

Being Awakened

AT the end of the essay *Genjō kōan* in *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen tells a little story about a conversation between a monk and a Zen master. Testing the old man, the monk asks, “Reverend sir, the nature of wind is eternal and exists everywhere, so why do you continue to fan yourself?” The master replies, “You understand that the nature of wind is eternal, but you still don’t understand why it exists everywhere.” “Why does it exist everywhere?” asks the monk. The master just continues to fan himself. Dōgen tells the story to make an important point. Although Buddha nature is eternal and exists everywhere, one must realize this in practice in order for it to become a reality. If enlightenment does not reveal one’s own innate Buddhahood and that of all things, Buddha nature remains a mere metaphysical truism. In making this point, Dōgen remains faithful to the tradition, which insists that the whole point of the Buddha Dharma as a system of doctrines and practices is the attainment of enlightenment and the liberation that comes with it.

Buddhism is ultimately about enlightenment. It does not primarily concern itself with morality, with being a good citizen, with conventional piety, or with confessing belief in a set of correct propositions. It does concern itself with these kinds of religiousness

to some minor degree, but it is really about enlightenment. Thus, if there were some great Yamalike judge to rule on the success or failure of a Buddhist's life at its termination, this judge would inquire not into the individual's piety or doctrinal correctness—whether the individual had been a good person, or had been generous to monks and other holy persons—but whether that individual had achieved enlightenment. Even the saintly and beloved individual who dies unenlightened has failed as a Buddhist.

Yet, having said this, it has to be acknowledged that for millions of Buddhists living and dead, enlightenment is not, or has not been, the great goal of their lives. The popular Buddhism of lay persons in all cultures has been one of merit-making done in the pious belief that this will ensure a rebirth in happy and fortunate circumstances. Enlightenment as a real option has seemed unrealistic for those who have no leisure for meditation and who feel caught up in the life of raising a family and struggling to survive. They also are attached to the sweet pleasures of sex and life with parents and children, and they regularly break or bend the precepts on lying, taking life, and consuming intoxicants. They are realistic about their options and content themselves with conventional acts of piety, with donating food, medicine, and robes to monks, repairing the local monastery, and trying to be good persons. This presumably will ensure a happy, prosperous rebirth. Enlightenment may be an option in some future life, but not now.

There are other reasons why the goal of enlightenment is rejected besides weakness or a sense of karmic entrapment. Some Buddhist cultures have made enlightenment contingent on a relatively high degree of asceticism and renunciation. Enlightenment is said to be possible only for those who abandon the life of the householder and devote their whole energy to meditation. The life of meditation involves total abstinence from all forms of sex, family involvement, occupation, and the ordinary small pleasures that make life worth living. This kind of life is not attractive to the average person.

Another reason for the rejection of enlightenment as a practical goal is that it is understood to be such a rare, extraordinary

phenomenon that even most monks—not to mention lay persons—relinquish any hope of attaining it in the present life. The Buddha knew all his past lives, was omniscient, performed amazing miracles, and was superhumanly wise and good. How could anyone less than the revered Founder dare hope to achieve as much? To be enlightened seems to suggest being superhuman, perhaps godlike or greater. It is not something to hope for if you are a poor, ignorant farmer.

One of the most interesting aspects of enlightenment as Dōgen presents it is the way in which it has lost this aura of the otherworldly, the extraordinary, and the inaccessible. Dōgen believed that it was attainable by anyone, lay or monk, who made a serious effort, and he presents it in a remarkably demystified and demythologized way.¹ His attempt to bring enlightenment down out of the heavens, so to speak, and make it available to all persons is part of the great religious revolution that took place during the Kamakura period in Japan and the reason why Dōgen is ranked with Nichiren and Shinran as great popularizers of Buddhism.

This popularizing work may be evaluated in two ways. One way is to see it as a deviant, soft, watered-down version of authentic enlightenment, made attractive because it does not demand much. It thus may be a bogus form of enlightenment, quite satisfying and impressive, but not the real thing. Similar criticisms could be made, and have been made, of the religious goal taught by Nichiren and Shinran. Another way of evaluating it is to see Dōgen as a realist who merely stripped away a kind of glorification and myth that had grown up around the achievement of Śākyamuni. Dōgen could be correct in insisting that his version of enlightenment is the real, accurate version and that myth, piety, and metaphysical excess had obscured the true nature of enlightenment over the centuries. Both interpretations can be supported, but it is not my purpose to defend either here, although I do find a special merit in this latter view.

The nature and significance of Dōgen's view of enlightenment will be clear only when seen against the background of Indian and Chinese teachings. This is a very large and complex topic

that I cannot deal with here in anything but rather general terms, but several issues do need to be addressed. Then we can turn to Dōgen.

I think that two suppositions characterize Indian views of enlightenment. One is that the difference between an ordinary person and one who is enlightened is that the ordinary person is infected with a number of moral and cognitive flaws that need to be eradicated before enlightenment and liberation are possible. This rather characteristic view can be seen clearly in Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra*, for instance, where he defines yoga as a process of purification.² Various aspects of yoga such as the restraints (*yama*), observances (*niyama*), postures, breath control, focusing of attention (*dhāraṇa*) and so on, are just so many devices for purifying the meditator physically, cognitively, and spiritually, in preparation for the culminating experience of nirvana and liberation. It is significant that the suppositions of this system, as well as a close duplication of practices, is followed in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhi-magga* (The Path of Purification), a fourth-century manual of Buddhist practice. Insight and liberation are dependent on a prior moral and cognitive self-purification. An enlightened being, consequently, has eliminated all these flaws.

The second supposition is that the individual is infected with not only the "three fundamental poisons" of craving, hatred, and ignorance, but a host of other flaws (*kleśa*, "afflictors"), not only numerous but tenacious and difficult to remove. For this reason, it is not realistic to expect to purify oneself of all these flaws in a single lifetime, and so Indian Buddhists tended to believe that many lifetimes would be required. Enlightenment, at least the perfect, complete enlightenment of a Śākyamuni, awaits us thousands of lifetimes away, the to-be-hoped-for reward for present diligence.

Nor does this attitude change with the Mahayana, despite teachings such as emptiness, which one would think would modify the traditional view. Enlightenment may be the sudden insight into the true nature of all things, including the *kleśa*, as empty, but this insight comes after a lengthy preliminary practice, one stretching over countless lifetimes. This view is reflected in much Mahayana scriptural and treatise literature, some of which spells out in great

detail the number of stages, with corresponding practices, that precede enlightenment. The most detailed shows the individual progressing heroically and patiently through fifty-three stages prior to perfect enlightenment.³ Some degree of *prajñā*-insight is said to exist in the forty-sixth stage, which “arms” the bodhisattva so that he or she can work successfully to liberate other sentient beings. But this perfection of insight (*prajñāpāramitā*) is necessarily preceded by efforts to perfect giving, morality, patience, vigor, and meditation. Even this enlightenment, however, is imperfect and needs cultivation over many more lifetimes. The view was still prevalent in the eighth century when representatives of Indian Buddhism confronted and debated someone who appears to have been a Chinese Zen Buddhist over the issue of whether enlightenment is gradual or sudden.⁴ The Indians rejected the possibility of suddenness, holding to the necessity for the gradual cultivation of the *pāramitās* of giving, morality, and so on.

In Chinese Zen we encounter for the first time in Buddhism a belief that enlightenment is, in some sense, sudden, in a way not found in Indian Buddhism. I say “in some sense” because in another sense both Indians and Chinese agreed that enlightenment is, by nature, sudden. If enlightenment is a change in one’s perception or understanding, then this change must occur in the blink of an eye, rather than in increments, as ordinary knowledge does.⁵ If enlightenment is the realization of an innate potential, perhaps understood as one’s Buddha nature, then again, one either has or has not realized it, but there is no progress or partial realization. However, though there was agreement on this, Indian and Chinese Buddhists nevertheless debated in Tibet and sharply disagreed on the issue of the suddenness or gradualness of enlightenment. Why?

The evidence seems to indicate that by “sudden,” the Chinese simply meant that enlightenment does not have to be preceded by lengthy stages of moral and cognitive self-purification. They were thus essentially adopting an antinomian stance in opposition to a more moralistic position held by the Indians. By “antinomian” I mean a religious doctrine holding that salvation or liberation is not contingent on moral status. The Chinese were insisting that enlightenment could occur (at least theoretically)

without any kind of preparatory work so strenuously held by Indian Buddhist texts. In searching for the roots of this tendency in Chinese Buddhism, students have suggested several possibilities. One is that the Chinese did not have the equivalent of the Indian assumption of a fixed social status in life due to karma and in some sense religiously ordained. In a society where one's present lot is the just and proper result of karma, one must accept one's lot, but one may hope that good karma in the present will result in moving upward in the scale of being in future lives. Such a deeply held assumption could very well have colored the Buddhist belief that enlightenment was not a present possibility but could be acquired in later lives as a result of becoming more worthy.⁶

Not only did the Chinese lack this view, with its religious underpinnings, but their experience led them to believe that persons with talent who worked hard could truly improve their present circumstances. A poor boy from a respectable family could, with the right conditions, rise to the exalted position of advisor to the emperor. Other scholars have suggested that the Chinese were not as obsessed with purity and defilement as Indians tended to be and consequently they did not share the belief that spiritual progress was contingent on a prior self-purification. The basic question for Chinese Buddhists was, Does enlightenment have to be linked with moral uprightness and does one have to wait for a very long time to change from an ordinary person into a Buddha? They said no.

This does not at all mean that Chinese Buddhists were immoral. The question was more theoretical than practical, although it had important implications for doctrine and practice. But they had their own models of spiritual perfection antedating the appearance of Buddhism in China, and these models established different criteria for perfection. I refer to the Taoist image of the sage as one who was liberated from convention, stereotyped thinking, and illusion, as one who had realized one's "Tao nature" (*Tao hsing*), but who might still have a family, live an ordinary life, enjoy catching fish and eating them with a jug of good wine. One might very well be liberated or enlightened as it was understood by Lao-tzu or Chuang-tzu, but one's spiritual perfection was not the culmination

of a long life—let alone many lives—of moral self-transformation. It may be that this affirmation of the natural human being and the world of nature helps to explain the tendency in Chinese Buddhist thought to affirm ordinary persons as capable of awakening to their essential nature. In this sense, then, “sudden” refers to the ability of certain persons to realize this nature without any preparation, whether moral or intellectual. The Chinese could back up their belief by appealing to the undeniable authority of a scripture like the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*, which says that “One attains *nirvāna* without destroying the moral and cognitive *kleśa*, . . . without destroying the conditioned.” Indian Buddhists do not seem to have made much of this implication of the emptiness doctrine, but it was significant to the Chinese.

The Chinese deviated from the Indian model in another important way, which was to have a strong impact on Dōgen’s own understanding of enlightenment. The Chinese rejected the venerable Indian Buddhist view that meditation (*samādhi*) and enlightenment (*bodhi*) are two essentially different things and that meditation had to precede enlightenment. Again, this instrumental conception of meditation is either implicit or explicit in meditation manuals such as those of Patañjali and Buddhaghōṣa. The Chinese took the position that meditation and enlightenment are identical—when one is present, so is the other. This is another side of the Chinese claim that enlightenment is sudden rather than gradual. It does not mean only that one is not enlightened piecemeal and progressively, and that one need not purify oneself morally and intellectually prior to enlightenment. Enlightenment is sudden because when one achieves *samādhi*, which technically is the state of oneness of subject and object, that same consciousness is enlightened consciousness. A number of important Chinese Zen teachers claimed something like this from about the eighth century onward.

One important source for this view of enlightenment is the *T’an ching*, or “Platform Sutra,” attributed traditionally to Hui-neng, who is identified in Zen histories as the sixth Chinese patriarch after Bodhidharma. Several passages in this text strongly

affirm the identity of meditation and enlightenment. In one passage, the author says:

Good friends, how are meditation and enlightenment alike? They are like the lamp and the light it gives forth. If there is a lamp, there is light; if there is no lamp, there is no light. The lamp is the substance of the light; the light is the function of the lamp. Thus, although they have two names, in substance they are not two. Meditation (*ting*) and wisdom (*hui*) are also like this.⁷

Slightly later, the author continues:

Good friends, my teaching of the Dharma takes meditation (*ting*) and wisdom (*hui*) as its basis. Never under any circumstances say mistakenly that meditation and wisdom are different. They are a unity, not two things. Meditation itself is the substance of wisdom, wisdom itself is the function of meditation. At the very moment when there is wisdom, then meditation exists in wisdom; at the very moment when there is meditation, then wisdom exists in meditation. Good friends, this means that meditation and wisdom are alike. Students, be careful not to say that meditation gives rise to wisdom or that wisdom gives rise to meditation, or that meditation and wisdom are different from each other.⁸

Later, Zen master Shen-hui repeats this identity of *ting* and *hui* in almost identical language. He says that what is essential is the state of consciousness called *wu-nien*, which is the absence of conceptual, discriminative thought. Shen-hui says that *wu-nien* is the essential thing, and meditation and wisdom are simply alternate expressions for *wu-nien*.⁹

This identity of the two terms was innovative in Buddhism and bore great consequences for the development of East Asian Buddhism. Shen-hui's claim that what was essential was *wu-nien* pinpoints the basis for the Chinese idea. The Chinese had asked the question, What is it essentially that characterizes the con-

sciousness of an enlightened being? They concluded that *wu-nien*, nondiscursive, nonconceptual, nondiscriminative consciousness is enlightened consciousness, and this was the same consciousness that occurred in *samādhi*. Thus, enlightenment is not a phenomenon essentially different from meditative consciousness, but is simply the *modal expression* of meditative consciousness. In using the analogy of the lamp and its light, the author of the *Platform Sutra* is using a common Chinese pattern of thinking called the *t'i-yung* pattern, which denies that two things are essentially different and reduces one to the status of being a functional expression or modal form of the other. This is very similar to Spinoza's argument to the effect that there cannot be two substances, but rather one is a modal form of the other. In short, "it's all one."

This means, of course, that the process of demythologizing the phenomenon of enlightenment had started well before Dōgen's time. No longer is it thought that a monk must meditate for years, perhaps lifetimes, in the hope that this strenuous and single-minded practice would someday culminate in a rare burst of comprehension unimaginable and almost supernatural. If an ordinary person has great determination and an inquiring spirit, and also has a good native talent for *samādhi*, then enlightenment, the actualization of one's intrinsic Buddha mind, is right there at once in the samadhic oneness with chopping firewood and drawing water from the spring. Is this the enlightenment of Śākyamuni described and extolled with such extravagant language in the scriptures? Is there something qualitatively distinct up ahead, thousands of lifetimes away? It is hard to say for sure, but at any rate, Chinese, and later Japanese, Buddhists such as Dōgen seem to have been utterly convinced that this was all that was required.

With this abbreviated and generalized look at Indian and Chinese views of enlightenment, we are in a better position to appreciate Dōgen's own contributions. As we have seen from his recounting of the story of the monk and the Zen master fanning himself, he strongly asserted the necessity for enlightenment and consequently for the *zazen* practice, without which enlightenment is impossible. It will be clear from my discussion that Dōgen inherited and reaffirmed the continental teachings we have seen above.

In other ways, he spoke of both enlightenment and practice with his own voice, drawing on both his personal experience and his lifelong reflections on that experience.

Dōgen refers to enlightenment frequently in *Shōbōgenzō*. He uses several terms for the experience, which are more or less synonymous but carry different nuances. He uses the native Japanese term, *satori*, and the Chinese *wu* (pronounced *go* in Japanese), which means “awakening,” and is the Sino-Japanese translation of the Sanskrit *bodhi*. He also uses the term *daigo*, which means “great awakening.” On occasion, he refers to the “perfect, complete enlightenment” of a Buddha, using the transliterated *anokutara-sanmyaku-sanbodai*, as well as the translation *mujō bodai* or *mujō shōtōgaku*. He uses a number of more colorful Zen expressions as well. He seems to choose a certain term because it has some appropriate connotation or flavor, and we must remember that given his great sensitivity to language, he probably did not use a term arbitrarily or carelessly.

The term he uses very often and which he seems to prefer, however, is not *satori* or others mentioned above, but rather *shō* and its verbal form, *shō suru*. English translations tend to render the term “enlightenment” or “realization,” and indeed that is what it means to Dōgen. But the question remains, Why did he use it instead of traditional technical terms such as *satori*? A dictionary translates *shō* as meaning “proof,” “evidence,” “a certificate.” The verbal form is said to mean “to prove” and “to guarantee.”¹⁰ Nothing resembling the Buddhist technical meaning of “enlightenment” or “awakening” can be derived from these dictionary definitions. Dōgen must use the term because it bears a particular nuance.

Perhaps traditional terms such as *satori* simply failed to communicate his own understanding of enlightenment, or he may have felt that it was misleading, as he did concerning the term *kenshō*, “to see one’s nature.” At any rate, fundamental to just about everything we mean when we speak of “Dōgen Zen” is his central teaching that everything, including ourselves, is already a Buddha right from the beginning, and consequently what we call “awakening” or “enlightenment” can really be only a process of *proving* to ourselves

this fact. In other words, to awaken to one's essential nature is the process of *authenticating* what the scriptures have told us is a fact, and I have chosen to translate *shō* as "authentication" for that reason. Perhaps Dōgen also had in mind the idea that awakening is also a process of becoming an authentic or genuine self, which is our essential nature or Buddha nature. Awakening is thus both the process of proving, certifying, or authenticating, and the process of becoming genuine or authentic.

The special suitability of the term *shō* in referring to enlightenment is particularly evident when seen in connection with Dōgen's well-known insistence that meditation and enlightenment are identical (*shushō ittō*). Dōgen did not invent the idea, as is clear from my earlier discussion of Chinese Zen trends. He was well acquainted with the *Platform Sutra* and certainly was aware of the indisputable fact that his teaching was the same as that found in that text. The following passage from Dōgen's *Bendōwa* sounds like a paraphrase of the *Platform Sutra*, so close are the teachings of the identity of practice and enlightenment:

To think that practice and enlightenment are not identical is a non-buddhist view. In the Buddha Dharma, practice and enlightenment (*shushō*) are one (*ittō*). Because your practice right now is practice based on enlightenment, the training of the beginner is the totality of intrinsic enlightenment. Therefore, though you are instructed to practice, do not think that there is any enlightenment outside of practice itself, because practice must be considered to point directly to intrinsic enlightenment. Because enlightenment is already enlightenment based on practice, the enlightenment is boundless; if practice is practice based on enlightenment, practice has no beginning.¹¹

This is the *locus classicus* of the teaching that is often said to characterize Dōgen's Zen: the oneness of practice and enlightenment. The passage clearly says, as does the *Platform Sutra*, that practice itself is an expression of intrinsic enlightenment, and enlightenment, or authentication, is present in the *zazen* practice. In

other words, intrinsic enlightenment as Buddha nature is expressed in practice in the form of a certain kind of awareness or consciousness, and self-awareness of this kind of consciousness is the authentication of intrinsic enlightenment.

As a result of this radical identification of practice and enlightenment, enlightenment is not a new condition that occurs at the culmination of lengthy practice and moral and cognitive self-transformation. Instead, upon the attainment of an awareness that characterizes mature *zazen* practice, transformation occurs in the form of the practice. In fact, elsewhere he says that the moral precepts (*kai*: Sansk., *śīla*) are complete in the practice of *zazen*. He confirms the presence of enlightenment in *zazen*, as well as the whole of the Buddha Way, in his essay *Sesshin sesshō*:

As for the Buddha Way, when one first arouses the thought [of enlightenment], it is enlightenment; when one first achieves perfect enlightenment, it is enlightenment. First, last, and in between are all enlightenment. . . . Foolish people think that at the time one is studying the Way one does not attain enlightenment, but that only when one has acquired *satori* is it enlightenment. They do not understand that when one musters one's entire mind and body and practices the Buddha Way, this is the entirety of the Buddha Way.¹²

Here we see that enlightenment is present at even the onset of practice, and the reason is that any practice is the practice of intrinsic enlightenment. Dōgen seems to be in complete accord with the Chinese view, and at some degree of deviance from classic Indian Buddhist teaching, that enlightenment is the transformed consciousness of the meditating subject.

Consequently, enlightenment exists with the commencement of *zazen* practice, at least to some degree. It is "to some degree" because *zazen* itself is probably weak and immature in the beginning, and so, consequently, the enlightenment that is expressed in practice may also be weak and immature. But because

enlightenment is identical with meditative awareness, Dōgen insists that *some part* of intrinsic enlightenment must be present even for the novice. The implication of this is that practice must become mature, and therefore Dōgen sees no conclusion to meditation practice. As practice matures, so too will the power of intrinsic enlightenment mature and grow stronger in its ability to illuminate and transform experience. “One inch of *zazen*, one inch of Buddha.”

Practice for life is thus required, and because of this very heavy stress on ongoing practice, I characterized Dōgen’s Zen as the “Zen of practice” in my earlier book. It is essential because it is the only way of developing a new kind of consciousness, which is the Buddha consciousness. This new consciousness is practiced in the formal *zazen* of the meditation hall several times daily, in the form of counting breaths or just following breaths mentally. Ideally, this same consciousness is maintained in other activities such as work, eating, dressing, bathing, and so on. What is essential is a selfless performance of actions while united in oneness with the object. This is *samādhi* and is the point to practice, because enlightenment is simply this selfless uniting of the mind-body with its experience. Dōgen calls it “dropping off mind and body” (*shinjin datsuraku*). Experiencing the dropping off of mind and body in meditative *samādhi*, even a little, is the commencement of the ability to live life in an enlightened manner.

If enlightenment is this dropping off of mind and body in the act of totally uniting with some object or activity, it implies that enlightenment is enlightenment for that one activity or encounter but not necessarily for the next. Therefore, there has to be an ongoing effort to achieve this consciousness in moment after moment of activity and encounter. Once again, it seems that Dōgen is not so concerned with some one-time enlightenment, which presumably continues on to pervade all subsequent experience, as he is with a strenuous effort to evoke an enlightened response with each fresh occasion. This may be why he speaks of continuing on the enlightenment process in *Genjō kōan*, and why he proclaims the need to continually “go beyond Buddha” in essays such as “Bukkōjō-ji.”

This touches on *zazen* practice also. As I pointed out above, *zazen* ideally is something done in all activities, not just an occasional activity in the meditation hall or in one's home. For this reason, then, to the extent that one is able to perform *zazen* in all experiences, one also continually encounters the experience with an enlightened consciousness.

To return to the choice of *shō* as a term referring to enlightenment, authentication is a moment-by-moment, lifelong process of experiencing events in their reality, and simultaneously being authenticated as that same reality.

Authenticating one's essential nature in the encounter with the world is thus the focus of Dōgen's teaching, not because it is the grand culmination of a lengthy previous exertion, but because it is the beginning, middle, and end of the whole religious life. In an important way, this is a lifelong learning process capable of endless deepening and broadening as the power of *samādhi* increases. Along with this, there is a continual letting go of the experience that leads to deeper experience. This is what Dōgen calls "going beyond Buddha," or what other Zen teachers have referred to as "becoming ignorant again." There is even more than this. Although the dropping off of the self is an important ongoing process, there is also the transformed world of other persons, animals, plants, soil, stone, and so forth, which is revealed in enlightenment. And finally there is the important issue of whether the dropped-off self can express itself creatively in word and action. The question asked by the Zen patriarchs is, Does a dragon still sing from within a withered tree? Dōgen says that it does. The following chapters will take up some of these other aspects of enlightenment.

This chapter has been concerned with the question of how Dōgen understood the event or process (I think that it is a process rather than event) of enlightenment, not with its content or implications for action. I have done this by looking at his view in the context of what Indian and Chinese Buddhists had to say. It seems clear that the presentation of enlightenment in *Shōbōgenzō* deviates in important ways from the conceptualizations of Indian Buddhism. The insistence in Indian Buddhism on the length of time

required for enlightenment is missing in *Shōbōgenzō*, where enlightenment is said to be present as soon as some degree of *samādhi* is present. Incidentally, *samādhi* itself was perceived by Indians as being a necessary precursor to more crucial meditative acts and was not identified as enlightened consciousness itself. Most importantly, however, what we miss in Dōgen's writings is the insistence on a high degree of moral and cognitive transformation as a *necessary* precondition for enlightenment. Dōgen is interesting in the way he reverses the traditional order of morality, meditation, and enlightenment in claiming that enlightenment is foundational for both meditation and morals, both of which are to be understood as expressions of inherent enlightenment. Dōgen follows his Chinese predecessors in seeing meditation and enlightenment as identical. He deviates from Chinese precedent in his understanding of the relationship between beings and Buddha nature, but I will address this in the next chapter.

There is very little doubt that this understanding of what enlightenment is and how it occurs comes at the end of a long history of change within Buddhist doctrine. The question remains, as raised earlier: Is this an example of a kind of demythologization that has always characterized Buddhist thought and is here outstanding in *Shōbōgenzō*, or is it a gross oversimplification and distortion of the genuine article? As one Buddhist reformer who was appealing to mass needs, as were Shinran and Nichiren in other traditions at the same time, his teaching was obviously meant to have mass appeal. Whatever his motives, and whatever degree of genuineness his version of enlightenment possesses, it seems clear from writings that he was utterly sincere in believing that this was indeed the enlightenment of the Founder and the Patriarchs, and that it was available to anyone who put forth a strong and sincere effort. His motto might have been, "enlightenment for all, right now." His approach is characteristic of historical trends in Japanese Buddhism. Centuries later, another Zen teacher, Suzuki Shōsan, exemplified the trend in teaching farmers that growing crops could be the enlightened activity of bodhisattvas if done in the proper spirit.