

Introduction

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Overview of Dōgen's Writings

This book presents a complete translation of the *Eihei Shingi*, one of the major writings of the Japanese Zen master Dōgen (1200–1253). Eihei Dōgen traveled to China and brought back the practice of Zen in 1227. He is considered the founder of the Sōtō branch of Japanese Zen, a continuation and development of the Caodong (pronounced “Tsow-dong”) lineage of the Chan [Zen] tradition, the lineage that Dōgen inherited from his Chinese teacher. But Dōgen’s teaching was not limited by any particular school of Buddhism, as he fully integrated the fundamental principles of Buddhist practice, philosophy, and community lifestyle as they had been expressed in China.

Dōgen’s body of writings, especially his masterwork, the *Shōbōgenzō* [True dharma eye treasury], is generally esteemed

today as one of the great summits of Japanese Buddhist philosophy. His essays include discussions on meditation practice, psychology, and poetic insight into the nature of reality. Although Dōgen is venerated as the founder of a major branch of Japanese Zen Buddhism, even within the Sōtō sect Dōgen's writings were largely unknown up until this century; they were studied by only a smattering of Sōtō scholars and monks. In this century Dōgen has finally gained wide acclaim as a spiritual thinker and philosopher, among secular as well as religious commentators in both Japan and the West. Contemporary attention to Dōgen's writings has focused on such themes as his expression of Buddha Nature teaching, his profound and dynamic view of time, his teachings on the practice and meaning of *zazen* (seated meditation), his creative and insightful use of language, and his radical nondualism, especially the nondualism of practice and enlightenment.

The work translated here, the *Eihei Shingi*, concerns community practice; it contains Dōgen's principal writings of guidelines and instructions for everyday life in the monastic training center he established. Some sections of this work are technical in nature and may be of interest primarily to Buddhist scholars and professional monastics. But many aspects of this work will also be of value to more general readers interested in the broad issue of the Zen tradition's attitude toward spiritual community life. These wider aspects are more apparent in the text's first essay, "Instructions for the Tenzo [Chief cook]," and in the many koans or Zen stories in the long final essay, "Pure Standards for the Temple Administrators."

The Role of Community in Buddhism

The communal institution has been an important aspect of Buddhism since the time of Shakyamuni Buddha twenty-five hun-

dred years ago in Northern India. The fellowship of practitioners, or sangha, established then has often functioned since as a radical contrast to existing social conventions and conditioning. The Buddhist monastic order, despite its varying relationships and accommodations to the ruling powers throughout Asian history, has offered an alternative or counterculture to the status quo of societies based on exploitation and disregard for individual human potential. This spiritual institution has had, in fact, a civilizing effect on Asian societies, moderating the brutal tendencies of various rulers.

The common designation of Buddhist monks as “home-leavers” ideally implies the act of renouncing worldly ambition by joining the monastic community, and also the inner work of abandoning ensnarement from the bonds of social and personal psychological conditioning. Although the essential insight of Buddhist awakening affirms the fundamental rightness and interconnectedness of the whole of creation, just as it is, the sangha remains as a historical instrument to perform the long-term work of civilizing and developing the awareness of our species so as eventually to actualize and fulfill for all beings the vision of our world as a pure land, informed by wisdom and compassion.

The monastic enclosure was developed in Shakyamuni’s time when the monks halted their peripatetic mendicant practice to abide together for a few months during the rainy season. Unlike the Catholic monkhood, which is usually entered for life, a major paradigm of Mahayana Buddhist monasticism has been oscillation between periods of training in the monastic enclosure and reentry into the marketplace. Monks test their practice by returning to interact with conventional society, and also help fulfill the developmental function of the Buddhist order by sharing with the ordinary world whatever they have learned of self-awareness, composure, and compassion during their monastic

training. In Japan, from Dōgen's time to the present, monks finish a period of training and go out to function as temple priests, ministering to the laity. Some later return to the monastery for further development or to help train younger monks. Traditionally in China and Japan, monks would also leave their monastic community to wander around to other teachers and test their practice and understanding.

In accord with its purpose, monastic community life is seen as an opportunity for its participants to develop their capacity for enacting the universal principles of awakening in the concrete aspects of their lives. Great emphasis is given to taking care to perform each activity with a wholehearted, positive attitude. The monastic lifestyle, procedures, and forms are strong supports for the practitioners immersed in the process of deepening their personal experience of the nonalienated, integrated nature of reality. Each ordinary function is treated as a tool for enhancing mindfulness of one's state of awareness and innermost intention. Some contemporary Zen teachers in the West, such as the Vietnamese master Thich Nhat Hanh and Robert Aitken Rōshi, have given similar attention to presenting updated practices for mindfulness in everyday life. Such exercises are developments of the traditional monastic daily practices depicted here by Dōgen.

The *Eihei Shingi* includes regulations and procedural instructions for these monastic forms and activities, including such details as the manner of sleeping and of brushing teeth. But the context for all the particular forms is Dōgen's practical attitude of care and mindful attentiveness to the real stuff of our lives and to communal harmony. The experience of ultimate truth and of Buddhist teaching must be applied to our everyday activity and relationships in the phenomenal world. Since the highest realization is not at all separate or elsewhere from our ordinary activity, Dōgen's lofty poetic and philosophic expression often bursts through amidst his descriptions of mundane procedures.

No currently existing Zen temple or monastery exactly follows all of the routines described here, although a few in Japan come close and still use this work as a guide. And many Zen centers in the West, as well as training temples in Japan, follow a great many of the monastic forms described herein. These forms are tools to help us find appropriate community lifestyles and practices.

Alignment with Nature

These monastic guidelines and forms also serve the function of realignment and attunement with the harmonious order and flow of nature. For example, the schedule of activities in Dōgen's monastic community followed the natural cycles. Time was signaled by various bells, drums, and wooden sounding blocks not regulated by abstract hours and minutes but according with divisions of time based on the varying sunrise and sunset times. The bell for evening zazen and the signal for night's end (see "Model for Engaging the Way") are traditionally determined by such means as whether or not there is enough daylight for the signal person to see the lines in his hand at arm's length, or whether or not ants on the ground are distinctly visible. The purpose of Zen community, to embody fully the reality of buddha nature, is not at all separate from achieving harmony with the natural environment and its rhythms. The community practice forms reflect the ecological Buddhist worldview of mutual interdependence.

The value of nature in the Zen tradition is reflected in the fact that many monasteries in China and Japan were situated deep in the remote mountains, as was the case for Eihei-ji, the monastery Dōgen established, and also for many of the temples in the stories Dōgen recounts in *Eihei Shingi*. However, many Buddhist monasteries have been essentially suburban. Temples have been

located on the outskirts between the city and the wilderness, and have served as an interface for the harmony of nature with whatever may pass for civilization at the particular time.

Cultural Adaptation and Expression

The monastic forms—schedules, style of robes, or eating utensils—may vary and adapt slightly through different times and cultures, but these forms and practices are far more enduring than the forms of the artificial world of fashion and culture. Throughout decades and centuries the styles of the laypeople are ever shifting, while the monks, as they follow these traditional practices, all look and live essentially the same.

Dōgen carefully illustrates in the *Eihei Shingi* the fundamental spirit and attitudes for communities of practitioners dedicated to universal spiritual awakening and to the harmonious expression of its practice in the group. Such underlying considerations transcend different cultural manifestations, and may provide useful guidance not only to Zen centers, but to all spiritually based communities.

Inevitably over the coming generations, Zen communities that endure in the West will develop their own appropriate forms and rituals for group practice. The forms Dōgen discusses are closely based on Buddhist teaching from China and reach back directly to the historical Buddha's time in India. While it may be argued that some of these forms reflect the native Japanese (and Chinese) cultural talent for regimentation, Dōgen intersperses with procedural instructions many expressions of the underlying attitudes for communal practice of transcultural awakened mind. Despite the often wholesome Western emphasis on individual responsibility, initiative, and development, Westerners also will have to develop workable patterns for har-

monization if they are to sustain engagement in communal practice of dharma. Dōgen's instructions clearly embody and exemplify principles of gratitude, sincerity, and harmony that are essential for any group spiritual practice.

Although Western communities will certainly make adaptations in ritual forms, historically this process has been an organic one over several generations, and cannot be artificially predetermined based on our conditioned intellectual views and opinions. Dōgen expresses his practical attitude to the process of cultural adaptation in "The Dharma for Taking Meals," the third essay in the *Eihei Shingi*, where he discusses the use of chopsticks in dharma communities in China and Japan. In India Shakyamuni Buddha and his disciples used their fingers for eating, as was customary in their society. But Dōgen does not imply that chopsticks are inherently superior to fingers or vice versa. Rather, he notes that practitioners in China and Japan, although they may want to follow Buddha's example exactly, simply lack cultural awareness and guidance in proper decorum for eating with hands.

A more significant instance of cultural relativity and adaptation appears in the "Pure Standards for Temple Administrators," where Dōgen quotes without comment the proscription in the Indian Vinaya (the rules for monks' conduct) against agriculture as a source of monks' livelihood. This was based on the Indian cultural priority of the sanctity of animal life, including earthworms and other small creatures imperiled by agrarian cultivation. However, slightly earlier in the same work Dōgen extols in detail the virtues of the diligent practice of the garden and field manager in the Chinese monastic model. In the Chinese cultural milieu the emphasis for Dharma communities had shifted radically from the earlier Indian monastic values to the priority on self-sufficient livelihood and integration of realization with everyday practical activities. In China it was more important to

display the possibility of awakened conduct even amidst mundane circumstances, and this jibed with the developing principles of Mahayana Buddhist practice.

Introductions to the Individual Essays

The *Eihei Shingi* consists of six sections. A given reader may find one essay more interesting than another, and they need not be read in sequence. As mentioned at the outset of the introduction, the general reader might find most useful the opening essay and long closing one, as the middle essays deal more with monastic forms and procedures.

First is "Instructions for the Tenzo" ["Tenzokyōkun"], written in 1237 at Kōshōji, Dōgen's temple in Uji just south of Kyoto, where Dōgen began assembling a community in 1233. This essay details specific duties of the *tenzo* or chief cook, going through a whole day. Normally a day is considered to begin in the evening, but here the *tenzo*'s job is delineated starting after lunch. Dōgen makes clear the paramount importance of the practice responsibilities of this position and that dedicated effort for the community well-being is as valuable a spiritual practice as meditation or as study of the sayings of the ancient masters. As elaborated in Edward Brown's foreword, the practice of attentive work with all the ingredients at hand, as experienced in kitchen work, is essential to Zen attitudes and development.

In his "Instructions for the Tenzo," Dōgen includes colorful examples of great Zen teachers and their doings while serving as *tenzo*, and also of his own rich encounters with *tenzos* while practicing in China. He elaborates the appropriate mental attitude for the *tenzo*, which must equal that of an abbot. Dōgen says of the *tenzo* position, "Since ancient times, masters with Way-seeking mind, lofty people who had awakened their hearts, were

appointed to this job. . . . If you do not have the mind of the Way, then all of this hard work is meaningless and not beneficial."

The second essay, "Model for Engaging the Way" ["*Bendōhō*"] was written in 1246 at Daibutsuji [Great Buddha Temple]. Dōgen founded this temple far from Kyoto in the remote mountains of Echizen (now Fukui) on the north coast of Japan after moving there in 1243. Later in 1246 he renamed it Eiheiiji [Eternal Peace Temple], after the era name from 58 to 75 C.E., when Buddhism and the first sutras officially entered China. It continues today as one of the two head temples of the Japanese Sōtō School.

"The Model for Engaging the Way" describes procedures and decorum for daily conduct (beginning with the evening) in the *sōdō* [monks' hall], where the monks sit zazen, eat meals, and sleep in assigned places. Dōgen asserts that just to maintain dignified demeanor while in accord with the daily community activities is exactly the practice of full awakening. This wholehearted engaging of the dharma at one with the community is itself, "the practice-enlightenment before the empty eon." So, he says, "do not be concerned with your actualization;" i.e., do not seek after some enlightenment later or elsewhere from this harmonious community practice.

As of this writing, few if any Zen centers in the West have traditional *sōdō*s where monks sleep in the same hall where they sit and eat. But in Japan, this *sōdō*-style practice is still very much the model for monastic training centers authorized by the Sōtō school.

The third essay, "The Dharma for Taking Food" ["*Fushukuhānpō*"] was written in 1246 at Eiheiiji. Here Dōgen gives detailed instructions for the formal manners and procedures for serving, receiving, and eating food in the monks' hall using the traditional set of bowls and cloths, called *hau* or *ōryōki*. Dōgen uses eating to illustrate closely the dignity with which all daily activities should be conducted by dharma practitioners. This formal eating practice

is a valuable mindfulness exercise, providing the opportunity to observe carefully and bring consciousness to one's conduct and interaction with an essential aspect of the phenomenal world. This practice also allows the monks to express deeply their respect for the teaching, each other, and the whole world.

Dōgen makes it clear near the beginning of the essay that there is no separation between food and spiritual teaching. "Dharma" in the following passage implies all of the meanings of the original Sanskrit word: primarily the teaching of reality, but also the truth of reality itself, the elements of that realm of reality, and this teaching as means or path to align with that reality. (Dharma as the teaching is meant as the dharma teaching of perfect truth rather than specifically as the Buddha Dharma of Buddhism, although all Buddhist teachers certainly would find the true dharma to be within the Buddha Dharma.) "Just let dharma be the same as food, and let food be the same as dharma. . . . If dharmas are the dharma nature, then food also is the dharma nature. If the dharma is suchness, food also is suchness. . . . Food is the dharma of all dharmas, which only a buddha together with a buddha exhaustively penetrate. . . . Dharma is itself food, food is itself dharma. This dharma is what is received and used by all buddhas in the past and future. This food is the fulfillment that is the joy of dharma and the delight of meditation."

These traditional procedures and attitudes for serving and eating food in Zen monasteries became the inspiration for the Japanese tea ceremony. Tea was first imported from China to Japan in the ninth century but achieved new heights of popularity in Dōgen's time as an aid for monks in maintaining their meditative wakefulness. Dōgen himself mentions drinking tea in the "Model for Engaging the Way." These dignified monastic manners were eventually transformed into a high art epitomizing the subtlety and range of Japanese aesthetics when the Way of Tea

was formalized, a few centuries after Dōgen, in the Rinzai temples of Kyoto.

The fourth essay in the *Eihei Shingi*, "Regulations for the Study Hall" ["Shuryō Shingi"] was written at Eiheiji in 1249. Dōgen details the courteous and considerate conduct appropriate for monks committed to total enactment of the Way. The relationship between fellow practitioners is profoundly intimate. "Siblings in Buddha's family should be closer to each other than with their own selves." Dōgen's guidelines honor both the respect due to those with experience and the underlying equality of all community members. "You should know that temporarily we are guest and host, but for our whole lives we will be nothing other than buddhas and ancestors."

The fifth and shortest essay, "The Dharma when Meeting Senior Instructors" ["Taitaiko gogejarihō"] is from a talk given in 1244 at Yoshimine Temple, where Dōgen's assembly was awaiting completion of the nearby Eiheiji. Here Dōgen gives beginning novices sixty-two specific injunctions for the appropriate etiquette when in the presence of senior instructors, defined as those who have completed five of the annual three-month-long practice periods.

While such hierarchical attitudes may be disconcerting seen from Western views of egalitarianism, one might also see these instructions as guidance for newcomers in the respectful attitude most conducive to harmonious entry into the community. The instructions also strongly encourage nondiscrimination toward various seniors by the novices based on personal preference or judgment. Enacting these practices expresses the appreciation and respect due to the sustained experience of practice and to those who have taken on the responsibilities of instructing others in the spiritual life. At the end Dōgen clarifies that these deferential guidelines are not meant to be applied between senior instructors themselves. But then he concludes that "Seeing

seniors is inexhaustible. The first summer practice period we see seniors; at the ultimate fulfillment [of attaining buddhahood] we see seniors." Within dharma community there is no end to embodying attitudes of appreciation and gratitude.

The sixth and final essay of the *Eihei Shingi*, "Pure Standards for the Temple Administrators" ["Chiji Shingi"], by far the longest, was written at Eiheiiji in 1246 and gives instructions with examples for the conduct and commitment of those in the monastic administrative positions. The first half of the essay gives twenty-one koans (classical teaching stories of dialogues or actions of former great masters), all of which concern previous temple administrators. In retelling the stories themselves, Dōgen sometimes quotes directly from the Chinese Chan (Zen) literature, and sometimes gives his personal reading of the original incidents. All the cases are followed by his own commentaries, which we have identified by indenting them in the text.

As a koan collection, the "Pure Standards for the Temple Administrators" is unique in its focus on community practice. What becomes apparent in reading these examples is that its heroes are often very far from what would be considered exemplary by any conventional standard. Dōgen most highly praises some of his exemplars specifically for incidents in which they apparently violate precepts and regulations, or even are temporarily expelled from the community—for example Fushan Fayuan and Xuefeng Yicun as tenzos and Wuzu Fayuan when he was mill manager. For Dōgen the purpose of the Zen community is not based on usual social, cultural, or psychological criteria, but solely on the unswerving devotion to universal awakening.

The second half of the "Chiji Shingi" expounds in turn the duties and careful attitudes of the main administrators: the director, the *inō* [monks' supervisor], the tenzo, and the work leader. Dōgen first quotes the instructions for each post from his primary sourcebook, the *Zen'en Shingi* (see below), and then adds

his own comments including some further examples and colorful stories. This last section of "Pure Standards for the Temple Administrators" is replete with Chinese cultural and monastic lore, but one senses that Dōgen may have intended further editing and elaboration. Had he lived longer, perhaps the sections for the other three administrators might have been developed into separate texts parallel to "The Instructions for the Tenzo."

Chan Stories and the Sōtō Use of Koans

In addition to procedural instructions, in the *Eihei Shingi* Dōgen includes, with his own commentaries, many examples of stories and dialogues of the old masters that illustrate the appropriate attitudes and intention for communal practice. These especially appear in the first section, "Instructions for the Tenzo," and in the long final section, "Standards for Temple Administrators." Some of these stories appear as well in classic koan anthologies such as the *Book of Serenity* [Shōyōroku], *Blue Cliff Record* [Hekiganroku], and *Gateless Gate* [Mumonkan]. But many of the stories or koans [literally, "public cases"] that Dōgen offers here are not available in the major sources and comprise a valuable addition to Zen teaching lore.

A popular misconception holds that koans are only used in the Linji/Rinzai branch of Zen and not in the Caodong/Sōtō lineage that Dōgen transmitted. The Sōtō tradition dates back to such seminal Chan figures as Shitou Xiqian (700–790) and Dongshan Liangjie (807–869), and later its monastic community life had been strengthened by Furong Daokai (1043–1118) and its meditation praxis poetically articulated by Hongzhi Zhengjue (1091–1157). Many figures throughout the history of this lineage commented on the koan literature in detail in their teachings, although these stories were not used in a systematic program of meditation as

they often have been in the Linji tradition. In fact, the two traditions frequently had a cooperative relationship. Dōgen's first teacher was from the Rinzai lineage, and a great many of the koans cited in "Standards for the Temple Administrators" involve figures in the Linji/Rinzai tradition, including Linji himself.

Dōgen compiled other collections of koans and commented on the classical stories frequently in his masterwork, the *Shōbōgenzō*. An aspect of Dōgen's use of koans can be seen from his teaching of *genjōkōan* [the koan manifesting], which emphasizes seeing one's own life experience and problems as koans to engage with. Conversely, he sees the classic stories of the old masters as intimate expressions of the existential issues of one's own life.

Most of the stories Dōgen includes in his *Pure Standards for the Zen Community* focus on the theme of the mutual cooperation, dedication, and kindheartedness necessary for those in responsible positions in the community. In the very beginning of the *Eihei Shingi*, at the start of "Instructions for the Tenzo," Dōgen says that the temple administrators "are all Buddha's children, and together they carry out Buddha's work." But in the sangha [or Dharma community] all members are considered Buddha's children, and all are doing the work of Buddha, i.e., bringing awakened compassion to the world so as eventually to actualize Shakyamuni's buddha field for all beings. Therefore, in the stories Dōgen cites as models for community leaders, the dedication and cooperative spirit exemplified are really guidance for all members of the spiritual community.

Significance of the *Eihei Shingi*
in Dōgen's Teaching and Practice

The writings in the *Eihei Shingi* mark the beginning of the later phase of Dōgen's teaching career. From the time of his return to

Japan from China in 1227 until his departure from the Kyoto area to Echizen in 1243, the emphasis of Dōgen's writing might be said to encompass the extensive elaboration of the universality of the nondualistic buddha nature and the efficacy of zazen as its expression in practice. During this period, Dōgen was directing his teaching to all interested sincere practitioners, lay students as well as monks.

After 1243, as Eiheiiji was being developed in the remote Echizen mountains, Dōgen's teaching was addressed more specifically to the community of monk disciples who gathered around him for concentrated training. As he sought to develop a core group of dedicated people who could carry on his work, his teaching emphasis naturally shifted to the value for them of precepts, discipline, and ordination, and of the intense "continuous practice" available in the setting of daily monastic training.

Dōgen's intention to carefully promulgate guidelines for monastic communities was clear even in his very early work. In "Talk on Wholehearted Practice of the Way" ["Bendōwa"], written in 1231 before he had established any community, Dōgen sought to convey the essential meaning of the zazen meditation practice he was introducing to Japan. But at the end of this work he added, with a feeling of regret, "I do not have a chance now also to present the standards for monasteries or regulations for temples, especially as they should not be treated carelessly."

Although much of his later work, including the *Eihei Shingī*, was focused on establishing clear standards for harmonious monastic communities, certainly zazen was still the core praxis. In the "Model for Engaging the Way" section of the *Eihei Shingī*, written in 1246, Dōgen presents detailed instructions for dignified conduct and procedures during the entire day in the monks' hall. As part of this, Dōgen includes both physical and attitudinal instructions for zazen, largely paraphrased (with some amplification) from Dōgen's first work, "Fukanzazengi." This work, the

"Way of Zazen Recommended to Everyone," first drafted in 1227 soon after Dōgen's return from China, is his basic instructions for zazen, to which "Bendowa" is a commentary.

The Zen monastic community that Dōgen depicts and encourages in the *Eihei Shingi* cannot be understood except as the expression of a harmonious lifestyle based on and emerging from the experience of zazen. Throughout his career, Dōgen advocated this nondualistic, objectless meditation practice, known also as "just sitting," which developed from the "serene illumination" meditation elaborated by Hongzhi Zhengjue in China in the previous century. This practice does not involve striving for gain or for manipulation of reality; it promotes active attentiveness to our present life experience just as it is. The self is seen as not estranged from the objective, phenomenal world. This "beyond-thinking" neither negates nor grasps at our thoughts and feelings, but attunes us to the deep harmony of reality that underlies the illusion of separation from the world that is created by discriminative consciousness.

All of Dōgen's suggestions for regulating everyday activities in the community are directed at helping practitioners together to embody and actualize this awareness in every aspect of ordinary life. The physical facilities and daily routines of the community also clearly revolve around the practice of zazen in the monks' hall.

Dōgen refers to this zazen as *jijuyū zammai*, the samadhi [concentrated awareness] of self-fulfillment or self-joyousness. The etymology of this term is relevant. The *ji* of *jijuyū* means self. The compound *juyu* means joyful or fulfilled, but separately the two characters mean to receive or accept one's function. So zazen, and self-fulfillment, is also by definition here the samadhi of the self accepting its function, or its job or position. The monastic community is based on this awareness. Each member is fulfilled, and their true nonalienated self is actualized, by each person

fully accepting and carrying out their job or position in the monastic mandala. Thus Dōgen stresses wholehearted engagement in one's job, as seen in the "Pure Standards for the Temple Administrators," where the nature, practice, and importance of many monastic positions are specifically delineated. This self-realizing samadhi is itself simply the reality of life (and death), and is not limited to the sitting posture. The purpose of Zen training and community practice is not just to extend this zazen awareness into everyday life but actually to discover the deep satisfaction and joyfulness of jijuyū samadhi emerging in all of our daily activities and relationships.

Contemporary Understandings
of Dōgen's Historical Context

Some contemporary academicians, both in Japan and the West, have made much of the shift in Dōgen's writing from the earlier emphasis on the universal value of zazen to the later monastic emphasis, and have imputed doctrinal contradictions, disputing extensively over which phase is the "true Dōgen." However, such scholastic deliberations completely fail to recognize the fundamental intention of Dōgen's work. While some of Dōgen's writings have rightfully earned him the modern reputation as a great philosopher, he never was concerned with producing a new, dogmatically consistent, philosophical doctrine along the lines of Western philosophical theories. Rather, his philosophy was always at the service of his main purpose: that of religious practitioner and spiritual guide.

The meaning of Dōgen's words must be realized in their context of practical teachings for particular students. From the viewpoint of sincere spiritual practice, rather than from the intellectual calculations and limited conceptualizations of consistency

that are sharply criticized as obstacles throughout true Zen literature, Dōgen's work can be seen as simply the natural unfolding of one person's awakened mind/heart. He consistently promoted practice that he considered appropriate and beneficial to the purpose of introducing thoroughly his understanding of Buddhist life into his native country.

It is true that in Dōgen's early works he emphasizes that full personal realization is available to any practitioner with sincere aspiration, lay or monk; whereas in some of Dōgen's final writings after *Eihei Shingi*—for example "The Merit of Home-Leaving" ["Shukke Kudoku"]—Dōgen states that full buddhahood, including transmission of the teaching to others, requires ordination as a monk. Earlier he had said that thorough personal awakening experiences depend only on wholehearted diligence. This emphasis is repeated in his later work. But the point of the later teaching, addressed to his monk disciples, is that historically the teaching of awakening has been transmitted and maintained only by a lineage of ordained monks. Still the case to modern times, this certainly need not be viewed as a doctrinal "contradiction," or a denigration of the insights and efforts of sincere lay practitioners.

We must recognize the intended function of Dōgen's teachings to particular groups of students. The complicated question of the various degrees and understandings of ordination and their role in practice is already proving to be a rich and difficult issue that must be engaged in Buddhism's development in Western cultures.

Recent historians have made valuable contributions to our knowledge of the particular conditions Dōgen faced and the backgrounds of his audiences. The context of the Buddhism prevalent in the culture of his time emphasized magical, esoteric ceremonies conducted by priests for the upper classes, and veneration of nature spirits and buddha and bodhisattva figures. Dōgen responded by strongly encouraging active personal

experience of practice and Buddhist truth through zazen and community life, not only available to the aristocracy. But this does not at all mean, as some modern interpreters have imagined, that Dōgen advocated a “pure,” clinical meditation practice that abandoned the prevalent worldview of Japan and Mahayana Asia with its rich, devotional religiosity. Chinese and Japanese Buddhism incorporated the native shamanistic sense of the spirit world, and fully recognized sacred qualities of the natural environment. The *Pure Standards for the Zen Community* includes veneration of native spirits and chanting of dharanis [magical incantations] as well as sutras. Dōgen maintained a ritual practice and poetic sensitivity congruent with a mystical outlook of the sort that contemporary Western Buddhists more usually associate with Tibetan Buddhism.

Many of Dōgen’s monk disciples came to him from the Daruma school, a slightly earlier, immature “Zen” movement in Japan that had some characteristics Dōgen strongly criticized. In parts of the *Shōbōgenzō* Dōgen used very harsh language to wean these disciples from their mistaken views of “natural” enlightenment, e.g., that the mere intellectual understanding that “Mind itself is buddha” is sufficient. These iconoclastic attitudes, perhaps analogous to the “Beat Zen” that preceded contemporary American Buddhist practice centers, misled these monks toward nihilistically ignoring the necessity for continued diligent practice and ethical conduct. As contemporary American Zennists have also learned, merely “going with the flow,” without vigilant attention to the consequences of conduct, is not sufficient. Dōgen’s commitment to ongoing practice, both to counter decadence and laxity and as the appropriate expression of genuine awakening, was a major concern in his standards for community life.

Awareness of this historical context can clarify specific aspects of Dōgen’s teaching. However, in the name of demythologizing previous sectarian, overly sanctified images of Dōgen in

the Sōtō school, some academic historians have imputed diverse, elaborate, and even self-serving motivations to Dōgen. For example, they explain his move to Eihei-ji as akin to a political power play. Such allegations apparently are based on these historians' own projections, since no actual historical data can confirm Dōgen's motivation. Hopefully, with further study of his work, a balanced view of Dōgen as a person may emerge that will include acknowledgment of both his human fallibility and the possibility of deep Mahayana commitment and faith as his determining intention.

Earlier Monastic Codes

Dōgen's writings in the *Eihei Shingi* were all inspired by the legendary original code for Zen communities, the *Hyakujō Shingi*. This work, said to be written by the great early Chinese master Baizhang Huaihai (749–814; Hyakujō Ekai in Japanese), was already lost before Dōgen's time. Baizhang is considered the originator of the Zen work ethic, embodied in his famous saying, "A day of no work is a day of no food." The *Hyakujō Shingi* is referred to as the model for Dōgen's primary written source for Zen monastic standards, the *Zen'en Shingi* [*Pure Standards for the Zen Garden*; *Chanyuan Qinggui* in Chinese], which was written in 1103 by the Yunmen lineage master Changlu Zongze. The last section of the *Zen'en Shingi* is designated as an extract from the *Hyakujō Shingi*. However, as there is no record of the *Hyakujō Shingi* from Baizhang's own time, its existence is uncertain.

The *Eihei Shingi* frequently quotes the *Zen'en Shingi* verbatim, or in paraphrase, when giving procedural instructions or admonitions. We have noted many such passages. However, Dōgen also quotes, and some of the *Zen'en Shingi* passages also refer to, extracts from various Vinaya texts from India, which give the early Buddhist rules of discipline and community conduct.

Clearly Dōgen aimed at maintaining ancient monastic community standards dating back to Shakyamuni Buddha in India. But unlike other Zen collections of regulations, Dōgen focuses on beneficial attitudes for community practice, often merely quoting the earlier shingi collections for procedural descriptions while adding original personal anecdotes and discourses concerning attitudinal or psychological orientations.

The Textual History of the *Eihei Shingi*

Dōgen did not himself compile his six essays in *Eihei Shingi* into one volume. However, he may have intended them to become a single work but was unable to accomplish this before his death at age fifty-three. In any case, the six works in the *Eihei Shingi* comprise all of the materials on community practice written by Dōgen in Chinese. (The *Shōbōgenzō* was all in Japanese.) Chinese was the formal literati language in Japan, much as Latin functioned in medieval Europe. Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō* was the first significant philosophical writing to use the native Japanese language. Some of the essays in the *Shōbōgenzō* written during the same period as the *Eihei Shingi* writings also dealt with monastic practice and procedures.

The first known compilation of the *Eihei Shingi* was by the fifteenth Eiheiji abbot Kōshū in 1502. It included only the "Ten-zokyōkun" and "Chiji Shingi." All six essays were first published together in 1667 by the thirtieth abbot of Eiheiji, Kōshō Chidō (d. 1670) in what is known as the Shohon edition. A translation of Kōshō Chidō's afterword to his version is included in this book as an appendix. He emphasizes the value of these writings as a guide for monastic practice despite their lack of literary polish compared to some of Dōgen's other works. This supports the likely view that some of the material may have been unfinished, or at least unedited, before Dōgen's early death.

The Sōtō school in Kōshō Chidō's period was strongly influenced by the popularity of the new Ōbaku Zen school. This school was founded by the Chinese monk Yinyuan Longqi (1592–1673), who arrived in Japan in 1654. Although some Sōtō monks were initially impressed with the Chinese forms of the Ōbaku School, many of them, led by Gesshū Sōko (1618–1696), were moved to examine more closely the Sōtō school roots in Dōgen's teaching. They came to feel that the later Chinese teachings of the Ōbaku monks had lost the essence of the wisdom expressed by Dōgen, with his radical nondualism. Gesshū, who helped initiate a period of reform and renewal in Sōtō Zen, especially insisted that Dōgen's writings included his own model for monastic practice, or shingi. *Eihei Shingi* was compiled and published by Kōshō Chidō as part of this response to the Ōbaku School and especially to the Ōbaku version of the monastic regulations.

The currently accepted Rufubon edition was published in 1794 by Eihei's fiftieth abbot, Gentō Sokuchū (1729–1807), who also supervised the publication of a major edition of the *Shōbōgenzō*. Various short passages that are in the text of the Shohon edition appear only as footnotes in the later Rufubon version, suggesting that they may have been added by Kōshō Chidō to Dōgen's original texts as explanations in the Shohon version. We have included these in the text and marked them with parentheses, which will not be used otherwise in the text itself. See, for example, "The Model for Engaging the Way," note 11.

Development of Standards for the Community
in the *Keizan Shingi*

Since its publication as a unified text in the seventeenth century, the Sōtō school has used the *Eihei Shingi* as a primary source for

instructions on monastic forms and procedures. Another primary source has been the *Keizan Shingi*, written near the end of his life by Keizan Jokin (1264–1325). Keizan, a Dharma successor three generations after Dōgen, is credited, along with his successors, with widely popularizing the Sōtō school in Japan. Keizan actively developed forms for extending Zen practice to the general lay populace. He incorporated into the Sōtō tradition the earlier Japanese spiritual context and was personally strongly influenced by Shugendō, the mountain ascetic tradition, as well as the Shingon school of Vajrayana Buddhism. Much of the ritual Keizan developed, which is still used in Sōtō temples, was derived from the Shingon tradition.

Along with his work of disseminating Sōtō ritual practice among lay followers, Keizan also maintained strong concern for the thoroughness and strictness of the Zen monastic training institution. Keizan founded Sōjiji Monastery, still the head Sōtō temple along with Eiheiji, and he is revered as the school's cofounder. Keizan's shingi generally accords with Dōgen's writings, while further elaborating ceremonial patterns and practices and monastic schedules.

In modern times the *Gyōjikihan*, compiled by the Sōtō school in 1889 based largely on Dōgen's and Keizan's shingi, has also become an important guidebook for Sōtō rules and ceremonies.

Translation Issues: Gender and Pronouns

In patriarchal East Asian culture, women were not generally in positions of power in the community, and the official histories rarely mention the many female adepts, although several of them are cited in the stories Dōgen includes in the "Pure Standards for Temple Administrators." There is nothing inherent in these monastic practices and procedures, however, that precludes

women from carrying out the various positions and jobs that Dōgen describes. Thanks to the insights of feminism, this reality is already clearly reflected in the recent adaptations of the tradition in Western (especially North American) society. Many current Western Dharma teachers are women, and in most American Buddhist communities women and men practice together, with women in responsible positions.

Personal pronouns in the Chinese used by Dōgen in the *Eihei Shingi* (as well as in his native Japanese language) are not gender specific. One of the many limitations of English in the translation of this material is that, unlike Chinese or Japanese neuter pronouns, third-person singular pronouns and possessive pronouns in English require gender (i.e., he, she, his, hers). To avoid inaccurately implying gender specifications, we have tried to avoid "he or she" constructions, but this is occasionally very awkward. To aid comprehension in the detailed procedural descriptions, especially in the "Model for Engaging the Way" and "The Dharma for Taking Meals," we sometimes have used "he" or "his," e.g., "The abbot enters the hall, and after he bows, he takes his seat." This should not be misconstrued as a gender distinction.

English pronouns provide numerous other problems for translation into English. Frequently in the Chinese in which Dōgen wrote the *Eihei Shingi*, the subject is unstated. Usually the implied subject is clear in context, but sometimes there is intended ambiguity, suggesting multiple meanings. Occasionally such ambiguity can be retained in English, but for coherent translation one usually has to supply at least a limiting pronoun like "you," meaning the students Dōgen is addressing in his teaching. Sometimes the translators had to guess at the implied subject. In such cases we have bracketed our interpretations of implied subjects. Brackets have been used throughout to help clarify the meaning of the text. In some cases such bracketed phrases also may be our interpretations.