

Journal of Buddhist Ethics

ISSN 1076-9005

<http://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/>

Volume 31, 2024

“The Shadow of the Whip:” *Memento Mori* in
Dōgen’s *12 Fascicles Collection* (十二卷本集)

Steven Heine

Florida International University

Copyright Notice: Digital copies of this work may be made and distributed provided no change is made and no alteration is made to the content. Reproduction in any other format, with the exception of a single copy for private study, requires the written permission of the author. All enquiries to: vforte@albright.edu.

“The Shadow of the Whip:”
Memento Mori in Dōgen’s
12 Fascicles Collection (十二卷本集)¹

Steven Heine²

Abstract

This paper offers a reexamination and reevaluation of the philosophical meaning and significance of Dōgen’s 道元 (1200-1253) last text that was left unfinished shortly before he died and was lost for centuries after that. The main message of the work concerns the inviolability of karmic causality (*inga* 因果) and the need to offer sincere repentance (*zange* 懺悔) for offenses committed. For various reasons, I refer to the final text as the *12 Fascicles Collection* (*Jūnikanbon-shū* 十二卷本集) instead of using the customary moniker of the “12-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō*” (*Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō* 十二卷本正法眼藏), which implies it is one of several versions of Dōgen’s masterwork. The title of this paper, drawn

¹ A Japanese version of this paper has been published: Steven Heine, “Ben’ei”—Dōgen *Jūnikanbonshū ni okeru* “Memento Mori,” translated by Kaneko Nao, in Kimura Kiyotaka, editor, Special Issue on “Dōgen’s Thought” in *Shisō* (September 2024); スティーヴン・ハイネ「鞭影—道元『十二卷本集』における「メメント・モリ」／金子奈央 訳, 木村清孝【『思想』2024年9月号 特集 | 道元の思想】, pp. 99-112.

² Florida International University. Email: heines@fiu.edu

from a passage in the “Shime (Four Horses)” fascicle of the *Collection*, highlights that a true Buddhist practitioner learns to respond to an awareness of the imminence of finitude and mortality like a proverbial splendid horse that spontaneously “races off upon seeing the shadow of the whip” (*mi ben’ei nigyō* 見鞭影而行). This image suggests the steed does not suffer the rider’s reprimands, or to put it another way, a true aspirant need not be prodded to obey the law of causality because he knows how to conduct himself in a principled way in every circumstance. The *12-Fascicles Collection* should also be seen as the result of Dōgen’s effort to curate the legacy of his general instructional outlook by rewriting or recasting some of his earlier essays and themes while crafting a timeless primer of basic Buddhist tenets. Its *memento mori* approach has a resonance with Kamakura-period deathbed practices and morality tales (*setsuwa bungaku* 説話文学).

“For as the sun is daily new and old”

—Shakespeare, Sonnet 76

Introduction

This paper offers a reexamination (*saikento* 再検討) and reevaluation (*saihyōka* 再評価) of the meaning and significance of Dōgen’s 道元 (1200-1253) last text that was left unfinished shortly before he died and was lost for centuries after that. The main message of the work concerns the inviolability of karmic causality (*inga* 因果) and the need to offer sincere repentance (*zange* 懺悔) for offenses committed. For various reasons, I refer

to the final text as the *12 Fascicles Collection* (*Jūnikanbon-shū* 十二卷本集) instead of using the customary moniker of the “12-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō*” (*Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō* 十二卷本正法眼藏), which implies it is one of several versions of Dōgen’s masterwork.³

Since the discovery in 1927 of an authentic fifteenth-century manuscript with a preface written by an anonymous monk that was held at Yōkōji 永光寺, there has been considerable and often impassioned debate about the status of Dōgen’s last collection and its relation to various editions of the *Shōbōgenzō*.⁴ This controversy is based largely on interpreting Ejō’s 懷奘 (1198-1280) cryptic suggestion made in a postscript (*okugaki* 奥書) for the twelfth fascicle, “Hachi dainin gaku” 八大人覺, which indicates that the last collection constitutes a “new draft” (*shinsō* 新草) that was designed to result in a revised edition the *Shōbōgenzō* containing 100 fascicles. The term “new draft” implies that Dōgen was not altogether satisfied that his true legacy would be exemplified sufficiently by his previous voluminous forms of expression, but due to illness he could not complete the innovative project (DZZ 2:458).

Some interpreters see the final collection’s emphasis on a strict understanding of the impact of karma as representative of an “intellectual change” (*shisōteki henka* 思想的變化) or “spiritual rebirth” (*shinsei* 新生) that indicates a dramatic break from Dōgen’s earlier writings, which focus on the practice of just sitting (*shikan taza* 只管打坐). Yet others view the last text as consistent and continuous with, or a relatively minor

³ *Dōgen Zenji zenshū* 道元禪師全集, 7 vols., ed. Kawamura Kōdō 河村孝道, et al. (Shunjūsha, 1988-1993); abbreviated as DZZ; see volume 2 for the twelve-fascicles collection.

⁴ Kagamishima Genryū 鏡島元隆 and Suzuki Kakuzen 鈴木格禪編, eds. *Jūkanbon Shōbōgenzō no shomondai* 十二卷本正法眼藏の諸問題 (Daizō shuppan, 1991); Nara Yasuaki, ed., *Budda kara Dōgen e* ブツダから道元へ (Tokyo shoseki, 1992); and Monma Sachio 門馬幸夫, *Dōgen shisō wo kaiseki suru: Shōbōgenzō dētabēsu ga shimesu shinjutsu* 道元思想を解析する: 『正法眼藏』データベースが示す真実 (Shunjūsha, 2021).

modification of, his previous work.⁵ I suggest that this hermeneutic impasse can be resolved by considering the concluding, if not necessarily the most decisive, collection of twelve fascicles an independent or standalone work that overlaps yet remains separate from the 75-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō* (*Nanajūgokanbon Shōbōgenzō* 七十五卷本正法眼藏; hereafter, 75-*Shōbōgenzō*), with which it is usually linked in recent publications and translations.⁶

Rather than being seen as a supplement or addendum to the larger and more famous 75-*Shōbōgenzō*, and even though the exact dating of fascicles is uncertain in all but one instance (“Hachi dainin gaku” was written on the sixth day of the first lunar month of 1253), the *12 Fascicles Collection* should take its rightful place as an autonomous work positioned within the framework of, but also situated somewhat in contrast to, most of the rest of Dōgen’s oeuvre. In critically reviewing theories espoused by leading Japanese scholars, my approach offers an alternative to elucidations that may seem one-sided or indicate that because of various thorny interpretive issues no firm conclusions can be inferred. Yet my analysis is expressed without fostering an overemphasis (*hENCHŌ* 偏重) on the final compilation.

The main reason for the assertion of autonomy is that Dōgen’s last text features a distinctive religious meaning and discursive method

⁵ See Mutai Takanao 務台孝尚, “Dōgen Zenji no shisō no ichi hen’i” 道元禪師の思想の一変移, *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū*, (1991). See also Victor Forte, “Indian Traditionalism in Eihei Dōgen’s *Shoaku makusa*,” (2023).

⁶ This has been the case since the publication of *Dōgen Zenji zenshū* 道元禪師全集. 3 vols, ed. Ōkubo Dōshū 大久保道舟 (1969-1970), which created a de facto 87-fascicle version plus miscellaneous fascicles. However, until recently, all English translations have been based on the 95-fascicle edition. This trend was changed with the release of the *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō*, 8 vols, ed. Sōtō Zen Text Project (Sōtōshū Shūmuchō, 2023); the twelve fascicles appear as a unit in vol. 7. See Steven Heine, *Readings in the Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*, 2020.

regarding the priority of accepting cause-and-effect while practicing rites of repentance to try to mitigate and possibly reverse the effects of wrongdoings. The *12 Fascicles Collection* primarily cites Indian sources, rather than Song-period Chan texts, and uses a basic Buddhist vocabulary that is distinct from that of the *75-Shōbōgenzo*. Moreover, the final compilation also demonstrates a clear narrative trajectory and thematic unity (*shubi ikkan* 首尾一貫) from the first to the last fascicle based on an unswerving spiritual vision and pedagogical approach. This progression covers the topics of renunciation and renewal in the first three fascicles, spiritual reciprocity realized through devotion to the three jewels (*sanbō* 三寶) in the next three fascicles, reckoning with the effects of moral retribution in fascicles 7, 8, and 9, and resolving to die in a remorseful fashion that attains redemption in the final set of fascicles.

I seek to resolve disputes about whether the last text is consistent or inconsistent with Dōgen's previous work by focusing instead on how it discloses a view of *memento mori*, which involves coming to terms with the "time of facing death" (*rinmeijūji* 臨命終時) by adopting an incorruptible attitude accompanied by impeccably upright behavior. According to the "Shime" 四馬 fascicle, which cites words attributed to the World Honored One 世尊, a true Buddhist practitioner learns to respond to an awareness of the imminence of finitude and mortality like a proverbial splendid horse that spontaneously "races off upon seeing the shadow of the whip" *mi ben'ei nigyo* 見鞭影而行 (DZZ 2:413).⁷ This image suggests the steed does not suffer the rider's reprimands, or to put it another way, a true aspirant need not be prodded to obey the law of causality because he knows how to conduct himself in a principled way in every circumstance.

⁷ See the discussion in Sugio Gen'yū 杉尾玄有, "Kaze to tsuki to butsu: Jūnikanbon *Shōbōgenzō* wa doko e iku ka" 風と月と仏—十二巻本『正法眼蔵』はどこへ行くか, in Kagamishima and Suzuki, *Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no shomondai*, pp. 57-109.

The *12-Fascicles Collection* should also be seen as the result of Dōgen's effort to curate the legacy of his general instructional outlook by rewriting or recasting some of his earlier essays and themes while crafting a timeless primer of basic Buddhist tenets. Its memento mori approach has a resonance with Kamakura-period deathbed practices and morality tales (*setsuwa bungaku* 説話文学), and it displays a pan-sectarian quality of rueful reverence that is relevant for all monastic (*shukke* 出家) and lay (*zaika* 在家) followers alike. Borrowing a term from contemporary literary criticism, Dōgen's last compilation can be regarded as an important example of "late-style," whereby an eminent thinker or artist creates a final work that culminates and crowns his lifetime of productivity.⁸ Yet, as the result of shifting contextual conditions, this last achievement often leads to new and somewhat strange or uncharted conceptual territory that may seem displaced or even disturbing to unexpectant readers, but it is ultimately beneficial and rewarding when carefully considered in its appropriate biographical and theoretical settings.

Moreover, the modern importance of Dōgen's final teachings is reinforced by the fact that these were extensively cited in the construction of the 1891 ritual text, the *Shushōgi* 修証義, for which 29 of 88 sentences were extracted from the group of twelve fascicles.⁹ This work, which continues to play a key role in Sōtō sect 曹洞宗 rites, highlights Dōgen's late-style themes of (1) acknowledging causality, (2) repenting to eliminate offenses, (3) taking the precepts to enter the order, (4) acting with compassion to benefit all beings, and (5) repaying gratitude through steadfast

⁸ See Edward Rothstein, "'On Late Style,' By Edward Said: Twilight of His Idols," *New York Times* (July 16, 2006).

⁹ This was the case before the 1927 discovery. See Nara Yasuaki 奈良康明, et al., eds., *Anata dake no Shushōgi* あなただけの修証義, 2001. Most of the rest of the 88 sentences are from the 75-*Shōbōgenzō*.

practice. These topics are enunciated without mentioning the role of *za-zen* practice.

Last But Not Least

What special teachings were bequeathed to his disciples in the final set of writings transcribed shortly before the death of Dōgen and how do these compare with his earlier works, especially the *75-Shōbōgenzō*? The last teachings focus almost exclusively and in an altogether direct and unambiguous fashion on accepting the demands of rigorous ethical injunctions by attaining a keen knowledge of the inevitable impact of one's karmic roots (*gōkon* 業根), which generate recompenses (*hō* 報) for good (*zen* 善) or evil (*aku* 惡) deeds permeating all aspects of existence, much like “shadows and echoes appearing without a hairsbreadth of divergence” (影響相隨, 毫釐靡忒). In accord with traditional Buddhist principles, Dōgen's last text valorizes the role of performing penitent acts to extricate from unwholesome deeds as the primary means for gaining liberation (*gedatsu* 解脱) from worldly bonds.

Furthermore, Dōgen's last teachings give priority to the role of monastic home-leavers, who receive the full precepts with the aim of overcoming the effects of karma. The first three fascicles, “*Shukke kudoku*” 出家功德, “*Jukai*” 受戒, and “*Kesa kudoku*” 袈裟功德, highlight the initial goals of renouncing any attachment to worldly society, following prescribed behavioral mandates, and donning clerical vestments as emblematic of the purity of spiritual rejuvenation. According to the initial fascicle, it is far preferable for someone to receive the full precepts through concentrating on cutting off anger and agitation but to occasionally violate them than it is to never receive the Buddhist rules. Yet other fascicles in the final collection address the aspirations of devout lay followers, who formed a key segment of the *Eiheiji* 永平寺 community in

Dōgen's late years and, by adhering to the guidelines of the partial set of precepts, were able to take preliminary steps conducive to eventually becoming free from their karma-bound existence.¹⁰

In both instances, the *12 Fascicles Collection* serves as a useful introduction for training practitioners, who need to feel in their flesh the stroke of the whip; that is, they must be reminded of the truth of moral causation by accepting meticulous teachings about how to comprehend yet transcend those restraints. But a genuinely earnest trainee will also be able to surpass such a dependency and ultimately display virtuous behavior just as the Buddha did. According to “Hachi dainin gaku,” which is based on citing verbatim and with minimum comments the last sūtra known as the *Butsu yuigyō kyō* 佛遺教經 (C. *Fo yijiao jing*) supposedly preached to mournful disciples by Śākyamuni at midnight before he entered *parinirvāṇa*,¹¹ everyone has the capacity to observe the eight (*hachi* 八) awakenings (*gaku* 覺) of a great sage (*dainin* 大人), which include mindfulness and meditation among other principles of conduct.

Not only is the topic of *zazen* ignored in the *12 Fascicles Collection* but a key passage in the tenth fascicle, “Shizen biku” 四禪比丘, suggests by citing an Indian scripture a vigorous skepticism regarding false claims made by practitioners who misleadingly consider the power of meditation to be identical with liberation, since this practice should be seen as a means rather than an end in itself. Yet such examples of omission or implicit criticism do not necessarily indicate a refutation of contemplative training techniques. Rather, the lacuna represents a deliberate discursive

¹⁰ See Sasada Kyōshō 笹田教彰, “Rinmeijūji kō: Jūnikanbon *Shōbōgenzō* no kōsō o megutte” 臨命終時考 – 十二卷本『正法眼藏』の構想をめぐって, *Bukkyō Daigaku Bukkyōgakubū ronshū* 98 (2014): 1-20.

¹¹ X.37.666; abbreviation for *Xinbian wanzi xu zangjing* 新編卅字續藏經, 150 volumes, Xinwenfeng, 1968-1978, reprint edited by Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association, CBETA Electronic Tripiṭaka Collection, Taipei (1998-2016).

bracket enabling Dōgen to forefront alternative religious themes that relativize the role of zazen by underscoring the necessity of adopting a profoundly moral approach to comportment at all times.¹²

Dōgen writes of his newly placed emphasis on causality in the eighth fascicle, “Sanjigō” 三時業, which deals with the impact that karmic deeds (*gō* 業) from the past exert on the “three times” (*sanji* 三時) of present life, next life, and future lives: “When engaging with cause-and-effect we are invariably affected, but if we are contrite, our evil actions will be terminated and a grave moral burden is reduced to a lesser load” もし因縁にあへば. かならず感得す. しかあれば. 悪業は. 懺悔すれば滅す. また轉重輕受す (DZZ 2:412).¹³ This clear message is no doubt inspirational for some followers of Dōgen, but it may be surprising or disquieting for other readers.

Even though “Sanjigō” does not go so far as to equate repentance with the experience of enlightenment, the meaning of the passage is probably not what would be anticipated by those most familiar with Dōgen’s earlier works that highlight paradoxical constructions of nondual philosophy based on the priority of the practice of zazen. For example, in the training manual for meditation, *Fukanzazengi* 普勸坐禪儀, his first major work written after he returned from four years spent studying in China, Dōgen enjoins practitioners, “Let go of all associations and put everyday affairs aside. Do not think of good or evil, and do not pay attention to right

¹² It is noteworthy that the 75-*Shōbōgenzō* contains a couple of fascicles that deal primarily with the merits of moral behavior based on paying close attention to the ephemerality of all aspects of existence in “Senjō” 洗淨 and “Senmen” 洗面, which was delivered for a third time by Dōgen in 1250. Also, the 60-fascicle version of the *Shōbōgenzō* includes “Sanjūshichihon bodai bunpō” 三十七品菩提分法 and “Bodaisatta shishōbō” 菩提薩埵四攝法.

¹³ Some interpreters critique the notion that the removal of transgressions may only require a penitent rite since this may be carried out in an unreflective, mechanical fashion.

and wrong (literally, this or that)” 放捨諸緣。休息万事。不思善惡。莫管是非 (DZZ 5:4).

In order to evoke a solemn tone conducive to contrition, the last instructions of Dōgen rely primarily on citing Buddhist sources such as Jātaka tales 本緣部, Āgama texts 阿含經, and *Prajñāpāramitā* literature 般若波羅蜜, in addition to other kinds of treatises, encyclopedias, reference works, and compendia that were available in Sinitic recensions or commentaries, including the *Dasheng yi zhang* 大乘義章 by Jingying Huiyuan 淨影慧遠 (523-592).¹⁴ The *12 Fascicles Collection* almost never quotes, or usually does so in a disparaging way, voluminous Chan transmission records.¹⁵ It also does not mention the requirements of sitting meditation or the creative entanglements of kōan 公案 (C. *gong'an*) commentaries. These two discursive elements evoked with a sense of literary bravado form the mainstay of Dōgen’s previous writings, especially the rhetorical pyrotechnics replete with wordplay, deliberate grammatical distortions, and inversions of conventional meaning that characterize the *75-Shōbōgenzō*. That text includes iconic contradictory sayings, such as “to study the self is to forget the self” *jikō wo narau to iu wa, jikō wo wasururu nari* 自己をならふといふは、自己をわするなり (DZZ 1:3), “disentangle entangled vines by means of entangled vines” *kattō wo mote kattō wo matsufu* 葛藤をもて葛藤をまつふ (DZZ 1:416), and “make mistake after mistake (until the right mistake is made)” *shōshaku jushaku* 將錯就錯 (DZZ 1:53). All these dictums suggest that errancy is not an obstacle but is itself the key to attaining an authentic realization.

¹⁴ In “Shizen biku,” Dōgen mainly cites Tiantai thinkers Zhiyi 智顛 (538-597) and Zhanran 湛然 (711-782).

¹⁵ An important exception is the quote in “Jinshin inga” from the *Shōdōka* 證道歌 (C. *Zhengdao ge*) by Yongjia Xuanjue 永嘉玄覺 (665-713), “Being open-minded but dismissing cause-and-effect / A recklessness that invites disaster.” 豁達空撥因果, 莽莽蕩蕩招殃過.

The twelve fascicles, in contrast, draw almost entirely from a lexicon of Sanskrit terminology to explicate the merits of fostering upstanding behavior. Dōgen uses didactic vocabulary regarding the roots of karma, whether good (*zen* 善) or evil (*aku* 惡), affecting each instant (*kṣaṇa*, J. *setsuna* 刹那) of existence while one perpetually confronts the end of life and tries to eliminate their offenses (*metsuzai* 滅罪). This possibility exists even for *icchantika* 一闍提闍 or those who, according to a certain view of Mahāyāna *tathāgatagarbha* (*nyoraizō* 如来藏) theory, have been outcasted by virtue of deficient karma generated in former lives.

Altogether lacking in the *12 Fascicles Collection* is the kind of non-dual vocabulary used commonly in the 75-*Shōbōgenzō* for the experiences of gaining spontaneous realization (*genjōkōan* 現成公案), identifying with the unity of being-time (*uji* 有時), apprehending oneness with the universality of buddha-nature (*busshō* 佛性), actualizing total activity (*zenki* 全機), or explicating a dream within a dream (*muchū setsumu* 夢中說夢), all of which are titles of fascicles. Other notions that are essential to early Dōgen, such as the experience of casting off body-mind (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落) and the identity of cultivation-realization (*shushō ittō* 修証一等), are not found in the pages of the final compilation as, according to some interpreters of his late shift, these topics were purposefully avoided.

To summarize, the writing style of the 75-*Shōbōgenzō* is characterized by literary innovation based on a self-affirming audacity in experimenting with various kinds of embellishments or relying on extensive punning and puzzling paradoxes, which seek to capture through enigmatic phrasings the profound state-of-mind of Zen contemplation. The 75-*Shōbōgenzō* features an organic interior resonance (*yūteki naiteki hibiki* 有機的, 内的響き). This literary method demands that students approach the text from an introspective standpoint in order to read between the lines to decipher the philosophical implications of Dōgen's obtuse renderings of hybrid Sino-Japanese linguistic structures that are designed to

disclose without obstructing the essential elements of an awareness of nonduality.

The tone of the *12 Fascicles Collection* Dōgen’s last compilation is singularly remorseful and apologetic in reflecting the austere, self-denying outlook of contrition (*kaishin* 悔心) due to the pervasive impact of karma in every aspect of daily life. This includes the self-deceptions of meditators who claim to transcend requisite ethical strictures but ultimately lapse into the main trap of nonduality that is derived from original enlightenment theory (*hongaku shisō* 本覚思想), which is an antinomian standpoint associated with the proscribed Daruma school 達磨宗 that rationalizes any breach of moral injunctions by valorizing a fabricated sense of freedom.

Early Versus Late Dōgen

Interpreting the twelve fascicles is a complicated hermeneutic task because the concluding text was left as a series of manuscript drafts. These materials were then edited by Ejō, who in scribal notes for “Hachi dainin gaku” enthusiastically encourages all followers to uphold Dōgen’s final teachings. Ejō writes, “You should make a copy and cherish these twelve fascicles [or: the twelfth fascicle]. In citing the last guidelines bestowed by Śākyamuni, this work is the final bequeathed teachings (*saigo no yuikyō*) of our late teacher.” 若奉恋慕先師之人，必書此十二卷，而可護持之。此釋尊最後之教敕。且先師最後之遺教也 (DZZ 2:458).

Ejō’s lofty estimation of the last compilation is reinforced when Dōgen indicates his intentions in the fifth fascicle, “*Kuyō shobutsu*” 供養諸佛, “O disciples of the bequeathed dharma, you should recite (or receive) and retain this teaching with the utmost reverence.” 遺法の弟子，ふかく頂戴誦(受)持すべし (DZZ 2:356). Ejō also implies that the final compilation, which he says constitutes a “new draft,” is the version that Dōgen

himself at the time of death would have selected as his foundational work. Dōgen's goal, according to Ejō, was to continue the rewriting process in the hope of reaching a total of 100 fascicles that replace the "old draft" (*kyūsō* 旧草), which is not identified but presumably would refer to the 75-*Shōbōgenzō*.

Following the acclaim accorded by Ejō, however, a rocky history ensued for nearly seven hundred years. The final collection was long rumored to exist as a discrete textual entity, but no complete manuscript was available for evaluation. During this lengthy period of being lost, the contents of the text were known only in piecemeal fashion because eleven of the twelve fascicles were embedded in other versions of the *Shōbōgenzō* that were also left when Dōgen died containing 60 fascicles (with 7 of the 12) or 28 fascicles (with 4 others).¹⁶ These eleven fascicles were included in a different sequence in the version of the *Shōbōgenzō* with 95 fascicles (Kyūjūgokanbon *Shōbōgenzō* 九十五卷本正法眼藏), often referred to as the Honzan Edition (本山版), that was first constructed in 1692 to create a comprehensive set of all vernacular sermons (*jishu* 示衆 or *kana hōgo* 仮名法語), but it was not published until the early 1800s.

The uncertain status lasted until the discovery of a copy of the *12 Fascicles Collection* from 1446 that included a eulogistic postscript written by an anonymous monk who said he was "a recently ordained bhikṣu and humble descendant of Dōgen" (永平末流小新戒比丘) who wished "to see the buddha and hear the dharma" (見佛聞法) for endless lifetimes.¹⁷ This scroll was held in the archives of Yōkōji located in the Noto Peninsula,

¹⁶ "Ippyakuhachi hōmyōmon" 一百八法明門, was unknown before the discovery.

¹⁷ Kohō Chisan 孤峰智燦 (1879-19067), the abbot of Yōkōji, discovered the manuscript and, in 1931 and Nagahisa Gakusui 永久岳水 included a transcription of "Ippyakuhachi hōmyōmon" in his *Shōbōgenzō chūkai shinshū* 正法眼藏註解新集. See Tsunoda Tairyū 角田泰隆. *Dōgen zenji no shisōteki kenkyū* 道元禪師の思想的研究 (Shunjūsha, 2015), 65; and William M. Bodiford, "Introduction to the *Shōbōgenzō*," in *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*, vol. 8, 19.

which was a part of the Keizan 瑩山 (1268-1325) faction of the Sōtō sect and thus did not stem from Dōgen's own temple lineage as transmitted by Ejō and Giun 義雲 (1233-1333), the second and fifth abbots of Eihei-ji, respectively.¹⁸ Therefore, the absence of some of the most basic text-historical details, such as precisely when and why the final compilation was composed and its function within the Sōtō hermeneutics (*kaishakugaku* 解釈学) since then, makes it “much more difficult to discern with confidence Dōgen's authorial intent or goals for this work,” as William Bodiford remarks (26).¹⁹ An important qualifier is that multiple questions are also frequently raised about the construction and content of most of Dōgen's other writings, particularly the various versions of the *Shōbōgenzō*.

Even a cursory reading reveals that the kind of self-critical, dualistic message found in Dōgen's final compilation appears at odds with, antithetical to, or perhaps indicates a repudiation of his previous philosophical ideas that emphasize the priority of just sitting in order to surpass dualities. The single main example of apparent contradiction between early and late writings involves two different interpretations of the kōan case about a wild fox (*yako* 野狐). In this Chan dialogue the master Baizhang 百丈 (720-814) is visited by a shapeshifting vulpine that claims to be a former monk being punished for five hundred lifetimes for having once expressed a profound misunderstanding by denying the impact of karma with the phrase, “not falling into causality” (*furaku inga* 不落因果), instead of affirming it by saying, “not obscuring causality” (*fumai inga* 不昧因果).²⁰

¹⁸ Tettsū Gikai 徹通義介 (1219-1309), the third abbot of Eihei-ji and founder of Daijōji 大乘寺, represented the main historical and ideological link between the two factions.

¹⁹ Bodiford also notes how the discovery “upended” conventional views of the *Shōbōgenzō*, 19.

²⁰ The original case appears in the 1036 transmission of the lamp record, *Tenshō kōtōroku* 天聖廣燈錄 (C. *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*), X.78.1553.451a.

According to the 75-*Shōbōgenzō* fascicle, “Daishugyō” 大修行 written in 1244, “Even if the old monk did say, ‘not falling into causality,’ he shows great practice that cannot deceive so he must not be denying causality” 不落因果. と道取すとも, 大修行の瞞他不得なるあり, 撥無因果なるべからず (DZZ 2:190). This means that the nonproduction of evil by a Chan teacher outweighs any moral dilemma that may leave issues about karmic recompense unresolved. However, in “Jinshin inga” 深信因果, which is the undated, drafted seventh fascicle in the *12-Fascicles Collection*, Dōgen reverses his understanding by arguing:

Where those who practice Chan in recent times in the Song dynasty are most in the dark is precisely their failure to recognize that “not falling into causality” is the teaching of a false view. How pathetic it is that, where the true dharma of Tathāgata has spread and even while encountering its direct transmission from ancestor to ancestor, they would form a wicked clique denying causality. 近代宋朝の参禪の輩ら, もともくらき處, ただ不落因果を邪見の説としらざるにあり. あはれむべし, 如來の正法の流通する, 祖祖正傳せるにあひながら, 撥無因果の邪儻となら. (DZZ 2:390)

Yet, it is important to recognize that the collections with 75 and 12 fascicles share a worldview based on sensitivity to the evanescence of all aspects of reality in addition to praise for those authentic Zen ancestors who embodied the essence of Buddhist discipline and compassion and were thought of as living buddhas. As Dōgen writes in “Shukke kudoku,” “When impermanence suddenly occurs, kings and grand officials, intimates and servants, wives and children, and valued possessions will not save us; we will just proceed alone to the yellow springs of hades. All that remains behind us are the effects of our good and evil karma.” おほよそ無常忽ちにいたるときは. 國王・大臣、親昵・従僕、妻子・珍寶, た

すくるなし、ただひとり黄泉に趣くのみなり。おのれに随ひゆくは、ただこれ善・悪業等のみなり。(DZZ 2:290)

Another common element linking the last collection with the 75-Shōbōgenzō is a reliance on composing or interpreting contradictory expressions to capture the truth of the dharma. For instance, Dōgen says in “Shukke kudoku” that worthy actions performed only for the sake of accruing merit will boomerang and fail to produce the desired results. Also, both texts revere the sanctity of the *Lotus Sūtra* 妙法蓮華經 by citing from it extensively, refer to the notion of “seeing buddha and hearing dharma” (*kenbutsu monbō* 見佛聞法), and reflect criticism of the so-called *Senika* heresy (*Senni gedō* 先尼外道) that represents a heretical eternalist worldview.

Nevertheless, the core interpretive conundrum that has been addressed by numerous researchers in the field of Dōgen studies following the 1927 discovery of the twelve fascicles concerns analyzing the reasons for the apparent disjuncture between writings from his early and late career stages while assessing the scope and significance of any conceptual gap. Is there a basic inconsistency and undeniable discontinuity between these stages? Or does a fundamental continuity and incontrovertible convergence underlie all of Dōgen’s writings, regardless of when or where they were composed? Alternatively, can a compromise view be persuasively argued that shows compatibility and intersection but allows for differences and distinctions to come forth?

In other words, does the seeming breach between texts indicate that a major transformation in the master’s thinking took place late in life when Dōgen experienced a basic change, as some reform-minded interpreters have suggested? This view, which indicates that the last collection negates previous writings (前者を否定する), is particularly associated with but is not limited to proponents of the methodological movement known as Critical Buddhism (*Hihan Bukkyō* 批判仏教), which arose in the

1980s in response to diverse societal problems then plaguing Japanese religions, including the legacy of ethnic discrimination and the lingering impact of prewar imperialism.²¹

Critical Buddhist scholars have argued that late-stage Dōgen purposefully altered his approach to articulating Zen theory and practice and, by doing so, implicitly rejected his former standpoint in favor of a new focus on atonement. According to Hakamaya Noriaki 袴谷憲昭, Dōgen had become aware that his previous philosophy was linked too closely with the notion of original enlightenment as a nondual doctrine infected with antinomian implications.²² Moreover, Critical Buddhism claims that Dōgen's last teachings articulate a powerful template for inspiring moral behavior in diverse situations that is relevant for dealing with contemporary ethical crises, although this implication is not explained systematically.

A more moderate approach to highlighting key differences between the twelve fascicles and previous texts is suggested by Sugio Gen'yū 杉尾玄有, who stresses that according to Ejō, Dōgen's aim near the end of his life was "to revise all the writings" (*mina kaki aratame* 皆書き改め). This indicates that in the proposed but incomplete revised text, the 75-*Shōbōgenzō* fascicles would play a secondary role because the arrangement of the proposed 100 fascicles, as part of an evolution (*shinka* 進化) of the compilation, should reverse the sequence (逆かさまの順序で配列されて) through a presumed emphasis on the twelve fascicles.²³

²¹ See Jamie Hubbard and Paul L. Swanson, eds. *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm Over Critical Buddhism*, 1997.

²² Hakamaya Noriaki 袴谷憲昭, *Dōgen to Bukkyō: Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no Dōgen* 道元と仏教—十二巻本正法眼蔵の道元, 1992.

²³ See Sugio Gen'yū 杉尾玄有, "Dōgen zenji no jiko-todatsu no go-shōgai to Shōbōgenzō no Shinka: Junikanbon ni yotte 'Ippyaku-kan' wo omou" 道元禅師の自己透脱の御生涯と『正法眼蔵』の進化—十二巻本によって「一百巻」を思う, (1985).

Seen from the other end of the interpretive spectrum, Dōgen's late shift is said to represent a relatively minor turn from propagating the dharma to promoting salvation (弘法篇から救生篇へ転回した) according to Kagamishima Genryū 鏡島元隆, or a transition from writings about awakening (悟りの書) to writings about faith (信仰の書) as per Shibata Dōken 柴田道賢, or from the *dao* (or path) to wisdom (菩提への道から) for Tsunoda Tairyū 角田泰隆, or from practice (行) to teaching (説示) for Ishii Seijun 石井清純.²⁴ However, the transitions suggested are not identical and may appear inconsistent. For example, Kagamishima and Shibata both indicate that late Dōgen emphasizes the instruction of less advanced practitioners, whereas the opposite view applies for Tsunoda and Ishii Seijun.

Nevertheless, for traditionalist Sōtō commentators, there is a negligible gap in thematic focus and intentionality between Dōgen's early and late writings, so that these are of equal value (等視) but with obvious, yet in the final analysis, slight differences in exposition and meaning acknowledged (ただし説相・意図の相違は認める). Therefore, no idea of a fundamental conversion needs to be evoked to gain an understanding of the twelve fascicles when seen in light of the master's overall religious standpoint. This outlook stressing complementarity rather than contradiction is summed up by Itō Shūken 伊藤秀憲. He maintains that the 75-*Shōbōgenzō* is the front gate” (第一義門) explicating the true transmission of the buddha dharma (正伝の仏法を説き示したもの) and the 12 *Fascicles Collection* serves as the secondary gate (第二義門) introducing

²⁴ This summary is based in part on unpublished seminar notes prepared by Ishii Seijun 石井清純, “Eihei kōroku yori mita Jūnikanbon *Shōbōgenzō* no seikaku” 『永平広録』より見た十二巻本『正法眼蔵』の性格, which I discussed with Prof. Ishii at Komazawa University on October 3, 2023. See also Ishii Seijun, “*Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō* no seiritsu jiki nitsuite” 12巻本『正法眼蔵』本文の成立時期について, (1991).

ordinary people to the practice of the buddha way (人々を仏道修行に導き入れようとしたもの).²⁵

Whichever view is endorsed—one based on radical change, or the other on underlying continuity, or one stressing a clerical audience and the other lay followers—it seems clear that Dōgen’s well-defined but controversial and contested final missive defies expectations for those accustomed to reading about the priority of zazen training or creative appraisals of Chan encounter dialogues as the primary means of achieving emancipation. But any ostensible contradiction involving the texts from different career stages is perhaps not so stunning since, throughout the phases of his career, Dōgen frequently changed paths or made diverse intellectual and verbal somersaults (*mondori* 翻筋斗) by greatly modifying his spiritual outlook and accompanying instructional methods based on his criticisms of unfounded views.

Sometimes this kind of turnaround is carried out in the same work. For example, in the 75-*Shōbōgenzō* fascicle, “Kankin” 看經, Dōgen strongly supports the practice of performing the ceremony or reciting sūtras at the request of the temple donors. Yet he also expresses an ironic yet adamant iconoclastic rejection of the efficacy of this practice by citing a dozen *kōan* cases that deem it wholly irrelevant or counterproductive, including a famous anecdote attributed to Zhaozhou 趙州 (778-897).

In another example of apparent inconsistency, the “Keisei sanshoku” 谿聲山色 fascicle from the 75-*Shōbōgenzō* offers at the outset an exalted view of the natural landscape of colorful mountain leaves and flowing streams as symbolic of the Buddha’s body and voice that stands beyond dualities by evoking a famous verse by the eminent Song-dynasty poet-meditator Su Shi 蘇軾 (J. So Shiki, 1037-1101). But later passages

²⁵ See Itō Shūken 伊藤秀憲, “Jūnikanbon *Shōbōgenzō* ni tsuite” 十二卷本『正法眼蔵』について,” (1986).

emphasize the value of penitence for those who misunderstand the true meaning of the poet's standpoint. As part of the main example of an early work that resembles the *12 Fascicles Collection's* focus on contrition, Dōgen writes, "When both mind and flesh become distracted and we also lose our faith, we should repent before buddhas with a sincere mind because the merit of repenting before buddhas will save and purify us." 心も肉も、懈怠にもあり、不信にもあらんには、誠心をもはらして、前佛に懺悔すべし。恚麼するとき、前佛懺悔の功德力、われをすくひて清淨ならしむ (DZZ 1:283).²⁶

A high degree of unpredictability in being willing to make significant alterations based on addressing various challenges by adapting to fluctuating pedagogical circumstances is indeed considered Dōgen's trademark. From that perspective, perhaps the *12 Fascicles Collection* can be regarded as yet another instance of vacillation and incongruity, or of the proverbial pendulum swinging from one side to the other, so that any perceived conflict is by no means disconcerting after all. Or, contrariwise, would such an assessment amount to a deception and suppression of the vibrant final set of writings that highlight a novel manner of teaching eager followers?

To explicate the complicated yet intriguing interpretive context of the *12-Fascicle Collection*, I support the historical analysis of Ishii Shūdō 石井修道, who favors a compromise standpoint indicating that the final text was mainly constructed during Dōgen's last years as a culminative though incomplete testament and useful summary of the merits (*kudoku*) of Buddhist preceptive living (*yuikaisho* 遺戒書).²⁷ Dōgen's final teachings

²⁶ Note that several passages from the *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* 正法眼藏隨聞記 collection of dharma talks compiled by Ejō in the mid-1230s also discuss the role of causality.

²⁷ See Ishii Shūdō 石井修道, *Saikin no Dōgen Zenji kenkyū ni omou* 最近の道元禅師研究に思う (Iwanami: Sōtōshū shōnenkai, 1994); and Ishii Shūdō, "Saigo no Dōgen:

(*saigokyō* 最後教) were bestowed to his followers as part of an instructional heritage designed to last for generations that at once epitomizes but in important ways eclipses the concerns explicated in his previous works. Therefore, the late shift was more gradual and wide-ranging than abrupt and single-minded.

In accord with but not bound by the tenets of Critical Buddhism, it seems that Dōgen changed his thinking about the priority of moral conduct shortly after he returned to Eiheiji in the third month of 1248 from an unsuccessful and disillusioning visit with shogun Hōjō Tokiyori 北条時頼 (1227-1263, r. 1246-1256) that began in the eighth month of 1247. Tokiyori was sequestered in the temporary capital of Kamakura, where he felt regretful for a lifetime of ruthless violence.²⁸ Through discussions with the icon of corrupted secular authority, Dōgen became aware of the antinomian implications embedded in nondual philosophical views and decided to enunciate the significance of causality as the necessary antidote for overt as well as subtle traces of immoral behavior. This shift in outlook is evident not only in the final compilation but in several other writings from the post-1248 period. These include key passages included in the *Eihei kōroku*'s 永平広録 dharma hall sermons (*jōdō* 上堂) and an essay on monastic regulations contained in the *Eihei shingi* 永平清規, as well as some conversations held with his Chinese mentor Rujing 如淨 (J. Nyōjo,

Jūnikanbon *Shōbōgenzō* to *Hōkyōki* 最後の道元—十二卷本正法眼蔵と宝慶記, in *Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no shomondai* 十二卷本正法眼の諸問題, pp. 319-374.

²⁸ Other factors include Dōgen's reception of a new version of the complete Buddhist canon (*Daizōkyō* 大藏經) given in 1250 by his samurai patron, Hatano Yoshishige 波多野義重 (d. 1258), and an emphasis on both harsh punishment of Gemmyō 玄明 (n.d.) for violating precepts and openness to welcoming novice monks first learning the rules.

1163-1227) that are part of the *Hōkyōki* 宝慶記.²⁹ Therefore, the late turn-about by Dōgen can be seen as an outcome of prior tendencies.

Whereas the *75-Shōbōgenzō* was completed in 1246, the composition of the *12 Fascicles Collection* was mainly constructed in the aftermath of Dōgen's return to a life of clerical reclusion at Eihei-ji in the distant mountains of Echizen province after he preached to Tokiyori. The shogun was intensely interested in using Buddhist prayer as a method of atonement, and he offered Dōgen the opportunity to become head of a new temple to be built in Kamakura. Dōgen declined despite the immense pressure he must have felt. As soon as he returned, Dōgen expressed a new emphasis on coming to terms with karmic causality in addition to acknowledging that he believed he himself had committed numerous errors of judgment, so that he felt like a lonely seeker who needed to adjust his teaching. The *Eihei kōroku* passage no. 3.251, which records the first sermon Dōgen gave to his monastic assembly after the homecoming, conveys much of the same doctrinal content in an "admission of errors" (*shippai no kokuhaku* 失敗の告白) that is evident in the *12 Fascicles Collection*.

In response to the concerns of disciples about what he preached while away, Dōgen states unequivocally but perhaps a bit dubiously since it seems anomalous rather than a continuation of his previous teachings, "I simply explained that people who practice virtue will improve and those who produce unwholesomeness will weaken, so that everyone must know to clarify the causes and experience the effects by throwing away the tile [everyday affairs] and taking up only the jewel [the dharma]." 只他說修善者昇，造惡者墮，修因感果，拋引玉而。 He further comments

²⁹ Ishii Shūdō, influenced by Yanagida Seizan 柳田聖山 and Mizuno Yaoko 水野弥穂子, maintains that the *Hōkyōki*, which was lost for decades until it was discovered by Giun in 1299 at Hōkyō-ji 宝慶寺 founded by Jakuen 寂円 (1207-1299), was probably composed career based on Dōgen's late-stage recollections, rather than immediately after his return from China in 1227.

about his own sense of doubt and sorrow, “How many mistakes have I made in my effort to cultivate the way! Today, I deeply regret seeming like a water buffalo . . . This mountain monk was away for over half a year, like a solitary wheel lost in vast space.” 功夫耕道多少錯. 今日可憐作水牛 . . . 山僧出去半年余. 猶若孤輪處太虛 (DZZ 3:166-168). Dōgen also explains that he feels renewed by the opportunity to reengage with his congregation through presenting the basic, yet now deeply internalized, teachings of causality.

Memento Mori

According to Dōgen’s concluding standpoint, which examines life/death for his disciples and is not simply about his own death even if the content was inspired by an increasing sense of mortality that magnifies the impact of momentary but fateful karmic determination, the key to attaining authentic Buddhist insight is to steer clear of certain seemingly high-minded but misleading ideas and to accept full responsibility for all thoughts and deeds. This view is especially expressed in “Hachi dainin gaku,” culled from the *Butsu yuigyō kyō*.³⁰ In the scripture the Buddha makes the pronouncement that, in his absence, adhering to the precepts should serve as a replacement that is equivalent to being in the presence of his leadership.

This sūtra was used widely in both Japanese Tendai 天台 and Shin-gon 真言 temple ceremonies as well as Chinese Buddhist rites at the time of Dōgen’s visit to the continent. It continues to be recited in contemporary Sōtō and other Japanese Buddhist temple rituals commemorating the anniversary of the Buddha’s death (*Nehan-e* 涅槃會) that takes place at the full moon of the second lunar month, or February 15 in the solar calendar. While stressing that the law of causality demands impeccable behavior at

³⁰ This sūtra, translated by Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 (344-413), was commented on in the *Dasheng yizhang* 大乘義章 by Jingying Huiyuan 淨影慧遠 (523-592).

all times, Dōgen says of the promise of obeying the *Butsu yuigyō kyō*'s guidelines which promote adherence to eight behavioral rules:

Due to the power of good roots planted in past lives, if you learn and study now how to enhance these instructions in lifetime after lifetime, you will surely attain supreme wisdom and teach this for the sake of saving all living beings. In this way, you shall become the same as Śākyamuni Buddha without any difference from him. 宿殖善根のちからなり。いま習學して生生に増長し、かならず無上菩提にいたり、衆生のためにこれをとかむこと、釋迦牟尼佛にひとしくして、ことなることなからむ。(DZZ 2:457)

Dōgen's *memento mori* outlook highlights the ethical responsibility that is expressed by the Chan maxim cited in the fifth fascicle, "Kuyō shobutsu," originally suggested by the master Shitou 石頭 (700-790), a Tang-dynasty progenitor of the Caodong/Sōtō school. At the end of his famous verse, the *Sandōkai* 參同契 (C. *Cantongqi*), which otherwise focuses on the unity with differences of opposites, especially light and darkness or form and formlessness, Shitou declares, "I say unto those studying Chan, 'Do not pass your days and months in vain'" (謹白參玄人。光陰莫虛度) (DZZ 2:357).³¹ The theme is echoed by the wise counsel conveyed in Dōgen's waka titled, "Not a moment is to be spent idly in twenty-four hours!" ("Jūnijū fukuka" 十二時中不虛過) (DZZ 7:157), which was presented to Tokiyori during the time of Dōgen's visit.

The late-stage Dōgen insists that a nondual view of morality, which tends to default all too readily to the blurring of any distinction between right and wrong because these counterparts ultimately represent "two sides of the same coin" (*ryōsei issai* 兩采一賽), is innately flawed and therefore counterproductive to attaining enlightenment. Only a genuine

³¹ The saying is also cited in Dōgen's 1249 rules essay, the *Shuryō shingi* 衆寮箴規.

stance of compunction has the unique capacity to reverse wrongdoings that have transpired in the current or a former lifetime and ensure a positive reincarnation in the next or a forthcoming existence. This emphasis is directly linked to, but goes beyond, the traditional monastic ceremony of *uposatha* 齋, held fortnightly, in which the confession of sins helps to steady the mental outlook of an errant monk or nun in order to reinvigorate their approach to practice. When carried out with supreme earnestness buttressed by ritual protocol, penance in the *12 Fascicles Collection* moderates any moral weakness and defuses the punitive impact of unwholesome deeds so as to overcome the dire results of karmic retribution and ultimately attain freedom from reincarnation.

Anticipating death and the impact of karmic determination on future lives heightens an awareness of the short-term quality of human existence and thereby amplifies the importance of ethical choices carried out by either confessing and correcting fortuitously one's errors or failing to change and thus aggravating wrongdoings misguidedly. "Even if you had deficient thoughts about meditation throughout your entire life," Dōgen says in "Shizen biku," "At the time of facing death . . . you must repent your lifelong mistakes and admit you were wrong!" たとひなむぢ一生のあひだ、四果とおもひきたれりとも、臨命終の時 . . . 一生の誤りを懺悔して、四果にはあらざりとおもふべし。 (DZZ 2:424). There is still an opportunity until, in effect, it has gotten too late because the grim reaper has called.

Dōgen's view of a meaningful remembrance or a cultivated mindfulness regarding the imminence of death stands in accord with important ritual trends in Kamakura-period Buddhism, especially involving the so-called "deathbed logic" of the Pure Land 浄土 and Nichiren 日蓮 schools. Jacqueline Stone maintains this view represents "the idea that the last thought is so powerful as to override the wrongdoings of a lifetime, enabling a superior rebirth or even liberation itself" (Stone 7). Deathbed logic,

which is influenced by the Sanskrit notion of upholding righteous beliefs at the very moment of one's passing (*marañacitta* मरणचित्त), advocates the notion that last thoughts (*rinmei shōnen* 臨命正念) and last rites (*rinmei gyōgi* 臨命行儀) have the power to reverse the wrongdoings of a whole lifecycle and enable a superior rebirth or even deliverance from the world of delusion.

We must also consider that biographical accounts of Dōgen's last days feature elements of practice that are representative though not exclusive to Zen training, such as dying in the posture of sitting meditation while composing a final poem to capture the fundamental meaning of a master's teaching mission (344).³² In particular, he draws from the technique prevalent in Chinese Chan and in some forms of Japanese Buddhism of writing a final verse at the very moment before death, which a master can foresee. This practice is referred to in Zen as the bequeathed verse (*yuige* 遺偈), which includes the ritual of composing the death poem (*yuige sahō* 遺偈作法) in the presence of close disciples.³³ Rujing's death verse, which Dōgen emulated in composing his own, uses the occasion to confess to a lifetime of transgressions: "For sixty-six years I have committed terrible sins against heaven . . ." 六十六年罪犯彌天 . . .³⁴

Therefore, the *12 Fascicles Collection* conveys a timeless attitude of urgent moral commitment supported by a profound awareness of evanescence in ways that recall numerous cross-cultural examples of prayer, poetry, and philosophy emphasizing a heightened sense of the imperative to

³² See also Ikeda Rosan 池田魯參, "Dōgen zenji no rinjūkan" 道元禪師の臨終觀, *Shūgaku kenkyū*, (1986).

³³ Or, the end-of-life verse (*chishigō ge* 知死期偈), or final expression (*shisei no ku* 辞世の句).

³⁴ Dōgen's tone is more boastful than regretful: "For fifty-four years, having illuminated the highest heaven . . ." 五十四年照第一天 . . ., DZZ 7:405. See Sugawara Shōei 菅原昭英, "Dōgen sōdan ni okeru yuige" 道元僧団における遺偈 (1989).

live an authentic life to the fullest extent while encountering the proximity of mortality at all times. Dōgen's approach resembles stoic and related cross-cultural standpoints. For example, there is a resonance with Marcus Aurelius who wrote, "You could leave life right now. Let that determine what you do and say and think," in addition to the words from Rousseau's *Confessions*, "When the last trumpet sounds. . ." We are also reminded of Montaigne's remark, "To study philosophy is to learn to die," and an evocative line from "The Dry Salvages" the T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, "And the time of death is every moment."

To evade seeing Dōgen's standpoint as altogether uncharacteristic of Chan/Zen discourse, his view also recalls the outlook expressed in a sermon that was given by a prominent Chinese predecessor in the Caodong school, Danxia Zichun 丹霞子淳 (1064-1117). To welcome the advent of spring at midnight on New Year's Eve according to the lunar calendar. Danxia says that "since time waits for no man as life is fleeting" 時不待人. 命焉得久, practitioners should not try to prepare for death by accumulating worldly benefits or seeking solutions through reading sūtras, adhering to Zen regulations, or using a savviness to create change. Instead, "Everyone should understand and practice to the utmost every day like it is the very last day (of the twelfth lunar month). How have you prepared for this last day? You must not waste any more time." 人人盡知今日是臘月三十日. 還曾準備得今日事麼. 諸人莫作等閑 (X.71.1425.757a).

Dōgen's revamped outlook as disclosed in the twelve fascicles can be interpreted alongside numerous examples of great works by preeminent thinkers, writers, and artists worldwide according to the analysis of late-style literary theory. This standpoint suggests that the final stages of a monumentally creative figure "reflect a life of learning, the wisdom that comes from experience, the sadness that comes from wisdom and a mastery of craft that has nothing left to prove."³⁵ In that sense, we could argue

³⁵Rothstein, "On Late Style."

that Dōgen had developed the supreme confidence to express his new vision in accord with basic Buddhist teachings even if—or, perhaps, because—it might seem unsatisfactory or confounding to his followers. His last collection was primarily aimed at reaching the minds of subsequent generations with a view of proper religious training based on embracing fundamental principles regardless of the role of sectarian labels.³⁶

On the other hand, it is also characteristic of some late-style expressions that the conceptual place where a great thinker or artist finds himself near the end of life is not the same symbolic territory as where they started their journey, and it could seem like a denial of the previous places that were occupied. Indeed, “it may not even be what was once expected or desired. But it is there, in resignation and fulfillment, that late works take their stand” by fostering “a strong sense [of the author] being out of place and time.”³⁷ From that perspective, the *12 Fascicles Collection* does not necessarily represent the culmination of a lifetime. Instead, it would be considered the reflection of a kind of disorder that may cause within readers the palpable feeling that there must be a basic discord between the early and late stages of Dōgen’s philosophy. Yet, as with an incomprehension of unusual features of Beethoven’s late quartets, for example, an initial reaction to a surprising final work may be a sign of its complexity rather than any drawback. Thus, a resistance to viewing Dōgen’s early and late collections as coexisting yet independent may reflect an incautious interpretive stance that needs to be reassessed.

³⁶ In *Hōkyōki* no. 10, Rujing encourages Dōgen’s future teaching mission, in DZZ 7:14. Also, in no. 20, he emphasizes causality in a way that resembles “Sanjigō,” in DZZ 7:24-26.

³⁷ Rothstein, “On Late Style.”

Conclusion

Dōgen's late-style approach to causality seems compatible with several Japanese cultural appropriations of ethical views that are influenced by a fundamental Buddhist concern with overcoming the travails of self-doubt when encountering retribution combined with Confucian injunctions about observing the strictures of filial piety to reduce personal confusion and promote uplifting behavior. The moralistic standpoint, whereby wrong behavior must be condemned and overcome without making concessions to human weakness, is indicated by perennial sayings such as, "Require good actions and penalize evil deeds" (*kanzen chōaku* 勸善懲悪) or "Abandon the false and take refuge in what is true" (*shaja kishō* 捨邪歸正), which is a fixed expression found throughout the Buddhist canon.

For Dōgen, in contrast to most other Kamakura-period Buddhist thinkers, the key point is not to await the right time for approaching the inevitability of death to affirm one's final beliefs and deeds. Rather, a true seeker must activate moral behavior based on carrying out impeccable attitudes and actions at each and every ephemeral moment in which the nearness of death is experienced. In "Dōshin" 道心 (also known as "Butsudō" 佛道), an undated (but probably late) text that was part of the 28-fascicle version or the *Himitsu* 祕密 *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen writes, "When this life comes to its end, our eyes will suddenly go dark. At that time, knowing that our life is ending, we should recite 'I take refuge in buddha.' Our sins are transformed and, born in a heaven and in the presence of buddhas, we will bow down to buddhas and hear the law preached by buddhas." この生のをはるときは、二つの眼、たちまちにくらくなるべし。そのときを、すでに生のをはりとしりて、はげみて、南無歸依佛、となへたてまつるべし。つみも轉じて、天上にむまれ、佛前にうまれて、ほとけををがみたてまつり、佛のとかせたまふのりを、きくなり (DZZ 4:532).

In this way, Dōgen's *12 Fascicles Collection* effectively integrates his early-stage view of “contemplating life-and-death” (*shōji-kan* 生死觀), which focuses on the practice of meditation to investigate the unity amid disunity of existence and nonexistence each impermanence moment as in the “Genjōkōan” 現成公案 passage, “We do not speak of life becoming death, so we say, ‘not arising’ . . . we do not indicate that death does not become life, so we say, ‘not ceasing.’” 生の死になるといはざるは、このゆえに不生といふ . . . 死の生にならざる、このゆえに不滅といふ (DZZ 1:4). Yet this view is transformed by a new perspective that can be termed “contemplating the end of life” (*rinjū-kan* 臨終觀), which highlights the value of a full commitment to enacting the letter and the spirit of the precepts in a way that is at once challenged and inspired by each individual's ongoing encounter with imminent mortality. According to Dōgen's *memento mori* standpoint, taking refuge assumes a role as the basic yet most powerful of all Buddhist practices that perhaps outweighs, although it certainly does not replace, the technique of just sitting.

Abbreviations

DZZ *Dōgen Zenji zenshū* 道元禪師全集

X *Xinbian wanzi xu zangjing* 新編卅字續藏經, 150 vols., Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1968-1978, reprint edited by Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association, CBETA Electronic Tripiṭaka Collection, Taipei, 1998-2016.

Works Cited

Bodiford, William M. “Introduction to the *Shōbōgenzō*,” in *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*,” vol. 8, pp. 9-236.

Dōgen Zenji zenshū 道元禪師全集. 3 vols. edited by Ōkubo Dōshū 大久保道舟, Chikuma shobō, 1969-1970.

Dōgen Zenji zenshū 道元禪師全集, 7 vols., edited by Kawamura Kōdō 河村孝道, et al, Shunjūsha, 1988-1993.

Forte, Victor. “Indian Traditionalism in Eihei Dōgen’s *Shoaku makusa*.” *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, vol. 30, 2023, pp. 353-397.

Hakamaya Noriaki 袴谷憲昭, *Dōgen to Bukkyō: Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no Dōgen* 道元と仏教—十二卷本正法眼蔵の道元. Daizō shuppan, 1992.

Heine, Steven. *Readings in the Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*. Columbia UP, 2020.

Hubbard, Jamie and Paul L. Swanson, eds. *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm Over Critical Buddhism*. U of Hawaii P, 1997.

Ikedo, Rosan 池田魯参. “Dōgen zenji no rinjūkan” 道元禪師の臨終観, *Shūgaku kenkyū*, vol. 28, 1986, pp. 37-42.

Ishii Seijun 石井清純, “Eihei kōroku yori mita Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no seikaku” 『永平広録』より見た十二卷本『正法眼蔵』の性格 Unpublished seminar notes from 2023.

Ishii Seijun, “Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no seiritsu jiki nitsuite” 12卷本『正法眼蔵』本文の成立時期について. *Komazawa Bukkyōgakubū ronshū*, vol. 22, 1991, pp. 236-260.

Ishii Shūdō 石井修道. *Saikin no Dōgen Zenji kenkyū ni omou* 最近の道元禪師研究に思う. Sōtōshū shōnenkai, 1994.

Ishii Shūdō, “Saigo no Dōgen: Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō to Hōkyōki 最後の道元—十二卷本正法眼蔵と宝慶記, in *Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no shomondai* 十二卷本正法眼の諸問題, pp. 319-374.

Itō Shūken 伊藤秀憲. “Jūnikanbon *Shōbōgenzō* ni tsuite” 十二巻本『正法眼蔵』について. *Shūgaku kenkyū*, vol. 28, 1986, pp. 49-54.

Kagamishima, Genryū 鏡島元隆 and Suzuki Kakuzen 鈴木格禅編, eds. *Jūkanbon Shōbōgenzō no shomondai* 十二巻本正法眼蔵の諸問題. Daizō shuppan, 1991.

Monma, Sachio 門馬幸夫. *Dōgen shisō wo kaiseki suru: Shōbōgenzō dētabēsu ga shimesu shinjutsu* 道元思想を解析する: 『正法眼蔵』データベースが示す真実. Shunjūsha, 2021.

Mutai Takanao 務台孝尚, “Dōgen Zenji no shisō no ichi hen’i” 道元禅師の思想の一変移. *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū*, vol. 39, no. 1, 1991, pp. 241-244.

Nara, Yasuaki, editor, *Budda kara Dōgen e* ブツダから道元へ. Tokyo shoseki, 1992.

Nara, Yasuaki 奈良康明, et al., editors, *Anata dake no Shushōgi* あなただけの修証義. Shōgakukan, 2001.

Rothstein, Edward. “‘On Late Style,’ By Edward Said: Twilight of His Idols,” *New York Times*, 16 July 2006.

Sasada, Kyōshō 笹田教彰. “Rinmeijūji kō: Jūnikanbon *Shōbōgenzō* no kōsō o megutte” 臨命終時考 – 十二巻本『正法眼蔵』の構想をめぐって. *Bukkyō Daigaku Bukkyōgakubū ronshū*, vol. 98, 2014, pp. 1-20.

Stone, Jacqueline I. *Right Thoughts at the Last Moment: Buddhism and Death-bed Practices in Early Medieval Japan*. U of Hawaii P, 2016.

Sugawara Shōei 菅原昭英. “Dōgen sōdan ni okeru yuige” 道元僧団における遺偈. *Shūgaku kenkyū*, vol. 31, 1989, pp. 110-115.

Sugio, Gen’yū 杉尾玄有. “Kaze to tsuki to butsu: Jūnikanbon *Shōbōgenzō* wa doko e iku ka” 風と月と仏 – 十二巻本『正法眼蔵』はどこへ

行くか, in Kagamishima and Suzuki, *Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no shomondai*, 1991, pp. 57-109.

Sugio, Gen'yū 杉尾玄有. “Dōgen zenji no jiko-todatsu no go-shōgai to Shōbōgenzō no Shinka: Junikanbon ni yotte ‘Ippyaku-kan’ wo omou” 道元禪師の自己透脱の御生涯と『正法眼蔵』の進化—十二巻本によって「一百巻」を思う, *Shūgaku kenkyū*, vol. 27, 1985, pp. 7-12.

Tenshō kōtōroku 天聖廣燈錄 (C. *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*), X.78.1553.

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō, 8 vols. edited by Sōtō Zen Text Project, Sōtōshū Shūmuchō, 2023.

Tsunoda, Tairyū 角田泰隆. *Dōgen zenji no shisōteki kenkyū* 道元禪師の思想的研究. Shunjūsha, 2015.

Xinbian wanzi xu zangjing 新編卍字續藏經, 150 vols., Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1968-1978, reprint edited by Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association, CBETA Electronic Tripiṭaka Collection, Taipei, 1998-2016.