70.
IBK	<i>Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū</i> 印度学仏教学研究, Tokyo.
KDBGKK	<i>Komazawa daigaku bukkyō gakubu kenkyū kiyō</i> 駒沢大学仏教学部研究紀要, Tokyo.
KDBGR	<i>Komazawa daigaku bukkyō gakubu ronshū</i> 駒沢大学仏教学部論集, Tokyo.
KDKK	<i>Komazawa daigaku kenkyū kiyō</i> 駒沢大学研究紀要, Tokyo.
SK	<i>Shūgaku kenkyū</i> 宗学研究 (Komazawa Daigaku), Tokyo.
SKKKK	<i>Sōtō shū kenkyū in kenkyū sei kenkyū kiyō</i> 曹洞宗研究員研究生研究紀要, Tokyo.
SSZ	<i>Sōtō shū zensho</i> 曹洞宗全書. 20 vols. Tokyo, 1929–38.
T	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i> 大正新修大藏經. 85 vols. Tokyo, 1924–33.
ZZ	<i>Dai Nihon zoku zōkyō</i> 大日本統藏經. 750 vols. Kyoto, 1905–12.

Citations of T take the following form: volume: page, column, (line); hence, e.g., T.46:470b12 indicates volume 46, page 470, column b, line 12. The notation T.# indicates T document number.

Citations of ZZ take the form: section, (part), case: page, column, (line); hence, e.g., ZZ.2B,1:362c6 indicates section 2 (*daini hen*), part B (*otsu*), case

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1, page 362, verso column 1, line 6. (For those referring to editions with consecutively numbered volumes, section 2 begins at vol. 96, part B at vol. 128.)

Citations of SSZ take the form: section, volume: page, column, (line); hence, e.g., SSZ.Shiden,2:21a15 indicates the historical and biographical section, volume 2, page 21, column a, line 15.

Transliteration of Japanese terms appearing in Dōgen's writings follows, where possible, the readings in Katō Shūkō, ed., *Shōbō genzō yōgo sakuin*, 2 vols. (1962–63).

## INTRODUCTION

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The Zen school is the Meditation school, and the character of Zen can be traced in the tradition of its meditation teaching. Historians have shown us that the origins of the school in China are considerably later and more complicated than the traditional account of the lineage of Bodhidharma would have it and that the early history of the school is in fact a history of the teachings and tradition of several Buddhist meditation communities of the seventh and eighth centuries. If the masters of these communities did not yet see themselves as members of a Ch'an, or Meditation, school, and if—as is clear from their own reports—they did not always agree on their interpretations of Buddhism, still they were bound together by a common concern for the immediate, personal experience of enlightenment and liberation and, hence, by a common emphasis on the cultivation of spiritual techniques conducive to that experience. To this extent they may be spoken of as participants in a single reform movement, which sought to cut through the scholastic elaborations of the medieval Chinese Buddhist church and to translate the yogic traditions of north China into a popular modern idiom acceptable to the T'ang Buddhist community.

By the end of the eighth century the Ch'an reformation had established itself as a distinct Buddhist school, complete with its own history, literature, and dogma. Nevertheless, the emphasis on practice and immediate experience remained a hallmark of the faith. Indeed some scholars have held that it was precisely this emphasis that allowed the school to weather the persecutions of the late T'ang and emerge as the sole surviving form of Chinese monastic Buddhism. On several counts such a view is probably overdrawn; but, if the number of Ch'an books from the late T'ang and Sung suggests that there was considerably more to Ch'an religion in those days than simply "seeing one's nature and becoming a Buddha," there is much in the content of these books to indicate that the ground of the religion continued to be the meditation hall and the daily round of the monastic routine.

Again, historians may rightly question the common claim that it was the school's practical bent and ascetic rigor that account for the subsequent adoption of Zen by the medieval Japanese warrior class; but there is no need to doubt that, quite apart from its obvious cultural appeal as the dominant form of Sung Buddhism, the Ch'an traditions of monastic discipline and meditation practice made the religion an attractive option for those in the spiritual turmoil of Kamakura Japan who sought concrete means to the direct experience of Buddhist enlightenment. Even today in the midst of our own turmoil these same traditions continue to characterize the school and attract adherents both in Japan and abroad.

Given the centrality of meditation to the school, it is hardly surprising that the interpretation of the practice should have formed a major—perhaps the major—issue of Ch'an and Zen doctrine, and that when the school has bothered to argue over doctrine, it has tended to do so in terms of this issue. We may recall that the most famous such argument, that between the "Northern" and "Southern" factions of the eighth century, revolved around the supposed differences between two accounts of the meditative path—one describing a "gradual" mental cultivation, the other emphasizing a "sudden" spiritual insight. Again, in the twelfth century, the well-known dispute between the Lin-chi and Ts'ao tung houses of Ch'an was cast in terms of two competing meditation styles—one recommending the investigation of the *hua-l'ou*, or *kung-an*, the other advocating something known as "silent illumination" (*mo-chao*). This latter dispute was carried over to Japan, where to this day it remains—albeit in somewhat altered forms—the primary ideological rationale for the separation of the two major Japanese schools of Rinzai and Soto.

Throughout the long and sometimes stormy history of Ch'an and Zen meditation teaching, probably



no single figure has been more closely identified with the practice than the Zen master Dogen (1200–1253), a pioneer in the introduction of the religion to Japan and the founder of what is today the largest of its institutions, the Soto school. For Dogen, seated meditation, or *zazen*, was the very essence of the Buddhist religion—what he called "the treasury of the eye of the true *dharmā*" (*shobogenzo*) realized by all the Buddhas and handed down by all the Patriarchs of India and China. The practice of this *zazen* was not simply an important aid to, nor even a necessary condition for, enlightenment and liberation; it was in itself sufficient: it was enough, as he said, "just to sit" (*shikan taza*), without resort to the myriad subsidiary exercises of Buddhist spiritual life. Indeed (at least when rightly practiced) *zazen* was itself enlightenment and liberation: it was the ultimate cognition, the state he called "nonthinking" (*hi shiryō*) that revealed the final reality of things; it was the mystic apotheosis, "the sloughing off of body and mind" (*shinjin datsuraku*), as he said, that released man into this reality. Such practice then (at least when rightly understood) was its own end, as much the expression as it was the cause of transcendence: it was "practice based on enlightenment" (*shōjō no shu*); it was the activity of Buddhahood itself (*butsumyō*). As such, this was, ultimately speaking, no mere human exercise: it was participation in the primordial ascesis (*gyōji*) of being itself, that which brought forth matter and mind, heaven and earth, the sun, moon, stars, and constellations.

Few Buddhists, whether of the Zen or other persuasions, would disagree with Dogen that, since the days of Sakyamuni, meditation has been, in one form or another, a core element of the religion—though most might question whether it is in itself sufficient to gain the final religious goal. Few Zen Buddhists, whether of the Soto or other denominations, would be surprised by Dogen's claim that (at least when rightly understood) the practice of Zen is itself the direct realization of the enlightened Buddha mind within us all, but many would doubt that the meaning of this claim is best interpreted through the concrete exercise of seated meditation. Dogen was not unaware of these questions and doubts. The true vision of the *shobogenzo*, he held, was always the minority view, handed down in each generation through a unique line of transmission (*tanden*) from Sakyamuni and preserved in his own day only in the person of his Chinese master, the Ts'ao-tung teacher T'ien-t'ung Ju-ching (i 163–1228). As for the rest—the benighted adepts of the Hinayana, the word-counting scholars of the Mahayana, and the self-styled masters of the other houses of Ch'an (especially of the Lin-chi house that had come to dominate Sung China)—they blasphemed *zazen* or paid it lip service without real understanding or authentic practice.

In our own day Dogen's vision of the *shobogenzo* has become recognized as one of the major monuments in the history of Zen thought; yet even now the blasphemy continues. In the first volume of his *Studies in the History of Zen Thought*, the great Rinzaï scholar D. T. Suzuki attacked Dogen's doctrine of "body and mind sloughed off" as mere negativism and his practice of "just sitting" as mere mental stasis. *Shikan taza*, he complained, failed to capture the vital spirit of Zen religious practice: like his forebears in the Chinese Ts'ao-tung school, Dogen taught a form of quietistic Zen meditation—a version of the old "silent illumination" (*mokushō*)—that tended to put philosophy before experience and to ignore the dynamic aspect of Zen wisdom in favor of stillness and stagnation. For his part, Suzuki preferred the psychological power and spiritual insight of the *koan* practice developed by his own forebear, the famed Sung Lin-chi master Ta-hui Tsung-kao (io8g-i 163).<sup>1</sup>

1. *Zen shōso* At *kenkyū* I (1943), repr. in *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū*, vol. 1 (1968), 1–344; for his treatment of Dogen, see especially 57–83, and 161–98, where he is more critical of later Sōtō interpretations than he is of Dogen himself and proposes a revisionist account of Dogen's Zen.

No one did more than D. T. Suzuki to bring Zen studies into the modern world, but here (as is often the case in his work) he is also carrying forward the old world of the eighteenth century and the

ideological origins of contemporary Japanese Zen sectarianism. It is the world of Hakuin Ekaku (1686-1769), who fixed the orthodox Rinzai *koan* practice and attacked what he called "dead sitting" or "silent illumination" (*koza mokusho*) as counter to the Buddhist path and disruptive of social ethics; and it is the world of Mujaku Dochu (1653-1744), who established modern Rinzai scholarship and dismissed Dogen's Zen as "pitiable." This Zen, said Mujaku, simply clung to the notion that the deluded mind was itself Buddhahood (*mojin soku butsu*) and ignored the transformative experience of awakening (*satori*). Dogen "never even dreamt" of the state of *satori* that was the meaning of the advent of the Buddha, the purpose of Bodhidharma's mission to China, and the message of the patriarch of *kanna*, or *koan* Zen, Ta-hui.<sup>2</sup>

It is not surprising that Hakuin and Mujaku should have failed to appreciate Dogen's brand of Buddhism. In modern times his rare vision of *Zazen* has become the sacred centerpiece of Soto ideology, but it was not always so, and for some half a millennium after his death, his *shobo genzo* was ever in danger of extinction even in his own school. In the eighteenth century the chief architect of modern Soto dogmatics, Menzan Zuiho (1683—1769), lamented the precarious history of the founder's Zen. Only the Soto house, he said, preserves the teaching that sitting itself is the "treasury of the eye of the true *dharma* and the mystic mind of *nirvana*" (*shobogenzo nehan myoshiri*); the practitioners of *kanna* have "never even dreamt" of it. Even within the Chinese Ts'ao-tung tradition, by the end of the Sung, only T'ien-t'ung Ju-ching still taught it; and, throughout the Yuan and Ming, the masters of Ts'ao-tung and Lin-chi alike have been wholly given over to Ta-hui's *kanna*. In Japan as well, only the founding ancestor, Dogen, proclaimed it; and after several generations the Soto monks went to study in the five Zen "mountains" of Heian and Kamakura, took up the style of Rinzai practiced there, and lost the *dharma* of their own house.<sup>3</sup>

There are many religious practices, said Menzan, that go by the name *zazen*, from the meditations of Taoism, Confucianism, and Shinto to the contemplative exercises of the Buddhist *sutras* and *Nostras*; and, in Zen, at least since the decline of the orthodox transmission of Bodhidharma's practice, individuals have made up their own techniques, like the *kanna* Zen so popular even today. But Dogen's *Zazen* has nothing to do with any of these.<sup>4</sup> For Menzan and his church, Dogen's *zazen* is like no other: it is the practice of "nonthinking," a subtle state beyond either thinking or not thinking and distinct from traditional Buddhist psychological exercises of concentration and contemplation; it is "just sitting," a practice in which, unlike the *koan* exercise of Rinzai Zen, "body and mind have been sloughed off" and all striving for religious experience, all expectation of *satori* (*taigo*), is left behind. This *zazen* is nothing but "the mystic practice of original verification" (*honsho myoshu*), through which from the very start one directly expresses the ultimate nature of the mind.

2. *Shobo genzo senpyo*, cited in Yanagida, "Dogen to Rinzai," *Riso* 513 (2/1976), 84. Mujaku's interpretations of Dogen have recently been treated at some length by Shibe Ken'ichi, in "Shobo genzo senpyo no ichi k5satsu," *SK* 24 (3/1982), 72-77; and "Shobo genzo senpyo to Edo ki shugaku no kanren," *SK* 25 (3/1983), 246-61. Hakuin's remarks appear in the first letter of his *Oralegama*. (*Hakuin oshozenshu* 5:128-29; see also his criticisms of the "dead *dharma* of the burned out mind and spent wisdom" [*keshin minchi*], in *Tabu koji* [ibid., 331].)

3. *Eiso zazen shin monge*, SSZ.Chukai,3:40b.

The eighteenth-century movement of which Menzan has proved the most influential representative sought to return Soto faith to the religion of its founder, and in fact many of the premises behind the sort of interpretation of his *za-Zen* that we see here can be found in Dogen himself. In theoretical terms this interpretation begins, like Dogen's own, from a version of the "sudden practice" (*tonshu*) of

the supreme vehicle (*saijo jo*), the venerable Ch'an ideal of a transcendental religion, beyond the expedients (*hoben*) of ordinary Buddhism, in which the spiritual exercise is brought into perfect accord with the ultimate principle of inherent Buddhahood. Again, as in Dogen's own presentation of the theory, the assertion of such a transcendental religion is accompanied by a strong emphasis on two equally venerable historical corollaries to it: (i) that the full revelation of the religion is not given in the writings of ordinary Buddhism but is only "transmitted from mind to mind" (*ishin denshin*) through the generations of the enlightened Patriarchs; and (2) that in any given generation such revelation must occur "all at once" (*tongo*) in the Patriarch's accession to the transmission. There is not, then, in this style of presentation properly speaking any such thing as an intellectual history of Ch'an and Zen, either of the tradition as a whole or of the thought of any of its authentic representatives.

In one form or another, something akin to these three hermeneutical principles—of the higher unity of practice and theory, of the historical continuity of esoteric tradition, and of the inner integrity of spiritual experience—still guides the presentation of what is often called "Dogen Zen" in the halls of Eihei ji, the chief monastery of the Soto school, and the classrooms of Komazawa, the university that now trains most of its academics. The principles can be seen at work throughout the religious writings of such influential modern masters as Nishiari Bokusan and Kishizawa Ian and even find their way into much of the historical and textual work of the modern "sectarian studies" (*shugaku*) represented by such eminent scholars as Eto Sokuo and Okubo Doshu. Yet, if such principles go back beyond Dogen to the very origins of Ch'an tradition, so too of course do the disagreements within the tradition over their implications for the understanding of Ch'an history and practice; and, if the principles continue to work in Soto theology today, there is no doubt that they have often brought "Dogen Zen"-like Zen tradition in general—into conflict with the assumptions of modern secular philological and historical method.<sup>6</sup>

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4. *Fukan zazm gi monge*, SSZ.Chukai,3: 4b.

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Even in Menzan's day, for example, the notion that the unity of theory and practice entailed a form of Zen distinct from Rinzai *koan* study was dismissed by prominent S6t5 masters like Tenkei Denson (1648-1735); and in our own day Tenkei's tendency to accommodation with Rinzai has been preserved among a small but active faction of S6t5 popularized especially by such modern masters as Harada Sogaku (1870—1961) and Yasutani Hakuun (1885—1973).<sup>6</sup> Much more important of course have been the intellectual developments outside the school that have challenged the S5t6 historical claims about the continuity of its tradition and of Dogen's place in it. The discovery of this Zen master's thought by prewar philosophers like Watsuji Tetsuro and his subsequent treatment by historians like Ienaga Saburo, Buddhologists like Tamura Yoshiro, literary historians like Karaki Junzo, and so on, have led to a wide range of new interpretations of his Buddhism, all of which, whatever their obvious differences, tend to treat it as the product of an independent, Japanese religious thinker and, hence, inevitably to undermine the conviction that Dogen merely served as a conduit for the orthodox *shobo genzo* of his master Ju-ching and the Chinese Ts'ao-tung Patriarchs.<sup>7</sup> Finally, the rapid development over the last few decades of the new Zen studies of scholars like Yanagida Seizan, based as they are on the critical use of historical documents, has forced a general rethinking of the old sacred histories of the school and, in the case of a figure like Dogen for whom the documentation is rather rich, has replaced the old sacred biography with more modern, secularized accounts of the historical circumstances of his ministry and the historical development of his thought.<sup>8</sup>

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5. The *shugaku* style of presentation is still current in much of the writing on "Dogen Zen": the

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former president of Komazawa University, for example, has recently twice reissued a representative sample of the style; see Kurebayashi Kodo, "Dogen zen no kihon teki seikaku," in the same author's *Dogen zen no honryu* (1980), 11-32; and in *Dogen*, ed. by Kawamura Kodo and Ishikawa Rikizan, *Nihon meiso ronshu* 8 (1983), 76—96; the piece was originally published in two parts in SK 3 (3/1961), and 4 (3/1962). In a companion to the second anthology here that is otherwise largely devoted to representative historical studies, the same editors have seen fit to reissue a polemical piece in this style by a noted professor of Kurebayashi's university on the superiority of *shikan taza* to Hakuin's *kanna* practice; see Sakai Tokugen, "Zen ni okeru henko," in *Dogen zenji to Solo shu*, ed. by Kawamura and Ishikawa, *Nihon bukkyo shushi ronshu* 8 (1985), 22-41; originally published in SK 2 (1/1960).

6. Harada's efforts to spread a broader version of Zen meditation that accommodated the *koan* can be seen, for example, in his early popular tract, *Zazen no shikala* (1927); Yasutani's *koan* style has been made famous in the West through the publication of Philip Kapleau's *Three Pillars of Zen* (1966).

7. For examples of these scholars' treatments, see Watsuji's pioneering "Shamon Dogen," in his *Nihon seishin shi kenkyu* (1926), Ienaga's *Chusei bukkyo shiso shi kenkyu* (1947), Tamura's highly influential *Kamakura shin bukkyo shiso no kenkyu* (1965), and Karaki's *Mujo* (1965).

Clearly the Soto system of interpretation is now experiencing many of the sort of intellectual challenges to its faith with which we have been familiar for over a century. As in our own case, the most conspicuous developments have occurred in the area of historical understanding, and the larger, more difficult question of how such understanding should affect our reading of Dogen's religion has inevitably lagged behind and has not yet, it is probably fair to say, received systematic attention. In particular the topic of his meditation, perhaps precisely because it lies so close to the heart of Zen tradition and especially of Dogen's religion (and somewhat outside the most immediate interests of both the historian and the philosopher) has tended to remain insulated from the effects of the new scholarship. One of the purposes of the following study is to begin to break down this insulation by bringing to bear on Dogen's meditation manuals some of the methods and findings of recent Zen studies. In this way I hope the work will serve not only as an introduction of these manuals to the Western literature on the school but also as one sort of prolegomenon to the rethinking of the traditional historical and theoretical principles of their interpretation. The study will seek, therefore, on the one hand simply to review what is now known about the manuals and on the other to raise certain questions, to locate problem areas, and to suggest possible new paths of inquiry. To this latter end, it will at times intentionally play the role of what we might call Mara's advocate, and it will in general be less concerned with completing a new model of Dogen's Zen than with calling attention to the fact that our present model may be rather less complete than is often assumed.

Dogen was a prolific author, who produced, over the quarter century of his active career, a sizable and varied corpus that ranged from formal treatises in *kanbun* (i.e., Chinese) to delicate Japanese verse. His work includes popular tracts on Zen practice, esoteric commentaries on Zen *koan*, records of his lectures to monks, and detailed rules of monastic ritual and routine. Given the centrality of *zazen* to his religion and the breadth of (at least the more abstract of) his definitions of it, this entire corpus is in some sense concerned with meditation; and, in fact, references to the practice abound in almost all of his writing. Still, there are certain of his texts that deal specifically with *zazen* and that have been central to the interpretation of his teaching on the topic. Some years ago the Educational Division of the S5t6 administrative headquarters, concerned that the modern school might lose sight of its essential message (*shushi*) of *shikan taza*, brought out a sourcebook of what it considered the

prime sacred texts (*seiten*) on the subject to be used in the education of Soto adherents. The book contains eight texts by Dogen. One of these, the *Shobo genzo zazen gi*, is a practical manual of *zazen* included in the famous collection of his Japanese essays, the *Shobo genzo*; others are more theoretical like the *Shobo genzo zanmai 5 zanmai* or the *Shobo genzo zazen shin*; still others, like the *Bendo wa* and *Gakudoyojin shu*, combine both of these characteristics. Among this last type is by far the most famous and important of Dogen's works on meditation, the *Fukan zazen gi*, or "Universal promotion of the principles of seated meditation."<sup>9</sup>

8. Yanagida's seminal *Shoki zenshu shisho no kenkyu* has become, since its publication in 1967, rather like the bible of the new Zen historians; though the book itself deals only with the historical texts of early Ch'an, its methodological influence has spread over a much wider field, and in fact in more recent years Yanagida himself has devoted considerable attention to Japanese Zen, including Dogen.

The *Fukan zazen gi* is a brief tract, in one roll of roughly 800 graphs, composed in a florid *kanbun* style and devoted to an explanation of both the theory and the procedures of *zazen* practice. It is generally held to represent Dogen's first Zen teaching, promulgated immediately following his return to Japan after the pilgrimage to Sung China that culminated in his great awakening to the *dharma* of Ju-ching. As the opening act of his ministry, intended to reveal the very essence of the message he sought to bring to the Japanese Buddhist community, its composition is widely regarded as marking the historical origin of his Soto school. It was, the school would later say, the very "dawn of Buddhism in Japan."<sup>10</sup> This historical significance for the tradition, coupled with the work's intrinsic importance as the primary textual source for the tradition's characteristic form of meditation, has given the *Fukan zazen gi* a central place in the literature of the Soto school. Indeed it has been taken into the litany of the church and is still recited daily at the close of evening meditation in the school's monasteries throughout Japan.<sup>11</sup>

Like much else in modern Soto Zen, the place of the *Fukan zazen gi* was largely fixed by Menzan, who first singled out the work for special attention in his *Fukan zazen gi monge*, published in 1757. Thereafter, from the *Fukan Zazen gi Juno go* of Menzan's contemporary Shigetsu (1689-1764), to the commentaries of the present day, the little manual has been used by many masters of the church as a vehicle for transmitting the way of *zazen*. In this century it has also been the subject of numerous historical and doctrinal studies in the religious and academic journals of Soto and, in recent decades, has several times been translated into modern Japanese and Western languages.<sup>12</sup> Yet for all its current reputation and wide public dissemination, in intellectual terms, the *Fukan zazen gi* has barely escaped the walls of the monastery: while outside those walls the academic study of Dogen and of the history and teachings of Ch'an and Zen Buddhism in general has been making remarkable advances, the interpretation of this text and of its author's message has tended to circle narrowly within the confines of the religious concerns of sectarian tradition. In the following study I explore some of the contours of these confines and the ways they have circumscribed our understanding of the origins, intellectual background, and religious character of Dogen's meditation teachings.

9. For the sourcebook, see *Ryoso daishi zazen seiten*, ed. by Sotoshu Shumuchō Kyoikubu (1959) (Most of the work of annotation was done by Kurebayashi Kodo; on the purposes of the book, see the afterword, following p. 203.) Also included here is a brief note by Dogen, the so-called "Fukan zazen gi senjutsu yurai," and two texts by the "Second Founder" of Soto, Keizan Jokin: the *^azenyojin ki* and *Sankon zazen setsu*. The book omits one significant document that I shall be using in this essay: Dogen's *Bendo ho*, a work devoted to the rules of the meditation hall.

10. Preface to *Fukan zazen gi monge*, SSZ.Chiikai,3: ia.

11. A practice prescribed in the modern handbook of church ritual (see *Showa teiho Soto shugyoj kihan* [1967], 40). The handbook also permits the substitution of Keizan's *azenyojin ki*, which itself draws on the *Fukan zazen gi*. Both manuals were included in one of the first modern "bibles" of Soto (actually a liturgical reference book), the *Zenshu Soto seiten*, compiled by Yamada K6d6 at the end of the Meiji period and reprinted many times during Taisho.

Though the monks who chant the *Fukan zazen gi* each day may do so in the conviction that it represents the founding document of their faith, in terms of the history of its author's own faith, the version of the work current in the modern church is rather late, probably dating from the last decade of his life. There is, however, an earlier version, preserved in an ancient manuscript thought to be in Dogen's own hand, which describes a form of meditation seemingly somewhat different from that now celebrated in the Soto literature. The existence of this manuscript has been known for decades, but, apart from several technical articles, it has received surprisingly little attention, and its implications for our understanding of the origins and development of Dogen's religion have not been taken very seriously. For this reason I begin my study here with a reexamination of the historical provenance of the two versions of the *Fukan zazen gi*, along with Dogen's other major writings on *zazen*, bringing together what is now known or can be inferred about the circumstances of their composition and going on to suggest how this information might affect the way we are used to reading his texts and interpreting the inspiration of their message. At issue for the tradition here is the question of the relationship between the facts of Dogen's new, secularized biography and the Soto faith in his enlightenment and accession to the Patriarchate as the primary and constant determinant of his life and thought; and, in order the better to bring out this issue, I adopt here a somewhat "positivistic" treatment of the biography that may at times seem as alien to some recent styles of historiography as it is to the tradition itself. Whether or not it is the proper job of the historian to uncover "the facts" of the past, the sensitivity to such facts has separated modern Zen studies from the tradition, and for this reason we must begin with them. By the nature of both the method and the material here, the arguments of Part I will sometimes involve considerable historical and bibliographic detail, and casual readers—or those interested more in meditation than the particulars of Dogen's life and writings—will be excused if they prefer to skim over some of this detail with an eye for the larger points behind it.

12. Menzan's *Monge* can be found at SSZ.Chukai,3:1-33; Shigetsu's *Fund go*, published in 1759, at *ibid.*, 47-53. For samples of the continuing commentarial tradition, see, for example, *Fukan zazen gi teiji roku* (1911), which records the teachings of the influential Meiji master Nishiari Bokusan (1821-1910), as edited by Kishizawa Ian; Harada Sogaku, *Fukan zazen gi kowa* (repr. 1982); Obora Ryoun, *Gendai kowa Fukan zazen gi* (repr. 1982); Uchiyama Kosho, *Shukyo toshite no Dogen zen: Fukan zazen gi ikai* (1977). Some years ago the chief monastery of the Soto school, Eihei ji, devoted two special issues of its journal to the text: see *Fukan zazen gi no sankyu*, *Sansho* 372 (9/1974), 373 (10/1974). Perhaps the most recent modern Japanese translation has been done by Yanagida Seizan, in *Shiso dokuhon: Dogen*, ed. by Yanagida (1982), 176-79; of the several English translations, see especially Norman Waddell and Abe Masao, "Dogen's Fukanzazengi and Shobogenzo zazengi," *The Eastern Buddhist*, new series 6, 2 (10/ 1973). 115-28.

Though many modern interpreters may rightly hold up Dogen's *zazen* teachings as a seminal moment in the Zen meditation tradition, they have often tended to treat these teachings in isolation from the larger tradition, preferring to focus on the internal structure of Dogen's system and looking up from the system only long enough to establish its pedigree or dismiss its competitors. Yet, if Dogen's *Fukan zazen gi* is the first and most famous work of its kind written in Japan, it is also (as he

himself emphasizes) deeply indebted to the heritage of the Buddhism its author sought to introduce from China. In fact, it is now well known to students of the text that it draws heavily on a Northern Sung Ch'an manual much read in Dogen's day. Interestingly enough, elsewhere in his writings, he himself dismisses this earlier work as failing to convey the orthodox tradition of *zazen*. This ambivalence toward his own sources reminds us of the need to pay more careful attention to the literary and intellectual background of Dogen's work and to the place of the work in the long history of Ch'an discourse on meditation. To this end, in Part II, I turn from the detail of Dogen's biography to the larger frame of this history and try to sketch at least the outline of what I take to be its major features. Chapter 3 deals with the history of the Ch'an meditation literature before and during Dogen's day; Chapter 4 discusses some of the religious issues that characterize this literature and set the stage for Dogen's own presentation of *zazen*. While my treatment of these broad subjects, spanning as it does fully half a millennium of religious history, will necessarily often skim lightly over some of the most complex topics and vexed issues of Zen studies, I trust that some of what I have to say here will prove entertaining not only to students of Dogen but to those with interest in the history and character of the Zen tradition as a whole.

These chapters present one version of the sort of "intellectual history" of Ch'an that is now heavily impinging on the more traditional sacred history of the *shobo genzo* and that has raised many questions about the meaning of Zen transmission and the spiritual continuity of the Patriarchate. Where traditional treatments preserved the model of the *shobo genzo* by explaining the discontinuities of Ch'an and Zen history apparent in its various factional disputes as the ongoing struggle between the true *dharma* and its heretical interpreters, some modern treatments have tended in effect to explain away these disputes as mere theological decoration on what was "really" political and social competition. My own approach here tries to avoid both these forms of reductionism and seeks rather to view the discontinuities in terms of the recapitulation, under various historical circumstances, of certain continuing tensions inherent in the Ch'an teachings themselves—tensions, for example, between exclusive and inclusive visions of the school's religious mission, between esoteric and exoteric styles of discourse, and especially between theoretical and practical approaches to its meditation instruction.

The recurrent "debates" over the interpretation of meditation that mark the history of Ch'an and Zen are justly famous and regularly receive due notice in accounts of the school. Yet there remains a sense in which we have not fully come to grips with the historical character and the religious problematic of the meditation tradition in which they occur. We are often told, for example, that Zen Buddhism takes its name from the Sanskrit *dhyana*, or "meditation," and that the school has specialized in the practice but we are rarely told just how this specialization is related to the many striking disclaimers, found throughout the writings of Ch'an and Zen (including Dogen's own), to the effect that the religion has nothing to do with *dhyana*. It is the gap between these two poles that serves as the arena for the debates and creates the kind of tension between Zen theory and its practice that is supposed to be resolved in the school's characteristic notions of the transcendental sudden practice (and in Dogen's famous doctrines of enlightened *zazen* and just sitting). The supposition of such a resolution, whether valid or not, has had the effect of focussing our attention—like that of the tradition itself—on its various novel permutations and of limiting the degree to which we have taken the continuing historical tension seriously. In fact our treatment of Dogen's *shikan taza* and our notices of the earlier debates of the Meditation school rarely seem to extend to discussion of the actual techniques of meditation that may (or may not) have been at issue, and we are not often told in concrete terms just how Dogen and the other monks of the school actually went about their specialization. As a result, we are hardly in a very good position to consider what—if any—implications the school's meditation

discourse may have had for the religious experience of its adherents.

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To attempt to get "behind" the discourse to the experience is not, for more than one reason, an unproblematic exercise—particularly in the case of something like Zen meditation. The general tendency of Buddhist scholarship to favor the study of theory over practice, whatever else it may say about the discipline, is surely in part the reflection of an inherent difficulty in getting at information on what actually took place in the meditation halls (let alone in the heads) of premodern Buddhists. To be sure, there have been Buddhists—like the famed sixth-century scholar and meditation teacher T'ien-t'ai Chih-i (538-97)—who left detailed and historically influential models of their spiritual exercises; but, by the nature of the case, the physical and psychological techniques of meditation are doubtless better learned through personal contact with an instructor than through books; and, in fact, despite (or perhaps because of) its abiding interest in meditation, the Ch'an and Zen tradition—with its emphasis on direct oral transmission from the master and its habit of making a virtue of ambiguity—has often been more loath than most to record the concrete details of its practice. Dogen, for all his fame as a meditation teacher, is by no means the least delinquent in this regard. Still, if he shares a preference for the higher discourse of metaphysical interpretation, unlike most of the famous masters of classical Ch'an, he did write at length on practice; hence there is somewhat more room in this writing than we have hitherto exploited to ask him about the actual techniques of "just sitting" and to reflect on their relationship both to what we know of earlier descriptions of meditation and to the more theoretical levels of his and earlier Ch'an teaching.

This last issue—the relationship between the practical and theoretical levels of Ch'an discourse—provides the dominant theme of my treatment of the tradition and serves as the ground for Part III, where I deal with Dogen's own teachings. Here I adopt a more analytic approach and try, through a close reading of selected passages of the *Fukan zazen gi* and related works, to reconstruct what Dogen said (and also what he did not say) about Zen meditation, reflecting along the way on how some of the material is related to earlier accounts of the subject. Focussing first on the older, autograph version of the work, I use it to explore his teachings on the concrete techniques and historical tradition of *zazen*. I then turn to the revised, vulgate text to consider Dogen's famous theory of enlightened practice and the knotty problem of how this theory both reveals and obscures the historical character of his practice. Finally, in my conclusion I step back a bit from Dogen's texts and the ideological issues of Zen tradition that are the primary concern of this book to suggest very briefly what I think might prove a fruitful course for further study. In the back matter I have included for the reader's convenience a comparative table of translations of Dogen's various meditation manuals, together with their Chinese predecessor, as well as translations of two other documents that figure in the discussion.



# PART I

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## Texts

## THE EARLIEST MANUAL AND THE ORIGINS OF DŌGEN'S ZEN

According to traditional histories, Japanese Soto Zen began in 1227. On this date the young Dogen, fresh from his enlightenment on Mt. T'ien-t'ung, returned to his native soil. Such was the strength of his new conviction and the urgency of his new mission that, almost immediately upon disembarking, he proclaimed the gospel of Soto Zen and set to work transmitting to his countrymen the teachings of its Chinese Patriarch, his master, Ju-ching. To this end his first act was the composition of a Zen meditation manual, the *Fukan zazen gi*, in which he enunciated the characteristic Soto doctrine of enlightened practice and described the unique Soto meditation of nonthinking in which that practice is realized.

This tradition that the *Fukan zazen gi* directly reflects the religion of Ju-ching and represents its initial statement in Japan is based on the theory that the work was written within months of Dogen's return from the continent, and that, therefore, it should be read as a manifesto of the Buddhism he had brought back from Mt. T'ien-t'ung. Apart from its larger assumptions about the nature of Ju-ching's religion and its transmission to Dogen, the theory rests on the evidence of two passages in the latter's writings, both of which seem to indicate an early date for the text. One of these passages occurs in the *Bendo wa*, a well-known tract in Japanese from 1231. At the conclusion of the work, in the course of explaining his reasons for writing it, Dogen adds, "The procedures of meditation should be carried out in accordance with the *Fukan zazen gi*, composed during the Karoku era [1225-27]." <sup>1</sup>

1. DZZ.I: 746, 763.

The second passage appears in a brief, untitled manuscript in Chinese, apparently in Dogen's own hand, discovered during the Edo period at Eihei ji. In this note, after lamenting the fact that no meditation manual had yet been transmitted to Japan, Dogen says, "When I returned to my country from the land of the Sung in the Karoku era, there were students who asked me [to compose a *zazen gi*]; and so, I felt obliged to go ahead and compose one." <sup>2</sup>

Since the Karoku era ended within a few months of Dogen's return to Japan, the manual he mentioned here must have been composed almost immediately upon his arrival. <sup>3</sup> The relationship of this manual, however, to the extant texts of the *Fukan zazen gi* remains problematic. Prior to the twentieth century it was assumed that the text referred to in these passages was the vulgate version of the *Fukan zazen gi* in use in Soto monasteries; but the discovery, at the beginning of this century, of a second version of the work has shown that assumption to be false.

This new version is preserved in an ancient manuscript belonging to Eihei ji. It first came to the attention of the scholarly community in 1922, when it was put on public display at Tokyo Imperial University. <sup>4</sup> The document, in one roll, is in a remarkable state of preservation. Its mounting, which appears to date from the late Edo period, bears a colophon identifying the manuscript as an authentic example of Dogen's calligraphy (*shinpitsu*) and stating that it was donated (presumably to Eihei ji) by the calligraphy expert Kohitsu Ryohan (1827-53). <sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, we have no information on the earlier history of the document or on how it fell into Ryohan's possession. Its state of preservation would indicate that it was apparently little handled over the centuries and lay largely unstudied in some private or institutional library. There is no evidence in the literature of the Soto school that its contents were known to the tradition.

2. DZZ.2 :6. For a translation of the full text, see Document i. The manuscript is badly deteriorated and was already difficult to decipher in the eighteenth century when it was studied by Menzan. The phrase in brackets in the translation here is illegible in the original and follows Menzan's interpolation. (See DZZ.2:6, note.) Given the context, there seems little reason to question his reconstruction.

3. Early sources for Dogen's biography do not agree on the exact date of his return from China, and the issue has long been a subject of dispute. We know, however, from the certificate of transmission (*shisho*) Dogen received from Ju-ching that he was still at T'ien-t'ung shan during the third year of the Chinese Pao-ch'ing era (1227). (DZZ.2:287.) On the fifth day of the tenth month (November 15) of this year, he wrote a brief note in Japan, entitled "Shari soden ki," concerning the delivery of his teacher Myozen's remains to one of the latter's disciples. (DZZ.2. 396.) Hence Dogen must have reached Japan in the third year of Karoku (1227), sometime prior to the tenth month. On the basis of seasonal patterns in the ship movements between the continent and Japan, many scholars now place the date in the eighth month. (See, e.g., Takeuchi Michio, *Dogen*, Jinbutsu sosho 88 [1962], 183-85. The sources for, and theories regarding, the date of Dogen's return have been discussed at some length in Okubo Doshu, *Dogen zenjiden nokenkyu* [rev. ed., 1966], 174-90.) On the tenth day of the twelfth month (January 18, 1228), the Japanese era name was changed from Karoku to Antei. We may assume, then, that Dogen's Karoku manual was composed sometime during the latter half of 1227.

4. See Okubo Doshu, *Dogen zenjigoroku*, Iwanami bunko 2211-12 (1940), 214. In 1925, Okubo reproduced the manuscript in collotype facsimile in his *Z<sup>en</sup>en bokka*, vol. 1 (repr., 1974), and in 1930, the text was published in SSZ.Shugen,2:11 -12. Okubo's edition of the text can be found at DZZ.2:3-5; a supplement to this collection, *Dogen zenji shinpitsu shusei* (1970) ,1-15, provides a photocopy of the manuscript.

The manuscript is written on elegantly illustrated paper, thought to be of Sung manufacture, in a *kaisho* script following the Sung style; the calligraphy as well as the signature (*kao*) accord well with other manuscripts attributed to Dogen. Thus, there is every reason to believe that the inscription on the mounting is correct in its assessment of the document's authenticity. In 1941 and again in 1952, it was judged an autograph and designated a National Treasure (*kokuhd*) by a commission of the Japanese government.<sup>8</sup>

This autograph version of the *Fukan zazen gi* shows quite a few interesting differences from the vulgate text. We shall consider some of these in detail later on; here it is sufficient simply to note that the comparison of the two texts has left little doubt that the vulgate is a later, edited version of the autograph. This means that the manual Dogen wrote in 1227 could not have been the vulgate *Fukan zazen gi*, since the autograph manuscript is clearly dated in the first year of Tenpuku (1233). Faced with this fact, modern scholars have been forced to abandon the traditional date for the vulgate text; but, in doing so, they have also had to surrender the primary historical evidence for the traditional understanding of Dogen's earliest Zen teachings. Perhaps to salvage what they could of that understanding, they have turned instead to the autograph version, arguing that it was this work that Dogen must have written immediately upon his return from China.

The meditation teachings of the Tenpuku manuscript do not quite correspond to those of the vulgate *Fukan zazen gi*, let alone to the "orthodox" interpretation of Dogen's Zen. Still, in other respects, the work does introduce certain themes characteristic of his later writings and central to Soto doctrine. Of these, perhaps the most conspicuous is the emphasis on the historical and philosophical tradition of

the Ch'an school. As we shall see when we take up the content of the text, Dogen's description of meditation practice is closely integrated with his advocacy of this tradition. Though he does not use the term itself here, he leaves little doubt that the practice he recommends is derived from, and leads to the realization of, the *shobo genzo*, the ancient wisdom of the Buddha handed down solely by the Ch'an Patriarchs.

5. An inscription on the lid of the box in which the manuscript is preserved indicates that the donation was made in September 1852. See Yokoi Kakudo, "Fukan zazen gi goshinpitsu bon ni tsuite," SK 11 (3/1969), 79-81.

6. Yokoi, "Fukan zazen gi goshinpitsu bon ni tsuite," 79. For a discussion of the style of the calligraphy, see *ibid.*, 81-84. As might be expected, there is considerable difference of opinion on which of the many manuscripts attributed to Dogen are authentic. Some of the more widely accepted have been reproduced in Okubo, *Dogen zenji shinpitsu shusei*, but Furuta Shokin has recently questioned this selection. (See his *Shobo genzo no kenkyu* [1972], 17-43 ) <sup>^n</sup> this same paper (33-34), he reaffirms the authenticity of the *Fukan zazen gi* manuscript on the basis of its signature.

Whatever else we may say of this theme as a religious teaching, its historical claim to a unique tradition of Buddhism, ultimately validated by Sakyamuni himself, gives the Tenpuku *Fukan zazen gi* a decidedly polemical cast. Indeed the work has been described as Dogen's "declaration of independence" from the established schools of Japanese Buddhism, and as what amounted to a "declaration of war" with the most powerful of these schools, the Tendai organization on Mt. Hiei; it has also been seen as the opening move in Dogen's attempts to reform the contemporary Ch'an school and restore what he took to be the original character of the tradition. There is undoubtedly some truth in both (and especially, perhaps, in the former) of these characterizations of the autograph *Fukan zazen gi*, but there is little justification for using either as direct evidence for the kind of Buddhism Dogen might have brought back from China. Quite apart from the question of whether its content can be traced to Ju-ching, the frequent claim that the Tenpuku manuscript is merely a copy of a text originally composed immediately upon Dogen's return from the Sung does not rest on very firm ground. Since this claim is crucial to current interpretations of the origins of Dogen's Zen, it is worth considering in some detail.<sup>7</sup>

We have seen that there are two sources for our knowledge of the missing Karoku manual. In the *Bendo wa* passage the manual is explicitly identified as the *Fukan zazen gi*; ordinarily this would seem sufficient reason for concluding that the extant text, though dated later, is a copy of the earlier work. In this case, however, both the value and the implications of the evidence are open to question. The *Bendo wa* is a notoriously problematic text, the authenticity of which has long been the subject of controversy. The discovery in this century of an early manuscript has done much to allay doubts regarding the provenance of the work, and few scholars today would seriously question its attribution to Dogen. Nevertheless, the many significant differences between this manuscript and the vulgate version strongly suggest that the text has undergone considerable revision during the course of its transmission. Indeed one scholar recently has suggested that the passage on the *Karoku zazen gi* represents such a revision, and that it was not included in DSgen's original version.<sup>8</sup>

7. The notion that the Tenpuku manuscript is but a fair copy (*seisho*) of the Karoku work has been current in Dogen scholarship since Okubo proposed it in his influential study of the text in *Dogen zenji goroku*, 207-14. (Slightly revised versions of this study subsequently appeared in his *Dogen zenji den no kenkyu*, 299-305, and in the introduction to his revised edition of *Dogen Zenji*

zenshu, vol. 2 [1970], 519-22.) For examples of the use of the autograph text to support the traditional view that, immediately upon his return from China, Dogen declared the independence of Soto Zen from both Japanese Tendai and Chinese Lin-chi, see Imaeda Aishin, *Chusei zenshu shi no kenkyu* (1970), 19-22; and Akishige Yoshiharu, "Fukan zazen gi ko," *Tetsugaku nenpo* 14 (1953), 460-63.

Even if we choose to accept the authenticity of the *Bendo wa* reference to the *Fukan zazen gi*, we have not established the identity of the Karoku and Tenpuku texts. Dogen's other works indicate that he was in the habit of editing and revising his writings, and we cannot rule out that possibility here. In fact, as we know, the two extant texts of the *Fukan zazen gi* show marked divergences; similar or greater differences could certainly separate the Karoku and Tenpuku manuals. Nor would it be surprising if the 1233 manuscript reflected something of its author's experience during the six years since his return to Japan—years in which, as we shall see, his situation underwent marked change. Under the circumstances, then, it would seem rash to identify the Karoku and Tenpuku texts simply on the basis of an identity of title.<sup>9</sup>

Even greater problems confront us in the case of our second source. This document is now commonly referred to as the "Fukan zazen gi senjutsu yurai" [Origin of the composition of the *Fukan zazen gi*], but in fact it has no title and nowhere refers to that work.<sup>10</sup> The notion that the note was written in reference to the *Fukan zazen gi* is based, rather, on its content. After mentioning his Karoku *zazen gi*, Dogen goes on to criticize the understanding of meditation found in the *Tso-ch'an i* of Tsung-tse's *Ch'an-yuan ch'ing-kuei*, the inadequacies of which he felt made it necessary for him to compose his own meditation manual. Tsung-tse's work and Dogen's doubts about it will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters; here it is sufficient simply to indicate that the text of the Tenpuku manuscript does indeed represent a revision of the *Tso-ch'an i* and, hence, would seem to accord with Dogen's stated purpose in writing his manual. Therefore, the argument has gone, we can safely assume the identity of this text with the Karoku work referred to in the "Senjutsu yurai."<sup>11</sup>

8. See Furuta Shokin, *Shobo genzo no kenkyu*, 34. The *Bendo wa* seems to have been unknown to Edo scholars prior to the discovery of several texts late in the seventeenth century—hence, the doubts regarding its authenticity. In the 1930s, Okubo Doshu discovered a manuscript at the Shobo ji in Iwate prefecture that bears a colophon dated 1515 and purports to be a copy of a 1332 manuscript. (See DZZ. 1: 763. For a discussion of this and other texts of the *Bendo wa*, see Eto Sokuo, *Shobo genzo josetsu: Bendo wa gikai* [1959], 29-37.) While the Shobo ji text varies considerably from the vulgate version, the passage on the *Fukan zazen gi* is almost identical. This passage seems somewhat out of place in its context and may have been added as an afterthought, though this does not, of course, rule out the possibility that it was written by Dogen himself. Furuta (*Shobo genzo*, 34) suggests that it was added by some later editor on the basis of our second source for the Karoku manual.

9. We may note in this regard the view of Nagahisa Toshio, who doubts that Dogen would have dated the colophon of his manuscript in Tenpuku if he had actually composed it in Karoku. He points out that the verb *sho*, appearing in the colophon, is regularly used by Dogen in the sense "to compose" (rather than "to copy") and suggests that it should be understood in that sense here. Thus he takes the colophon as evidence that the Tenpuku text was sufficiently different from the Karoku manual for Dogen to have considered it a new work. (See his "Fukan zazen gi no kenkyu," SK 5 [4/1963], 11.)

10. Menzan, in his commentary on the *Fukan zazen gi*, assumed that the note represented a

postface to the manual (*Fukan zazen gi monge*, SSZ.Chukai,3:33); the title by which it is now usually cited was supplied by Okubo when he originally published the text in *Z<sup>en-en</sup> bokka* (see his *Dogen zenji den no kenkyu*, 176). The manuscript has been photocopied in Okubo, *Dogen zenji shinpitsu shusei*, 16, and described at *ibid.*, 3.

Here again, the argument obviously suffers from an excluded middle term: even if we grant that the *Karoku zazen gi*, like the Tenpuku manuscript, was a revision of Tsung-tse's manual, we cannot necessarily conclude that the two works were identical. The fallacy is painfully conspicuous in this case, where we have a total of four extant meditation texts by Dogen, all of which represent greater or lesser revisions of the *Tso-ch'an i*. If the argument from content were valid, we should expect all of these texts to be the same. In fact, of course, they are not. This formal weakness, moreover, is only one of the problems with the argument: of greater interest is the fact that it is based on what seems a questionable reading of the "Senjutsu yurai."

The passage on the composition of the *zazen gi* that I quoted earlier is widely cited as evidence for the original date of the *Fukan zazen gi*. Unfortunately, it is almost always cited in isolation, and surprisingly little attention has been paid to the context of the passage or to the historical character of the "Senjutsu yurai" itself. Consequently, the *zazen gi* mentioned in this passage is generally assumed to be the work for which the "Senjutsu yurai" was intended as an explanation. This assumption stands behind the notion that the *Karoku zazen gi* was critical of Tsung-tse's *Tso-ch'an i*. Yet a careful reading of the text reveals that, in fact, it was not necessarily written for the *Karoku* manual, nor does it explicitly connect that manual with the Chinese work.

The "Senjutsu yurai" informs us that Dogen returned to Japan in the *Karoku* era, was asked about meditation, and, therefore, felt obliged to write a manual of *zazen*. It then goes on to praise the T'ang figure Po-chang Huai-hai (749-814), famed as the author of the first Ch'an monastic code, and to criticize Tsung-tse for his failure to transmit Po-chang's meditation teachings faithfully. Finally, it closes with the statement "Now I gather the true arcana I have myself seen and heard, [offering them merely as a substitute for what is received in the mind's expression."<sup>12</sup>

Although the date of the "Senjutsu yurai" is unknown, given the fact that the document mentions Dogen's return to Japan in the *Karoku* era, the date must be put sometime after the end of that era. The last sentence clearly seems to indicate that the note was written on the occasion of the composition of the work for which it was an explanation. Thus it is not certain that the text of this work was the same as that of the original *Karoku Zazen gi*. On the contrary, there may well be two distinct texts: one (the *Karoku zazen gi*), which Dogen says at the beginning of the note he composed just after his return; and another (unidentified), alluded to in the final sentence, for which he is now writing the "Senjutsu yurai." According to this reading, this latter work would seem to be the one offered as a correction of Tsung-tse's manual. Presumably, it was also intended to improve on Dogen's own earlier efforts at a *zazen gi*; otherwise, there would have been no need to compose it. Indeed this presumption is strengthened by the rather apologetic tone Dogen strikes in referring to his *Karoku* work, which he wrote, as he says, only out of a sense of obligation. The "Senjutsu yurai," then, does not indicate that Dogen's first *zazen gi* was critical of Tsung-tse; far from establishing the identity of the Tenpuku and *Karoku* texts, in fact, it suggests the possibility that the two may have been quite different.

11. This argument was first proposed by Okubo Doshii, in his *Dogen zenji goroku*, 108—9.

12. DZZ.2:6.

Since the "Senjutsu yurai" lacks both title and date, we cannot say with any certainty for which of

Dogen's *zazen gi* it was written. The two most likely dates for the note are (1) 1233, on the occasion of the composition of the Tenpuku *Fukan zazen gi*; and (2) sometime in, or shortly after, 1243, when, as we shall see, Dogen composed his *Shobo genzo zazen gi* and probably also his revised version of the *Fukan zazen gi*. Internal evidence would appear to support the former. The "Senjutsu yurai" opens with a lament over the fact that "the special transmission outside the scriptures, the treasury of the eye of the true *dharmā*" (*kyōge betsuden shobo genzo*) has hitherto been unknown in Japan. In 1241, Dogen wrote the *Shobo genzo bukkyō*, & work devoted largely to a severe criticism of the famous Ch'an dictum of a "special transmission outside the scriptures." One doubts that soon thereafter he would make use of the dictum in the "Senjutsu yurai" to describe his own tradition.<sup>13</sup>

13. For the dates of the *Shobo genzo bukkyō*, see DZZ.i: 314; Dogen's criticism of the notion of *kyōge betsuden* appears at 306-8. My point here, I must admit, is somewhat vitiated by one of Dogen's poems, written in the winter of 1247-48 during his visit to Kamakura, on the theme *kyōge betsuden* (DZZ.2:412). Prof. Yanagida Seizan has called my attention to the fact that the "Senjutsu yurai," in emphasizing fidelity to the monastic code of Po-chang, reflects a sentiment appearing at the end of the Tenpuku *Fukan zazen gi* in the line, "Honor the rule of Po-chang and everywhere convey the circumstances of Shao-lin"—a line that does not appear in any of Dogen's later manuals.

In opposition to a Tenpuku date, we have the opinion of Furuta Shokin, to the effect that the calligraphic style of the "Senjutsu yurai" is "more mature" than that of the Tenpuku manuscript. He suggests that it was written around 1243, as an explanation of the *Shobo genzo Zazen gi*. (See his *Shobo genzo no kenkyū*, 33.) The question of the relative maturity of Dogen's calligraphy must be left to the experts in such matters; but the specific association of the note with the *Shobo genzo* text seems unlikely, since one would hardly expect Dogen to offer a formal explanation in Chinese of a vernacular work apparently first composed as a lecture. Still, Furuta's suggestion is an interesting one, because it leads him to speculate that the Karoku text was, in fact, an early version of the *Shobo genzo* manual, not of the *Fukan zazen gi*. In one sense this is implausible, since, as we shall see in our discussion of this text, the manual in the *Shobo genzo* presupposes material much later than 1227. If, however, his suggestion is intended only to indicate that the Karoku text, like the later *Shobo genzo* work, may have been simply a practical manual on the procedures of meditation, then it appears to be well taken.

Whatever the true date of the "Senjutsu yurai," its evidence does not allow us to read into Dogen's earliest meditation manual the teachings of the Tenpuku manuscript. If, as the text informs us, he was asked to teach *zazen* after he returned from China, Dogen was presumably looked upon, at least in some quarter, as knowledgeable in meditation. This would hardly be surprising, since he had just completed four years of training in Chinese monasteries. There was obviously much interest in the Sung Ch'an movement among Japanese Buddhists at this time, and anyone of his background and social prominence would probably have been eagerly approached for information. Under the circumstances he might well have "felt obliged" to compose a work on the *zazen* practice he had studied abroad. This work could easily have been simply a practical manual, giving concrete instructions on meditation technique; it need not have shared the ornate literary character of the *Fukan zazen gi* or its "revolutionary" political and doctrinal implications.

In regard to the question of the Karoku text's relationship to the *Tsoch'an i*, we can only speculate. There is every reason to believe that Dogen was familiar with Tsung-tse's work when he composed his first manual. It was well known in China, and indeed there is some evidence that it was recommended to Dogen by Ju-ching himself. Portions of its text, moreover, had previously appeared in Japan in Yosai's *Kozen gokoku ron*, a work with which we may presume Dogen was acquainted even before he

left for the mainland.<sup>14</sup> As we have noted, all four of Dogen's extant works on meditation practice make use of the *Tso-ch'an i*, and it seems reasonable to suppose that the *Karoku zazen gi* was no exception. We know that by 1233, when he wrote the *Tenpuku* manuscript, Dogen had already begun to modify Tsung-tse's presentation of Zen practice, but whether he did so in his first manual is not clear. Particularly if the *Karoku* work—like the *Tso-ch'an i* and unlike the *Fukan zazen gi*—was intended solely as a practical guide, he might well have been content simply to restate the kind of basic instructions on contemplative technique found in this popular Ch'an meditation text. Indeed this would explain why his subsequent criticism of Tsung-tse obliged him to rewrite his own manual.

I have considered the question of the missing *Karoku zazen gi* at some length here because these doubts about its content have a significant effect on the broader issue of how we are to interpret the origins of Dogen's Zen and the development of his ministry. If, as it appears, we cannot identify the work with the text of the *Fukan zazen gi*, then neither can we use this text to show what Dogen thought about Zen when he left Ju-ching. Put the other way, if Dogen's earliest extant meditation manual cannot be dated before 1233, our reading of it must take into account not only its author's experience in China but also the events of the half-decade and more that had passed since his return to Japan. Let us briefly review here what we know of these two historical factors.

14. See T.80:12a, 14-27. As we shall see, Yosai's text is apparently based only indirectly on Tsung-tse's manual. Although this work must be used with some caution, in the *Hokyo ki*, Juching is reported to have recommended the *Tso-ch'an i* to Dogen. (DZZ.2:386.)

The traditional story of the young Dogen's search for the true *dharma* is well known, and its details need not long detain us here.<sup>15</sup> The son of a powerful Heian aristocratic family, he is said to have entered the Tendai order on Mt. Hiei at the age of thirteen and subsequently to have studied under the important Tendai prelate Kōin (d. 1216), then abbot of Onjō ji, one of the two major centers of the school. Following the death of Kōin, he moved to Kennin ji, the monastery in Heian recently founded by Yosai (1141 -1215) for the practice of the new Zen tradition that the latter sought to introduce from China. There Dogen became the disciple of Yosai's student Myōzen (1184-1225), with whom, in 1225, he undertook his pilgrimage to the Southern Sung.<sup>16</sup>

When the two Japanese monks arrived on the continent, they made for the Ching-te monastery on Mt. T'ien-t'ung. There they studied under the current abbot, a Lin-chi master by the name of Wu-chi Liao-p'ai (1149-1224), who had been a student of Ta-hui Tsung-kao's influential disciple Fo-chao Te-kuang (1121 — 1203). Although on several occasions this abbot acknowledged his enlightenment, Dogen remained dissatisfied with his own understanding and unconvinced by Wu-chi's brand of Buddhism. After something over a year at T'ien-t'ung, therefore, he set out in search of another master. On nearby Mt. Asoka, he visited the monastery of A-yiiwang, like T'ien-t'ung, one of the five great "mountains" (*wu shan*) of Ch'an recognized by the government of the Southern Sung; but he could find no one there of substance. He went north, to the first of the five mountains, Wan-shou ssu on Mt. Ching; here he had an interview with the master Che-weng Ju-yen (1151-1225), another of Te-kuang's disciples, but again he came away empty-handed. He went south, as far as Mts. T'ien-t'ai and Yen-tang; along the way, he was offered (and declined) *dharma* transmission by a certain Lin-chi master Yuan-tzu, abbot of Wan-nien monastery, and had an inconclusive meeting with the master P'an-shan Ssu-cho, also a descendant of Ta-hui.

15. The most detailed and influential single study of Dogen's biography is Okubo's *Dogen Zenji den no kenkyu*; for an English account of the early years, see James Kodera, *Dogen's Formative Years in China: An Historical Study and Annotated Translation of the Hokyo-ki* (1980).



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