



WISDOM ACADEMY

Buddhist Philosophy in Depth, Part 3

JAY GARFIELD

Lessons 5:
Dogen and the Formation of Soto Zen

Reading:
Dogen's Extensive Record
“Master Dogen’s Informal Talks at Eiheji Temple in
Echizen Province,” pages 373 - 498

DŌGEN'S EXTENSIVE RECORD

A T R A N S L A T I O N O F T H E



EIHEI KŌROKU

TRANSLATED BY

TAIGEN DAN LEIGHTON &
SHOHAKU OKUMURA

EDITED & INTRODUCED BY

TAIGEN DAN LEIGHTON

FOREWORD BY TENSHIN REB ANDERSON

WITH INTRODUCTORY ESSAYS BY STEVEN HEINE AND JOHN DAIDO LOORI

ESHU EIHEI ZENJI DŌGEN OSHŌ SHŌSAN

MASTER DŌGEN'S INFORMAL TALKS
AT EIHEIJI TEMPLE IN ECHIZEN PROVINCE

COLLECTED BY EJŌ, ATTENDANT OF DŌGEN ZENJI, AND OTHERS

E K
I Ō
H R
E O
I K
U

THE EXTENSIVE RECORD OF EIHEI DŌGEN, VOLUME EIGHT

Shōsan

The Suchness of Grasping and Letting Go

1. Informal Meeting at the End of the Summer Practice Period¹

Both ancients and moderns clarify and engage that and this as they manifest.² If you do not know it is, how could you accomplish such a thing?

1 *Shōsan*, which we are translating as “informal meeting,” is only informal in comparison to the *jōdō*, or Dharma hall discourses, of volumes 1–7 of Dōgen’s Extensive Record. The *jōdō*, literally “ascending in the hall,” were given from the Dharma seat platform in the Dharma hall while the monks were standing. This was the traditional form used in most of the Recorded Sayings of individual masters compiled in Song dynasty China. It was the form favored by Dōgen once he settled at Eiheiiji. The written form of *jishu*, used by Dōgen in *Shōbōgenzō*, was used much less, or scarcely at all, once he started giving the *jōdō* at Eiheiiji. Volume 8 starts with informal meetings (*shōsan*), literally “small meetings,” which were given somewhat more informally than the *jōdō*, usually in the abbot’s quarters. The informal meetings included discussion, although only Dōgen’s talks are recorded in the Eihei Kōroku *shōsan*. Traditionally these informal meetings were given only on calendar days ending in 3 or 8 (i.e., 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28). The following days, ending with 4 or 9, traditionally had a more relaxed monastic schedule. However, the *shōsan* in volume 8 were given upon other, annual ceremonial occasions. Following the *shōsan* in this volume are a collection of *hōgo*, literally “Dharma words,” which were written to individual students. While we know the dates of many of the Dharma hall discourses in volumes 1–7, the dates of these *shōsan* are uncertain, although they all were given after Dōgen settled at Eiheiiji.

2 “Both ancients and moderns clarify and engage that and this as they manifest” could be read in a variety of other ways. The first part might be read as meaning “from ancient to modern times.” The next as “clarify distinctions (between that and this).” The last part, “as

If you do know it is, how could you accomplish such a thing?³ Although it is like this, if you only see by grasping and do not see by letting go, your eyebrows will mislead you, and your true eye will be caught in attachments. Essentially, if we practice in accord with the order [of the Buddha way], all people on the great earth will drink tea.

Dwelling Thoroughly in the Mountains

2. Informal Meeting on New Year's Eve

Great assembly, with more than three hundred pieces of empty sky I can buy one branch of plum blossoms at the end of the twelfth month, which, with auspicious clouds at the top of the cliff and the moon above the cold valley, contains spring and warmth promising sounds of laughter. Study of the way should directly follow the Dharma manner of ancient buddhas and previous ancestors. A deceased elder [Dongan Changcha] said, "We should direct ourselves toward how the Tathāgata practiced," which is the same meaning. Clouds and water brothers, you have departed far from your home villages, and have forever put aside family and kin. Completely forget trying to control fame and fortune or right and wrong. Although we should diligently study the details of our practice activity, and each and every dignified manner, first we must study the single affair of the ancient buddha ancestors. That is abiding in the mountains.

In ancient times a monk asked Great Teacher Yunju [Daoying] Hongjue, "Ultimately, how is a monk?"

Great Teacher [Yunju] said, "Abiding well in the mountains."

The monk did a prostration and arose.

Great Teacher [Yunju] said, "How about you?"

The monk, said, "Within the realms of good and bad, life and death,

they manifest," might be read as "and see completely" or "and become set as views." The reading given in the text is the one we deem most likely.

3 "If you do not know it is, how could you accomplish such a thing? If you do know it is, how could you accomplish such a thing?" is a slight paraphrase of a comment that Dongshan Liangjie made about his teacher Yunyan Tansheng. Before leaving Yunyan, Dongshan asked him how to express his teaching. After a pause, Yunyan said, "Just this is it." Later, a monk asked Dongshan whether Yunyan truly knew "it is" or not. Dongshan replied, "If he did not know it is, how could he be able to say such a thing? If he did know it is, how could he be willing to say such a thing?" See Dharma hall discourse 494; and Cleary, *Book of Serenity*, case 49, p. 206; or Powell, *Record of Tung-shan*, p. 28.

or favor and adversity, a monk's mind ultimately is immovable like a mountain."

Great Teacher [Yunju] immediately hit [the monk] once with his staff and said, "You have betrayed the former sages and destroyed my descendants."

Great Teacher [Yunju] then asked the monk standing next to the first monk, "How do you understand this?"

That monk made prostration, stood up, and said, "A monk ultimately abides in the mountains, his eyes not seeing the colors black and yellow [of sky and earth], his ears not hearing the music of bamboo and strings."

Great Teacher [Yunju] said, "You have betrayed the former sages and destroyed my descendants."

Therefore, all of you, what the former sages and ancient buddhas wish for is simply "abiding well in the mountains." Already abiding in the mountains, all of you should meet together with the ancient buddhas and previous ancestors. Even if you have not yet met together with the ancient buddhas and previous ancestors, you should be delighted that you are abiding well in the mountains. Keeping and maintaining this matter without regressing or being turned around is itself single-minded engaging of the way.

The World-Honored One said, "Sleeping in the mountain forests is what delights buddhas. Diligent effort in the towns does not please buddhas."

Therefore great ancestral teachers on Vulture Peak [Śākyamuni], Chicken Foot Mountain [Mahākāśyapa], Mount Song [Bodhidharma], Huangmei [Daman Hongren], Caoxi [Dajian Huineng], Nanyue, Qingyuan, Shitou, Yaoshan, Yunyan, Dongshan [Liangjie], Yunju, Xuedou, Furong [Daokai], and Dabai [either Hongzhi Zhengjue or Tiantong Rujing], all simply abided in the mountains. Furthermore, even laypeople who were noble wayfarers all hid themselves in the deep mountains and left excellent examples, such as at Mount Ji, Mount Nan, Shouyang, and Kongtong.⁴

⁴ The teachers in the previous sentence are all in the glossary. Mount Ji is where Xuyou hid when the legendary Emperor Yao tried to make him ruler. Mount Nan, or Zhongnan

Right now, if you are someone who has the mind of the way, at first you should seclude yourself and dwell in mountain valleys. Ignorant people who are truly without the mind of the way, who crave fame and love possessions, cannot abide in the mountains. All of you people already are dwelling in the mountains, so how could you not practice? Everyone, you should never betray the former sages, or destroy my descendants. Truly you must never dismiss abiding well in the mountains. Dwelling in the assembly throughout death and lifetimes is more excellent than [dwelling with] one's own flesh and blood. As this is superior to one's own flesh and blood, we should practice and train, joining in harmony in accord with Dharma. If you do not practice today, you will have spent three hundred sixty days in vain. If you do not spend a single day in vain, you will not waste three hundred sixty days. The former ancestor Shitou said, "Do not pass your time in vain," which is exactly the meaning of this.⁵ A person practicing and one not practicing are a person reflecting on oneself and not reflecting, respectively, which is the saying of an ancient sage that is clear and obvious, and contains an admonition.

Long ago Master Foyan [Qingyuan] became fundraiser monk at Wuweijun, and once hit his heel in the street and had some realization. After returning [to his temple], he brought this up to [his teacher] Wuzu [Fayan]. Later, when he was staying at the guest house, one night during sitting he stirred the fire, and suddenly had a forceful realization. Although this was the case, whenever he entered the [teacher's] room he was never able to enter deeply to the inner sanctum. Calmly he asked Wuzu for instruction. Wuzu said, "I will express it for you with a parable. It is just like a person pulling an ox, and the ox passes by the window. Both horns and four hooves pass by, but only the tail cannot pass by."⁶

Mountain, was where government minister Zhuge Kongming (181–234) hid. After being dismissed by the emperor for giving highly moral advice, Boyi and Shuqi hid on Mount Shouyang, where they died of starvation. According to Zhuangzi, Kongtong Mountain is where the sage Guang Chengzi lived and where the Yellow Emperor went for advice that led him to give up his kingdom. See Hamill and Seaton, *Essential Chuang Tzu*, pp. 75–76.

⁵ Shitou's "Do not pass your time in vain" is the last line of his *Harmony of Difference and Sameness* (Jpn.: Sandōkai). See Leighton, *Cultivating the Empty Field*, pp. 74–75; and Shunryu Suzuki, *Branching Streams Flow in the Dark*.

⁶ The story of the ox's tail not passing by the window appears in Mumonkan, case 38. It has

Wuzu instructed Foyan like this. Both horns and four hooves have passed by. Why is it that only the tail cannot pass by? People, look at this in detail in your Zen practice.⁷

The World-Honored One said, “For example, it is like a great elephant passing by a window. The entire body has gone by, but only the tail cannot get by. Worldly people are also like this. Home-leavers entering the way who altogether abandon associations, but only are not yet able to abandon name and gain, are like the elephant’s tail not able to pass by.”

Because of this [remaining attachment], we transmigrate through the six destinies in the three realms [desire, form, and formless], and are tossed around through birth and death. Therefore, although the elephant spoken of by the World-Honored One and the ox spoken of by Wuzu are different, yet they are the same. Thus we should know that if the tail has not yet been studied in practice, the horns also have not yet been studied. If the horns have already passed by, the tail has already passed by. Great assembly, do you wish to understand the meaning of horns and tail?

After a pause Dōgen said: Leading the ox along, do not seek for a perfect balance point. The three realms are alike duckweed floating on the water. Studying the way, the tail has not yet passed by; on what day will the entire body pass by the window?

Great assembly, you have been standing for a long while. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

The Dynamic Relationship of Ancient and Present

3. Informal Meeting for the End of the Summer Practice Period

In ancient times there were those who heard one and attained ten; nowadays there are none who hear ten and attain one. What is the principle of this? What face did ancient people cherish? They cherished this iron-beaked face, and opened these vajra eyes. As to what face current people cherish, they cherish this iron-beaked face, and open these vajra eyes.

sometimes been translated as the ox passing *through* the window; a vivid, fantastic image. But this is more conventionally understood as passing by, or in view of, the window. See Shibayama, *Gateless Barrier*, pp. 265–272; and Aitken, *Gateless Barrier*, pp. 231–234.

7 “Zen practice” here is *sanzen*, which Dōgen sometimes uses interchangeably for *zazen*. If so, this is an unusual instance of Dōgen directly recommending reflection on a *kōan* in meditation.

An ancient buddha [Baoming Renyong] said, “[The examples left by] ancient people are what current people use; current people are what ancient people have brought about. Ancient and present ones neither turn their back nor face each other, but how many present or ancient people know this?”⁸

Therefore, current people [practicing the way] are the ongoing outcome of ancient people; and what ancient people have brought about is exactly the ancient ones’ ability to give rise to current people. Ancient people’s [example] is the intimate functioning of current people; and current people’s functioning is exactly so that current people can use [the example of] ancient people. Because of this, the ancient ones cannot avoid being used by current people, and current people cannot avoid being an outgrowth of the ancient ones.

It is impossible to diminish a single thread or to add on a single hair. Therefore we have peacefully abided [in practice period] for ninety days, not departing the monastery for three months. Having reached such a field, it is all right to call ourselves ancient people; it is all right to call ourselves modern people; it is all right to call ourselves neither ancient nor modern people. We can call ourselves as such for the first time.

After a pause Dōgen said: Just this seeing and hearing goes beyond seeing and hearing, and there are no more sounds or colors to offer to you.⁹ Having completely settled within this, you are genuinely beyond concerns. Whether or not you make distinctions between ancient and modern, what is the problem? I respectfully hope you will take good care.

Nine Times Nine in the Deep Snow

4. Informal Meeting on Winter Solstice

An ancient worthy said, “Nine times nine makes eighty-one, but nobody can understand this calculation. Two times five hundred coins are originally one string of cash.”¹⁰

8 This is a quote from Shūmon Rentō Eyō, volume 15, the section on Baoming Renyong.

9 “Just this seeing and hearing goes beyond seeing and hearing, and there are no more sounds or colors to offer to you” is a quote by Sanping Yizhong, cited by Hongzhi Zhengjue in case 85 of his kōan collection, *The Record of Further Inquiries*. Yunmen also cites this saying; see App, *Master Yunmen*, p. 160.

10 “Nine times nine makes eighty-one” is a frequent saying of Yunmen, used, for example,

An ancient worthy spoke like this. Everybody, do you want to understand this clearly? “Nine times nine makes eighty-one, but nobody can understand this calculation,” horizontally a thousand, vertically ten thousand, horizontally ten, vertically one; this is responding to the occasion and receiving support. “Two times five hundred coins are originally one string of cash,” copper, iron, silver, and gold coins; this is the first [arising of] yang and [the daylight’s increase] reaching its culmination. Already being like this, everybody, how do you speak a phrase to congratulate each other for encountering the buddha ancestors?

After a pause Dōgen said: Although around our mountain home each night the snow is deep, with the plums blossoming in the snow, the great earth is fragrant. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

A Great Dōjō

5. Informal Meeting on New Year’s Eve

After expressing appreciation for the temple administrators, monastic department heads,¹¹ and the great assembly, Dōgen said: Bodhisattvas arouse the mind [of awakening] and enter the kitchen. The nostrils are well pierced, and the rice is fragrant.¹² With [the monks] again and again carrying water and gathering firewood, I become aware that Eiheiji is a great practice place.¹³

I can remember, a monk once asked Zhaozhou, “Two mirrors face each other, which is brighter?”

to answer the question, “What is the way beyond?” It is suggested by Iriya Yoshitaka that Tang dynasty multiplication tables began with nine times nine, so this indicates the most common, basic knowledge. See App, *Master Yunmen*, pp. 90, 105. “Two times five hundred coins are originally one string of cash” refers to two ancient units of currency, but basically is like saying one hundred pennies is originally one dollar. The source of this quote is unknown.

11 Temple administrators are the *chiji*, including the *tenzo*, or chief cook, and monastic department managers are the *chōshū*. All these are the various officials responsible for maintaining the monastery. See Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen’s Pure Standards for the Zen Community*, pp. 50, 52, 208–209.

12 “Nostrils are well pierced” is literally “loftily pierced.” Since piercing nostrils is an ox-training image used for training disciples, this is here an image of developed practitioners.

13 “Practice place” here is *dōjō*, literally “place of the way,” used for the Bodhi seat where

Zhaozhou said, “Elder monk, your eyelids cover Mount Sumeru.”¹⁴

Suppose this were Eihei, and someone asked me, “Two mirrors face each other, which is brighter?” I would simply face him and, holding up my staff, say: This is a monk’s staff.

Suppose he said to this old man, “This is what you were able to study on the long monks’ platform. What is the way of going beyond buddha ancestors?”

Dōgen threw down his staff, descended from his seat, and said: I respectfully hope you will take good care.

Our Temple Is Great Awakening

6. Informal Meeting for Beginning the Summer Practice Period

Gathering together at the place to select buddhas, we engage and affirm the matter of our journey of practice.¹⁵ Not leaving the monastery, how do my legs resemble a donkey’s? Protecting life, all people have their own life conditions.¹⁶ As for Yunmen’s ninety days of money for rice, how could this rice not be the self?¹⁷ As for Dongshan [Liangjie]’s “Not an inch of grass for ten thousand miles,” there are gates to both east and west.¹⁸ The old teachers in the various directions all dwell on the tip of Huangbo’s staff.¹⁹ Hundreds of thousands of samādhis are not separate

Buddha awakened, but also commonly used for various training centers, including for martial arts.

14 See Green, *Recorded Sayings of Zen Master Joshu*, p. 118.

15 “Place to select buddhas” is *senbutsujō*, another name for the monks’ hall. “Journey of practice” is *angya*, or “pilgrimage,” here referring to ceasing travels for the practice period.

16 “How do my legs resemble a donkey’s?” and “Each person has their own life conditions” are two of the “three barriers” of Huanglong Huinan. See Dharma hall discourse 420.

17 Once at the end of a summer practice period, Yunmen demanded the monks give him back the money for ninety days’ worth of food. See App, *Master Yunmen*, p. 130.

18 At the end of a summer practice period, Dongshan suggested that the departing monks should go where there is not an inch of grass for ten thousand miles. See Cleary, *Book of Serenity*, case 89, pp. 382–384.

19 For Huangbo’s staff, see Dharma hall discourse 493.

from [Hongzhou] Shuiliào's chest.²⁰ Therefore it is said, "Make great perfect awakening into our own temple building." Now our temple building is great perfect awakening. "Body and mind dwell peacefully in the wisdom of the nature of equality."²¹ Many selves are peacefully dwelling within one self; the one body within the many bodies engages the way.

Everyone, do you want to understand this truth? We must eat rice with the mouth of the assembly; our vitality must be the strength of the assembly. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

A Complete Dharma Year

7. Informal Meeting for the End of Summer Practice Period

Do you want to see the completion of the Dharma year?²²

Dōgen made a circle [in the air with his whisk] and said: It comes from this.

Again Dōgen made a circle and said: Being here it is complete. Being able to practice big radish Zen, we fulfill the wombs of donkeys and bellies of horses.²³ Being able to practice glass water jar Zen, we smash it and seven flowers are torn into eight pieces.²⁴ Being able to practice Tathāgata Zen,

20 When Hongzhou Shuiliào asked his teacher Mazu about Bodhidharma's coming from the west, Mazu kicked him in the chest; Shuiliào, knocked down, was greatly enlightened. He arose laughing and, rubbing his hands, said, "How excellent. The source of the hundreds of thousands of samādhis and immeasurable meanings can be understood on the tip of a hair." Later he said to his students, "Since I was kicked by my teacher Mazu until now, I cannot stop laughing." See Ogata, *Transmission of the Lamp*, pp. 289–290; and Cheng Chien, *Sun-Face Buddha*, p. 77.

21 This is quoted from the Complete Enlightenment Sutra, the chapter on "Complete Enlightenment Bodhisattva." See Muller, *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*, p. 232; and Sheng-yen, *Complete Enlightenment*, p. 59. Dōgen also cites this quote in the Shōbōgenzō essay Ango (Practice Period); see Tanahashi, *Beyond Thinking*; and Nishijima and Cross, *Master Dogen's Shobogenzo*, book 4, p. 85.

22 At the end of the summer practice period, monks were considered to have completed another "Dharma year" of seniority since their ordination, which affected their position in the monastery, including the order of their places in the monks' hall.

23 "Big radish Zen" refers to a story about Zhaozhou, and so could be interpreted as "Zhaozhou's Zen." See Dharma hall discourse 438. When asked whether he had closely studied with his teacher Nanquan, Zhaozhou said, "In Zhen Province they raise large radishes." For donkeys' wombs and horses' bellies, see Dharma hall discourses 114, 128, 276, and 390.

24 "Glass water jar" refers to a phrase by Dahui in his kōan commentaries, Zen Master

our eyes have no strength and this life is impoverished. Being able to practice Ancestral Zen, this disaster reaches our descendants.²⁵

Practicing in such ways, please tell me, what is the intention of Eihei? Just see the sun rising in the east. Who can then drink Zhaozhou's tea?²⁶

Ninety Days of Great Peace

8. Informal Meeting for Opening the Summer Practice Period

Master Cihang [Fapo] was a venerable teacher in the Huanglong lineage. When he resided at Four Clarities temple at Mount Tiantong, at an informal meeting for opening the summer practice period he said, "Zen practitioners should first have their noses upright, then must have clear, bright eyes. Next they must value penetrating both the essence and its expression. After that they arrive equally into energetic capacity and its function, and then enter buddhas and demons, self and other arriving together. Why is this? When the nose is upright, everything is upright. This is like a person dwelling in a household; if the master is upright, all below him are naturally transformed. So how can we make our nose upright? An ancient sage [Huangbo] said, 'Be determined not to flow into a second thought, and you will enter our essential gate.' Doesn't this make a standard for you that approaches [your true self] before your parents were born?" Then he said, "The long period of ninety days starts tomorrow. Your practice should not go outside the guidelines."

The teacher Dōgen said: Although an ancient sage said, "Be determined not to flow into a second thought," I, Eihei, also say: Be determined not to flow into a first thought; be determined not to flow into no thought. Everyone, if you practice and study like this, you will finally attain it.

This evening, I, Eihei, do not begrudge the karma of words, and say to all of you: The long period of ninety days starts tomorrow. Your practice should not go outside the guidelines. Sit on your cushions unconcerned

Dahui Pujue's Arsenal of the Essential Gate, compiled in 1186. Dahui was the leading Linji school master in Song China in the period before Dōgen, and Dōgen sometimes strongly criticized him. This is probably also implied here in the smashing of this Zen.

25 For "Tathāgata Zen" and "Ancestral Zen" see Dharma hall discourse 52 and volume 1, note 123. Generally, Tathāgata Zen refers to practice based on sutra study, and Ancestral Zen refers to practice applied to everyday activity.

26 For Zhaozhou's tea see volume 6 (Dharma hall discourse 428), note 30.

by other affairs; all through the day, silently, serenely appreciate the great peace.

The Meaning of the Green Pine

9. Informal Meeting for Winter Solstice

Here is a story: A monk asked Zhaozhou, “What is the meaning of the ancestral teacher [Bodhidharma] coming from the west?”²⁷

The teacher Dōgen said: Your tongue is my tongue.

Zhaozhou said, “The cypress tree in the garden.”

The teacher Dōgen said: It is difficult to directly reveal the function of going beyond to his face, but [Zhaozhou] offered the ten-thousand-year-old family style for the sake of this person.

The monk said, “Master, do not use objects to guide people.”

The teacher Dōgen said: He is forcing his eyes to try to see the North Star [behind his head].

Zhaozhou said, “I am not using objects to guide people.”

The teacher Dōgen said: Without any sounds in the branches, the breeze carries the spring color.

The monk [again] asked, “What is the meaning of the ancestral teacher coming from the west?”

The teacher Dōgen said: Next year again there will be new branches profusely blooming; the spring wind never rests.

Zhaozhou said, “The cypress tree in the garden.”

The teacher Dōgen said: Who can face this, and still catch fish and shrimp?²⁸

Now, although it is like this, I, Eihei, have something further to say. Do you want to hear it?

After a pause Dōgen said: In the cold of the year, I can know the meaning of the green pine, and again I plant its spiritual root on the mountain peak.

For a long while the assembly has been standing compassionately. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

27 This story is also discussed by Dōgen in Dharma hall discourses 433 and 488, and in kōan case 45 with verse comment in volume 9. See volume 7 (Dharma hall discourse 488), note 35, for other references.

28 Catching fish and shrimp here may imply that the true meaning cannot be captured.

Family Instructions for the End of the Year

10. Informal Meeting at New Year's Eve

This informal meeting is [where are given] the family instructions of all buddhas and ancestors. In our country of Japan, in previous generations the name of this [shōsan] had not been heard, much less had it ever been practiced. Since I, Eihei, first transmitted this, twenty years have already passed.²⁹ This is fortunate for our country, and joyful for the people. Why is that so? This comes from the ancestral teacher [Bodhidharma] arriving from the west, and the Buddha Dharma entering the land of China. What we call family instructions is not to carry out anything that is not the activity of buddha ancestors, and not to wear anything that is not the Dharma robes of buddha ancestors. What we call activity is, having quickly abandoned fame and profit and forever casting away self-centeredness, without approaching the rulers and ministers of the country and without coveting donors and patrons, to take your own life lightly in seclusion within mountains and valleys and to value Dharma, never departing from the monastery. A great precious jewel is not the [true] treasure, but cherish each moment. Without worrying about myriad affairs, engage the way with single-mindedness. Being like this, you will be the direct heir of the buddha ancestors, and the guiding teacher of humans and heavenly beings.

Truly, having aroused bodhi mind and having practiced and studied with good teachers is a great sign [of buddhahood after practice] throughout three immeasurable kalpas. Great assembly, do you want to see the three immeasurable kalpas?

Dōgen drew a circle with his whisk and then said: People, what do you call this? Can you call this a circle? Can you call this a square? Can you call this original existence? Can you call this present existence? Can you call this the movement of time and the changing of years through spring and autumn, winter and summer? Can you call this vertically permeating the three times and horizontally filling the ten directions? If you call it any

29 This twenty years cannot be exact. We do not know the exact dates of these *shōsan* given at Eihei-ji, but the first informal meetings by Dōgen in Kyoto were less than twenty years before Dōgen's last teachings in 1252 and his death in 1253. Dōgen founded his first temple, Kōshō-ji, in 1233, and, as far as we know, he did not give any talks before that. He did not give anything that might have ever been called a *shōsan* until 1235.

of those, you will be completely wrong, and immediately fall into the mistaken views of those outside the way. Therefore, the virtue of these three immeasurable kalpas cannot be assessed with the calculations of humans and heavenly beings. Why is it like this?

Tonight it is the thirtieth day of the twelfth month, and tomorrow is the beginning of a great new year. It is not at all possible to call tomorrow the final day of the last month, and it is not possible to call tonight the beginning of the new year. Since we cannot call this twelfth month the new year, we know that the new year has not truly arrived. We cannot call the new year the twelfth month, so we know that the old year has not actually passed. The old year has not yet passed, and the new year has also not arrived. Coming and going do not intermingle; new and old are beyond dichotomy.

So a monk asked Shimen Huiche, “How is the time when the year is used up?”

Shimen said, “Elder Wang in the eastern village burns money in the night.”³⁰

Later a monk asked Kaixian Shanxian, “How is the time when the year is used up?”

Kaixian said, “As of old, early spring is still cold.”

Tonight, suppose a monk were to ask me, Eihei, “How is the time when the year is used up?”

I would simply say to him: In the snow, one branch of plum blossoms opens.

You have been standing for a while, late into the night. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

For the Love of Buddha's Lively Eyes

II. Informal Meeting for Beginning the Summer Practice Period

Zen Master Cihang [Fapo] was a venerable teacher in the Huanglong lineage. He abided at Tiantong monastery for thirty years, and at an informal meeting on the occasion of the beginning of summer practice period, he said, “Zen practitioners should first have their noses upright,

30 It was a Chinese custom to burn some money on New Year's Eve to pacify the spirits. Both this and the next exchange are from the Recorded Sayings of Yuanwu Keqin.

then must have clear, bright eyes. After that they must value arriving at both the essence and its expression.”³¹

Great assembly, do you want to understand the meaning of old man Cihang's saying, the nose is upright? If you can understand this, you have drilled through your nostrils.³² Do you want to understand clear, bright eyes? [Your old eyes] have been replaced with soapberries by a bystander.³³ Do you want to understand arriving at both the essence and its expression? *Dōgen struck his seat once with his whisk and said:* The essence has arrived; the expression has arrived. There is a skillful means for going beyond.

Old man Cihang also said, “The long period of ninety days starts tomorrow. Your practice should not go outside the guidelines.” Great assembly, you should know that these are good words.

This evening I, Eihei, will speak for the sake of everyone. Great assembly, do you want to understand practice that does not go outside the guidelines? From tomorrow until the end of practice period, for ninety days throughout three months, from left to right, from east to west, going beyond buddhas and transcending ancestors, drop off body and mind and drill holes through your nose. Entering the monks' hall, entering the Buddha hall, arriving at the kitchen, arriving at the entry gate, all are practice that does not go outside the guidelines. All buddha ancestors and all patch-robed monks together cannot practice outside the guidelines. Even if they wanted to practice outside the guidelines, it is not possible.

Although this is so, tonight I, Eihei, continue the two sayings of Zen Master Cihang for the sake of testimony about [the value of] never leaving for ninety days.

After a pause Dōgen said: The long period of ninety days starts tomorrow, without practice outside the guidelines. Straw sandals and monks' staffs are completely put aside, for simply loving the vital eye of Gautama.

31 This is part of the longer quote discussed by Dōgen in informal meeting 8, above, probably at the opening of the previous summer practice period.

32 Drilling through your nose has the meaning of putting in a nose ring so as to be led and trained like an ox; but it also relates to breathing with ease.

33 Soapberries are mentioned by Dōgen as resembling Buddha eyes, and are used for rosary beads. See Dharma hall discourse 143 and volume 2, note 64. Soapberry beads are also mentioned in Dharma hall discourses 178, 317, 389, and 402.

For a long while the assembly has been standing compassionately. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

The Nectar within Forms and Rituals

12. Informal Meeting for the End of the Summer Practice Period

Informal meetings are primarily for exalting the family instructions. However, they are not caught up in the forms and rituals of the three thousand decorous manners, and do not discuss the vain struggles about the eighty thousand minutiae of formal practice.³⁴ These [family instructions] are simply the sitting cushions and Zen boards of the seven buddhas, and the source of the life root of the ancestors. Therefore, this is not in the realm of the four dhyānas or eight samādhis. How could it be measured in terms of the three wise or ten sacred stages? Every day just sit, dropping off body and mind. Do not be worried with a scene of laughable confusion about [comparisons between] barbarians or the civilized. Do not vainly waste a moment, but always cherish time.

If you ask about the universal and particular within this, the great venerable precious one is apparent and magnificent. At just this very time, how is it? Great assembly, do you want to clearly enact this?

After a pause Dōgen said:

Within the entire bright clear world, nothing is hidden.
 Sitting, cutting off Vairocana, cannot be matched.
 Geese drinking milk in water can swallow the pure [milk] flavor.
 Bees gathering nectar from flowers
 do not mar remaining fragrance.³⁵

I respectfully hope you will take good care.

34 “Three thousand manners” refers to the 250 monk precepts, multiplied by the four positions (walking, standing, sitting, and lying down) and again multiplied by the three times (past, present, and future), to make three thousand.

35 Vairocana is the *dharmakāya*, or reality body of Buddha, encompassing the entire phenomenal world. Cutting off Vairocana here implies going beyond Buddha, directly meeting the immediate present. “Geese drinking milk and bees gathering nectar” is a traditional image, used, for example, by Hongzhi in his poem “Guidepost of Silent Illumination.” See Leighton and Wu, *Cultivating the Empty Field*, p. 68.

Returning to the Source

13. Informal Meeting at Winter Solstice

Elder and younger brothers, where great virtue matures, the first energy of brightness immediately arises.³⁶ The ten thousand things can return and directly see the venerable worthy one [Buddha]. So it is said, “The whole world in ten directions is your own single eye; the whole world in ten directions is your self; the whole world in ten directions is your own radiant light; the whole world in ten directions is this gate of liberation.”³⁷ What place is not a place where you attain buddhahood? What time is not a time when you expound the Dharma? Don’t you know the saying that even when Protecting Brightness [Bodhisattva] had not descended from the Tuṣita Heaven, the single circle was complete, pervading the ten directions?³⁸

I appreciate these words [from Hongzhi].

Here is a story.³⁹ Zen Master Nanyue [Huirang] Dahui once visited the sixth ancestor [Huineng] at Caoxi. The ancestor asked him, “Where are you from?”

Nanyue said, “I came from the place of National Teacher Songshan [Hui]an.”

The ancestor said, “What is this that thus comes?”

Nanyue never put this question aside. After eight years he told the sixth ancestor, “I, Huirang can now understand the question, ‘What is this that thus comes?’ that you received me with upon my first arriving to see you.”

The sixth ancestor asked, “How do you understand it?”

36 “First energy of brightness” is literally “the first *yang*,” implying that the days are getting longer and brighter. The passage from “where great virtue matures” down to “the single circle was complete, pervading the ten directions” (including the quotation from Changsha) is a quote from a Winter Solstice *shōsan* by Hongzhi Zhengjue in his Extensive Record, volume 1.

37 This quote is from Changsha Jingcen.

38 “Protecting Brightness” was the name of Śākyamuni Buddha when he was still a bodhisattva in Tuṣita Heaven, waiting to descend to the world and become the next Buddha.

39 This story is also recounted in Dharma hall discourse 374 and as kōan case 59 in volume 9. See volume 5, note 43, for other references.

Nanyue said, “To explain or demonstrate anything would completely miss the mark.”

The sixth ancestor said, “Then do you suppose there is practice-realization or not?”

Nanyue said, “It is not that there is no practice-realization, but only that it cannot be defiled.”

The sixth ancestor said, “This nondefilement is exactly what the buddhas protect and care for. I am thus, you are thus, and the ancestors in India also are thus.”

Caoxi asked his student a good question, and Nanyue exerted his effort well. Although this is so, I want to count the black and white stones of Śāṇavāsin. Because of his veneration for his teacher, [Śāṇavāsin’s disciple Upagupta] could feel the radiance from the white hair curl.⁴⁰ At just such a time, ultimately, what can be said?

After a pause Dōgen said: The four great elements return to their own natures, just as a child turns to its mother.⁴¹

Late into the night, the assembly is compassionate. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

The Solid Rock at the Gate

14. Informal Meeting at New Year’s Eve

Here is a story. Yaoshan asked [his disciple] Yunyan, “Aside from your staying with Baizhang, where else have you been before coming here?”

Yunyan said, “I have been to Guangnan.”

Yaoshan said, “I have heard it said that the round rock outside the east gate of the city of Guangzhou was shifted by the lord of the city. Is that so?”

40 There is a story that the third ancestor in India in the Zen lineage, Śāṇavāsin, a disciple of Ānanda, gave his disciple Upagupta black and white stones, and told him to count black stones when bad mind appeared, and white stones when good mind appeared. The white hair curl refers to the curl of hair on a buddha’s forehead from whence light is emitted.

41 “The four great elements return to their own natures, just as a child turns to its mother” is from Shitou Xiqian’s *Harmony of Difference and Sameness* (Jpn.: *Sandōkai*). See Leighton, *Cultivating the Empty Field*, pp. 74–75; and Suzuki, *Branching Streams Flow in the Darkness*, pp. 20–23.

Yunyan said, “Not only the lord of the city, but even if all the people in the entire country tried, they could not move it.”⁴²

Yaoshan and Yunyan have talked like this. How can I, Eihei, avoid speaking? Not only the lord of the city, not only the entire country, but if all the buddhas of the three times and all the ancestral teachers were to use all their strength trying to shift it, it would not budge. Why is that so?

After a pause Dōgen said: Each and every thing as such has no inside or outside; every particle is firm, set in samādhi. How wondrous and amazing!⁴³ The entire body is bright and glittering, beyond the value of jewels.

Transmitting the Jewels of Yaoshan's Words

15. Informal Meeting for Beginning the Summer Practice Period

Here is a story. Yaoshan had not gone up to the hall [to give a talk] for a long time.⁴⁴ The director said, “For a while the great assembly has been missing the master’s kind instruction.”

Yaoshan said, “Strike the bell.” The bell was sounded and the assembly gathered. Yaoshan ascended the seat. After a while he simply descended from the seat, and returned to the abbot’s quarters.

The director followed after him and said, “Master, you agreed before to expound the Dharma for the assembly. Why didn’t you offer us a single word?”

Yaoshan said, “There are sutra teachers for sutras, and commentary teachers for commentaries. Why do you blame this old monk?”

42 This story appears in Keitoku Dentōroku (Jingde Transmission of the Lamp), volume 14, the section on Yunyan. Yunyan’s “staying with Baizhang” refers to the story about Yunyan being Baizhang’s personal attendant for twenty years, but still not understanding. Finally, Yunyan succeeded to Yaoshan, although there were still questions about his understanding. See Cleary, *Transmission of Light*, pp. 160–163; and Cleary, *Book of Serenity*, pp. 206–209, 291–293.

43 Dongshan Liangjie exclaimed, “How strange and wondrous!” upon realizing that non-sentient beings expound the Dharma. He added that “when you listen with your ears you cannot hear it; when you listen with your eyes you can hear it.” See Powell, *Record of Tung-shan*, pp. 23–26; and Wu, *Mind of Chinese Ch’an*, p. 99.

44 This story appears in Dharma hall discourse 492 and also in Shōyōroku, case 7. See Cleary, *Book of Serenity*, pp. 28–31.

Great assembly, do you want to understand the meaning of Yaoshan speaking like this? The clouds in the blue sky; Baofu [Congzhan] points to the boat. The water in the bottle; [Luohan] Dizang [Guichen] plants the fields.⁴⁵ A mute person's dream is realized by a mute person; an old woman expounds old woman Zen. Unpolished jewels within the mountain peaks vigorously produce clouds; the lotus flowers within our hands open toward the sun. Although I have spoken like this, I, Kichijō [the mountain name for Eihei-ji], tonight yet again would like to proclaim this meaning, expressing it in verse.

After a pause Dōgen said:

What children of the house attain are the true gold coins.
A good horse does not even wait for the shadow of the whip.
Who can comprehend Yaoshan without these words?
Still, ancients and moderns compete to transmit and spread
[his truth].

You have been standing for a while, late into the night. Take good care.

Renewing Laughter

16. Informal Meeting for the End of the Summer Practice Period

Dōgen drew a circle and said: This is the great immeasurable, primary affair. All buddhas in the three times verify this single great matter, and for the sake of all living beings emit light and expound the Dharma.⁴⁶ Ancestral teachers in all generations practice this primary matter, and offer

45 "The clouds in the blue sky; the water in the bottle" is a saying by Yaoshan in response to the official Li Ao's question, "What is the way?" in Keitoku Dentōroku, volume 14. See Wu, *Mind of Chinese Ch'an*, p. 82. Baofu's pointing to the boat might perhaps refer to Hekiganroku, case 23, in which Baofu, walking in the mountains, pointed and said, "Right here is the summit of the mystic peak." See Cleary and Cleary, *Blue Cliff Record*, pp. 154–158. Dizang's planting the fields refers to his response to a teacher who had come from the south, where he said that there was extensive discussion among Buddhists. Dizang asked how that could compare to him just planting fields and growing rice to eat. See Dharma hall discourse 425 and Shōyōroku, case 12, Cleary, *Book of Serenity*, pp. 51–55.

46 "This single great matter" (translated here also as "primary affair or matter") is a reference to the Lotus Sutra, chap. 2, which describes the single great cause for buddhas' appearing in the world: to lead suffering beings into the path of awakening. See Katō, Tamura, and Miyasaka, *Threefold Lotus Sutra*, pp. 59–60.

their hands to bestow their marrow. Bodhisattvas who study prajñā transmit this primary matter and make it their face and eyebrows. Sitting for ninety days in the summer, we transcend the three times, completely fulfill awakening, and transform and free all beings.

I can remember, Zhaozhou asked Daci [Huanzhong], “What is the body of prajñā?”⁴⁷

Daci said, “What is the body of prajñā?”

Zhaozhou gave a hearty laugh.

The next day, when Zhaozhou was sweeping the ground, Daci asked, “What is the body of prajñā?”

Zhaozhou threw down his broom and roared with laughter.

In one meeting of these two ancient buddhas, Daci and Zhaozhou, they could not prevent this marvelous wonder. How can we assess it? Yesterday, we had rice in our bowls; this morning we had five-flavored gruel. This is the ordinary livelihood within the house of patch-robed monks. How is it when going beyond the buddha ancestors? Great assembly, do you want to clearly understand this?

After a pause Dōgen said: Daci’s “What is the body of prajñā?” refreshes Zhaozhou’s laughter yet again.

For a long while the assembly has been standing compassionately. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

Clouds and Waters Meet Equally with Clouds and Waters

17. Informal Meeting for Winter Solstice

When clouds and waters are sufficient, they arrive whether it is from near or far.⁴⁸ When gruel and rice are sufficient, right at this time we have our life. The clouds flow through the mountains; the waters are boundless in the ocean. Everywhere monks enter this essential teaching, how could

47 Dōgen also tells this story in Dharma hall discourse 159. See Green, *Recorded Sayings of Zen Master Joshu*, p. 162.

48 There are several puns in this first sentence, which carry through the entire passage. The subject is “clouds and waters,” both literally and figuratively—monks are commonly referred to as clouds and waters. “Sufficient” (*soku*) also means legs, so the sentence might also be read as “Monks arrive [at Eihei-ji] using their legs, whether from near or far,” or, literally, “whether short or long.”

there be a different Dharma for each of them? Right at this time, can you all clearly understand? Students with eyes wide open throughout their bodies encounter me, Kichijō [the mountain name for Eihei-ji], a person of clouds and waters.

I can remember, the sixth ancestor [Dajian Huineng] asked Master [Nanyue Huai]rang, “Where are you from?”⁴⁹

Nanyue said, “I came from the place of National Teacher Songshan [Hui]an.”

The ancestor said, “What is this that thus comes?”

After eight years had passed, Nanyue commented to the sixth ancestor, “To explain or demonstrate anything would completely miss the mark.”

The sixth ancestor said, “Then do you suppose there is practice-realization or not?”

Nanyue said, “It is not that there is no practice-realization, but only that it cannot be defiled.”

Again, [Nanyue’s response came after] eight years had passed.

Tonight, I, Eihei, borrow [Nanyue’s] mouth to express it completely, and take his hand to practice together. Again, do you want to clearly understand the point of this story?

After a pause Dōgen said: I want to clarify the person whose head is three feet long, and discuss prajñā with him as an equal.⁵⁰

You have been standing for a while, late into the night. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

49 This dialogue is given in slightly expanded form in informal meeting 13, as well as in Dharma hall discourse 374 and as kōan case 59 in volume 9. See volume 5, note 43, for other references.

50 “The person whose head is three feet long” is cited in Xuedou’s verse comment to case 59 in the Hekiganroku. See Cleary and Cleary, *Blue Cliff Record*, pp. 387–388. Here, the person with a three-foot-long head seems to be Dōgen’s way of referring to the one “that thus comes.” “Discuss prajñā with him as an equal” is from the poem about the windbell by Dōgen’s teacher, Tiantong Rujing. It is Dōgen’s kōan case 58 in volume 9 and is cited by Dōgen in a slightly different version in his Shōbōgenzō Mahāprajñāpāramitā. See Cleary, *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays*, p. 26. The poem is also discussed by Dōgen in Hōkyōki, his journals of practice in China. See Kōdera, *Dōgen’s Formative Years in China*, pp. 135, 191; and Tanahashi, *Enlightenment Unfolds*, p. 23.

Kind Hearts in Deep Snow

18. Informal Meeting at New Year's Eve

Yaoshan asked [his disciple] Yunyan, "Aside from your staying with Baizhang, where else have you been before coming here?"⁵¹

Yunyan said, "I have been to Guangnan."

Yaoshan said, "I have heard it said that the round rock outside the east gate of the city of Guangzhou was shifted by the lord of the city. Is that so?"

Yunyan said, "Not only the lord of the city, but even if all the people in the entire country tried, they could not budge it."

Yaoshan and Yunyan met each other like this. I, Eihei, am their distant descendant, so how can I avoid studying this?

After a pause Dōgen said: From ancient to modern times, deep snow fills [the Chinese capital] Chang'an.⁵² When [Dazu Huike] attained the marrow and [Bodhidharma] transmitted the robe, the cold pierced to the bone. The entire body is bright and glittering. How could its preciousness be evaluated? The kindly minds of old women are not deceived.

Sitting Upright like Bamboo

19. Informal Meeting for the Beginning of the Summer Practice Period
Zen Master Huanglong [Huinan] Puxue instructed his assembly in a Dharma hall discourse, saying, "It is good for monks to dwell in the mountains; abandoning desires in tranquillity is the Dharma of *śrāmaṇa* [monks]. Sutras are there, so you should open and read them. There are various teachers you should visit and question. In that manner, there was a monk who inquired of great teacher Yunju [Daoying] Hongjue, 'Ultimately, how is a monk?'"⁵³

"[Yunju Hong]jue said, 'Abiding well in the mountains.'

51 This story also appears in informal meeting 14. In his comments in this informal meeting 18, Dōgen seems particularly to be supporting Yunyan's understanding.

52 Chang'an, literally "long peace," was the name of the Chinese capital, sometimes used to symbolize fulfillment of peace and *nirvāṇa*. Since Eihei-ji, the name of Dōgen's temple, also means "eternal peace," Dōgen's use of "Chang'an" here implies that Eihei-ji was then covered in deep mid-winter snow, and that Dōgen himself was covered in the peace of deep *śamādhi*.

53 This story was also cited in informal meeting 2.

“The monk did a prostration and arose.

“[Yunju Hong]jue said, ‘How do you understand?’

“The monk, said, ‘Within the realms of good and bad, life and death, or favor and adversity, a monk’s mind ultimately is immovable like a mountain.’

“[Yunju Hong]jue immediately hit [the monk] once with his staff and said, ‘You have betrayed the former sages and destroyed my descendants.’

“[Yunju Hong]jue then asked the monk standing next to the first monk, ‘How do you understand this?’

“That monk made a prostration, stood up, and said, ‘A monk ultimately abides in the mountains, his eyes not seeing the colors black and yellow [of sky and earth], his ears not hearing the music of bamboo and strings.’

“[Yunju Hong]jue said, ‘You have betrayed the former sages and destroyed my descendants.’”

[Then in comment] Huanglong said, “What kind of phrase will you say in order not to betray the former sages and not to destroy your descendants? If you can utter it, wherever you go the blue mountains will be no other than the site of enlightenment.⁵⁴ If you cannot speak, cold and heat will crush your life-span, and spirits and demons will be jealous of your well-being.”

Then Huanglong struck his seat with his whisk and descended.

The teacher Dōgen said: Yunju and Huanglong have spoken this way, how can I, Eihei, their distant descendant, avoid speaking? Do you clearly understand their meaning? Suppose someone were to ask you, “Ultimately, how is a monk?” and someone were to answer, “Abiding well in the mountains.” Tell me, what is the meaning of this “abiding well in the mountains”?

After a pause Dōgen said: Encountering conditions is exactly the essence, engage [each] place to fully penetrate it. With the rhymings of pines by the window at dawn, with the heart of the moon in the autumn waters, nurturing the crane I finally cherish its purity. Seeing clouds, we harmonize together without haste. In accord with time and season, the sighing of the breeze is soothing and fragrant. Myriad peaks and valleys are dark

54 “Site of enlightenment” here is *dōjō*, a practice place, used for the bodhi maṇḍala, where a buddha awakens.

and hazy with sprinkles and downpours. Right at such a time, how is it?

Sitting upright with moss thick and boulders slippery, the wind is strong in [Hangzhou] Duofu's bamboo thicket.⁵⁵

Great assembly, you have been standing a while. I respectfully hope you will take good care.

The Village Songs of Mahākāśyapa and Mañjuśrī

20. Informal Meeting for the End of the Summer Practice Period

For ninety days of non-action, the whole assembly has been peaceful and calm. Nevertheless, we have been protected by the buddha ancestors, which is truly the fortune and happiness of the great assembly. Tonight I, Eihei, will hold an informal meeting, as usual [at the end of a practice period]. What we call informal meeting is [an occasion to give] the family instructions. Although there are many family instructions, now I will offer one or two. The ancestral teachers of former generations are all noble people with the mind of the way [bodhicitta]. Without the mind of the way, the myriad practices are mere vain arrangements. Therefore, monks who study and practice must first arouse bodhi mind. Arousing bodhi mind is [arousing] the mind that saves all living beings. First, you must have the mind of the way. Next you must become endowed with yearning for the ancients. Then you must seek what is genuine. These three kinds are what should be studied by both beginners and latecomers. The family instructions of Eihei are simply like this.

I can remember, once long ago during the time of the World-Honored One, on the day of confession, Mañjuśrī had spent the summer at three places.⁵⁶ Mahākāśyapa wanted to expel Mañjuśrī, but when he started to approach the sounding block to make the announcement, he

55 The bamboo thicket of Hangzhou Duofu, a disciple of Zhaozhou, also mentioned in Dharma hall discourse 520, refers to the following dialogue, recorded in the Gotō Egen collection "Five Lamps Merged into the Source" (Ch.: Wudeng Huiyuan). A monk asked, "How is Duofu's bamboo grove?" Duofu replied, "One or two stalks are leaning." When the monk said he didn't understand, Duofu said, "Three or four stalks are bent over." In this informal meeting by Dōgen, in the context of a true monk's upright sitting, "the wind is strong" may refer to being bent over and flexible like bamboo, without being unseated. "Wind" here also implies strong "style" or "dignity." "Moss thick and boulders slippery" implies remaining settled for a long time.

56 "Day of confession" (Jpn.: *jishi*; Skt.: *pravāraṇa*) was a day at the end of the practice

suddenly saw hundreds of thousands of myriad millions of Mañjuśrīs. Mahākāśyapa used all of his divine powers, but could not lift the sounding block. The World-Honored One finally asked Mahākāśyapa, “Which Mañjuśrī do you want to expel?” Mahākāśyapa did not respond.

Great assembly, do you want to fully inquire into this occurrence? First, you must deeply trust that spending the summer in practice period is the one great matter in the house of buddha ancestors. Do not take it lightly. Tell me, at that time, did Mahākāśyapa expel Mañjuśrī or not? If you say he had expelled Mañjuśrī, why is it that he could not raise the sounding block with all of his divine powers? If you say he had not expelled Mañjuśrī, since [Mahākāśyapa’s] action was completely in accord with regulations, his effort should not be discredited. Great assembly, you should know that if Mahākāśyapa wanted to expel śrāvakas, pratyeka buddhas, beginners, latecomers, or even those of the stages of the ten sages and three wise ones, Mahākāśyapa certainly could have raised the sounding block. Now, if [Mahākāśyapa] wants to expel the hundreds of thousands of myriad millions of Mañjuśrīs, Mahākāśyapa uses a sounding block that cannot be raised. How can this be? Don’t you see that a thousand-pound stone bow cannot be used to shoot a small mouse. How could a thousand-ton ship sail, following the ruts of an oxcart? Although it is like this, without intervening in a matter of such realms [of comparisons], is there something more to say that goes beyond?

After a pause Dōgen said:

In a peaceful age the ruler’s activity is to govern without signs.
The family style of old peasants seems to be most pristine.
Just concerned with village songs and festival drinking,
How would they know of the virtues of Shun
or the benevolence of Yao?⁵⁷

period when monks confessed and reflected upon their misdeeds. The three places where Mañjuśrī had spent the summer were at King Prasenajit’s harem, playing with children at an elementary school, and at a bordello, staying a month at each. This story is quoted from Hongzhi’s Extensive Record, volume 3, and was also recorded in Yuanwu’s Recorded Sayings. Dōgen also cites it in Shōbōgenzō Ango. See Tanahashi, *Beyond Thinking*, pp. 139–40; and Nishijima and Cross, *Master Dogen’s Shobogenzo*, book 4, pp. 85–86.

57 These four lines after the pause are quoted, with only minor variations for the sake of

Great assembly, you have been standing a while. I respectfully hope you will take good care.



poetic meter, from Hongzhi's verse comment to case 5 of the Shōyōroku. Shun and Yao are ancient wise emperors of Chinese legend. See Cleary, *Book of Serenity*, p. 21.

58 The word translated here as “nirvāṇa” is *jakumetsu*, which means tranquillity and cessation of worldly attachments. These *hōgo*, or “Dharma words,” were probably written down for individual students, and not usually presented as talks. They date from before Dōgen moved to Echizen and established Eihei-ji, when he was still teaching at Kōshō Hōrin-ji temple, where the Dharma hall discourses in volume 1 of Eihei Kōroku were given.

59 “Beyond study” refers to those who have completed their study.