

正法眼藏第六十一

Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma, Book 61

龍吟

Song of the Dragon

Ryūgin

Translated by Carl Bielefeldt

INTRODUCTION

This fascicle of the *Shōbōgenzō* was composed in the winter of 1243, at a small temple at Yamashibu 禪師峰, in the province of Echizen (modern Fukui prefecture). It occurs as book 61 in the 75-fascicle redaction of the *Shōbōgenzō* and as book 51 in the 60-fascicle redaction. The text, one of the shortest in the *Shōbōgenzō*, represents a commentary on two sayings on the phrase, “the song of the dragon in the dried tree”—a common Zen metaphor for vitality within repose (or the teaching activities of a Zen master), reflected in similar expressions in our text: “the roar of the lion in the skull,” “the eyeball in the skull,” “the pregnant column.” Dōgen begins his comments by distinguishing the “dried tree” in these sayings from the common phrase “dried tree and dead ashes,” often used to represent a state of mental quiescence. Unlike such a state, Dōgen says, the “dried tree” of the buddhas and ancestors can “meet the spring” and “sprout.” This “sprouting” is “the song of the dragon,” and it is precisely the state of being “dried” that permits one to sing it. He concludes his brief remarks by identifying the Zen masters’ talk about “the song of the dragon” with the countless tunes sung by the dragon. This translation is based on the edition of the text in Kawamura Kōdō, *Dōgen zenji zenshū* 道元禪師全集, volume 2 (1993), pp. 151-154. Other English renderings of this work can be found in Kōsen Nishiyama and John Stevens, “The Roar of a Dragon,” *Shōbōgenzō*, volume 1 (1975), pp. 111-113; Yuho Yokoi, “A Mysterious Sound Made by the Wind Blowing round a Dead Tree,” *The Shobo-genzo* (1986), pp. 707-710; Francis Cook, “Dragon Song,” *Sounds of the Valley Streams* (1989), pp. 97-100; Thomas Cleary, “The Dragon Howl,” *Rational Zen: The Mind of Dōgen Zenji* (1992), pp. 104-107; Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross, “The Moaning of Dragons,” *Master Dogen’s Shobogenzo*, Book 3 (1997), pp. 227-231; and Hubert Nearman, “On the Roar of the Dragon,” *The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching* (2007), pp. 741-745.

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(*Ryūgin*)

舒州投子山慈濟大師、因僧問、枯木裏還有龍吟也無。師曰、我道、髑髏裏有師子吼。
Once a monk asked the Chan Master Ciji of Mt. Touzi in Shuzhou, “Is there the song of the dragon in the dried tree?”

The master said, “I say there’s the roar of the lion in the skull.”¹

枯木死灰の談は、もとより外道の所教なり。しかあれども、外道のいふところの枯木と、佛祖のいふところの枯木と、はるかにことなるべし。外道は枯木を談すといへども、枯木をしらず、いはんや龍吟をきかんや。外道は、枯木は朽木ならん、とおもへり、不可逢春と學せり。

Talk of “dried trees and dead ashes” is originally a teaching of the alien ways. Nevertheless, there should be a big difference between the “dried tree” spoken of by the alien ways and the “dried tree” spoken of by the buddhas and ancestors. While the alien ways talk of “dried trees,” they do not know “dried trees,” much less do they hear “the song of the dragon.” The alien paths think that the “dried tree” is a rotted tree; they study that it cannot “meet the spring.”²

佛祖道の枯木は、海枯の參學なり。海枯は木枯なり、木枯は逢春なり。木の不動著は枯なり。いまの山木海木空木等、これ枯木なり。萌芽も枯木龍吟なり、百千萬圍とあるも、枯木の兒孫なり。枯の相性體力は、佛祖道の枯椿なり、非枯椿なり。山谷木あり、田里木あり。山谷木、よのなかに松栢と稱す。田里木、よのなかに人天と稱す。依根葉分布、これを佛祖と稱す。本末須歸宗、すなはち參學なり。かくのごとくなる、枯木の長法身なり、枯木の短法身なり。もし枯木にあらざれば、いまだ龍吟せず、枯木にあらざれば、龍吟を打失せず。幾度逢春不變心は、渾枯の龍吟なり。宮商角徵羽に不詳なりといへども、宮商角徵羽は、龍吟の前後二三子なり。

The “dried trees” that the buddhas and ancestors speak of is the study of “the ocean drying up.” The ocean drying up is the tree drying out; the tree drying out is “meeting the spring.” The tree not moving is “dried.” The present mountain trees, ocean trees, sky trees, and the rest—these are the “dried tree.” The “germination of a sprout” is the “song of the dragon in the dried tree”; though it may be a hundred, thousand, myriad in circumference, it is the progeny of the dried tree. The mark, nature, substance, and power of “dried” is “a dried post” and “not a dried post,” spoken of by the buddhas and ancestors. There are trees of mountains and valleys; there are trees of paddies and villages. The trees of mountains and valleys are known in the world as pines and cypress; the trees of paddies and villages are known in the world as humans and devas. “The leaves are spread based on the root”: this is called the buddhas and ancestors; “root and branch return to the source”: this is our study. Being like this is the dried tree’s long dharma body, the dried tree’s short dharma body. One who is not a dried tree does not make the song of the dragon; one who is not a dried tree does not lose the song of the dragon. “How many springs has it met without changing its mind?”—this is the song of the dragon entirely dried. Though it may not be versed in the notes of the scale, the notes of the scale are the second or third sons of the song of the dragon.³

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しかあるに、這僧道の枯木裏還有龍吟也無は、無量劫のなかに、はじめて問頭に現成せり、話頭の現成なり。投子道の我道髑髏裏有師子吼は、有甚麼掩處なり、屈己推人也未休なり、髑髏遍野なり。

Nevertheless, this monk’s saying, “is there the song of the dragon in the dried tree?” is the first appearance of the question in countless æons; it is the appearance of a topic. Touzi’s saying, “I say there’s the roar of the lion in the skull” is “what’s been concealed?” It is “never ceasing to subdue oneself and promote others”; it is “skulls fill the fields.”⁴

香巖寺襲燈大師、因僧問、如何是道。師云、枯木裏龍吟。僧曰、不會。師云、髑髏裏眼睛。後有僧問石霜、如何是枯木裏龍吟。霜云、猶帶喜在。僧曰、如何是髑髏裏眼睛。霜

云、猶帶識在。又有僧問曹山、如何是枯木裏龍吟。山曰、血脈不斷。僧曰、如何是髑髏裏眼睛。山云、乾不盡。僧曰、未審、還有得聞者麼。山云、盡大地未有一箇不聞。僧曰、未審、龍吟是何章句。山云、也不知是何章句。聞者皆喪。

A monk once asked the Great Master Xideng of Xiangyan zi, “What is the way?”

The master said, “The dragon song in the dried tree.”

The monk said, “I don’t understand.”

The master said, “The eyeball in the skull.”

Later, a monk asked Shishuang, “What is the dragon song in the dried tree?”

Shuang said, “Still harboring joy.”

The monk said, “What is the eyeball in skull?”

Shuang said, “Still harboring consciousness.”

Again, a monk asked Caoshan, “What is the dragon song in the dried tree?”

Shan said, “The blood vessel not severed.”

The monk said, “What is the eyeball in the skull?”

Shan said, “Not entirely dried up.”

The monk said, “Well, can anyone hear it?”

Shan said, “On the whole earth, there isn’t one who can’t hear it.”

The monk said, “Well, what passage does the dragon sing?”

Shan said, “I don’t know what passage it is. Everyone who hears it loses his life.”⁵

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いま擬道する聞者吟者は、吟龍吟者に不齊なり、この曲調は龍吟なり。枯木裏髑髏裏、これ内外にあらず、自佗にあらず、而今而古なり。猶帶喜在は、さらに頭角生なり。猶帶識在は、皮膚脱落盡なり。

The hearer and singer spoken of here are not equal to the singer of the dragon’s song; this tune is the dragon’s singing.” “In the dried tree,” “in the skull”—these are not about inside or outside, not about self or other; they are the present and the past. “Still harboring joy” is a further “horn growing on the head”; “still harboring consciousness” is “skin entirely shed.”⁶

曹山道の血脈不斷は、道不諱なり、語脈裏轉身なり。乾不盡は、海枯不盡底なり。不盡是乾なるゆゑに、乾上又乾なり。聞者ありや、と道著せるは、不得者ありや、といふがごとし。盡大地未有一箇不聞は、さらに聞著すべし、未有一箇不聞は、しばらくおく、未有盡大地時、龍吟在甚麼處、速道速道なり。未審龍吟は何章句は、爲問すべし、吟龍は、おのれづから泥裏の作聲擧拈なり、鼻孔裏の出氣なり。也不知は何章句は、章句裏有龍なり。聞者皆喪は、可惜許なり。

Caoshan’s saying, “the blood vessel not severed,” is speaking without avoidance; it is “turning the body in the stream of words.” “Not entirely dried up” is “when the ocean dries up, it does not entirely [dry] to the bottom.” Since “not entirely” is “drying up,” there is “drying up” beyond “drying up.” His saying, “can anyone hear it?” is like saying, “is there anyone who can’t?” About “on the whole earth, there isn’t one who can’t hear it,” we should ask further: leaving aside “there isn’t one who can’t hear it,” when there isn’t any whole earth, where is the song of the dragon? Speak! Speak! “Well, what passage does the dragon cry?” should be made a question. The crying dragon is itself raising its voice and bringing it up within the mud, is breathing it out within its nostrils. “I don’t know what passage it is” is a dragon within the passage. “Everyone who hears it loses his life”: what a pity!⁷

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いま香巖石霜曹山等の龍吟來、くもをなし、水をなす。不道道、不道眼睛髑髏。只是龍吟の千曲萬曲なり。猶帶喜在也蝦蟇啼、猶帶識在也蚯蚓鳴、これによりて血脈不斷なり、葫蘆嗣葫蘆なり。乾不盡のゆえに、露柱懷胎生なり、燈籠對燈籠なり。

This song of the dragon of Xiangyan, Shishuang, and Caoshan forms clouds and forms water. It does not talk about the way; it does not talk about the eyeball or skull: it is just a thousand tunes, ten thousand tunes of the song of the dragon. “Still harboring joy” is “the croaking of frogs”; “still harboring consciousness” is “the murmuring of worms.” By these, “the blood vessel is not severed,” “the bottle gourd succeeds the bottle gourd.” Since it is “not entirely dried up,” the columns conceive and give birth, the lanterns face the lanterns.⁸

正法眼藏龍吟第六十一

Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma

The Song of the Dragon, Book 61

爾時寬元元年癸卯十二月二十五日、在越宇禪師峰下示衆

Presented to the assembly twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month of the first year of Kangen (*mizunoto-u*), beneath Yamashibu, in the domain of Etsu⁹

弘安二年三月五日、於永平寺書寫之

Copied this on the fifth day of the third month of the second year of Kōan, at Eiheiiji10__

NOTES

1. **“Song of the dragon”** (*ryūgin* 龍吟): The word *gin* (translated here as “song”) is used in reference to a range of sounds, from singing, chanting, and reciting, to crying, moaning, sighing, humming, etc., both human and animal. The term *ryūgin* (“dragon song”) is used in traditional music to refer both to a type of flute (*ryūteki* 龍笛), and to a melody in court music (*ryūgin chō* 龍吟調).

“The Great Master Ciji of Mt. Touzi in Shuzhou” (*jōshū tōsu zan jisai daishi* 舒州投子山慈濟大師): I.e., Touzi Datong 投子大同 (819-914), a disciple of Cuiwei Wuxue 翠微無學, in the lineage of Qingyuan Xingsi 青原行思. “Great Master Ciji is a posthumous title. Shuzhou is in the vicinity of present-day Anqing 安慶 in Anhui. This conversation can be found in the *Jingde chuan deng lu* 景德傳燈錄, T.51[2076]:319a29-b1.

“Dried tree” (*koboku* 枯木): Or “dead tree”; the somewhat awkward translation “dried tree” seeks to preserve lexical continuity with Dōgen’s other uses of *ko* (“to dry out,” “to be dried out”) in this text. The term is regularly used in Chan literature for an immobile state of meditation; see below, **Note 2. “Dried trees and dead ashes.”** The phrase “dragon’s song in the dried tree” (*koboku ryūgin* 枯木龍吟) evokes the sound of the wind in bare branches; often used in Chan to suggest action within repose, or the power of life within the lifeless.

“The skull” (*dokuro* 髑髏): I.e., of a skeleton; often used in Chan texts in a sense similar to “dried tree.” The “lion’s roar” (*shishi ku* 師子吼; *simha-nāda*) is regularly used in Buddhist literature for the preaching of a buddha.

2. **“Dried trees and dead ashes”** (*koboku shikai* 枯木死灰): Or “dead wood and cold ashes”); a common expression in Chan texts, often used in a perjorative sense, for the mind in trance. See **Supplemental Note 1.**

“**A teaching of the alien ways**” (*gedō no shokyō* 外道の所教): I.e., something taught by non-Buddhists. While the term *gedō* (*tīrthika*) is usually used in reference to Hinduism and other Indian religions, Dōgen is no doubt thinking here of Daoist texts like the *Zhuang zi* (see, **Supplemental Note 1**).

“**Meet the spring**” (*hō shun* 逢春): Dōgen here introduces a term from the verse by Damei Fachang 大梅法常 that he will quote below. (See **Note 3. “How many springs has it met without changing its mind?”**) The sense is likely “revive after the dead of winter.”

3. “The ocean drying up” (*kaiko* 海枯): Dōgen will return to this theme below. For the source of this expression, see **Supplemental Note 2**.

“**Germination of a sprout**” (*hōga* 萌芽): Presumably the “sprout” that appears when the dried tree “meets the spring.” While seemingly not a term of art in Chan literature and not used elsewhere in Dōgen’s writings, this expression is somewhat reminiscent of the common “before the germination of a subtle sign” (*chinchō mibō* 朕兆未萌), used to represent the “unborn” (*mushō* 無生).

“**The mark, nature, substance, and power of dried**” (*ko no sō shō tai riki* 枯の相性體力): Probably here indicating something like “the meaning of ‘dried.’” The phrase draws on a famous line in the *Lotus Sūtra*; see **Supplemental Note 3**.

“**A dried post**” (*koshō* 枯樁); “**not a dried post**” (*hi koshō* 非枯樁): Or, we might say, “a rotted stake.” For the likely source of these expressions, see **Supplemental Note 4**.

“**The leaves are spread based on the root**” (*e kon yō bunpu* 依根葉分布); “**root and branch return to the source**” (*honmatsu shu ki shū* 本末須歸宗): From the famous poem *Cantong qi* 參同契, by Shitou Xichen 石頭希遷 (700-790), disciple of Qingyuan Xingsi (*Jingde chuan deng lu*, T.51:459b15).

“**Long dharma body**” (*chō hosshin* 長法身); “**short dharma body**” (*tan hosshin* 短法身): From the Chan saying, “the long one is a long dharma body; the short one is a short dharma body” (*chang zhe chang fashen duan zhe duan fashen* 長者長法身短者短法身).

“**How many springs has it met without changing its mind?**” (*kido hō shun fu hen shin* 幾度逢春不變心): Or “without changing its core.” From a verse by Damei Fachang 大梅法常 (752-839) (*Jingde chuan deng lu*, T.51:254c12-13):

摧殘枯木倚寒林、幾度逢春不變心。

Broken dried tree keeping to the cold forest.

How many springs has it met without changing its mind?

“**Notes of the scale**” (*kyū shō kaku chi u* 宮商角徵羽): A loose translation for what is in the original simply a listing of the five notes of the traditional scale of Chinese music: *gong* 宮, *shang* 商, *jue* 角, *zheng* 徵, *yu* 羽. Dōgen is here playing on the common uses of *ryūgin* in reference to music (see above **Note 1. “Song of the dragon”**)—a play he will continue below.

“**The second or third sons of the song of the dragon**” (*ryūgin no zengo nisan shi* 龍吟の前後二三子): A tentative translation; possibly “two or three former or later sons of the song of the dragon.” The point would seem to be that the musical scale is derivative of the dragon’s song.

4. “The appearance of a topic” (*watō no genjō* 話頭の現成): Or “the realization of a saying”; i.e., a significant utterance. The term *watō* is regularly used in Chan texts for the main topic, or point, of a *kōan*.

“**What’s been concealed?**” (*u jinmo en sho* 有甚麼掩處): I.e., it is everywhere obvious. Likely

reflecting another saying of Touzi (*Jingde chuan deng lu*, T.51:319b25-26):

問、如何是火焰裏藏身。師曰、有什麼掩處。

[Someone] asked, “What is the body hidden within flames?”

The master said, “What’s been concealed?”

“**Never ceasing to subdue oneself and promote others**” (*kukko suinin ya mikyū* 屈己推人也未休): The sense here may be simply that Touzi’s words are “never ceasing.” For a possible source, see **Supplemental Note 5**.

“**Skulls fill the fields**” (*dokuro hen ya* 髑髏遍野): Though this Chan expression might be read in a negative sense, presumably in its context here it is intended to suggest that the roaring skulls Touzi speaks of are ubiquitous. The expression can be found, e.g., attributed to Gushan 鼓山 at *Jingde chuan deng lu*, T.51:347c11.

5. “Great Master Xideng of Xiangyan zi” (*kyōgenji shūtō daishi* 香巖寺襲燈大師): I.e., Xiangyan Zhixian 香巖智閑 (d. 898), disciple of Weishan Lingyou 滙山靈祐. Xideng dashi is a posthumous title. His biography occurs at *Jingde chuan deng lu*, T.51:283c-284a. This discussion of the dragon song occurs in several collections, including Dōgen’s *shinji Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:142, case 28).

“**Shishuang**” (*sekisō* 石霜): I.e., Shishuang Qingzhu 石霜慶諸 (807-888). His biography occurs at *Jingde chuan deng lu*, T.51:320c1.

“**Caoshan**” (*sōsan* 曹山): I.e., Caoshan Benzhi 曹山本寂 (840-901), disciple of Dongshan Liangjie (洞山良价); his posthumous title is Great Master Yuanzheng 元證大師.

“**The blood vessel**” (*kechimiyaku* 血脈): Or “bloodline”; a standard Chan expression for the lineage of the buddhas and ancestors.

“**Everyone who hears it loses his life**” (*monja kai sō* 聞者皆喪): Or “All who hear it are to be mourned”; taking *sō* here as in *sōshitsu* 喪失 (“loss”). The expression “to relinquish one’s body and lose one’s life” (*sōshin shitsumyō* 喪身失命) is regularly used in Chan for the experience of awakening.

6. “The hearer and singer spoken of here are not equal to the singer of the dragon’s song” (*ima gidō suru monja ginja ha gin ryūgin ja ni fusei nari* いま擬道する聞者吟者は吟龍吟者に不齊なり): A tentative translation of a passage subject to interpretation. The sentence might also be read, “the hearing and singing they seek to speak of here is not equal to the singing of the singing dragon (*ginryū ginja*). The commentary of the *Shōbōgenzō monge* 聞解 suggests that the point here is that the authentic “song of the dragon” is beyond the active and passive opposites of “singing” and “hearing”; it also offers an alternative opinion to the effect that what the monks are discussing is not the authentic “song of the dragon” (*Shōbōgenzō chūkai zensho* 正法眼藏注解全書, 7:566-67).

“**This tune is the dragon’s singing**” (*kono kyokuchō ha ryūgin nari* この曲調は龍吟なり): The antecedent of “this” is unclear; it could refer either to the quoted passage or to Dōgen’s comment on it—or to neither. “Tune” here, while playing on the music of the dragon’s song, might be taken as the exploration of the theme of the dragon’s song—i.e., the study of the dragon’s song is the singing of the dragon.

“**The present and the past**” (*nikon niko* 而今而古): Probably to be taken in the sense “at once present and past” or, perhaps, “timeless.”

“**Horn growing on the head**” (*zu kaku shō* 頭角生): A colloquial expression usually indicating

something impossible or worthless, as in the Chan saying “where wisdom doesn’t reach, speech is prohibited; speech is a horn growing on the head” (*zhi budao chu qie ji dao zhao dao zhao ji tou* 智不到處切忌道著道著即頭角生) (*Jingde chuan deng lu*, T.51:314a16).

“**Skin entirely shed**” (*hifu datsuraku jin* 皮膚脱落盡): Perhaps reflecting a conversation between the Chan masters Mazu 馬祖 and Yueshan 藥山 (*Mazu Daoyi chanshi yulu* 馬祖道一禪師語錄, ZZ.119:816b5-6):

一日祖問之曰、子近日見處作麼生。山曰、皮膚脱落盡、唯有一真實。

One day, [Ma]zu asked him [i.e., Yueshan], “Son, what have you seen recently?”

[Yue]shan said, “Skin entirely shed, there’s just a single reality.”

7. “Speaking without avoidance” (*dō fuki* 道不諱): Or “a saying that does not conceal.” A rather unusual expression, in Chinese syntax, not appearing elsewhere in Dōgen’s writings.

“**Turning the body in the stream of words**” (*gomyaku ri tenshin* [or *tenjin*] 語脈裏轉身): The translation loses Dōgen’s play here with the graph *myaku* (“stream”), rendered as “vessel” in Caoshan’s saying. The expression, variations on which occur elsewhere in the *Shōbōgenzō*, reflects a common Chan usage (as, e.g., in the *Biyān lu* 碧巖錄 [case 29, T.48:169a19]: “The immeasurably great person turns round [or is turned round] within the stream of words” [*meiliang daren yumo li zhuanque* 沒量大人語脈裏轉却]).

“**When the ocean dries up, it does not entirely [dry] to the bottom**” (*kaiko fujin tei* 海枯不盡底): Variation on the saying, “When the ocean dries up, you finally see the bottom”; see above, **Supplemental Note 2**.

“**Raising its voice and bringing it up within the mud**” (*ni ri no sashō konen* 泥裏の作聲舉拈);

“**breathing it out within its nostrils**” (*biko ri no suiki* 鼻孔裏の出氣): The translation supplies the object pronoun “it,” assuming the preceding “question” as antecedent. To “bring up” (*konen*) is often used for a Chan master’s presentation of a topic for comment; the word “mud,” while here perhaps suggestive of the “bottom” of the ocean, is often used in Chan for the sphere of the master’s teaching activities.

8. “Forms clouds and forms water” (*kumo wo nasu mizu wo nasu* くもをなし水をなす):

Evoking the association of the Chinese dragon with clouds, rain, and bodies of water, no doubt here suggesting spiritual nourishment.

“**It does not talk about the way; it does not talk about the eyeball or skull**” (*fudō dō fudō ganzei dokuro* 不道道不道眼睛髑髏): Dōgen here shifts into Chinese syntax. The translation takes “song of the dragon” as the unexpressed subject; “the way” (*dō*) here likely refers back to the opening question in the quotation, “what is the way?”

“**The croaking of frogs**” (*gama tei* 蝦蟆啼); “**the murmuring of worms**” (*kyūin mei* 蚯蚓鳴): (*Gama* [“frogs”] is more commonly written 蝦蟆; the reader may supply for the verb *tei* 啼 [rendered “murmur”] whatever sound she would like worms to make.) Frogs and worms appear regularly in Chan sayings. The reference here is likely drawn from a verse by Dōgen’s teacher Tiantong Rujing 天童如淨 (1163-1228), see **Supplemental Note 6**.

“**The bottle gourd succeeds the bottle gourd**” (*koro shi koro* 葫蘆嗣葫蘆): In Dōgen’s usage, the intertwined vines of the bottle gourd can stand for the relationship between master and disciple. Variation on another saying of Rujing often cited in the *Shōbōgenzō*: “the bottle gourd vine entwines the bottle gourd” (*koro tōshu ten koro* 葫蘆藤種纏葫蘆). (*Rujing yulu* 如淨語錄, fascicle 2 [Kagamishima, 306-307].)

“The columns conceive and give birth” (*rochū kaitai shō* 露柱懷胎生); **“the lanterns face the lanterns”** (*tōrō tai tōrō* 燈籠對燈籠): The lanterns and columns of the monastic halls are common topics in Chan conversation, seemingly used especially to represent the concrete reality of the immediate surroundings; “columns pregnant” (*rochū kaitai*), also commonly found in Chan texts, seem to function rather like the “dragon song in the dried tree” to suggest vitality within a seemingly lifeless object.

9. “The first year of Kangen (*mizunoto-u*)” (*kangen gannen mizunoto u* 寬元元年癸卯): I.e., 1243, the year of the 10th heavenly stem, 4th earthly branch in the cyclical calendar.

“Beneath Yamashibu, in the domain of Etsu” (*etsuu yamashibu ge* 越宇禪師峰下):

Apparently, a small temple (sometimes read Zenjibuji 禪師峰寺) not far from Dōgen’s residence at Kippōji 吉峰寺, in the province of Echizen 越前 (modern Fukui prefecture); a site given in the colophon of several texts of the *Shōbōgenzō* from this period.

10. “Copied this” (*shosha shi* 書寫之): The copyist’s identity is unknown; perhaps Dōgen’s close disciple Koun Ejō 孤雲懷奘 (1198-1280), whose name appears as the copyist of many *Shōbōgenzō* texts.

“The second year of Kōan” (*kōan ninen* 弘安二年): I.e., 1279. Eiheiji was the temple in Echizen that became the chief center of Dōgen’s community in Echizen; originally founded as Daibutsuji 大佛寺 in 1245, then refounded as Eiheiji in 1247.

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES

1. “Dried trees and dead ashes” (*koboku shikai* 枯木死灰): A term appearing in several places in Dōgen’s corpus, typically in perjorative reference to contemplative trance. This use is common in Chan texts, as seen, e.g., in a passage from the *Linjian lu* 林間錄, by Juefan Huihong 覺範慧洪 (1071-1128), quoted in Dōgen’s *Shōbōgenzō butsudō* 佛道 (DZZ.1:472):

石門林間錄云、菩提達磨、初自梁之魏。經行於嵩山之下、倚仗於少林、面壁燕坐而已、非習禪也。久之人莫測其故。因以達磨爲習禪。夫禪那、諸行之一耳。何足以盡聖人。而當時之人、以之爲史者、又從而傳於習禪之列、使與枯木死灰之徒爲伍。雖然聖人非止於禪那、而亦不違禪那。如易出于陰陽、而亦不違陰陽。

In Shimen’s *Linjian lu*, it is said,

When Bodhidharma first went to Wei from Liang, he proceeded to the foot of Mt. Song, where he stopped at Shaolin. There he just sat facing a wall. This was not the practice of *dhyāna*, but after a while others, unable to fathom what he was doing, held that Dharma practiced *dhyāna*. This *dhyāna* is but one among various practices; how could it suffice to exhaust [the practice of] the holy ones? Nevertheless, people of the time took it in this way; the historians followed this and recorded him with those that practiced *dhyāna*, thus making him a confederate of the partisans of “dried trees and dead ashes.” Be that as it may, the holy ones do not stop at *dhyāna*, and yet they do not oppose *dhyāna*. It is like “change,” which is beyond *yin* and *yang* and yet does not oppose *yin* and *yang*.

The use of the terms “dried trees” (*kumu* 枯木 or *gaomu* 槁木) and “dead ashes” (*sihui* 死灰) in reference to contemplation has a long history in Chinese literature. It is perhaps best known from the second book of the *Zhuang zi* 莊子. The book opens with Jiqi of Nanguo leaning on his armrest and gazing at the heavens. His companion Yancheng Ziyou exclaims, 何居乎、形固可使如槁木、而心固可使如死灰乎。

“What’s this? Can you actually make the body like a dried tree and the mind like dead ashes?”

2. “The ocean drying up” (*kaiko* 海枯): Allusion to a saying, drawn from a verse by the poet Du Xunhe 杜荀鶴 (846-907), that occurs often in Chan literature (See, e.g., *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄, T.48:564b12):

海枯終見底、人死不知心。

When the ocean dries up, you finally see the bottom;

When a person dies, you do not know his mind.”

Dōgen seems to have enjoyed such play with this saying. In his *Shōbōgenzō hensan* 偏參 (DZZ.2:116), we find “when the ocean dries up, you cannot see the bottom” (*kai ko fuken tei* 海枯不見底); “when a person dies, he does not leave his mind behind” (*nin shi furyū shin* 人死不留心). In *Shōbōgenzō kokyō* 古鏡 (DZZ.1:226), he has “though the ocean dries up, it does not reveal the bottom” (*kai ko futō ro tei* 海枯不到露底). The *Shōbōgenzō hotsu bodai shin* 發菩提心 (DZZ.2:167), has “when the ocean dries up, the bottom remains; though a person dies, the mind remains” (*kai karete naho soko nokori hito ha shisu tomo shin nokoru beki* 海かれてなほ底のこり人は死すとも心のこるべき).

3. “The mark, nature, substance, and power of dried” (*ko no sō shō tai riki* 枯の相性體力):

Likely reflecting the famous line in the *Lotus Sūtra* (T.9:5c11-13), from which the Tiantai tradition derives its characteristic teaching of the “tenfold suchness” (*jū nyoze* 十如是):

唯佛與佛乃能究盡諸法實相。所謂諸法如是相、如是性、如是體、如是力、如是作、如是因、如是緣、如是果、如是報、如是本末究竟等。

Only buddhas with buddhas can exhaust the real marks of the dharmas: that the dharmas are of such a mark, such a nature, such a substance, such a power, such an action, such a cause, such a condition, such an effect, such a recompense, such an ultimate equality from beginning to end.

4. “A dried post” (*koshō* 枯椿); “**not a dried post**” (*hi koshō* 非枯椿): Likely a reference to a saying by Sushan Guangren 疎山光仁 (or Kuangren 匡仁, 837-909) included in Dōgen’s *shinji* 真字 *Shōbōgenzō* (DZZ.5:270, case 285):

疎山示衆云、病僧咸通年已前、會法身邊事。咸通年已後、會法身向上事。雲門出問云、如何是法身邊事。師曰、枯椿。曰、如何是法身向上事。師曰、非枯椿。

Sushan addressed the assembly, saying, “Before the Xiantong years [860-873], I understood things in the vicinity of the dharma body; after the Xiantong years, I understood things beyond the dharma body.”

Yunmen asked, “What are things in the vicinity of the dharma body?”

The master said, “A dried post.”

[Yunmen] asked, “What are things beyond the dharma body?”

The master said, “Not a dried post.”

5. “Never ceasing to subdue oneself and promote others” (*kukko suinin ya mikyū* 屈己推人也未休): “To subdue (or humble) oneself and promote others” is a fixed phrase seen in another saying of Touzi (*Jingde chuan deng lu*, T.51:320a21-22):

問、七佛是文殊弟子。文殊還有師也無。師曰、適來恁麼道也、大似屈己推人。

[Someone] asked, “The Seven Buddhas are the disciples of Mañjuśrī. Does Mañjuśrī have a master?”

The master said, “To talk this way just now is just like subduing yourself and promoting another.”

6. “The croaking of frogs” (*gama tei* 蝦蟇啼); **“the murmuring of worms”** (*kyūin mei* 蚯蚓鳴): In his *Shōbōgenzō ganzei* 眼睛 (DZZ.2:??), Dōgen quotes his teacher Rujing: 先師古佛上堂云、霖霖大雨、豁達大晴。蝦蟇啼、蚯蚓鳴。古佛不曾過去、發揮金剛眼睛。咄。葛藤葛藤。

My former master, the old buddha, ascended the hall and said,
Heavy rain for days on end,
Opening up to great clear skies.
Frogs croak and worms murmur.
The old buddhas have never past away;
They show their diamond eyes.
Drat!
Entanglements, entanglements.