

SYLLABUS: GTU/INSTITUTE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES -Spring, 2015

Instructor: Taigen Dan Leighton

Title: Topics in Buddhist Traditions of Japan: Teachings of Zen Master Dōgen

Course number: HRHS 8454 Online course

Course Description: The writings of Dōgen, 13th century Japanese Sōtō Zen founder, are a unique highpoint of Zen literature. Exploring profound Buddhist philosophical issues, Dōgen creatively used poetic language and wordplay to evocatively express the meaning of practice/ enlightenment, and to train his students who successfully established Sōtō Zen in Japan. We will do textual study of a selection of Dōgen's major writings, including teachings about meditation, nature mysticism, community life, koans (teaching stories), and Buddhist theories of temporality. After discussing background material on Dōgen, and several of the essays from one of Dōgen's major works, *Shōbōgenzō* (True Dharma Eye Treasury), we will focus on the short discourses to his students in *Dōgen's Extensive Record*, which demonstrate his teaching style and humor. We will consider the impact of Dōgen's various background sources, including the Chinese koan tradition, the Japanese poetic and aesthetic tradition, the East Asian Buddhist monastic tradition, and Mahayana sutras and bodhisattva lore. We will also explore how Dōgen's challenging writings relate to modern spiritual issues.

Texts:

Required:

Leighton, Taigen Dan. *Zen Questions: Zazen, Dōgen, and the Spirit of Creative Inquiry* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2011).

Cleary, Thomas, trans. *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen* (University of Hawaii Press, 1986).

Leighton, Taigen Dan, and Shohaku Okumura, trans. *Dōgen's Extensive Record: A Translation of Eihei Koroku* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2004).

There will also be required Additional Commentary included in Moodle or available Online for each week, some written and some audio, also listed in the syllabus below. These will consist of articles or Dharma talks by the instructor, or others, available online, most directly relating to the assigned reading by or about Dōgen, or in some cases related indirectly.

Optional, but Recommended:

NOTE: None of the following are required for this course, but are recommended for any who wish to read further.

Kim, Hee Jin. *Eihei Dōgen: Mystical Realist* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2004). First published in 1975, and still one of the best overall introductions to Dōgen's teaching and philosophy.

Leighton, Taigen Dan, *Visions of Awakening Space and Time: Dōgen and the Lotus Sutra* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Demonstrates Dōgen's grounding in the Mahayana bodhisattva tradition, especially with the Lotus Sutra. Also provides detailed discussion of Dōgen's exploration of issues of space and temporality, especially relevant for weeks 3 and 5.

Heine, Steven, *Did Dōgen Go to China?: What He Wrote and When He Wrote It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). A very helpful, nuanced break-down of the phases of Dōgen's teaching career, debunking stereotypical views of "early" and "late" Dōgen.

Waddell, Norman and Masao Abe. *The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002). A good introduction to major essays in Shōbōgenzō, as accessory to the required Cleary volume. Includes the important “Buddha Nature” essay.

Heine, Steven, *Dōgen and the Koan Tradition* (State University of New York Press, 1994). An extremely important, academic study on the way koan practice is elaborated by Dōgen in his panoramic approach, different but equally valid as the more familiar huatou koan curriculum developed in Rinzai Zen.

Leighton, Taigen & Shohaku Okumura, trans. *Dōgen's Pure Standards for the Zen Community* (State University of New York Press, 1996). Dōgen's primary writings on the monastic community practice and its meaning, some of which is surprisingly relevant to modern lay practice.

Heine, Steven, editor, *Dōgen: Textual and Historical Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). A good collection of academic essays on Dōgen from various

Tanahashi, Kazuaki, ed. and trans. *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen*. (N.Y.: North Point Press, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1985). Another good introduction to major essays in Shōbōgenzō, as accessory to the required Cleary volume. This and two other early anthologies of translations edited by Tanahashi are included in his landmark complete Shōbōgenzō: *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Zen Master Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*, Shambhala, 2010.

Additional Assigned Readings may be provided for selected weeks online or through the Moodle system.

Additional Research Bibliography [OPTIONAL] at end of syllabus.

Weekly Topics and Assignments:

1. Week of February 2

Introduction to Dōgen's practice teachings.

Assignment:

Leighton, *Zen Questions: Zazen, Dōgen, and the Spirit of Creative Inquiry*, Part 1, pp. ix-x, 3-57.

Additional Commentary [Audio]:

“Dōgen's Four Basic Teachings”

http://audio.ancientdragon.org/20100124DT_ADZG_dogens_four_basic_teachings.mp3

Kaz Tanahashi, “My Life with Dōgen”

http://audio.ancientdragon.org/20110710DT_ADZG_my_life_with_dogen.mp3

2. Week of February 9

Dōgen's Dharma teachings, and monastic practice.

Assignment:

Leighton, *Zen Questions*, Part 2, pp. 61-108; from Part 4, “Gary Snyder and Wild Practice,” pp. 213-220.

Additional Commentary:

“Dōgen's Approach to Training in Eihei Koroku”

http://www.ancientdragon.org/dharma/articles/Dogen_approach_training_eihei_koroku

[okay to skip the middle section, “*Demonstrations of Practice Clarified in the Dawn Wind*” -repeated in the Additional Commentary from *Zen Questions* for Week 11.]

3. Week of Feb. 16

Fukanzazengi “Universal Recommendations for Zazen” and “Self-Fulfillment Samadhi”
Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen’s Extensive Record*, Fukanzazengi, pp. 532-535.

“Self-Fulfillment Samadhi” (Jijuyu Zammai)

<http://ancientdragon.org/dharma/chants/#the_self_fulfillment_samadhi>; and

Additional Commentary:

“Dōgen’s Cosmology of Space and the Practice of Self-Fulfillment”:

http://www.ancientdragon.org/dharma/articles/Dogens_cosmology_of_space

[Optional, but recommended:]

Kuge “Flowers in the Sky”

Cleary, *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen*, pp. 64-75.

4. Week of Feb. 23

Genjokoan “Actualization of the Fundamental Point” and “One Bright Pearl”

Assignment:

Cleary, *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen*, pp. 29-35, 57-63.

Dōgen’s “Actualizing the Fundamental Point” (Genjokoan):

<http://ancientdragon.org/dharma/chants/#genjo_koan>;

Additional Commentary [Audio]:

Shohaku Okumura, “Genjokoan: Realization and Delusion Defined”

http://audio.ancientdragon.org/20110326aDT_ADZG_genjokoan_3.mp3

Shohaku Okumura, “Genjokoan: Dropping Body-Mind”

http://audio.ancientdragon.org/20110326pDT_ADZG_genjokoan_4.mp3

5. Week of March 2

Uji “Being Time” and Shoji “Birth and Death”

Cleary, *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen*, pp. 102-110, 121-123.

Additional Commentary:

Leighton, *Zen Questions*, “Meeting Our Ancestors of the Future,” pp. 243-253.

“Dōgen’s Appropriation of Lotus Sutra Ground and Space” [especially note the section mid-article on the Inconceivable Lifespan and Dōgen Time]:

http://www.ancientdragon.org/dharma/articles/Dogens_appropriation_of_lotus_sutra_ground_and_space

6. Week of March 9

Sansuikyo “Mountains and Waters Sutra”

Assignment:

Cleary, *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen*, pp. 87-101.

Additional Commentary [Audio]:

“Mountains and Waters Sutra” [from part 3 of 3-week telecourse on Dogen]

http://audio.ancientdragon.org/20130706SM_ADZG_dogen_explorations_of_reality_3.mp3

7. Week of March 16

Introduction to Eihei Koroku; and Bodhisattva background, “The Four Integrative Methods of Bodhisattvas.”

Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen’s Extensive Record*, pp. 1-47.

Cleary, *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen*, pp. 116-120.

Additional Commentary:

“The Lotus Sutra as a Source for Dōgen's Discourse Style” [includes comments on Dharma Hall Discourses 69, 70, 24, 88, & 123 from vol. 1; and on 229 from vol. 3]:

http://www.ancientdragon.org/dharma/articles/lotus_sutra_and_Dogen

[NOTE: March 23-March 29 is GTU Spring Recess]

8. Week of March 30

Eihei Koroku vol.1

Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen’s Extensive Record*, pp. 75-150.

Additional Commentary:

Leighton, *Zen Questions*, “Almost Not Confused by Self,” pp. 135-142. [comment on Dharma Hall Discourse 39]

MIDTERM EXAM DUE

9. Week of April 6

Eihei Koroku vol. 8: Informal Meetings and Dharma Words

Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen’s Extensive Record*, pp. 473-532.

Additional Commentary:

Leighton, *Zen Questions*, “Practice Realization Expression,” pp. 165-176.

10. Week of April 13

Eihei Koroku vol. 2-3

Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen’s Extensive Record*, pp. 151-251.

Additional Commentary:

Leighton, *Zen Questions*, “Speak Softly, Speak Softly,” pp. 111-123.

11. Week of April 20

Eihei Koroku vol. 4

Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen’s Extensive Record*, pp. 253-310.

Additional Commentary:

Leighton, *Zen Questions*, “Dōgen's five-part Approach to Zazen,” pp. 125-134.

12. Week of April 27

Eihei Koroku vol. 5

Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen's Extensive Record*, pp. 311-369.

Additional Commentary:

“Dōgen's Zazen as Other-Power Practice”:

http://www.ancientdragon.org/dharma/articles/Dogens_zazen_as_other_power_practice

13. Week of MAY 4

Eihei Koroku vol. 6

Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen's Extensive Record*, pp. 371-420.

Additional Commentary:

Leighton, *Zen Questions*, “Readying the Ox,” pp. 143-154. [comment on Dharma Hall Discourses 131, 423]

14. Week of May 11

Eihei Koroku vol. 7

Assignment:

Leighton and Okumura, *Dōgen's Extensive Record*, pp. 421-472.

Additional Commentary:

Leighton, *Zen Questions*, “Dropping Body-Mind, and the Pregnant Temple Pillars,” pp. 155-163. [comment on Dharma Hall Discourse 501].

15. Week of May 18

Review; General Discussion

Assignment: Work on Final Paper

FINAL PAPERS DUE May 31.

Course Objectives:

- 1) The class will do a close reading of the teachings of Zen master Dōgen as well as modern commentaries on Dōgen, and students will gain familiarity with major issues and approaches in Dōgen's Zen teaching.
- 2) We will consider the philosophical and soteriological implications of spiritual teachings proposed by Dōgen.
- 3) We will discuss the practical applications of Zen approaches described, and their relevance to contemporary spiritual concerns.

Grading: Your final grade will be based:

- 1) 35% on participation in online class discussion.
- 2) 30% on the 6 page midterm exam, due by end of week 8.

3) 35% on a 10 page final research paper, due by the end of the week following week 15, i.e. by May 31.

Auditors:

Auditors are welcome to this course. Auditors are expected to participate fully in the online discussion each week, but will not do the midterm exam or final paper. Auditors are expected to have some Buddhist studies or practice background, as for enrolled students. Consult IBS registrar for details on auditing fees and registration.

Note on Reading Dōgen:

When trying to read Dōgen, I recommend first just reading through the material, not trying to understand in first reading, but letting his discourse wash over you like a hot bath or a symphony. Please note the places that especially catch you, that are evocative, challenging, unsettling, or inspiring. Go back to those passages and spend time with them.

This will especially be necessary when reading through the many short Dharma hall discourses in Eihei Koroku, but also for the more elaborated Shōbōgenzō essays. Find and consider the sections that interest you, and write about those in your postings to the online discussion.

Participation in online discussion:

Each student will contribute at least two postings and no more than five postings each week on the class material for that week. Each posting should be no more than three paragraphs or one page long. These maximum limitations of size and numbers of postings are intended to encourage you to consider carefully your inquiries or responses, and to express digested reflection. Please try to write as clearly as possible. Go back and read your posting before submitting it, to make sure it is clear. These suggested limitations may be shifted during the course at the instructor's discretion. Feel free to respond also to the material provided in the "Additional Commentaries," along with responses to the basic readings. These may sometimes directly concern the assigned reading from Dōgen, and sometimes address tangentially related material.

Your messages can include questions or comments about material in the reading, or responses to other students' questions or comments. It is encouraged to express varying viewpoints, but please do so with respectfulness to all other participants. As instructor I will respond to comments and questions at least two or three times each week.

You may separately send questions about class procedures or protocols, either in the Moodle venue, or individually to the instructor at: <taigen108@gmail.com>.

Midterm Test: This will consist of three two-page essay responses to be selected from five questions.

Final Research Paper:

Your essays should express your critical response or inquiry into a particular, focused aspect of the material presented in the class texts, clearly articulating your point of view. Comparative papers are welcome, but should focus a clear majority of comment on the material from the class. It is not required that you consult any other than the required reading in the syllabus, but an additional research Bibliography is provided for those interested. Papers should be 10 pages double-spaced, plus conventional forms of notes and bibliography.

FINAL PAPERS DUE MAY 31.

NOTE: PREREQUISITE FOR THIS CLASS IS SOME BACKGROUND IN BUDDHIST STUDIES OR PRACTICE.

I am available for consultation, and can be reached via e-mail at: taigen108@gmail.com

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Additional Research Bibliography [**OPTIONAL**]:

{NOTE: Some of the below works are out of print in the editions cited, but may have been reprinted, especially by Shambhala or Wisdom Publications. Check Amazon or other listings for possible newer editions.]

Abe, Masao. *Zen and Western Thought*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985.

Abé, Ryuichi, and Peter Haskel, trans. with essays. *Great Fool: Zen Master Ryokan; Poems, Letters, and Writings*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996.

Aitken, Robert. *The Mind of Clover: Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics*. S.F.: North Point Press, 1984.

Bodiford, William M. *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: Kuroda Institute, University of Hawaii Press, 1993.

Cleary, Thomas, trans. *The Book of Serenity*. Boston: Shambhala, 1990.

_____, trans. *The Five Houses of Zen*. Shambhala, 1997.

_____, trans. *Minding Mind: A Course in Basic Meditation*. Boston: Shambhala, 1995

_____, trans. "*Shōbōgenzō*": *Zen Essays by Dōgen*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986.

_____, trans. *Transmission of Light: Zen in the Art of Enlightenment by Zen Master Keizan*. New York: North Point Press, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1990.

Cook, Francis. *How to Raise an Ox: Zen Practice as Taught in Zen Master Dōgen's "Shōbōgenzō"*. Los Angeles: Center Publications, 1978.

_____. trans. *The Record of Transmitting the Light: Zen Master Keizan's Denkoroku*. Los Angeles: Center Publications, 1991.

_____. *Sounds of Valley Streams: Enlightenment in Dōgen's Zen*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

Dumoulin, Heinrich. *Zen Buddhism: A History. Volume 2 Japan*. N.Y.: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990.

Faure, Bernard. *Visions of Power: Imagining Medieval Japanese Buddhism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Foster, Nelson, and Jack Shoemaker, editors. *The Roaring Stream: A New Zen Reader*. Hopewell, N.J.: The Ecco Press, 1996.

Heine, Steven, *Did Dōgen Go to China?: What He Wrote and When He Wrote It*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

_____. *Dōgen and the Koan Tradition: A Tale of Two "Shōbōgenzō" Texts*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

_____, editor. *Dōgen: Textual and Historical Studies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

_____. *Shifting Shape, Shaping Text: Philosophy and Folklore in the Fox Koan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999.

_____. *The Zen Poetry of Dōgen*. Tuttle, 1997.

Heine, Steven, and Dale Wright, editors, *The Koan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

- _____. editors, *Zen Ritual: Studies of Zen Buddhist Theory in Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Kasulis, Thomas P. *Zen Action/ Zen Person*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1981.
- Kim, Hee Jin, trans. *Flowers of Emptiness: Selections from Dōgen's "Shōbōgenzō."* Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1985.
- LaFleur, William R., ed. *Dōgen Studies*. Honolulu: Kuroda Institute, University of Hawaii Press, 1985.
- _____. *The Karma of Words: Buddhism and the Literary Arts in Medieval Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.
- Leighton, Taigen Dan. *Faces of Compassion: Classic Bodhisattva Archetypes and Their Modern Expression*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2003.
- _____. *Songs for the True Dharma Eye: Verse Comments on Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*. San Francisco: Browser Books Publishing, 2007.
- _____. *Visions of Awakening Space and Time: Dōgen and the Lotus Sutra*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Leighton, Taigen Dan, and Shohaku Okumura, trans. *Dōgen's Pure Standards for the Zen Community: A Translation of Eihei Shingi*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.
- Leighton, Taigen Daniel with Yi Wu, trans. *Cultivating the Empty Field: The Silent Illumination of Zen Master Hongzhi*. Boston: Tuttle and Co., 2000. (Originally published by N.Y.: North Point Press, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1991).
- Nishijima, Gudo Wafu and Chodo Cross. *Master Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*. Books 1-4. Woods Hole, Mass.: Windbell Publications, 1994-97.
- Okumura, Shohaku, and Taigen Daniel Leighton, trans. *The Wholehearted Way: A Translation of Eihei Dōgen's "Bendowa" with Commentary by Kosho Uchiyama Roshi*. Boston: Charles Tuttle and Co., 1997.
- Okumura, Shohaku, and Thomas Wright, trans. *Opening the Hand of Thought*. N.Y.: Arkana; Viking Penguin Inc., 1994.
- Snyder, Gary. *Mountains and Rivers Without End*. Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 1996.
- _____. *The Practice of the Wild*. N.Y.: North Point Press, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1990.
- Stambaugh, Joan, *Impermanence is Buddha Nature*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990.
- Suzuki, Shunryu. *Not Always So: Practicing the True Spirit of Zen*. N.Y.: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002.
- _____. *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. New York: Weatherhill, 1970.
- Tanahashi, Kazuaki, ed. and trans. *Treasury of the True Dharma Eye: Zen Master Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*. Boston: Shambhala, 2010.
- Waddell, Norman and Masao Abe. *The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002.
- Warner, Jisho, Shohaku Okumura, John McRae, and Taigen Dan Leighton, editors. *Nothing is Hidden: Essays on Zen Master Dōgen's Instructions for the Cook*. New York: Weatherhill, 2001.
- Watson, Burton, trans. *Ryokan. Zen Monk-Poet of Japan*. N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1977.
- Williams, Paul. *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*. London: Routledge, 1989.