



Treasury of the True Dharma Eye  
Book 4

Bringing Forth the Mind of Bodhi  
*Hotsu bodai shin*

Translated by  
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*Introduction*

This fascicle, book 4 of the twelve-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō*, occurs as number 70 in the vulgate edition and as number 34 in the sixty-fascicle redaction. According to a colophon on some manuscripts, it was composed in the spring of 1244, at Kippōji, Dōgen’s monastery in Echizen province. This colophon is identical with that of another fascicle entitled *Hotsu bodai shin* that is found as number 63 in the seventy-five-fascicle redaction. This latter work, occurs as number 69 in the vulgate *Shōbōgenzō* under the title *Hotsu mujō shin*, the title given it in the sixty-fascicle collection, where it occurs as book 63. Although some have taken the two colophons at face value and assumed that both texts were in fact composed on the same day, given that their contents and style are completely different, it seems more likely that, like most of the other texts of the twelve-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō*, our text here was composed at a later date, and that, at some point in its history, the present colophon was added from the earlier text.

Unlike the earlier text, which deals with the metaphysics of the mind of bodhi and its expression in religious acts, the present work emphasizes the bodhisattva’s selfless aspiration to save all sentient beings from suffering. Relying almost entirely on proof texts from the

sūtras and scholastic commentaries, Dōgen here treats the expression “*hotsu bodai shin*” in the traditional terms of the bodhisattva’s aspiration to achieve the unsurpassed, perfect awakening of a buddha (*bodhi-cittotpāda*; “arousing the thought of bodhi”). In the process, he ignores the more innovative interpretations of the *bodhi-citta* as an inherent buddha mind and rejects the more radical claims that bringing forth this mind is equivalent to the ultimate awakening.

This translation is based on the text prepared by the Soto Zen Text Project for its forthcoming complete English version of the *Shōbōgenzō*. Due to considerations of space, it lacks the full annotation provided in that version. Passages in italics translate text given in Chinese in Dōgen’s original.

**Bringing Forth the Mind of Bodhi**

Broadly speaking, there are three types of “mind”:

*First is the mind of citta, called here [in China] “the mind of thinking”; second is the mind of hrdaya, called here “the mind of grasses and trees”; third is the mind of vrdhha called here “the mind of accumulated essentials.”<sup>1</sup>*

Among these, it is always the thinking mind that is used to give rise to the mind of bodhi. “Bodhi” represents the pronunciation of Sindhu [i.e., India]; here [in Chinese translation, it is called “the way.”<sup>2</sup> *Citta* represents the pronunciation of Sindhu; here it is called “the thinking mind.” If it is not this thinking mind, it cannot give rise to the mind of bodhi. It is

not that we take this thinking mind as itself the mind of bodhi; it is by means of this thinking mind that we bring forth the mind of bodhi. To bring forth the mind of bodhi means making a vow and engaging in the effort to deliver all living beings before we ourselves are delivered. Though our status may be lowly, once we bring forth this mind, we are already the teachers of all living beings. This mind is not something present from the beginning, not something that arises suddenly; it is not one, not many; it is not spontaneous, not fixed; it is not something within our bodies, nor are our bodies within the mind. This mind does not extend throughout the dharma realm; it is not before, it is not after; it is not existent, it is not nonexistent; it is not something with its own nature, it is not something with another's nature, not something with a shared nature, not something with a nature lacking cause. Nevertheless, where there is the interaction of feeling and response, the mind of bodhi is brought forth. It is not something bestowed by the buddhas and bodhisattvas, not something we bring about ourselves. Because the mind is brought forth in the interaction of feeling and response, it is not spontaneous.<sup>3</sup>

This bringing forth the mind of bodhi occurs mostly among humans of the southern continent. There are a few instances under the eight inopportune circumstances but not many. After bringing forth the mind of bodhi, one practices for three *asamkhyeya* kalpas and one hundred great kalpas.<sup>4</sup> After practicing for incalculable kalpas, one becomes a buddha; or, after practicing for incalculable kalpas and first delivering living beings, one does not in the end oneself become a buddha: there are those

who merely deliver living beings, who merely benefit living beings; it depends on the aspiration of the bodhisattva. In short, the mind of bodhi means working constantly through the three types of karma [of body, speech, and mind] at how to cause all living beings to bring forth the mind of bodhi and lead them to the way of the buddha. Frivolously providing them with worldly pleasures is not considered benefiting living beings. This bringing forth the mind, this practice and verification, far transcend the boundaries of delusion and understanding. They surpass the three realms [of desire, form, and formlessness] and excell in all ways; they are not something the *śrāvakas* and *pratyeka-buddhas* can reach.

The Bodhisattva Kāśyapa said in a verse praising the Buddha Śākyamuni,

*Bringing forth the mind and the ultimate  
— the two are without distinction;  
But of the two states of mind, the former  
mind is the more difficult.*

*First to deliver others before one is delivered oneself—*

*For this, I pay obeisance to the initial  
bringing forth of the mind.*

*Once it is initially brought forth, one has  
become a teacher to devas and humans;  
Surpassing the śrāvakas and pratyeka-  
buddhas.*

*Bringing forth the mind like this goes  
beyond the three realms;*

*And thus it can be called the highest  
unsurpassed.<sup>5</sup>*

“Bringing forth the mind” means to bring forth the mind [that aspires] “*first to deliver others before one is delivered oneself.*” This is called “initially bringing forth the mind of

bodhi.” After bringing forth this mind, in meeting many buddhas and making offerings to them, to see the buddhas, hear their dhar-  
mas, and further bring forth the mind of bodhi is “adding frost to snow.”

“The ultimate” means bodhi, the fruit of buddhahood. When we compare *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* and initially bringing forth the mind of bodhi, while they may be like the fire at the end of a kalpa and a firefly, when we bring forth the mind that “*first delivers others before one is delivered oneself*,” “*the two are without distinction*.”

*I always have this thought:*

*How can I cause living beings*

*To enter the unsurpassed path*

*And quickly achieve a buddha body?*<sup>6</sup>

This is itself the lifespan of a tathāgata: the buddhas’ bringing forth the mind, practicing, and verifying the fruit are all like this.

“Benefiting living beings” means causing living beings to bring forth the mind “*first to deliver others before one is delivered oneself*.” Yet we should not think that we will become buddhas on the strength of our causing [beings] to bring forth the mind “*first to deliver others before one is delivered oneself*.” Even though the merit that would enable us to become buddhas may have ripened and become complete, we turn it around and dedicate it to the buddhahood and attainment of the way of living beings.

This mind is not ours, not another’s, not coming from elsewhere; yet after we bring forth this mind, when we take up the whole earth, it turns entirely to gold, when we stir up the great oceans, they turn immediately to ambrosia. Thereafter, to take hold of earth,

stones, sand or pebbles is itself to take up the mind of bodhi; to study “the water spray, foam or mirage” is to bear the mind of bodhi on your own back. Therefore, to give away *countries and cities, wives and children, the seven treasures, males and females, my heads and my eyes, my marrow and my brains, the flesh of my bodies, my hands and feet* — this is all the noisy hubbub of the mind of bodhi, the lively flapping of the mind of bodhi.<sup>7</sup>

The present *citta*, the mind of thinking, is not close by, is not far off, is not our own, is not another’s; yet when this mind is turned toward the principle of “*first to deliver others before one is delivered oneself*,” without falling back from it, it is the bringing forth of the mind of bodhi. Therefore, when the grass and trees, tiles and pebbles, gold and silver, and precious treasures to which all living beings are attached as their possessions are given over to the mind of bodhi, is this not also bringing forth the mind of bodhi?

Because neither the mind nor the dharmas [occur] of themselves, another, both, or without cause, after this mind of bodhi has been brought forth for a single *ksana*, the myriad dharmas all become supporting conditions.<sup>8</sup> More generally, both bringing forth the mind and attaining the way occur according to arising and cessation in a *ksana*. If there were not arising and cessation in a *ksana*, the evil of the previous *ksana* would not depart; and if the evil of the previous *ksana* did not depart, the good of the subsequent *ksana* would not arise. It is the Tathāgata alone who clearly knows the size of this *ksana*. “*In one ksana of thought, he can say a word; in one ksana of speech, he can explain a letter*” — this too is only the Tathāgata; *the*

*other two vehicles [of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha] cannot do it.*<sup>9</sup>

Generally speaking, during one snap of a strong man's fingers, there are sixty-five *ksanas*; and though the five aggregates are arising and ceasing [during this time], the common person never senses them. Above the duration of a *tat-ksanas* [equal to 120 *ksanas*], even the common person can recognize it. In the course of one day and one night, there are 6,499,980 *ksanas*,<sup>10</sup> during which the five aggregates are all arising and ceasing. Nevertheless, common people never sense them; and, because they do not sense them, they do not bring forth the mind of bodhi. Those who do not know the buddha dharma, who do not believe in the buddha dharma, do not believe in the principle of the arising and ceasing of *ksanas*.

Those who clearly understand the treasury of the true dharma eye, the wondrous mind of nirvāna, necessarily believe in the principle of the arising and ceasing of *ksanas*. Although it appears that, having encountered the teachings of the Tathāgata, we clearly understand [the principle], we only know it from the *tat-ksanas* and above, and simply believe that the principle must be true. Our failure to clarify all the dharmas preached by the World-Honored One is like our failure to know the duration of a *ksanas*. Students, do not irresponsibly become arrogant. We not only do not know the extremely small, we also do not know the extremely large; yet, when we rely on the power of the way of the Tathāgata, living beings also see the three chiliocosms. In short, our going from this existence to the intermediate state, and from the intermediate state to our next existence, is all movement from *ksanas* to *ksanas*. In

this way, without any intention, pulled along by our karma, our flowing through birth and death never pauses for a single *ksanas*. With the body and mind thus flowing through birth and death, we should bring forth the mind of bodhi [that aspires] “*first to deliver others before one is delivered oneself.*” Even though we may begrudge the body and mind on the path that brings forth the mind of bodhi, through birth, old age, sickness, and death, they are in the end not our own.

On the fact that the lifetime of living beings passes swiftly, arising and ceasing without surcease:

*When the World-Honored One was in the world, there was a bhikṣu who came to the Buddha; prostrating himself at his feet, then standing back to one side, he addressed the World-Honored One, saying, “How swift is the arising and ceasing of the lifetime of living beings?”*

*The Buddha said, “I can explain it, but you would not understand.”*

*The bhikṣu said, “Is there some example that would show it?”*

*The Buddha said,*

*There is, and I shall tell you. Suppose there are four accomplished archers, each holding a bow and arrow, standing together back to back and about to shoot in the four directions. There is a swift fellow who comes to them and says, “You may now all shoot your arrows at the same time, and I can catch them all, without any falling to the ground.” What do you think? Is he swift or not?*

*The bhikṣu said to the Buddha, “Swift indeed, World-Honored One.”*

*The Buddha said,*

*The speed of that man does not match that of a yakṣa [spirit] that walks on the earth; the speed of a yakṣa that walks on the earth does not match that of a yakṣa that flies through the sky; the speed of the yakṣa that flies through the sky does not match the speed of those in the heavens of the four deva kings; the speed of those devas does not match the speed of the twin wheels of sun and moon; the speed of the twin orbs of sun and moon does not match the speed of Jianxing Tianzi, who pull the chariot of the orbs of sun and moon. These devas increase in speed, yet the arising and ceasing of a lifetime are faster than they are. The ksanas flow on, without ever pausing.<sup>11</sup>*

Such is the speed of the flow of the *ksanas* arising and ceasing. From moment to moment, the practitioner must not forget this principle. Yet, while being at this speed of the flow of the arising and ceasing of *ksanas*, for those who bring forth a single thought of “*first delivering others before one is delivered oneself*,” a long, long life immediately appears before them. The buddhas of the three times and the ten directions, together with the seven buddhas, the world-honored ones, as well as the twenty-eight ancestors of the Western Heavens and six ancestors of the Eastern Earth, down to the ancestral masters who have transmitted the Buddha’s “treasury of the true dharma eye, the marvelous mind of nirvāna” — all have maintained the mind of bodhi. One who has yet to bring forth the mind of bodhi is not an ancestral master.

*In the one hundred twenty questions of the Chanyuan qinggui, it is said, “Have you*

*awakened the mind of bodhi?”*

We can clearly see from this, the fact that the study of the way by the buddhas and ancestors has always given priority to awakening the mind of bodhi. This is the constant norm of the buddhas and ancestors. “To awaken” means “to understand clearly.” This is not the great awakening: though one may have suddenly verified the ten stages [of the bodhisttva path], one is still a bodhisattva. The twenty-eight ancestors of the Western Heavens and the six ancestors of the Land of Tang, as well as the great ancestral masters — these are bodhisattvas, not buddhas, not *śrāvakas* or *pratyekabuddhas*. Among those who study nowadays, there is not a single person who has clearly recognized that they are bodhisattvas, not *śrāvakas*. Arbitrarily calling themselves “patch-robed monks” or “the patch-robed,” since they do not know that truth, they are in rank confusion. How deplorable that, in this late season, the way of the ancestors has so declined.

Such being the case, whether we are a householder or a renunciate, whether in a heaven or among humans, whether in suffering or in bliss, we should quickly bring forth the mind that seeks “*first to deliver others before one is delivered oneself*.” Regardless of whether the realm of living beings is finite or infinite, we bring forth the mind that seeks *first to deliver all living beings*; precisely this is the mind of bodhi.

When the Bodhisattva, in his final life as heir apparent, is about to descend to Jambudvīpa, in his final teaching to the devas of the Tusita Heaven, he said, “*The mind of bodhi is a gateway to the illumination of the dharma because it does not cut off the the three treasures.*”<sup>12</sup> It is clear from this that our not

cutting off the three treasures is due to the power of the mind of bodhi. After we have brought forth the mind of bodhi, we should firmly protect it and not turn back from it.

*The Buddha said,*

*Why does the bodhisattva protect one thing — i.e., the mind of bodhi? The bodhisattva-mahāsattva always strives to protect the mind of bodhi, just as a worldly person protects an only child; or, again, as a person blind in one eye protects the other eye; or as a traveler in a vast wilderness protects his guide. The bodhisattvas’ protection of the mind of bodhi is like this. Because they protect the mind of bodhi like this, they attain anuttara-samyak sambodhi. Because they attain anuttara samyak-sambodhi, they are endowed with permanence, bliss, self, and purity, the unsurpassed great parinirvāna. Therefore, the bodhisattva protects one thing.<sup>13</sup>*

Such, clearly, are the words of Buddha on protecting the mind of bodhi. The reason that we protect it and do not turn back from it is, as is regularly said in the secular world, “There are three things that are born but do not reach maturity: fish eggs, the fruit of the *āmra* [i.e., mango], and the bodhisattva who has brought forth the mind.” Since there are many who fall back from it, we have long feared that we too might fall back; and for this reason, we protect the mind of bodhi.

When, as beginners, bodhisattvas turn back from the mind of bodhi, it is mostly due to their failure to meet a true teacher. When we do not meet a true teacher, we do not hear the true dharma; when we do not hear the true

dharma, we are likely to deny cause and effect, to deny liberation, to deny the three treasures, to deny the dharmas of the three times. Vainly addicted to the five desires in the present, we lose the merit for bodhi on the road ahead. Or the Deva Māra-pāpīyā, and the like, in order to obstruct the practitioner, may assume the appearance of a buddha or appear in the guise of parents, teachers, relatives, devas, and the like; and, drawing near, they will seduce the bodhisattva, saying, “*The way to buddhahood is long, with protracted suffering, painful in the extreme. Better first to liberate yourself from birth and death, and then deliver living beings.*” Hearing such persuasion, the practitioner turns back from the mind of bodhi, turns back from the practice of the bodhisattva. But we should know that such talk is the talk of Māra. Bodhisattvas must recognize this and not go along with it; they should never turn back from their vow “*first to deliver others before one is delivered oneself.*”

[Talk] that would have us turn back from the vow “*first to deliver others before one is delivered oneself*”, we should recognize as the talk of Māra, we should recognize as the talk of alien ways, we should recognize as the talk of bad friends. Never go along with it.

*There are four types of Māra: (1) Māra as mental afflictions; (2) Māra as the five aggregates; (3) Māra as death; and (4) Māra as deva.*

*Māra as mental afflictions refers to the one hundred eight mental afflictions, further divided into the eighty-four thousand mental afflictions.*

*Māra as the five aggregates refers to these mental afflictions combining as the causes*

and conditions that produce this body. The four primary elements and the forms produced by the four primary elements — form and eye faculty, and the rest — are called “the form aggregate.” The combination of the sensations of the hundred eight mental afflictions is called “the sensation aggregate.” Our countless, large and small perceptions, separate and combined, are called “the perception aggregate.” The mental states of craving, anger, and the like, arising from pleasant and unpleasant thoughts, the dharmas associated and not associated [with the mind] are called the “formations aggregate.” By the combination of the six sense organs and six sense objects, there arise the six consciousnesses; the incalculable, limitless states of mind of these six consciousnesses, separate and combined, are called “the consciousness aggregate.”

*Māra as death: because of the causes and conditions of impermanence, the lifespan of the continuing five aggregates is broken down, and the three factors of consciousness, warmth and life all depart; therefore, it is called “the Māra of death.”*

*Māra as deva, lord of the realm of desire. Because he is deeply attached to worldly pleasures and relies on gaining, he produces false views and detests the way to nirvāna of all the wise men and sages. This is called “Māra as deva.”*

*“Māra” is a word of Sindhu; in Qin [i.e., China], it means “the one who takes life.” Although Māra as death actually takes the life, the others also create the causes and conditions for taking life and take the life*

*of wisdom; therefore, they are called “murderers.”*

*Question: Since the one Māra as the five aggregates includes the other three types, why distinguish them as four?*

*Answer: In reality, they are one Māra; because we distinguish their meanings, we have four.<sup>14</sup>*

The preceding is the work of the ancestral master Nāgārjuna. Practitioners should know it and diligently study it. Do not be foolishly deceived by Māra and turn back from the mind of bodhi. This is protecting the mind of bodhi.

Treasury of the True Dharma Eye  
Bringing Forth the Mind of Bodhi  
Number 4

Presented to the assembly at the Yoshimine Shōja, Yoshida district, province of Etsu, Fourteenth day, second month of *kinoe-tatsu*, the second year of Kangen [24 March 1244]

Copied this from his [i.e., Dōgen’s] draft, ninth day, fourth month of *kinoto-u*, the seventh year of Kenchō [16 May 1255]. Ejō

Notes

1. “The mind of *citta*”: These definitions are borrowed from a passage in the *Mohe zhiyuan*, by Zhiyi (538-597), identifying the Sanskrit terms rendered by the Chinese *xin* (“mind”). Some scholars suggest that Sanskrit for the third term should be reconstructed as *vrddha* (“expanded,” “developed”). The three terms are also introduced in the *Shōbōgenzō shinjin gakudō*.

2. **“Bodhi’ represents the pronunciation of Sindhu; here, it is called ‘the way’”**: This and the following sentence translate Zhiyi’s Chinese in the *Mohe zhiguan*. The term “dao” (“the way”) was often used in Chinese translation for Sanskrit “bodhi.”

3. **“The interaction of feeling and response”**: A fixed expression for the communication between a devotee and a deity; here, again, Dōgen is relying on the *Mohe zhiguan*.

4. **“The southern continent”**: I.e., our continent, south of Mt. Sumeru in Buddhist geography.

**“The eight inopportune circumstances”**: Eight conditions under which it is said to be difficult to encounter Buddhism; Sanskrit *astāksana*.

**“Three *asamkhyeya* kalpas and one hundred great kalpas”**: A traditional calculation of the length of the bodhisattva path.

5. **“Bringing forth the mind and the ultimate”**: I.e., the beginning and the culmination of the bodhisattva path. The passage is a quotation from the *Nirvāna Sūtra*.

6. **“I always have this thought”**: Quoting a verse by the Buddha Śākyamuni in the *Lotus Sūtra*.

7. **“The water spray, foam or mirage”**: From a verse in the *Lotus Sūtra*:

This world is entirely unstable,

Like water spray, foam or mirage.

**“Countries and cities”**: A list based on a passage in the *Lotus Sūtra*, in which the Buddha Śākyamuni speaks of the offerings he made when he was born as kings in his incalculable previous lives.

8. **“*Ksana*”**: I.e., a “moment,” an “instant.” Dōgen uses the transliteration of the Sanskrit term, which he will discuss below.

9. **“In one *ksana* of thought”**: Quoting the *Mahāvibhāsā* (Apidamo da piposha lun)

10. **“In the course of one day and one night, there are 6,499,980 *ksana*”**: A Japanese rendering of a sentence in the *Mahāvibhāsā*. The number *oku*, here should be read as 100,000 (*śata-sahasra*, not 1,000,000), as is clear from the calculation of a day and night (*ahorātra*) given by the *Apidamo da piposha lun* at T.1545:27.701b8-12

11. **“When the World-Honored One was in the world”**: Again, quoting the *Mahāvibhāsā* (*Apidamo da piposha lun*).

**“Jianxing Tianzi”**: The original Sanskrit here has not been identified. In Hindu mythology, the chariot of the sun typically is pulled by seven horses; that of the moon, by ten horses.

12. **“The Bodhisattva, in his final life as heir apparent”**: I.e., the Bodhisattva Jyotipāla, who would be reborn in his next life as Siddhārtha and become the Buddha Śākyamuni. His words here represent number 82 in the list of 108 “gateways to the illumination of the dharma,” which Dōgen discusses in his *Shōbōgenzō ippyakuhachi hōmyō mon*.

13. **“The Buddha said”**: Quoting the *Nirvāna Sūtra*.

14. **“There are four types of Māra”**: Quoting the *Dazhidu lun*.