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The Philosophy of Zen Master Dōgen: Egoless Perspectivism

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Abstract and Keywords

Dōgen Kigen (1200–1253), founder of the Sōtō school of Zen Buddhism, is undoubtedly one of the most original and profound thinkers in Japanese history. This article focuses on Dōgen's *Genjōkōan*, which can be translated as “The Presencing of Truth.” This key text for understanding Dōgen's thought is the core fascicle of his major work, *Shōbōgenzō* (Treasury of the True Dharma Eye). It is the “treasury of the true Dharma eye” that Śākyamuni Buddha (ca. 500 BCE) is said to have transmitted to his successor, Mahākāshyapa, by silently holding up a flower. This event is held to mark the beginning of the Zen tradition, which is characterized by Bodhidharma (ca. 500 CE) as “a special transmission outside the scriptures; not depending on words and letters; directly pointing to the human mind; seeing into one's nature and becoming a Buddha”.

Keywords: Japanese philosophy, Dōgen Kigen, Bodhidharma, Zen Buddhism, *Genjōkōan*

Carrying the self forward to verify-in-practice the myriad things is delusion; for the myriad things to come forth and verify-in-practice the self is enlightenment.

...[When] a person verifies-in-practice the Buddha Way, attaining one thing he or she becomes thoroughly familiar with that one thing; encountering one activity he or she [sincerely] practices that one activity. Since this is where the place [of the presencing of truth] is and the Way achieves its circulation, the reason that the limits of what is knowable are not known is that this knowing arises and proceeds together with the exhaustive fathoming of the Buddha Dharma.¹

Dōgen Kigen (1200–1253), founder of the Sōtō school of Zen Buddhism, is undoubtedly one of the most original and profound thinkers in Japanese history. The focus of this chapter will be on Dōgen's *Genjōkōan*, which can be translated as “The Presencing of Truth.”² This key text for understanding Dōgen's thought is the core fascicle of his major work, *Shōbōgenzō* (Treasury of the True Dharma Eye). It (p. 349) is the “treasury of the true Dharma eye” that Śākyamuni Buddha (ca. 500 BCE) is said to have transmitted to his successor, Mahākāshyapa, by silently holding up a flower. This event is held to mark the beginning of the Zen tradition, which is characterized by Bodhidharma (ca. 500 CE) as “a special transmission outside the scriptures; not depending on words and letters; directly pointing to the human mind; seeing into one's nature and becoming a Buddha.” Like Bodhidharma, who is said to have sat in meditation for nine years after bringing Zen (Ch. Chan) from India to China, Dōgen too placed great emphasis on the silent practice of “just sitting” (*shikantaza*).

Yet Dōgen's writings are not just expedient means to practice and enlightenment, fingers pointing at the moon; they are also literary and philosophical masterpieces in their own right. Indeed, Dōgen is considered by many to be the greatest “philosopher” in the tradition of Zen Buddhism.³ Rather than merely insist on the limits of language and reason, he poetically and philosophically manifests their expressive potential. The “entangled vines” (*kattō*) of language are not treated simply as impediments to be cut through with the sword of silent meditation and ineffable insight. Instead, they are understood to have the potential to become “expressive attainments of the Way”

(*dōtoku*) that manifest perspectival aspects of the dynamic Buddha-nature of reality.⁴

Dōgen accepts the delimited and delimiting nature of language and of thought in general. And yet, he does not think that the perspectival limits of all perception, feeling, and understanding are as such antithetical to enlightenment. Rather than an overcoming of perspectivism, enlightenment for Dōgen entails a radical reorientation and qualitative transformation of the process of perspectival delimitation. Nietzsche once wrote, “Egoism is the law of perspective applied to feelings.”⁵ Dōgen would say that “egoistic perspectivism” well describes a state of delusion. Enlightenment, on the other hand, is precisely a matter of shedding the egoistic will to posit oneself as the fixed center of the world. Nevertheless, according to Dōgen, enlightenment does not supplant perspectival knowing with an omniscient “view from nowhere.” Rather, it involves an ongoing nondual engagement in a process of (p. 350) letting the innumerable perspectival aspects of reality illuminate themselves. Enlightenment thus entails an egoless and nondual perspectivism.

Dōgen would agree with Heidegger that any manifestation of truth always involves both a revealing and a concealing.⁶ As Dōgen puts it, “When one side is illuminated, the other side is darkened.”⁷ This epistemological principle is one of the central themes of his thought, and it can be found at work already in the famous opening section of the *Genjōkōan*. Since these programmatic yet laconic first four sentences of the text are often thought to contain the kernel of Dōgen's philosophy of Zen, let us begin by quoting and explicating them. As we shall see, these few lines can be read as a compact history of the unfolding of Buddhist thought from its foundational teachings through Mahāyāna philosophies to Dōgen's Zen.

Through Buddhism to Zen

When the various things [*dharma*s] are [seen according to] the Buddha's teaching [Buddha Dharma], there are delusion and enlightenment; there is (transformative) practice; there is birth/life; there is death; there are ordinary sentient beings; and there are Buddhas.

When the myriad things are each [seen as] without self [i.e., as without independent substantiality], there is neither delusion nor enlightenment; there are neither Buddhas nor ordinary sentient beings; and there is neither birth/life nor death.

Since the Buddha Way originally leaps beyond both plentitude and poverty, there are arising and perishing; there are delusion and enlightenment; and there are ordinary sentient beings and Buddhas.

And yet, although this is how we can say that it is, it is just that flowers fall amid our attachment and regret, and weeds flourish amid our rejecting and loathing.⁸

While the first sentence speaks from the temporal perspective of “*when* the various things are [seen according to] the Buddha's teaching...,” the second sentence speaks from that of “*when* the myriad things are each [seen as] without self...” What is affirmed in the first sentence is strikingly negated in the second. What is Dōgen doing here in this overturning alteration of perspective? While the first sentence sets forth several fundamental distinctions that constitute the basic teachings of Buddhism—such as that between ordinary sentient beings and their delusion on the one hand and Buddhas and their enlightenment on the other—the second sentence, by focusing now on the central teaching of no-self (*anātman*), goes on to (p. 351) negate *the reification* of these oppositional designations. For readers familiar with Mahāyāna Buddhism's Perfection of Wisdom literature, such self-deconstructive negations in a Buddhist text do not come as too much of a surprise. *The Heart Sutra*, for example, radicalizes the early Buddhist doctrine of no-self into that of the emptiness (*śūnyatā*; i.e., the lack of independent substantiality) of all phenomenal elements of existence (*dharma*s) and linguistic conventions, even to the point of a systematic negation of (a reified misunderstanding of) traditional Buddhist teachings themselves, including the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. *The Heart Sutra* also speaks of no-birth, no-death, and no-attainment, rather than of nirvāna as the attainment of a release from samsāra as the cycle of birth and death.⁹

Furthermore, readers familiar with Mādhyamaka philosopher Nāgārjuna's notion of the “emptiness of emptiness” (i.e., the idea that emptiness itself is not an independently substantial entity, but rather is the nature of events of interdependent origination [*pratītya-samutpāda*]),¹⁰ and with Tiantai (Jap. Tendai) philosopher Zhiyi's development of the Two Truths (i.e., the conventional truth of provisional designations and the ultimate truth of emptiness) into

the Three Truths of “the provisional, the empty, and the middle,”¹¹ will be prepared for the third sentence of the *Genjōkōan*. No longer qualified by a “when...,” the “middle” perspective expressed here resolves the tension between the first two perspectives so as to make possible the reaffirmation of distinctions, but now without reification. In fact, in its teaching of the ontological middle way of interdependent origination, Buddhism has always rejected nihilism and annihilationism along with substantialism and eternalism. The Buddhist account of the interdependent and dynamic nature of reality and the self is not subject to the “all or nothing” dilemma that plagues an ontology of independent and eternal substances. As Dōgen says here, “the Buddha Way originally leaps beyond both plentitude [i.e., substantial being] and poverty [i.e., nihilistic void].” Affirmatively thought, using the language of the Three Truths, the Buddhist *middle* way embraces the nondual polarity of the *provisional* “plentitude” of differentiated being and the “poverty” or substantial *emptiness* of ubiquitous interdependent origination.

It is possible to relate these first three sentences of the *Genjōkōan* not only to the Three Truths of Tiantai (Tendai) philosophy, but also to Chan Master Weixin's famous three stages on the way to enlightenment, according to which a mountain is first seen as a mountain (i.e., as a conceptual reification), then not as a mountain (i.e., as empty of independent substantiality and linguistic reification), and finally really as a mountain (i.e., in the suchness of its interdependent origination).¹² The path of the Buddha Way ultimately leads one back to the here and now.

(p. 352) Be that as it may, and although we should bear in mind that Dōgen was first of all trained as a Tendai monk and was intimately familiar with doctrines such as the Three Truths, it is also important to recall that he was from an early age dissatisfied with the then-prevalent doctrine of “original enlightenment” (*hongaku*). What concerned the young Dōgen was that a premature and blanket affirmation of the self and the world of distinctions *as they are* tends to deny or at least downplay the importance of transformative practices of cultivation (*shugyō*). This dissatisfaction and concern finally induced him to come down from Tendai's Mt. Hiei on a path that led him to Zen.

The primary and ultimate standpoint of Dōgen's Zen is most directly expressed in the climactic—and, in a sense, intentionally anticlimactic—fourth sentence of the *Genjōkōan*. Here Dōgen calls for a return from the heights of reason (*ri*) to the basis of fact (*ji*), that is, to the nonidealized here and now of concrete experience, where “flowers fall amid our attachment and regret, and weeds flourish amid our rejecting and loathing.” I would suggest that this crucial sentence, like so many in Dōgen's often polysemous texts, can be read in at least two ways. On the one hand, as the expression of the concrete experiences of enlightened existence, it signifies that nirvāna is not somewhere beyond the trials and tribulations of samsāra (the realm of desire and suffering). Rather, it is a matter of “awakening in the midst of the passions” (*bonnō soku bodai*). Like the Daoist sage's uninhibited weeping at his wife's funeral, Zen enlightenment is not an escapist dying to, but rather a wholehearted dying into a liberated and liberating engagement in the human life of emotional entanglements.

On the other hand, I think that this fourth sentence can also be read—on a less advanced but certainly no less significant level—as an acknowledgement that no amount of rational explanation of the nonduality of samsāra and nirvāna can bring about an actual realization of this truth. In *Fukanzazengi* Dōgen writes: “From the beginning the Way circulates everywhere; why the need to verify it in practice? ... And yet, if there is the slightest discrepancy, heaven and earth are vastly separated; if the least disorder arises, the heart and mind get lost in confusion.”¹³ And he tells us in *Bendōwa*: “Although the truth [Dharma] amply inheres in every person, without practice, it does not presence; if it is not verified, it is not attained.”¹⁴ Religious practice is necessary, which, for Dōgen, involves not just the practice of meditative concentration, but also the practice of thoughtful discrimination. Hence, after the opening section of the *Genjōkōan* he proceeds to concretely describe—by means of what has been aptly called a “transformative phenomenology”¹⁵—the conversion from a deluded/deluding to an enlightened/enlightening comportment to the world.

(p. 353) Verification: The Practice of Enlightenment

A deluding experience of the world, according to Dōgen, occurs when one “carries the self forward to verify-in-practice (*shushō*) the myriad things.” On the other hand, “for the myriad things to come forth and verify-in-practice the self is enlightenment.”¹⁶ In order to appreciate this explanation of delusion and enlightenment, we need to first discuss Dōgen's peculiar notion of *shushō*. In this term, Dōgen conjoins two characters to convey the inseparable

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nonduality of “practice” and “enlightenment (verification).”¹⁷ This key aspect of Dōgen's teaching is poignantly addressed in the concluding section of the *Genjōkōan*, where the action of the Zen master fanning himself (practice) is demonstrated to be one with the truth that the wind (Buddha-nature) circulates everywhere.

As Chan Master Baoche of Mount Mayu was using his fan, a monk came and asked, “It is the wind's nature to be constantly abiding and there is no place in which it does not circulate. Why then, sir, do you still use a fan?”

The master said, “You only know that it is the nature of the wind to be constantly abiding. You don't yet know the reason [more literally: the principle of the way] that there is no place it does not reach.”

The monk said, “What is the reason for there being no place in which it does not circulate?”

At which time the master just used his fan.

The monk bowed reverently.

The verifying experience of the Buddha Dharma and the vital path of its true transmission are like this. To say that if it is constantly abiding one shouldn't use a fan, that even without using a fan one should be able to feel the wind, is to not know [the meaning of] either constantly abiding or the nature of the wind.¹⁸

Enlightenment, for Dōgen, is found not in inactive detachment, nor in a passive acceptance of the way things are, but rather in the midst of a holistic participation—an engaged playing of one's part—in the world.

The character for *shō*, which is Dōgen's favored term for enlightenment, normally means to verify, prove, attest to, confirm, or authenticate something. As a synonym for enlightenment, *shō* is a matter of *verifying* (“showing to be true” and literally “making true”) and hence *realizing* (awakening to and thus actualizing) the fact that one's true self (*honbunjin*), one's “original part,” is originally part and parcel of the dynamically ubiquitous Buddha-nature. In the *Busshō* fascicle of the *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen famously rereads the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra*'s claim that “all (p. 354) sentient beings have the Buddha-nature” to mean that “Buddha-nature is all that is” (*shitsu-u wa busshō nari*).¹⁹ Enlightenment is a matter of *verifying-in-practice* this fundamental fact. It is a matter of *authentication*, of truly becoming what one in truth is: a unique expression of a universally shared Buddha-nature.

Learning to Forget the Self

The self is a participant in the dynamically interconnected matrix of the world. Delusion occurs when the self egoistically posits itself as the single fixed center—rather than existing as one among infinitely many mutually reflective and expressive focal points—of the whole.²⁰ In delusion the myriad things are seen, not according to the self-expressive aspects through which they show themselves, but rather only as they are forced into the perspectival horizon of the self-fixated and self-assertive ego. To borrow the language of Kant, the deluded and deluding ego willfully projects its own forms of intuition and categories of understanding onto the world. In contrast, through practicing the Buddha Way one comes to realize the empty (i.e., open and interdependent) nature of the true self.

Dōgen describes the steps of this process of practice and enlightenment in three of the most frequently cited lines of the *Genjōkōan*:

To learn the Buddha Way is to learn the self.

To learn the self is to forget the self.

To forget the self is to be verified by the myriad things [of the world].²¹

The study of Buddhism, according to Dōgen's Zen, involves more than a cognitive grasp of the truth of the Buddhist teachings (Buddha Dharma; *buppō*). It involves a holistic practice of a way of life (Buddha Way; *butsudō*).²² The central practice of the Buddha Way for Dōgen, and for the Zen tradition in general, is seated meditation (*zazen*),²³ rather than the study of scriptures, the performance of esoteric rituals, or calling on the grace of a transcendent savior. According to Zen, “what comes through the gate [i.e., from outside of oneself] is not the treasure of the house”; the truth (p. 355) must be discovered within. Dōgen thus speaks of meditation as a practice of taking a radical “step back that turns the light around.”²⁴

The light of our unenlightened minds is generally directed outward, shining its objectifying gaze on things and on a projected image of the ego itself. Things and other persons become objects of attachment (or aversion), possessions (or enemies) of a reified conception of the self as ego-subject. But things and persons change and otherwise refuse to obey one's will, ever slipping from the grasp of the ego, which is itself constantly subject to mutation and otherwise fails to live up to the self-constructed image of itself. Hence, repeatedly disappointed and frustrated, the ego suffers the resistance of the world and, out of greed, hate, and delusion, inflicts suffering on others. Ironically, the Buddha Dharma itself, as with any teaching, can be turned into just another object of dogmatic and even fanatic attachment, diverting us from the root of the problem, namely, a false conception of ourselves and our relation to the world. Therefore, the Buddha Way first of all requires a penetrating examination of the self.

Yet when one turns the light around to reflect on the deepest recesses of the self, what one ultimately finds is—nothing. There is no substantial ego-subject underlying our thoughts, feelings, and desires. But neither is this nothingness—or emptiness—a nihilistic void. Rather, the ungraspable nothingness of the self is the very source of the open-minded, open-hearted, and creatively free activity of the true self. The true self is an open engagement with others. A thoroughgoing “learning the self” thus paradoxically leads to a “forgetting of the self” as an independent and substantial ego-subject.

Dōgen speaks of this “forgetting” most radically in terms of his own enlightenment experience of “dropping off the body-mind” (*shinjin-datsuraku*). Note that Dōgen does not speak dualistically of freeing the mind from the body. In fact, he explicitly rejects the mind/body dualism of the so-called Senika heresy, and speaks of the “oneness of body-mind” (*shinjin ichinyo*) along with the nonduality of the “one mind” with the entire cosmos.²⁵ Insofar as we have identified ourselves with a dualistic and reified conception of the mind, however, along with the body this too must be shed. Only through a radical experience of letting go of all reifications of and attachments to the mind as well as the body does one become open to the self-presentation of the myriad things.

Yet this openness must be realized, and this realization is neither static nor simply passive. When Dōgen says that “things come forth and verify-in-practice the self” (elsewhere he even claims that “original practice inheres in the original face of each and every thing”²⁶), he is countering the willful self-assertion of unenlightened human subjectivity by calling attention to the “objective side” of the “total dynamism” or “undivided activity” (*zenki*) of a nondual experience of reality. Elsewhere he speaks of the *nonduality* of this experience as follows: “When you ride in a boat, body-and-mind, self-and-environs, subjectivity-and-objectivity are all together the (p. 356) undivided activity of the boat. The entire earth as well as the entire sky are the undivided activity of the boat.”²⁷ For our part, in order to authentically participate in this nondual event—and hence to verify or realize this or that aspect of reality—we must not only liberate ourselves from a self-assertive fixation on our body-mind by letting it drop off; we must also spontaneously pick up the body-mind again in an energetic yet egoless “total exertion” (*gūjin*) of “rousing the [whole] body-mind to perceive forms, rousing the [whole] body-mind to listen to sounds.”²⁸

Let us pause for a moment to review the pivotal paradoxes involved in Dōgen's path of Zen. (1) Turning to and from ourselves: By way of initially turning the light of the mind away from (a deluded view of) external reality and back toward ourselves, we discover an emptiness at the heart of the self that opens us up to an enlightened experience of the myriad things of the world. (2) Utter detachment and total involvement: This process of enlightenment entails a radical “dropping off the body-mind” that leads, not to a state of mindless disembodiment, but rather to a holistic integration of the body-mind and its unattached yet wholehearted employment in nondual events of enlightening perception and understanding.

Nondual Perspectivism

The intimately engaged yet egoless perception and understanding that Dōgen speaks of are, however, never shadowless illuminations of all aspects of a thing. The epistemology implied in Dōgen's understanding of enlightenment is plainly not that of simultaneous omniscience. Enlightenment does not entail the achievement of an instantaneous all-knowing view from nowhere, but rather the realization of being on an endless path of illuminating the innumerable aspects of reality, an ongoing journey of appreciating the “inexhaustible virtues” of things. Enlightenment is not a state of final escape to another world, but rather a never self-satisfied process of enlightening darkness and delusion within this world. Indeed, setting out on this never-ending Way of enlightenment

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entails awakening to the ineradicable play of knowledge and nescience. And thus, once again paradoxically, Dōgen tells us: “When the Dharma does not yet saturate the body-mind, one thinks that it is sufficient. If the Dharma fills the body-mind, one notices an insufficiency.”²⁹ This is Dōgen's version of the Socratic wisdom of knowing one's ignorance.

(p. 357) Dōgen makes this epistemological point most clearly and forcefully in the section of *Genjōkōan* where he speaks of the inexhaustible aspects and virtues of the ocean.

For example, if one rides in a boat out into the middle of the ocean where there are no mountains [in sight] and looks in the four directions, one will see only a circle without any other aspects in sight. Nevertheless, the great ocean is not circular, and it is not square; the remaining virtues of the ocean are inexhaustible. It is like a palace [for fish]. It is like a jeweled ornament [to gods]. It is just that, as far as my eyes can see, for a while it looks like a circle. It is also like this with the myriad things. Although things within and beyond this dusty world are replete with a variety of aspects, it is only through a cultivated power of vision that one can [intimately] perceive and apprehend them. In order to hear the household customs of the myriad things, you should know that, besides appearing as round or square, there are unlimited other virtues of the ocean and of the mountains, and there are worlds in all four directions. And you should know that it is not only like this over there, but also right here beneath your feet and even in a single drop [of water].³⁰

When Dōgen speaks of a human being sitting on a boat in the middle of the ocean, looking out in all four directions and seeing only a vast empty circle, he is perhaps not only speaking literally but also metaphorically of a meditative experience of emptiness. We might refer in this regard to the “empty circle” or “circular shape” (*ensō*) that appears as the eighth of the *Ten Oxherding Pictures*,³¹ which is often interpreted as a symbol for the absolute emptiness of the Dharmakāya (the Truth Body of the Buddha), or the Buddha-nature (*Busshō*) understood—as Dōgen and other Zen masters sometimes do—in terms of *mu-Busshō* (“no-Buddha-nature” or the “Buddha-nature-of-Nothingness”).

In any case, what is crucial is that neither the *Ten Oxherding Pictures* nor Dōgen's Zen stops here at the empty circle. It may be necessary to pass through an experience of emptiness as a “great negation” of the ego and its reifying attachments, and as the realization of absolute equality and equanimity. But even emptiness must not become a “perspectiveless perspective” to which one becomes attached. In the all-embracing “one taste” of perfect equality, the differences between singular things are concealed. Here, too, “emptiness must empty itself” and allow for distinctions, such that true nonduality is a matter of “not one and not two” (*fuichi funi*). The universal truth of emptiness is not an overarching perspective that negates, but rather a pervading principle that enables the interplay between unique yet interconnected beings. In its “suchness,” each thing, person, animal, or event is neither an independent substance nor an indistinct portion of an undifferentiated totality: rather, it is a unique perspectival opening within the dynamically interweaving web of the world.

(p. 358) Hence, even though one may perceive the ocean (or world) as a vast empty circle, Dōgen goes on to write: “Nevertheless, the great ocean is not circular, and it is not square; the remaining virtues [or qualities] of the ocean are inexhaustible. It is like a palace [for fish]. It is like a jeweled ornament [to gods]. It is just that, as far as my eyes can see, for a while it looks like a circle.” Dōgen is drawing here on the traditional Buddhist notion that different sentient beings experience the world in different manners, depending on the conditioning of their karma. He is likely alluding specifically to the following commentary on the *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha*: “The sea itself basically has no disparities, yet owing to the karmic differences of devas, humans, craving spirits, and fish, devas see it as a treasure trove of jewels, humans see it as water, craving spirits see it as an ocean of pus, and fish see it as a palatial dwelling.”³² Dōgen writes elsewhere that one “should not be limited to human views” and naively think that what you view as water is “what dragons and fish see as water and use as water.”³³

The epistemology implied in Dōgen's view of enlightenment as an ongoing practice of enlightening, as an unending path of discovery, is thus what I would call an engaged yet egoless, a pluralistic yet nondual perspectivism. It is a perspectivism insofar as reality only shows itself one aspect and focal point at a time. On the one hand, in a deluded/deluding comportment to the world this aspect and focus get determined by the will of a self-fabricating ego that goes out and posits a horizon that delimits, filters, and schematizes how things can reveal themselves (namely, as objects set in front of a subject who represents and manipulates them). On the other hand, in an enlightened/enlightening comportment to the world, things are allowed to reveal themselves through nondual

events in which the self has “forgotten itself” in its pure activity of egoless engagement. This engagement is neither simply passive nor simply active; for, originally, we are not detached ego-subjects who subsequently encounter (either passively or actively) independently subsisting objects. The original force at work in experience is neither “self-power” (*jiriki*) nor “other-power” (*tariki*). Rather, writes Dōgen, the “continuous practice” (*gyōji*) one participates in is “pure action that is forced neither by oneself nor by others.”³⁴ At every moment of enlightened/enlightening experience there is—for the time being—but a single nondual middle-voiced event of “being-time” (*uji*)³⁵ as a self-revelation of a singular aspect of reality. Enlightenment is a matter of realizing that the world is in truth made up of such nondual self-revelatory events. And just as these interconnected yet unique events are infinite, so is the path of their verification-in-practice.

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Notes:

(1.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:54 and 59; compare Dōgen 2002, 40 and 44. Most of my primary references will be to Dōgen 1990a, a reliable and readily available Japanese edition of the *Shōbōgenzō* in four volumes. Although all translations of quoted passages from Dōgen's texts will be my own, for the reader's convenience I will cross-reference available English translations in addition to citing the original Japanese texts.

(2.) For a full translation of this text, together with an essay that includes an explanation of the title as well as an earlier version of parts of the present chapter, see Bret W. Davis, "The Presencing of Truth: Dōgen's *Genjōkōan*," in *Buddhist Philosophy: Essential Readings*, ed. William Edelglass and Jay L. Garfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 251–259. Other translations of *Genjōkoan* include "Manifesting Suchness" (Waddell and Abe 2002), "Manifesting Absolute Reality" (Cook 1989), "The Realized Universe" (Nishijima and Cross 1994), "Actualizing the Fundamental Point" (Tanahashi 1985), and "Offenbarmachen des vollen Erscheinens" (Ōhashi and Elberfeld 2006).

- (3.) Dōgen was first treated as a “philosopher” in Japan in the early twentieth century, most notably by Watsuji Tetsurō (1889–1960) and by Tanabe Hajime (1885–1962). Prior to that, the study of his texts had been confined to Sōtō sectarian exegesis, culminating in *Shōbōgenzō keiteki* (Tokyo: Daihōrinkaku, 1965, originally published posthumously in 1930), a detailed and influential commentary by Nishiari Bokusan (1821–1910). For an engaging example of a recent Zen master's commentary, which is frequently sharply critical of Nishiari's interpretations, see Yasutani 1996. Philosophical studies of Dōgen in the West include Abe 1992; Heine 1994; Kasulis 1981; Hee-Jin Kim 2004, 2007; and Kopf 2002.
- (4.) See Dōgen 1999, 163–172, 179–184; Heine 1994, 243–249; and Cook 1989, 101–106.
- (5.) Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 199 (§162); see also Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 340 (§637).
- (6.) See Martin Heidegger, “The Essence of Truth,” in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- (7.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:54; compare Dōgen 2002, 41.
- (8.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:53; compare Dōgen 2002, 40.
- (9.) See Hanh 1988, and Lopez 1988.
- (10.) See Garfield 1995.
- (11.) See Swanson 1995.
- (12.) However, just as each of Tiantai's Three Truths is affirmed as a view of the truth, many traditional commentators (including Nishiari) stress that each of the first three sentences of the *Genjōkōan* ultimately has its own unassailable validity as a perspectival expression of the whole truth.
- (13.) Dōgen 1990b, 171; compare Dōgen 2002, 2–3.
- (14.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:11; compare Dōgen 2002, 8; also see Dōgen 1985, 87.
- (15.) See Elberfeld 2004, 382.
- (16.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:54; compare Dōgen 2002, 40.
- (17.) See Dōgen 1990a, 1:28; Dōgen 2002, 19.
- (18.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:60; compare Dōgen 2002, 44–45.
- (19.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:73; compare Dōgen 2002, 61.
- (20.) As with much of Zen thought, Dōgen's perspectivism is heavily influenced by Huayan (Jap. Kegon) philosophy, which in turn draws upon the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*'s image of the “jewel net of Indra” wherein each jewel reflects all the others. See Cook 1977 and Chang 1971.
- (21.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:54; compare Dōgen 2002, 41.
- (22.) Note the terminological shift from “Buddha Dharma” to “Buddha Way” in the first section of the *Genjōkōan*. In Japan, the terms traditionally used for “Buddhism” (now *bukkyō*) were *buppō* (Buddha Dharma or Law, which refers to the Buddhist teachings or the truth indicated by those teachings) and *butsudō* (Buddha Way, which refers to the practice of the way of the Buddha).
- (23.) The very word “Zen” derives from the Sanskrit *dhyāna*, meaning meditation.
- (24.) *Dōgen Zenji goroku*, 170; compare Dōgen 2002, 3.
- (25.) See Dōgen 2002, 21–23, and Dōgen 1994, 41–46. On the notion of “body-mind” in Dōgen, see Yuasa 1987,

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111–123; Nagatomo 1992, 105–129; and Shaner 1985, 129–155.

(26.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:18; compare Dōgen 2002, 14.

(27.) Dōgen 1990a, 2:84; compare Dōgen 1999, 174.

(28.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:54; compare Dōgen 2002, 41. There are contrasting interpretations of this passage. Along with most scholars, I have interpreted this “rousing the [whole] body-mind to perceive and listen” in terms of enlightenment. Other scholars have read it in terms of delusion. For a noteworthy example of the latter interpretation, see “‘Genjōkōan’ to shizen,” in *Ueda Shizuteru shū* [Ueda Shizuteru Collection] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 2002), 9:286ff.

(29.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:57; compare Dōgen 2002, 43.

(30.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:57–58; compare Dōgen 2002, 43.

(31.) See Yamada 2004.

(32.) Quoted in Dōgen 2002, 43; see also Dōgen 1990a, 1:440.

(33.) Dōgen 1990a, 2:198.

(34.) Dōgen 1990a, 1:297; compare Dōgen 1999, 114.

(35.) In the *Uji* fascicle (Dōgen 1990a, 2:46ff.; Dōgen 2002, 48ff.), Dōgen famously reads the compound *uji*, not simply as “for the time being,” but as a nondual event of “being-time.” On this important aspect of his thought, see Heine 1985; Stambaugh 1990; and Elberfeld 2004.

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