

Gyōbutsu-igi (The Dignified Deeds of the Buddhas)

——『英訳正法眼蔵行伝威儀卷』——

横 井 雄 峯

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Introduction

The *gyōbutsu* mean the practising Buddhas. They are true men who practise the Way with the whole body and mind. True men are enlightened persons who behave themselves freely in the realm beyond enlightenment and practice. In this sense, the *butsu* (Buddhas) are the *gyō* (practice) and vice versa.

The *igi* mean the dignified behaviors. However, behaviors are deeds. Therefore, the *gyōbutsu-igi* mean the dignified *gyōbutsu*. It is because they practise the Way endlessly in their daily life, that they maintain their dignity.

The *gyōbutsu*, as Dōgen said, are far from various Buddhas, rewarded, manifested, self-joyous or altruistic ; or from various enlightenments, initial, original, self-evident or non-investigative. On the other hand, the whole function of the *gyōbutsu* is in but beyond enlightenment and delusion, birth and death, or coming and going. Moreover, in the eternal 'now' this function penetrates not only the whole universe but also our daily deed, such as a sound of breaking wind or a smell of excrement. But the whole universe includes all things, so the meditation hall, the Buddha hall, the

temple kitchen and the main gate are all the glorious light of the *gyōbutsu*.

On the Buddha-body scholastic Buddhists give various opinions : the two, three, four or ten bodies of the Buddha. However, Dōgen regarded all this as an attachment to the Buddha-body, thinking the true Buddha-body is realized only by the *gyōbutsu* beyond the conceptional grasp.

The *gyōbutsu-iigi* are the name of section 6 of the *Shōbō-genzō* ; expounded by Dōgen at Kōshō-ji temple in the middle of October, 1241.

Text

The Buddhas always behave themselves quite perfectly [in their daily life]. We call them the *gyōbutsu*. They are free from various Buddhas, rewarded,¹ manifested,² self-joyous³ or altruistic⁴ ; or from various enlightenments, initial, original, self-evident or non-investigative. The *gyōbutsu* are not compared with these [conceptional] Buddhas. We should know that the Buddhas in the Way expect no enlightenment. None but the *gyōbutsu* behave themselves freely beyond the [conceptional] Buddhas. This is quite unknown to the self-joyous and altruistic Buddhas.

The *gyōbutsu* manifest themselves freely in everything, such as body and speech, regardless of [specific] time and space or Buddha and practice. None but the *gyōbutsu* can free themselves from an attachment to the Buddha and the Dharma, because we are slaves to them. The words “an attachment to the Buddha” mean that we are attached to the conception of the Buddha’s wisdom. Therefore, every moment we labour under an idle mistake, unable to become

enlightened. Some will say, “To regard the Buddha’s wisdom as such is a view identical with the Buddha’s wisdom. Who can say it wrong? „I think he is tied with a formless rope endlessly and tightly, only living in a cellar (conception) of the Buddha. He does not know that the non-substantial Buddha⁵ suffers from sickness (conception), nor that the [reward-body⁶ is distressed.

Even scholars of *sūtras*⁷ and *sāstras*⁸ who have a poor knowledge of the Way say, “To regard *dharmatā* (entity of all things) as such is delusion.” Not saying, “To regard *dharmatā* as such is to be attached to it,” they are doubly tied with *dharmatā* and delusion. Indeed, it may be pitiable that they should not know that there is an attachment to *dharmatā*, but they know, instead of it, that there is an attachment “delusion.” This will inevitably cause them to seek for the Buddha’s wisdom. The *gyōbutsu* have been free from these attachments. Therefore, in the *Lotus Sūtra*⁹ Śākyamuni-buddha says, “The life-span that I got through the practice of a *bodhisattva* in the previous existence is still now twice as long as the above-mentioned countless *kalpas* of time.” It never means, we should realize, that the *bodhisattva*’s life-span has long lasted till now; nor that the Buddha’s was long in the past. The words “countless *kalpas* of time” mean the eternal ‘now.’; “still now” mean that now is the whole life-span [of the *gyōbutsu*]; “through the practice of a *bodhisattva* in the previous existence” mean that the *gyōbutsu* devote their 100-year life-span [to the very moment] freely even if their practice is eternal.

Practice and enlightenment are, therefore, beyond conception, such as being and non-being. Where there is no

conception of the Buddha or the ordinary people, there are various expressions beyond that of the *gyōbutsu*. Therefore, the *gyōbutsu* are never defiled with [the conception of] practice and enlightenment. It is not because the latter two are originally pure, but because purity is beyond purity and impurity.

Hui-nêng,¹⁰ the sixth patriarch in China, said, "Only this purity (non-attachment) is highly esteemed also by the Buddhas, you, me, and the patriarchs in India. His words "also by you" mean that you are also a Buddha; "also by me" mean that I am also a Buddha. Really where there is no "you" or "me," there is the true and real "me" or "you" whom the Buddhas esteem highly. This is the *gyōbutsu-iigi*. His words "also by me" mean that Hui-nêng was an excellent master; "also by you" mean that Nan-yüeh¹¹ was also an excellent disciple. So excellent were both of them that they behaved themselves freely as the *gyōbutsu*. We should know that Hui-nêng's words "only this purity is highly esteemed also by the Buddhas, me and you" mean that you are the *gyōbutsu*, even if he didn't say, "I am." The *gyōbutsu* is so highly esteemed and so prevalent.

We have realized, therefore, that practice and enlightenment have no connection with nature and form or cause and effect.¹² The *gyōbutsu-iigi* mean that the Buddhas naturally become the Buddhas themselves and that they make themselves practice. Therefore, the *gyōbutsu* sometimes lay down their life for the *Dharma* or forsake the *Dharma* for their life. Sometimes they grudge their life and sometimes not. Or they forsake the *Dharma* both for the *Dharma* and for their mind. We must not forget that their ways of abandon-

ment are endless.

We should not regard the great Way as the Buddha, because the latter is only one part of the former. It is just as bloom partially shows the coming of spring. Nor should we consider the *iigi* [of *gyōbutsu*] as their mind, because their mind is only one part of the *iigi*. It is just as the coming of spring partially shows bloom. Even a single blade of grass is the clear manifestation of mind of the Buddhas and patriarchs. But this is also only one trace of their free deeds. Even if we try to regard the *gyōbutsu-iigi* as mind encompassing the innumerable Buddhas, the *gyōbutsu-iigi* are originally beyond this discrimination. Therefore, they are something indescribable, uncontrollable and unthinkable.

Now there is one thing for us to think about the *gyōbutsu-iigi*. My words "There is no gap between Buddha and self" mean that the *gyōbutsu-iigi* are known not only to me and you but also to the Buddhas in the ten directions. However, it does not always follow that there is no gap among the three. Therefore, an ancient patriarch said, "Realize truth and practice it in your daily life." When we realize like this, all things, bodies, actions and Buddhas are one with the *gyōbutsu-iigi*. The former four are each none but themselves, so they are beyond themselves.

All the visible things manifest themselves clearly. Therefore, we must not think mistakenly that we can see none of them. We can see this and that [even in the one-whole world]. Whether we come or go, we pass the same gate (*gyōbutsu-iigi*). The whole world (thing) manifests itself so clearly that there are indescribable words, enlightenment, deed and transmission of the Law by Śākya-buddha. And,

as an ancient patriarch¹³ said, whether we go in or out the gate, we find nothing but grass. So there is no conception of grass anywhere. Nor do we need a letter “in” or “out.” This understanding, if not denied, is originally as empty as vision and hallucination. Who will repeat mistakes, regarding this as empty?¹⁴ Both advance and retreat are mistakes, so are one and two steps. All of them, therefore, is a mistake.¹⁵ However, the heaven is the heaven alone; the earth is the earth alone. Therefore, the great Way is not hard to realize. We should further realize thoroughly that the identity of the “*ii*” and “*gi*” [of *ii gi*] is as leisurely as the great Way.

We must know that we are born and die along with the Way. There will persistently appear deeds as free as a ball rolls about. It is the whole heaven and earth or the whole life and death or the secular world and the pure land, that shows one part of the *gyōbutsu-ii gi*. Therefore, they are one part of the *gyōbutsu-ii gi*.

But, nevertheless, most Buddhist monks seem to think only that the whole universe means this human world, the four continents,¹⁶ China or Japan; and that the whole earth means one billion worlds or one province and one prefecture. We must think the words “the whole universe” or “the whole earth” over and over again. We should never think only that they are large. The word “large” means the realm beyond the Buddhas and patriarchs where maximum is minimum, and vice versa. The words “neither large nor small” may sound skeptical, but they mean the dignified *gyōbutsu*. The words “the whole universe” or “the whole earth” uttered by the Buddhas and patriarchs mean, we

should know, that the clear manifestation is the whole world (thing). That is to say, we should not say only that the whole world (thing) manifests itself clearly. This is the one-whole *gyōbutsu-iigi*.

In Buddhism they often talk about “womb-born” and “metamorphically born,” but not “moisture-born” or “egg-born.” Still less do they know that there are other higher kinds of birth; nor do they see, hear or realize that there are four others. Now it has been clearly and personally transmitted that the great Way of Buddhas and patriarchs has four other higher kinds of birth. What are they that never try to hear, learn, know or realize these?

We have already heard of the four kinds of birth. Then, how many deaths are there? Are there the four kinds of death against as many kinds of birth? Or are there two, three, five, six, one thousand or ten thousand kinds of death? A mere doubt of them is also one part of studying Buddhism.

Just let me think of this. Among sentient beings of the four kinds of birth is there any one of birth, not death? Or is there any one transmitting death alone, not birth? Is there any one of birth or death alone?¹⁷ We should never fail to study all this thoroughly. Some persons, not trying to realize the word “*mushō*” (rise of non-duality), neglect their physical and mental realization. How foolish they are! They are beast-like beings and below *śrāvakas*¹⁸ and *pratyeka-buddhas*¹⁹ who tell about sudden or gradual enlightenment. Because even if we hear the word “*mushō*,” we should think what it means. We should not wonder if it can also be Buddha, Way, mind and decay, of non-duality or if

there is no *mushō* nor *dharmadhātu*²⁰ nor *dharmatā* nor death. This is because they are attached to *mushō* alone, just as camels or donkeys are careful about water or grass alone.

We should know that birth and death mean daily deeds in the Way, that is, utensils of Buddhist followers. We use them carefully or clarify them thoroughly. Therefore, the Buddhas clarify the meaning of birth and death thoroughly and use it freely. Who will call a man ignorant of this “a true man” or “a man versed in the meaning of birth and death”? We should not hear that we have sunk in the ocean of birth and death, nor believe that we are in birth and death; nor that birth and death are birth and death alone; nor that we cannot understand or clarify the meaning of birth and death thoroughly.

Some says, “The Buddhas appear in no other world than the human world.” If he is right, do all the worlds of Buddhas belong to the human world? This can be said only of the human Buddha Śākyamuni who said, “I alone am the most honorable one in the whole universe.” There are, however, many other Buddhas in the Buddhas’ and the celestial worlds. A man who says that the Buddhas appear only in the human world is far from the spirit of the Buddhas and patriarchs.

A patriarch said, “Śākya-buddha was transmitted the Law by Kāśyapa-buddha²¹ and [after his birth and death] went to the *Tuṣita* Heaven²² to lead people there. He is still in the celestial world.” We should realize that then the human Sākya-buddha died to show others the mortality of human life but that the celestial Sākya-buddha is still leading people

there. We monks should know that the human Śākya-buddha was various in word, deed, and sermon, but all of them was only one of his auspicious functions. We should not be too foolish to know that the celestial Sākya-buddha is leading people in many other ways. The great Way, which has been rightly transmitted from Buddha to Buddha, is beyond extinction and eternity. This original meaning has been rightly transmitted only in Buddhism as a merit unknown and inaudible to non-Buddhists.

In the world of the *gyōbutsu* there are sentient beings free from the four kinds of birth. And there will also be the world different from the celestial, human or cosmic realm. If we wish to see the free deeds of *gyōbutsu*, we should not look upon or think of the *gyōbutsu-igi* with eyes or ideas of human and celestial beings. The *gyōbutsu-igi* are unknown even to *bodhisattvas* at high levels,²³ still less to human or celestial beings. They are short in stature, so they are poor in knowledge; short in life-span, so shallow in consideration. How can they realize the *gyōbutsu-igi*?

Therefore, those who narrow-mindedly regard human affairs or rules as Buddhism cannot be recognized as the Buddha's disciples. They are only sentient beings who suffer for their [evil] deeds in the previous existence. They have never heard or practised Buddhism with the whole body and mind yet; nor been born and died; nor seen and heard; nor behaved themselves, following the true Law. There has been no benefit of the Law to them yet.

The previous words "The *gyōbutsu* are far from various enlightenments, original, initial, non-substantial, and conceptional" mean this fact. Thinking and non-thinking or con-

ceptional and transcendent enlightenments or initial and original enlightenments—all this is only the idea of the ordinary people, never rightly transmitted from Buddha to Buddha. There is an incomparably great difference in thinking and original enlightenment between the ordinary people and the Buddhas. Even the ideas of *bodhisattvas* at high levels are far below the Way of the Buddhas. How can the ordinary people attached to letters realize the *gyōbutsu*?

However, most of the ordinary and heretical people only regard themselves as the Buddhas, mistaking the means for the end. The Buddhas said, “These fellows are sinful,” or “They are to be pitied.” Even if their grave sins are beginningless and endless, their sins are heavy loads to them. They should just ease themselves of the heavy loads and reflect on themselves. Even if they regard themselves as sinful, their sins are beginningless.

Now the *gyōbutsu* are quite free in *igi* (deeds). This is because the *gyōbutsu* are identical with the Buddhas, and conceal their glory from sentient beings to save the latter from suffering. In each world, celestial or human, the *gyōbutsu* lead others [to the Way]. There is a merit that “to lead” is identical with “to be led.” It is just as spring is come when flowers come out. So the *gyōbutsu* have transcendent self and others or comings and goings beyond duality. Staying here, the *gyōbutsu* go to the Tuṣita Heaven and back. That is to say, staying here is staying in the Tuṣita Heaven.²⁴ The same can also be said when they go to the Comfortable World and back, staying here. Or staying here, they go beyond the Tuṣita Heaven and the Comfortable World. Even if broken to pieces, the two worlds remain as

they were. That is also the case when they are affirmed or negated. They are each the one-whole world.

We should know that the two worlds mean the Pure Land and the celestial world. Both of them are beginningless and endless. Simultaneously with them, the *gyōbutsu* practise the Way, get absolute enlightenment and repeat absolute delusion. All this is only so small a function that the *gyōbutsu* move their toes a bit in their straw-sandals.

Sometimes a sound of breaking wind or a smell of excrement is the free deeds of *gyōbutsu*. Sometimes we can smell them with our noses or hear them with our ears, bodies or deeds ; and sometimes we can get the essence of the Buddhas and patriarchs. But this is obtained only through the *gyōbutsu-iigi*.

About the thorough clarification of the meaning of birth and death there is an old saying : “A great enlightened person leaves birth and death to his mind, body, the Way or birth and death themselves.” Its original meaning manifests itself beyond any time, ancient and modern. However, when it does, the *gyōbutsu-iigi* are done suddenly and thoroughly ; and the original meaning that birth and death or body and mind are beginningless and endless are immediately realized. The thorough deed and clarification are done naturally. As we find our head in a mirror, so we clarify the true self by reflecting on ourselves. This endless clarification penetrates the *gyōbutsu* through their practice.

I often said a word “leave.” However, it is impossible without the thorough clarification of the Buddha’s mind. When this clarification is stable, we learn and realize that all things are the undisguised manifestation of one’s mind

or that the three worlds²⁵ are nothing but one's mind. Indeed, these learning and realization are also one part of all things, but we have grasped our original mind through Buddhist practice in our daily life.

Therefore, when we find the original meaning in words and phrases or read between the lines over and over again, we take or give it thoroughly. This study is: "What is birth?" "What is death?" "What are one's body and mind?" "What is *give* or *take*?" "What is sameness or difference?" "Can't we notice each other, passing the same gate?" "Can't a hidden thing manifest its part?" "Can we realize [the Way] after careful thinking or long thought?" "Does [the Way] mean a brilliant grain of jewel,²⁶ a great treasury of *sūtras*, a *shujō*,²⁷ one's original nature, 'thirty years later,'²⁸ or the eternal now?" All this must be studied very carefully.

At this very moment we hear voices with the one-whole eye²⁹ and see forms with the one-whole ear. Moreover, when we see objects clearly with the Buddha's eye, there is nothing to be seen. The *gyōbutsu* make gentle smiles or blink their eyes. All this is a temporary appearance of the *gyōbutsu-iigi*. They are neither attracted by outer things nor attract them; nor rise from, or are produced by, causation; nor are the original nature or the real one, of all things; nor in their own positions; nor the original beings; nor something described as such. They are none but the dignified *gyōbutsu*.

As mentioned before, the *gyōbutsu* lay down their life for the Law or forsake the Law for their life. However, the words "lay down" mean that they have left their life to

their mind ; the words “be beyond birth and death” mean that they have left them to the Buddha for some time. Therefore, all things and the three worlds are said to be nothing but one’s mind. Moreover, about “one’s mind” there are different expressions : fences, walls, tiles or pebbles. But they never deny “one’s mind.” This is the *gyōbutsu-igi* where the *gyōbutsu* leave birth and death to their mind or the Law ; lay down their life for the Law or forsake the Law for their life.

All this is unknown to those who have got the initial or original enlightenment, still less to non-Buddhist, *śrāvakas*, *pratyeka-buddhas* or *bodhisattvas* at high levels. These *igi* are unknowingly realized by each person. However vigorous his action may be, it is nothing but itself. Is this action one-whole or double? The word “one-whole” never means length ; the word “double” never means self and others. When we realize this identity, our influence [as the *gyōbutsu*] penetrates and our insight [as the *gyōbutsu*] stand unrivalled in the whole world. There appears the light (Buddha’s wisdom) that takes (affirms) or gives (negates) freely. This light is the meditation hall, the Buddha hall, the temple kitchen and the main gate before us. There is another light that neither takes nor gives. It is also the meditation hall, the Buddha hall, the temple kitchen and the main gate.

Further, the one-whole eye of the *gyōbutsu* penetrates the ten directions or encompasses the whole ground ; the mind of the *gyōbutsu* masters the past and future. The lights of these body and mind are so brilliant that there are the Buddhas in the three stages of time who [conceptionally] never regard themselves [as the *gyōbutsu*] or the ordinary

people who [practically] recognize themselves [as the *gyōbutsu*]. Herein lies the point and the essence of the Way. It is because the Law expounds the *gyōbutsu* and makes the *gyōbutsu* go their own way.

When the Great Teacher Chen-*chueh*³⁰ of Mt. Hsüeh-fêng said to some monks, "The Buddhas in the three stages of time roll the great *Dharma*-wheel in a flame." The Great Teacher Tsung-i³¹ at the Hsüan-sha temple said, "As soon as a flame expounds the great Law to the Buddhas in the three stages of time, they listen to it." Later, Abbot Yüan-wu³² said, "Now here is Hou-pai and now here is Hou-hei.³³ Both of them freely exchanged an expression according to another's ability. The words 'A raging flame fills the whole heaven' mean that the Buddhas expound the Law. And the words 'There is a raging flame filling the whole heaven' mean that the Law expounds the Buddhas. It is just as the wind blows off the intertwining of ivies or wisteria-vines. In other words, both of them penetrated into another's heart with a single word, just as *Mañjuśrī*³⁴ saw through the silence of Vimalakīrti."³⁵

"The Buddhas in the three stages of time" mean all the Buddhas. The *gyōbutsu* are the Buddhas in the three stages of time. There are no Buddhas but belong to the three stages of time. This is an expression of the three stages of time in Buddhism. What are the *gyōbutsu*? They are the Buddhas in the three stages of time. Whether we know it or not, that is the case. Therefore, the three ancient high monks³⁶ equally uttered these words.

We should for a while think of Hsüeh-fêng's words "The Buddhas in the three stages of time roll the great *Dharma*-

wheel in a flame.” It must be in a flame that they do so. A flame must be a training hall of the Buddhas. All this is not audible to scholars of *sūtras* and *śāstras*; nor understandable to non-Buddhists, *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*. We must know that the flame of the Buddhas is quite different from that of the ordinary people and think well whether the ordinary people have such a flame.

We should study his words “The Buddhas in the three stages of time are in a flame.” When in a flame, are they identical with, or far from, the flame? Are both of them the same or different? Are both of them one or another? The words “roll the great *Dharma*-wheel” will mean that the Buddhas do so for themselves and others; that a Zen master does so for his disciple, there being no gap between the two; that the Buddhas roll the *Dharma*-wheel, and vice versa. Since Hsüeh-fêng has already said, “The Buddhas roll the *Dharma*-wheel,” there will also be the *Dharma*-wheel which rolls a fire-wheel, the Buddhas, the *Dharma*-wheel itself and the three stages of time, even if the whole land is the whole fire.

Therefore, a flame is a training hall where the Buddhas roll the great *Dharma*-wheel. It is beyond discrimination, such as world, time, man or enlightened and unenlightened persons. Therefore, the Buddhas in the three stages of time roll the great *Dharma*-wheel in a flame. The above words “The Buddhas in the three stages of time” mean that the Buddhas are beyond discrimination. They are identical with a training hall for rolling the *Dharma*-wheel, so there is a flame. There is the flame, so there is a training hall for them.

Hsüan-sha said, "As soon as a flame expounds the Law to the Buddhas in the three stages of time, they listen to it." Hearing this, some says that Hsüan-sha's words are above Hsüeh-fêng's. But he is not always right. We should know that there is a difference between the two. Eventually, Hsüeh-fêng told about a place where the Buddhas in the three stages of time roll the great *Dharma*-wheel; Hsüan-sha told about their listening to the Law. Indeed, Hsüeh-fêng told about rolling the *Dharma*-wheel, but not whether there is necessarily its hearer or not; nor, therefore, that there should necessarily be its hearer; nor that the Buddhas in the three stages of time expound the Law for a flame; nor that they roll the great *Dharma*-wheel for themselves; nor that a flame, for the flame itself. Herein lies the essence of his remarks.

Is "rolling the *Dharma*-wheel" different from "rolling the great *Dharma*-wheel"? "Rolling the *Dharma*-wheel" is not "expounding the Law,"; "expounding the Law" is not always "expounding to others." So Hsüeh-fêng's words leave nothing unsaid. We must realize thoroughly Hsüeh-fêng's words "roll the great *Dharma*-wheel in a flame," not disturbed by Hsüan-sha's words. To realize Hsüeh-fêng's words is to do the *gyōbutsu-igi*. It never means that a flame including the Buddhas spreads only one or two boundless worlds and penetrates as many atoms. We must not regard the realm where the great *Dharma*-wheel is rolled as large and small or wide and narrow. "Rolling the great *Dharma*-wheel" never mean to expound to self and others; nor to expounding and listening.

Hsüan-sha said, "As soon as a flame expounds the Law

to the Buddhas in the three stages of time, they listen to it," but not say the words "roll the *Dharma*-wheel" or "The Buddhas do so." Even if the Buddhas in the three stages of time listen to the Law at once, how will a flame roll their *Dharma*-wheel? And will also the flame expounding the Law to them roll the great *Dharma*-wheel? Hsüan-sha never said yet, "It is at time of this sermon that the *Dharma*-wheel is rolled," or "There is no rolling of the *Dharma*-wheel." But I wonder if Hsüan-sha was foolish enough to think that rolling the *Dharma*-wheel is expounding the Law. If so, he was still ignorant of Hsüeh-feng's words. Though, indeed, he may have known that the Buddhas in the three stages of time listen to the Law as soon as a flame expounds it to them, yet not that a flame listens to the Law as soon as it rolls the *Dharma*-wheel; nor said that where a flame rolls the *Dharma*-wheel, the flame itself does so. The Law which the Buddhas in the three stages of time listen to is nothing but their own. We must not regard a flame as the Law or the Buddhas or the flame itself. A talk between master and disciple should not be neglected. They are identical with each other just as Huai-hai³⁷ exclaimed, "I thought the barbarian had a red beard, but here is another red-bearded barbarian!"³⁸

Hsüan-sha's talk leaves something to be desired, but it will help us with the realization of the Way. We should free ourselves from the superficial doctrines of the Greater and Lesser Vehicles³⁹ which scholars of *sūtras* or *śāstras* expounded, realizing thoroughly the teachings which the Buddhas and patriarchs have rightly transmitted. For example, the words "The Buddhas in the three stages of time

listen to the Law” are far from the doctrines of the Greater and Lesser Vehicles. These scholars never know that the Buddhas listen to the Law, only knowing that they expound the Law according to outer things ; nor say that they practise the Way, or become the Buddhas. As mentioned before, Hsüan-sha said, “The Buddhas in the three stages of time listen to the Law at once.” This tells us that the Buddhas listen to the Law. But we must not say, “An expounder is superior to a listener.” The former is venerable, so is the latter.

Śākya-buddha said, “A man who expounds this *Lotus Sūtra* sees me. But it is hard to expound it to each person.” Therefore, a good expounder of the Law sees Śākya-buddha, because the ‘me’ of the words “see me” means Śākya-buddha. [In the same *sūtra*] Śākya-buddha says, “After my death it will be hard to listen to this *sūtra* and ask the meaning.” We should know that listening is also as hard as expounding. There is, therefore, no gap in superiority between the two. Even the most venerable Buddhas immediately listen to the Law. Immediate listening means the Buddhas in the three stages of time. Therefore, the Buddhas are enlightened persons. This never means that they listen to the Law in course of practice, because they are already the Buddhas themselves.

We must know that they are the Buddhas by listening to a flame-sermon at once. We must not doubt the identical function between expounder and listener. Even if we do, there is nothing but identity. It is just as there is no gap between two arrow-heads when they clash against each other in the air. A flame never fails to expound the Law to the

Buddhas in the three stages of time. About this we can say, "Every moment blossoms come out on trees, and the world becomes fragrant." Just in other words, what after all does "immediate listening to a flame-sermon" mean? It means that a disciple is superior or equal to his master in wisdom. When we have further realized this identity between the two thoroughly, we are the Buddhas in the three stages of time.

Indeed, Yüan-wu said, "Here is now Hou-pai," but "Hou-pai," never hinders "Hou-hei."⁴⁰ It shows that Yüan-wu had such a free function as exchanges words according to another's ability. Some of his words are similar to Hsüan-sha's and others not. Apart from this, is a flame the Buddhas? Or are the Buddhas a flame? Where Hsüan-sha exchanged words, we can see his free function.

Hsüeh-fêng's words left no trace of exchanging words, either. But, nevertheless, we should know that some of Hsüan-sha's words were right and others not; or that some of Hsüeh-fêng's were uttered and others not.

Yüan-wu's words are also different from Hsüan-sha's and Hsüeh-fêng's. He said, "It means that the Buddhas expound the Law or that a raging flame fills the whole heaven," or "It means that the Law expounds the Buddhas or that the whole heaven is filled with a raging flame." His words are truly the light for latter-day trainees. Even if we don't know the meaning of this "raging flame," when it is wrapped in the whole heaven, there is no gap between the two. What the whole heaven wraps is a raging flame. What is the use of telling this from that?

Monks! You were born in this land, in space and time,

distant from India where Śākya-buddha was born. However, you have got a chance, glad to say, to hear the words “the whole heaven.” Though we have often heard that the Buddhas expound the Law, yet how long we have been troubled, not knowing that the Law expounds the Buddhas! Therefore, the Buddhas in the three stages of time are expounded by the Law or the Buddhas themselves throughout the three stages of time.

Now there is only the whole heaven which blows off the intertwining of ivies and wisteria-vines. With one word “heaven” Yüan-wu penetrated into the hearts of Hsüeh-fêng and Hsüan-sha just as Mañjuśrī saw through the silence of Vi-malakīrti. Therefore, the Law expounds, practises and realizes the Buddhas; the Buddhas expound the Law, train themselves, and become enlightened. All this is the *gyōbutsu-igi*. Through all ages and worlds those who have grasped or realized this use it respectfully.

Time : The middle of October, 1241

Place : The Kōshō-ji temple

Notes :

1. Skt., *saṃbhoga-kāya*. The reward-body of a Buddha. The Buddha's body produced when he realizes enlightenment as a result of the vows taken and practice pursued in time of a *bodhisattva*.
2. The Buddhas transforming themselves to save all sentient beings.
3. The Buddhas using their own wisdom.
4. The Buddhas giving others their own wisdom.
5. Skt., *dharmakāya*. The Law-body. The absolute nature of the Buddha-mind, which transcends personality and is iden-

tical with the Truth. It is considered to be the highest aspect of the threefold body of the Buddha.

6. See note 1.
7. Scholars who expound the meaning of *sūtras*.
8. Scholars who expound the meaning of philosophical treatises dealing with various aspects of Buddhist doctrine.
9. Skt., *Saddharmapundarika-sūtra*. The *sūtra* of the Lotus of the Supreme Law, commonly known as the *Lotus Sūtra*. This *sūtra*, composed of eight sections divided into twenty-seven or twenty-eight chapters, is one of the most important documents of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. It teaches that perfect enlightenment was achieved by the Buddha many *kalpas* ago, and that even followers of *Hinayāna* are able to attain perfect enlightenment.
10. 637-712. The Buddhist heir of Hung-jen, and the sixth Chinese patriarch. He is said to have realized enlightenment when pounding rice while training on Mount Huang-mêi.
11. 677-744. One of the prominent disciples of Hui-nêng. He is considered to be the seventh Chinese *Zen* patriarch.
12. Practice and enlightenment are practice and enlightenment alone.
13. Hung-chi. 1091-1157. A Buddhist heir of Tsu-chin.
14. A dream and a hallucination are naturally a dream and a hallucination. So we need not make a mistake by adding the conceptional dream and hallucination to them.
15. When mistakes are mistakes alone, there is no mistake.
16. The four continents surrounding Mt. *Sumeru*: (1) *Pūrvavideha*, (2) *Aparagodānīya*, (3) *Uttarakuru*, and (4) *Jambudvīpa*.
17. Birth is birth; death is death.
18. Originally this meant a disciple of the Buddha Śākyamuni. In *Mahāyāna* Buddhism it refers to a person in the *Hinayāna* tradition who exerts himself to attain the stage of *arhat* by observing 250 precepts in the case of monks and 348 precepts in the case of nuns. From the *Mahāyāna* point of view this is a lower stage than that of a *bodhisattva*.
19. One who has realized enlightenment through independent study, without the guidance of a master. Like the *arhat*, he does not attempt to save others.

20. The entire universe as the undisguised manifestation of truth.
21. The sixth of the seven past Buddhas, and the Buddha immediately preceeding Śākyamtni; He was born in Vārānasi as a Brāhman and became enlightened under a *nyagrodha* tree, and had 2,000 disciples. Also the third of the 1,000 Buddhas in the present *kalpa* of time.
22. The fourth heaven in the World of Desire where *Ekajātīpratibaddha-bodhisattvas* live. Śākya-buddha is Maitreya-buddha there.
23. High levels that a *bodhisattva* attains through a long practice.
24. There is no gap between staying and going. To stay and go without any trace of having done so.
25. The Worlds of Desire, Form and Spirit.
26. This means that the whole universe is as clear and perfect as a brilliant jewel.
27. A long staff. Originally used by mendicant monks during their travels in search of the Law. Now used only at the ordination of the new abbot.
28. The remote future.
29. The Buddha's eye.
30. 822-908. A Buddhist heir of Tê-shan Hsüan-chieh.
31. 835-908. A Buddhist heir of Hsüeh-fêng.
32. -1135. A Buddhist heir of *Fa-yen*.
33. A skillful robber Hou-pai was deceived into losing his dress by a woman robber named Hou-hei. This means that there is no difference in ability between Hsüeh-fêng and Hsüan-sha.
34. A *bodhisattva* of supreme wisdom. Regarded as the idealization or personification of the Buddha's wisdom. which is embodied in *zazen*.
35. A rich layman in the same age as the Buddha. It is said that he kept silent after a long discussion with Mañjuśrī.
36. Hsüeh-fêng, Hsüan-sha, and Yüan-wu.
37. Ch., Pai-chang Huai-hai. 720-814. A Buddhist heir of Matsuo Tao-i. Famous for having written a two-section work on the regulations for monastic life known as the Pai-chang Ching-kuei.
38. This means that there is no gap between the two.

39. Skt., Mahāyāna. Literally, "Greater Vehicle." The northern of the two main branches of Buddhism. The southern branch, designated by Mahāyāna Buddhists as Hīnayāna, of "Lesser Vehicle," arose in southern India, whence it spread to Ceylon, Burma, Thai-land and Cambodia. (Hīnayāna adherents themselves prefer the term *Theravāda*, "Way of the Elders," as the designation for their form of Buddhism.) In Hīnayāna Buddhism one strives to become an *arhat*, that is, a person who has gained liberation by single-heartedly overcoming passion and ego. the Mahāyāna branch of Buddhism, on the other hand, spread from northern India to Tibet, Mongolia, China, Korea, and Japan. In contrast to Hīnayāna Buddhism, which tended to remain conservative and rigid, the Mahāyāna adapted itself to the needs of people of diverse racial and cultural back-grounds and varying levels of understanding. Its ideal became the *bodhisattva*, one who is ever ready to sacrifice himself in the interest of those lost in ignorance and despair even at the cost of his own supreme enlightenment.
40. Hou-pai (Hsüeh-fêng) is one with Hou-hei (Hsüan-sha) in ability.