

# I

## *The Oneness of Practice and Attainment*

*Implications for the Relation between Means and Ends*

### YOUNG DŌGEN'S DOUBT

Dōgen is one of the most outstanding and unique Buddhists in the history of Japanese Buddhism. He is unique in at least the following three senses.

First, rejecting all existing forms of Buddhism in Japan as inauthentic, he attempted to introduce and establish what he believed to be genuine Buddhism, based on his own realization that he attained in Sung China under the guidance of Zen master Ju-ching (Nyojō, 1163–1228). He called it “the Buddha Dharma directly transmitted from the buddhas and patriarchs.” He emphasized zazen (seated meditation) as “the right entrance to the Buddha Dharma,” in the tradition of the Zen schools in China since Bodhidharma, originating from Śākyamuni Buddha. Yet he strictly refused to speak of a “Zen sect,” to say nothing of a “Sōtō sect,” which he was later credited with founding. For Dōgen was concerned solely with the “right Dharma,” and regarded zazen as its “right entrance.” “Who has used the name ‘Zen sect?’” he asks rhetorically. “No buddha or patriarch ever spoke of a ‘Zen sect.’ Those who pronounce a devil’s appellation must be confederates of the devil, not children of the Buddha.”<sup>1</sup> He called himself “the Dharma transmitter Shamon

(Monk) Dōgen who went to China" and returned "empty-handed" but with the strong conviction that he had attained the authentic Dharma that is directly transmitted from buddha to buddha and should transplant it to Japanese soil. Thus he rejected the idea of *mappō* (final or degenerate Dharma), an idea that had gained wide acceptance in the Japanese Buddhism of his day. It may not be too much to say of Dōgen that just as Bodhidharma transmitted the Buddha Dharma to China, he intended to transmit it to Japan.

Secondly, though Dōgen came to a realization of the right Dharma under the guidance of a Chinese Zen master whom he continued to revere throughout his life, the understanding of the right Dharma is unique to Dōgen. Based on his religious awakening and penetrating insight, Dōgen grasped the Buddha Dharma in its deepest and most authentic sense. In doing so, he dared to reinterpret the words of former patriarchs, and even the sūtras themselves. As a result, his idea of the right Dharma represents one of the purest forms of Mahayana Buddhism, in which the Dharma that was realized in the Buddha's enlightenment reveals itself most profoundly. All of this, it is noteworthy, is rooted in Dōgen's own existential realization, which he attained through long and intense seeking. Based on this idea of the right Dharma, he not only rejected all existing forms of Buddhism in Japan, as stated above, but severely criticized certain forms of Indian and Chinese Buddhism, though he generally considered the practice of Buddhism in these two countries to be more authentic than it was in Japan.

The third reason Dōgen is unique in the history of Japanese Buddhism is because of his speculative and philosophical nature. He was a strict practitioner of zazen who earnestly emphasized *shikantaza* (just sitting). He spent his whole life in rigorous discipline as a monk. He encouraged his disciples to do the same. Yet he was endowed with a keen linguistic sensibility and philosophical mind. His main work, the *Shōbōgenzō* (A Treasury of the Right Dharma Eye), perhaps unsurpassable in its philosophical speculation, is a monumental document in Japanese intellectual history. In Dōgen, we find a rare combination of religious insight and philosophical ability. In this respect, he may well be compared with Thomas Aquinas, born twenty-five years after him.

Dōgen wrote his main work, the *Shōbōgenzō*, in Japanese, in spite of the fact that leading Japanese Buddhists until then had usually written their major works in Chinese. Dōgen made pen-

etrating speculations and tried to express the world of the Buddha Dharma in his mother tongue by mixing Chinese Buddhist and colloquial terms freely in his composition. The difficult and distinctive style of his Japanese writing is derived from the fact that, in expressing his own awakening, he never used conventional terminology, but employed a vivid, personal style grounded in his subjective speculations. Even when he used traditional Buddhist phrases, passages, etc., he interpreted them in unusual ways in order to express the Truth as he understood it. In Dōgen, the process of the search for and realization of the Buddha Dharma, as well as the speculation on and expression of that process, are uniquely combined.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of this essay is to analyze and clarify one of the fundamental doctrines in Dōgen's thought that opens up his whole approach to philosophy and religion: the "oneness of practice and attainment" (*shushō-ittō*). Dōgen's views on this topic were developed because of a basic doubt or question he encountered in studying Tendai Buddhism during his early years of monastic training. He overcame this doubt through his personal liberation experience, attained under Ju-ching, of "the casting off of body-mind" (*shinjin-datsuraku*). The standpoint Dōgen set forth after his return to Japan was based on this enlightenment experience. In particular, his notion of the oneness of practice and attainment is a key to clarifying the uniqueness of his understanding of such crucial issues in Buddhism as the relation between illusion and enlightenment, beings and Buddha-nature, temporality and continuity, and life and death.

How did Dōgen come to realize the standpoint of the oneness of practice and attainment? To clarify this point, we must first examine the doubt that Dōgen faced on Mt. Hiei that led him to travel to Sung China to seek a resolution. According to such traditional biographical accounts of Dōgen's life as *Sansogyōgōki* and *Kenzeiki*,<sup>3</sup> Dōgen in his younger days encountered a serious question in his study of Tendai Buddhism on Mt. Hiei. It was expressed as follows:

Both exoteric and esoteric Buddhism teach the primal Buddha-nature [or Dharma-nature] and the original self-awakening of all sentient beings. If this is the case, why have the buddhas of all ages had to awaken the longing for and seek enlightenment by engaging in ascetic practice?<sup>4</sup>

This question concerns the Tendai idea of "original awakening" (*hongaku*) as opposed to "acquired awakening" (*shikaku*).

Tendai Buddhism emphasizes original awakening, the doctrine that everyone is originally awakened or enlightened. It rejects acquired awakening as inauthentic, because that doctrine indicates that awakening can be acquired only as a result of sustained practice. Dōgen came to doubt this fundamental standpoint of Tendai Buddhism, and asked, "Why should people engage in religious practice to overcome delusion if they are originally enlightened?"

This was the most crucial question for the young truth-seeker, and it finally compelled him to travel to China. The solution realized during that journey provided the foundation for Dōgen's later religion and philosophy.

Dōgen's initial question may be restated as follows: If, as Tendai Buddhism expounds, all sentient beings are originally endowed with the Buddha-nature and are inherently awakened to their true nature, why is it necessary for so many Buddhist practitioners in the past, present, and future to set upon a religious quest and practice various forms of Buddhist discipline to attain enlightenment? Are not that resolve and practice unnecessary?

This question is unavoidable for Tendai Buddhism in its expounding of original awakening. When young Dōgen came across this question, however, he apparently took the Dharma-nature, or innate self-nature, to be Reality as it exists immediately without the mediation of practice. He apparently grasped original awakening simply as a reality arising directly beyond time and space, something with a real existence independent of all practice. It must be said that in such an understanding there lurks a kind of idealization and conceptualization of original awakening. Strictly speaking, not only the Dharma-nature and original awakening, but also religious resolution and practice, are conceptualized in that understanding. But as Chih-i, the founder of Tendai Buddhism, had said: "Where can there be an innate Maitreya and a naturally enlightened Śākyamuni Buddha?"<sup>5</sup> The Dharma-nature, or original awakening, does not exist immediately without the mediation of practice in time and space. Rather, it discloses itself only through our own resolution and practice in time and space. Resolution and practice are therefore indispensable factors in the disclosure of the Dharma-nature.

In contrast to the question encountered by Dōgen concerning the standpoint of original awakening, there is another question that could arise from a totally opposite direction. That is, if

our own resolution and practice are indispensable, we cannot legitimately say that we are originally endowed with the Dharma-nature or that all sentient beings are originally enlightened. Why then does Tendai Buddhism expound the primal Dharma-nature and the original awakening of all sentient beings?

This question is posed from the standpoint of acquired awakening. In that standpoint, the Dharma-nature and one's true nature, seen as not originally endowed, are taken as something to be realized only as a result of resolution and practice and are not understood as existing directly without the mediation of practice in time and space. It must be said, however, that here again there lurks a kind of idealization and conceptualization. Although it is from a direction totally opposite that of the previous case, Dharma-nature is now equally idealized as the goal to be reached, and resolution and practice are conceptualized as the means to reach it. And so, by taking our own resolution and practice in time and space as indispensable, we misconceive them as the indispensable *basis* for attaining Dharma-nature, or awakening to one's true nature.

The unavoidable question that tormented young Dōgen was, Why are resolve and practice considered necessary if the original Dharma-nature is an endowment? In contrast to that, this other doubt wonders how the Dharma-nature is said to be originally endowed, if resolve and practice are indispensable. Both of the above questions are nothing but the idealization, conceptualization, and objectification from opposite directions of the matter of awakening in Mahayana Buddhism—also referred to as “Buddha-nature,” “self-nature,” “Mind,” “Dharma,” or “Thusness.” Both of these doubts abstract equally in taking as an object the Reality of the Buddha-nature or awakening, which is fundamentally unobjectifiable and cannot be idealized.

To overcome this error of abstraction, we must clearly realize the distinction between that which must be the *ground* or *basis* and that which must be the *condition* or *occasion*. From the Mahayana Buddhist perspective, both the Buddha-nature and resolution-practice are indispensable and necessary for awakening. They are, however, indispensable in two different senses. Buddha-nature is indispensable as the *ground* or *basis* of awakening, whereas resolution-practice is necessary as the *condition* or *occasion* for awakening. The aforementioned errors of abstraction stem from the confusion of ground and occasion (or basis and condition); in this confusion, only one side is rec-

ognized, while the role and function of the other side is neglected. Or the errors derive from mistaking both sides for one another.

Put more concretely, in the case of young Dōgen, Dharma-nature, or one's true nature, is recognized as the Reality that is the ground of awakening for all sentient beings and beyond the limitations of time and space. But there is a doubt about the necessity of our own resolution-practice in time and space as the indispensable condition for realizing that ground as the ground. The Dharma-nature as ground is grasped abstractly by Dōgen as something existing immediately without the mediation of resolution-practice as a condition. The other standpoint, however, overemphasizes the necessity of our own resolution-practice in time and space and treats it as if it were the ground. This view thereby commits the abstraction of conceiving of the Dharma-nature as a direct extension of our own resolution-practice. In this case the Dharma-nature, which should originally be the ground, loses its reality and its character as the ground and is grasped merely as a sign to guide our resolution and practice; that is, it is grasped as nothing more than a condition or occasion. Even though the Dharma-nature is understood to be realized at the last extremity of time and space, it is not seen as beyond the limitations of time and space.

As we saw before, the question young Dōgen encountered was that of why resolution-practice is necessary if we are originally endowed with the Dharma-nature. To Dōgen it was an existential and subjective question. At least intellectually, however, Dōgen must have fully realized the existence of another question, that of how the primal Dharma-nature can be seen as fundamental if resolution-practice is indispensable. For these questions are the two sides of the same issue of Dharma-nature, or awakening, and they are essentially connected with one another. Among novices and monks at Mt. Hiei, where Dōgen was studying, there must have been many who encountered one or the other of these two questions, even though their doubts might not have been as clear and acute as Dōgen's.

At any rate, while studying Tendai Buddhism at Mt. Hiei, Dōgen unconsciously idealized the Dharma-nature and doubted the necessity of practice. And yet, precisely at that point, he could not help feeling restlessness and anxiety over his own existence, which was somewhat separated from the fundamental Reality. This may be why in the opening pages of *Hōkyōki*, a record of Dōgen's dialogues with his Chinese teacher Ju-ching,

Dōgen says:

The mind that aspires to enlightenment arose in me at an early age. In my search for the Way I visited various religious teachers in my own land and gained some understanding of the causal nature of the world. Yet, the real end of the three treasures (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) was still unclear. I clung vainly to the banner of mere names and forms.<sup>6</sup>

By this Dōgen means that he was shackled by doctrinal concepts and formulations and, in his understanding, was unable to penetrate to Reality. It must have been this anxiety stemming from his feeling of separation from the fundamental Reality that motivated him to sail to China, even though this arduous journey was undertaken at the risk of his life.

#### THE SOLUTION: ONENESS OF PRACTICE AND ATTAINMENT

In China, Dōgen “visited many leading priests of Liang-che, and learned of the different characteristics of the five Gates.”<sup>7</sup> Dōgen wrote: “Ultimately, I went to T'ai-pai peak and engaged in religious practice under the Zen master Ju-ching until I had resolved the one great matter of Zen practice for my entire life.”<sup>8</sup> At this point Dōgen attained an awakening that overcame all the previous idealization, conceptualization, and objectification of the Dharma-nature. There was not even an inch of separation between the Dharma-nature and Dōgen's existence. Dōgen's statement “The practice of Zen is the casting off of body-mind”<sup>9</sup> implies that all possible idealization, conceptualization, and objectification engaged in concerning awakening and discipline, attainment and practice, since his study on Mt. Hiei are completely cast off through the body-mind of Dōgen himself. Then the “innate self” in its true sense is fully realized as the body-mind that has been cast off.

How was the problem of the relationship between resolution-practice and the Dharma-nature solved at the very moment of the “casting off of body-mind” (*shinjin-datsuraku*), which is simultaneously “body-mind that has been cast-off” (*datsuraku-shinjin*)? His solution is shown here and there in his writings:

This Dharma is amply present in every person, but unless one practices, it is not manifested; unless there is realization, it is not attained.<sup>10</sup>

To think practice and realization are not one is a heretical view. In the Buddha Dharma, practice and realization are identical. Because one's present practice is practice in realization, one's initial negotiation of the Way in itself is the whole of original realization. Thus, even while one is directed to practice, he is told not to anticipate realization apart from practice, because practice points directly to original realization. As it is already realization in practice, realization is endless; as it is practice in realization, practice is beginningless.<sup>11</sup>

As for the truth of the Buddha-nature: the Buddha-nature is not incorporated prior to attaining Buddhahood; it is incorporated upon the attainment of Buddhahood. The Buddha-nature is always manifested simultaneously with the attainment of Buddhahood. This truth should be deeply, deeply penetrated in concentrated practice. There has to be twenty or even thirty years of diligent Zen practice.<sup>12</sup>

In the Great Way of buddhas and patriarchs there is always continuous practice which is supreme. It is the way which is circulating ceaselessly. There is not even the slightest gap between resolution, practice, enlightenment, and nirvāna. The way of continuous practice is ever circulating.<sup>13</sup>

These statements all show that awakening is not a subordinate to practice, attainment to discipline, Buddha-nature to becoming a buddha, or vice versa. Both sides of such contraries are indispensable and dynamically related to each other. Such expressions of Dōgen's as "the oneness of practice and attainment," "the simultaneous realization" of Buddha-nature and the attainment of Buddhahood, and "the unceasing circulation of continuous practice" clearly indicate this dynamic and indispensable relation. Unless one becomes a buddha, the Buddha-nature is not realized as the Buddha-nature, and yet at the same time one can become a buddha only because one is originally endowed with the Buddha-nature. It is at this point that the dynamic truth of the simultaneous realization of the Buddha-nature and its attainment can be seen.

As we see in Figure 1.1 below, the standpoint of acquired awakening may be illustrated by a horizontal line, for it presupposes a process of resolution and practice leading to attainment as its end. It indicates the dimension of time and space. On the other hand, the standpoint of original awakening may be illus-



trated by a vertical line, because by completely overcoming the notions of process and time and space implied by acquired awakening, it indicates the transspatial and transtemporal dimension, which is a matter not of process but of depth.

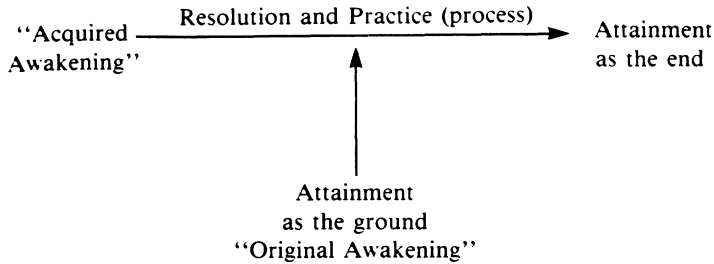


Figure 1.1

As already discussed, in Mahayana Buddhism, especially in Tendai Buddhism, both resolution and practice as the condition (occasion) and attainment as the ground (basis) are indispensable. Nevertheless, the standpoint of acquired awakening takes resolution and practice as the necessary ground for attainment, which is seen as the end. It takes only the horizontal dimension as the real and overlooks the vertical dimension, which is actually the indispensable ground for resolution and practice. On the other hand, the standpoint of original awakening as understood by the young Dōgen takes attainment as the one true reality and doubts the significance of resolution and practice. That view takes only the vertical dimension as the real and neglects the horizontal dimension, which is seen as something unnecessary.

However, as Dōgen realized through his experience of the casting off of body-mind, practice and attainment are not two but one and constitute a dynamic whole in which the horizontal dimension (practice) and the vertical dimension (attainment) are inseparably united. Thus he emphasizes, "As it is already *realization in practice*, realization is endless; as it is *practice in realization*, practice is beginningless."<sup>14</sup> This dynamic relation of practice and realization (attainment) may be illustrated as in Figure 1.2.

The center of this dynamic whole is the intersection of the horizontal dimension and the vertical dimension. We are always living in, and living as, this intersection. Since the horizontal process of practice is beginningless and endless, *any point*

of the process of practice is *equally* a point of intersection with the vertical line of attainment, which is infinitely deep. This means that attainment, as the ground, supports and embraces the whole process of practice, and that *any point* of practice points *directly* to original attainment.

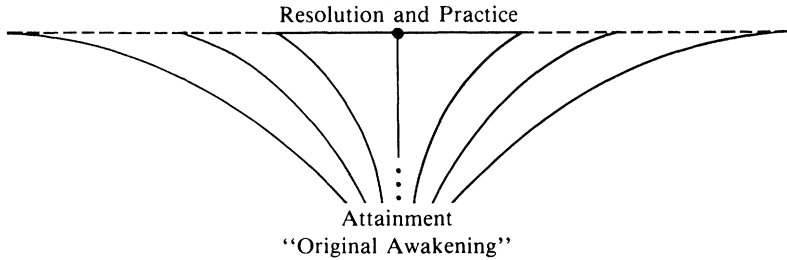


Figure 1.2

In order to properly grasp this matter, however, it may be necessary to clarify the issue by dividing it into two aspects as follows:

1. Both attainment (awakening, or the Buddha-nature) and practice (discipline, or becoming a buddha) are indispensable; but the former is indispensable as the *ground*, or *basis*, whereas the latter is indispensable as the *condition*, or *occasion*. In this regard, their distinction, and especially the irreversible relationship between them, must be clearly realized; attainment (awakening) is more fundamental than practice, not the other way around.

The young Dōgen recognized the indispensability and the reality of attainment of the Buddha-nature. Precisely because he did so, however, the indispensability of practice in becoming a buddha was questioned. He clearly realized the transcendental reality of attainment (the Buddha-nature), which is beyond time and space, but could not help doubting the reality of resolution, practice, and becoming a buddha, which do not escape the limitations of time and space. This is because Dōgen was trying to understand the reality of the latter by only taking the reality of the former as the standard. In other words, at that point, without distinguishing between “that which must be the ground” and “that which must be the condition,” Dōgen was trying to grasp both attainment and practice, the Buddha-nature and becoming a buddha, in one and the same dimension. It is, however, an abstraction to grasp both of them in that way, for the standpoint of attainment (or the Buddha-nature), which is beyond time and space, is clearly different in

its dimension from the standpoint of practice (becoming a buddha), which is inseparable from the limitations of time and space. The former is “that which must be the ground” of human existence, whereas the latter is not. But even so, one should not immediately say that only the former has reality whereas the latter lacks it. If one were to understand the issue in that way, it would be yet another form of abstraction and conceptualization of the matter, and one would not arrive at the reality of the issue. The standpoint of resolution, practice, and becoming a buddha is an indispensable reality in a different sense than is Buddhahood. It is indispensable not as “that which must be the ground” but as “that which must be the condition” whereby one realizes the ground as ground. In that case it has an *indispensable reality as the condition* for Buddhahood. Further, “that which must be the ground” is more fundamental than “that which must be the condition,” and thus there is an irreversible relationship between them. That is to say, attainment, or the Buddha-nature, is more fundamental than resolution and practice, and this relationship should not be reversed.

In short, although both attainment (the Buddha-nature) and practice (becoming a buddha) are equally real and equally indispensable to human existence, the former is so as the ground, whereas the latter is so as the condition or occasion. Attainment and practice—the Buddha-nature and becoming a buddha—are inseparable from one another, and yet the former has priority over the latter. In order not to abstract from the concreteness of the matter, however, one must not miss the distinction between “that which must be the ground” and “that which must be the occasion” as well as their irreversible relationship. This is precisely because, as quoted before, Dōgen says:

This Dharma is amply present in every person, but unless one practices, it is not manifested; unless there is realization, it is not attained.

This is one of the things Dōgen awakened to at the point of the casting off of body-mind.

A question opposite to the one young Dōgen faced was the question of why the primal Dharma-nature is emphasized, if resolution and practice are indispensable. In this question, the questioner understands resolution, practice, and becoming a buddha as if they were the ground of the Buddha-nature, for the question overemphasizes their indispensability. Here again,

there is a confusion between “that which must be the ground” and “that which must be the occasion.” That this standpoint, too, has fallen into an abstraction distant from Reality must have been clearly recognized by Dōgen in his awakening realization of the casting off of body-mind.

2. As stated above, there is an irreversible relationship between attainment (the Buddha-nature), which is indispensable as the ground of one’s awakening, and practice (becoming a buddha), which is indispensable as the condition of attainment. Attainment (the Buddha-nature), however, is not something substantial; in itself it is nonsubstantial and nonobjectifiable no-thingness. Accordingly, through a realization of the nonsubstantiality of its ground, practice as the condition is realized as something real in terms of the ground. Thus, in going beyond the irreversible relationship between attainment (the Buddha-nature) and practice (becoming a buddha), these two aspects come to be grasped in terms of a reversible identity.

As Dōgen says, “You say no (Buddha-nature) because Buddha-nature is emptiness.”<sup>15</sup> Attainment (the Buddha-nature), indispensable as the ground of human existence, is not a being or something substantial, but is in itself empty and no-thing. Accordingly, even though the Buddha-nature is the ground that is realized only through practice as its condition, it is not a substantial ground or a ground that is some particular thing, but a ground as no-thing, that is, a nonsubstantial and nonobjectifiable ground. It is a ground that is different from ground in the ordinary sense as something simply distinguished from a condition. In this way, the distinction between ground and condition in the ordinary sense is overcome. Further, the irreversibility between them is also overcome. At that point, that which is conditional is directly realized as the ground. This is the reason Dōgen expounds “impermanence-Buddha-nature” (*mujiō-busshō*) by saying, “Impermanence is in itself Buddha-nature.”<sup>16</sup>

In other words, at that point impermanence itself, which is strictly limited by time and space, is realized in its suchness as the Buddha-nature that is beyond time and space. Accordingly, resolution, practice, and becoming a buddha not only are occasions or conditions for attaining the Buddha-nature, but also come to have the meaning of original attainment, which must be the ground. Conversely, original attainment, which must be the ground, cannot be attained apart from resolution, practice, and becoming a buddha, which are usually understood as con-

ditions. Therefore, a reversible relationship between attainment and practice, the Buddha-nature and becoming a buddha, is realized. This is the reason Dōgen says:

In the Buddha Dharma, practice and realization are identical. Because one's present practice is practice in realization, one's initial negotiation of the Way in itself is the whole of original realization.... As it is already realization in practice, realization is endless; as it is practice in realization, practice is beginningless.<sup>17</sup>

Again, it is for this reason that Dōgen says:

There is not even the slightest gap between resolution, practice, enlightenment, and nirvāna. The way of continuous practice is ever circulating.<sup>18</sup>

Practice now is not mere practice but "practice in attainment" (*shōjō no shū*). Accordingly, it is realized as "wondrous practice" (*myōshū*) and is not different from "original attainment pointed to directly" (*jikishi no honshō*). In other words, the Buddha-nature is not merely "incorporated prior to attaining Buddhahood." There is an aspect in which we must say, "It is incorporated upon the attainment of Buddhahood." And so, in the final analysis, as Dōgen said, "the Buddha-nature is always manifested simultaneously with the attainment of Buddhahood." This is what Dōgen calls "the truth of the Buddha-nature."<sup>19</sup>

In this, we see Dōgen's emphasis on the oneness of practice and attainment, Buddha-nature, and the ever-circulating way of continuous practice. This is precisely what Dōgen awakened to at the moment of the casting off of body-mind, and it was a complete solution to the question that arose in him on Mt. Hiei. This emphasis, however, does not indicate an immediate identity between practice and attainment—or the Buddha-nature and becoming a buddha—that exists apart from the mediation of any negation. One should not overlook the fact that Dōgen's realization of the "oneness of practice and attainment" includes a dynamism mediated by negation—it is a dynamic, nondualistic identity between practice and attainment that is mediated by the realization of impermanence-Buddha-nature. The realization includes, as stated before, (1) an aspect in which attainment (the Buddha-nature), as ground, and practice (becoming a buddha), as condition, are both indispensable and must be distinguished from one another, and (2) an aspect in which attainment is nothing but the attainment of

impermanence-Buddha-nature. Attainment as ground, and practice as condition, are nondualistically identical in the realization of impermanence-Buddha-nature. In other words, Dōgen's view of the oneness of practice and attainment, that is, the ever-circulating way of continuous practice, does not indicate a mere reversible identity between attainment and practice, the Buddha-nature and becoming a buddha. Rather, it indicates a reversible identity, in which an absolute irreversibility between attainment and practice, the Buddha-nature and becoming a buddha, can be reversed by virtue of the nonsubstantiality of attainment and the emptiness of the Buddha-nature. This point must not be overlooked. What is involved here is a reversible identity that is always inseparably connected with the aspect of irreversibility. Dōgen's realization of the oneness of practice and attainment consciously includes within itself this sort of reversible identity.

This means that Dōgen, and all of us, are always standing at the intersection of the temporal-spatial horizontal dimension and the transtemporal-transspatial vertical dimension insofar as we awaken to the oneness of practice and attainment. We are also always standing at a dynamic intersection of irreversibility and reversibility, between practice as a means and attainment as a ground. Each and every moment of our life is such a dynamic intersection. We are living such moments from one to the next, realizing that impermanence is in itself Buddha-nature.

### CONTEMPORARY IMPLICATIONS

What significance does Dōgen's idea of the oneness of practice and attainment have for us today? Needless to say, it has undeniable significance for our religious life. First of all, in zazen practice and religious life in the narrow sense, we must clearly realize the dynamic oneness of practice and attainment. Dōgen's idea of the oneness of practice and attainment, however, has rich implications that are applicable, in terms of the oneness of means and end, to a much wider domain of our human life than just religious life in the narrow sense. I would now like to discuss briefly two areas to which the idea of the oneness of means and end may be significantly applied. One area is the understanding of the present and future in our individual and social life; the other is the understanding of one's personality and its relationship to other persons and other things.

*The Understanding of the Present and Future*

In our individual and social lives we tend to set up an end or purpose in the future and think about how to live in the present in order to attain that end. This aim-seeking, or teleological, approach has been quite prevalent throughout history, but it is most evident in the modern West. In the West, the notion of "progress" has been strongly emphasized, and the progressionist view of history has been predominant. (Even Marxism may be regarded as a sort of progressionism.) In this view of history, and in the aim-seeking approach, the present is regarded simply as a step toward a future goal. This implies at least the following three points:

1. The present is not grasped as something meaningful in itself, but as something significant only as a means to arrive at the end projected in the future.
2. We are always "on the way" to the attainment of a goal and, though we may approach the projected goal, we cannot completely arrive at it. Thus we are not free from a basic restlessness.
3. This basic restlessness stems from the fact that in the aim-seeking approach we objectify or conceptualize not only the future but also the present, and thus we are separated from reality.

In contrast to the aim-seeking approach, the realization of the oneness of means and end implied in Dōgen's idea of the oneness of practice and attainment provides an entirely different view of the present and future. In the realization of the oneness of means and end, each and every step of the present is fully realized as the end itself, not as a means to reach the end. And yet, at the same time, each and every step of the present is totally realized as a means toward a future goal, because we are living at the dynamic intersection of the temporal-spatial dimension and the transtemporal-transspatial dimension. In this way, firmly grounding ourselves on reality, we can live our lives creatively and constructively toward the future.

To realize the oneness of means and end, and the dynamic intersection of the temporal-spatial and transtemporal-transspatial dimensions, we must turn over the aim-seeking progressionist approach from its base. Only when we clearly realize the unrealistic, illusory nature of the aim-seeking, progressionist

view of life and history do we come to the realization of the dynamic oneness of means and end.

*The Understanding of One's Personality*

Unlike a thing, that is usually regarded as existence that is a means, a person is regarded as existence with the self as its own end. This is especially clear in Kantian ethics, which has given a philosophical foundation to the modern notions of personality, freedom, and responsibility. Kant distinguishes things and human personality, and insists that while things can only have value as existence that is a means, human personality has dignity and grace as existence with self-purpose. Although a human being can be used as a means, at the same time he or she must always be treated as an end. In the Kantian framework, this superiority of people over things, and end over means, should not be overcome. Thus Kant talks about the "Kingdom of ends" as the community of personality. Viewed in the light of Dōgen, this Kantian notion of personality not only is limited by anthropocentrism but also is not completely free from reification of the human self. In Dōgen, people are not essentially distinguished from other beings, but are grasped as a part of the realm of beings. People and other beings are equally subject to impermanence, or transiency. Although only people who have self-consciousness can realize the impermanency common to all beings *as* impermanency, they can overcome the problem of life and death only when they can overcome the transiency common to all beings. In Dōgen both suffering and emancipation from it are grasped on this transanthropocentric dimension. Hence Dōgen's emphasis on the simultaneous attainment of Buddha-nature for self and others, and for humans and nature. In this simultaneous attainment, each person becomes an occasion or means for the others' attainment just as each person realizes his or her own attainment. Here self-awakening and others' awakening take place at the same time. While maintaining one's individuality in terms of self-awakening, one serves as the means for the awakening of others. This dynamic mutuality takes place not only between the self and others, but also between humans and nature. This is the reason Dōgen emphasizes, in the "Bendōwa" fascicle, that

trees and grasses, wall and fence, expound and exalt the Dharma for the sake of ordinary people, sages, and all living



beings. Ordinary people, sages, and all living beings in turn preach and exalt the Dharma for the sake of trees, grasses, wall, and fence. The dimension of self-enlightenment-qua-enlightening-others basically is fully replete with the characteristics of realization, and causes the principle of realization to function unceasingly.<sup>20</sup>

This mutual help for enlightenment between humans and nature, however, cannot take place insofar as humans take only themselves as the end. As Dōgen maintains:

To practice and confirm all things by conveying one's self to them, is illusion; for all things to advance forward and practice and confirm the self, is enlightenment.<sup>21</sup>

The self must be emptied, for all things to advance and confirm the self. Accordingly, "to forget one's self" is crucial. To forget one's self is nothing other than body-mind casting off. And when body-mind are cast off, the world and history are also cast off. If body-mind are cast off without the world and history being cast off, it is not an authentic "body-mind casting off." Further, "body-mind casting off" is not something negative. It is immediately the cast-off body-mind, that is, the awakened body-mind that is freed from self-attachment and ready to save others. In the same way, the casting off of the world and history, which takes place at the same time as the casting off of body-mind, is not something negative. It is directly the cast-off world and history, that is, the awakened world and awakened history, that "advance forward and practice and confirm the self."

Such are the implications of the notion of the oneness of means and end when that notion is applied to the understanding of one's personality and its relationship to other persons and other things. Here we can see Dōgen's challenge to the contemporary issues of ecology and history. The crucial point of this dynamic mutuality between the self and others, and humans and the world, is to forget one's self, or body-mind casting off. Only when one forgets one's own self, and one's body-mind are cast off, is self-awakening-qua-awakening-others fully realized. This is not the "Kingdom of ends," but the "Kingdom of dependent origination."