



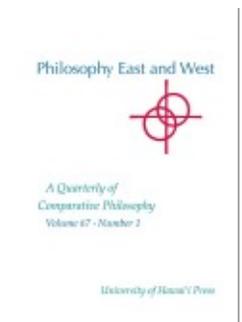
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Dōgen Zenji no shisō-teki kenkyū □□□□□□□□□□ (Studies in Dōgen Zenji's thought) by Tsunoda T

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Philosophy East and West, Volume 67, Number 1, January 2017, pp. 274-277
(Review)

Published by University of Hawai'i Press
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/pew.2017.0019>



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BOOK REVIEWS

Dōgen Zenji no shisō-teki kenkyū 道元禅師の思想的研究 (Studies in Dōgen Zenji's thought). By Tsunoda Tairyū 角田泰隆. Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2015. Pp. 672. 25000 ¥, ISBN 978-4-393-11317-2.



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Tsunoda Tairyū (b. 1957) of Komazawa University is one of the foremost authorities on *shūgaku* 宗学, or “Sōtō theology,” in Japanese academia, and a leading philologist of Dōgen’s writings, in particular the *Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼藏 (Treasury of the True Dharma Eye). Tsunoda’s ongoing investigation of Dōgen’s philosophy culminated in the year 2015 when his extensive study *Dōgen Zenji no shisō-teki kenkyū* 道元禅師の思想的研究 (Studies in Dōgen Zenji’s thought) was published by Shunjūsha.

Tsunoda opens by introducing the fundamental methodologies that constitute Sōtō theological scholarship. The first is *sankyū* 参究, or scholarship based on one’s faith in the tradition. With *sankyū*, Tsunoda argues, the standpoint of faith renders scholarship as more of a subjective rather than a critical endeavor (p. 5). The second methodological approach is *kenkyū* 研究, or scientific research. This point of view, Tsunoda proposes, is inherently more objective than the *sankyū* method, and tends to depart from sectarian dispositions (pp. 5–6). Nonetheless, these two paradigms are constantly in dialogue, and he sees both as representing the vital efforts of the Sōtō school in continuously interpreting the philosophical aspects of Dōgen’s Zen (pp. 6–7) and making them relevant down through the generations.

To illustrate these aspects within the history of Sōtō hermeneutics, Tsunoda presents a detailed review of the various sectarian efforts and their successful integration with modern scholastic approaches. He goes on to define *sankyū* in terms of *dentō-shūgaku* 伝統宗学 or “traditional theology,” and *kenkyū* as modern scientific research, proposing that the integration between these two methodologies began toward the end of the Edo period (1603–1868), ultimately continuing to this day. He singles out the works of Etō Sokuō 衛藤即應 (1888–1958) as a clear example of this merger, and identifies his own methodology as continuing this fruitful, though challenging, admixture of *sankyū* and *kenkyū*—of faith questioned by critical inspection (pp. 21–22).

Yet another important issue that arises in the introduction is the historical and cultural prism applied to the study of Dōgen. Here, Tsunoda adopts a nontraditional

approach, arguing that the place of Dōgen’s philosophy within the history of Buddhism should be examined through looking into Dōgen’s own understanding of the evolution of the Dharma—and his place within it. Indeed, the manner in which this subjective stance is reflected can be found in Dōgen’s own writings and sermons. Tsunoda claims that clarifying Dōgen’s own point of view regarding his place within the Dharma is no less crucial than providing an analysis of the historical and cultural context of his life (“*Dōgen Zenji ga toraeta bukkyōshi no kaimei mo jūyō de aru*” 道元禅師が捉えた仏教史の解明も重要である—p. 50). While such analysis is indeed essential, Tsunoda chooses to begin with Dōgen the person before moving on to providing “external” context (pp. 23–24).

The remaining sections of the introduction consist of an analysis of the *Shōbōgenzō* collection. Tsunoda presents a close inspection of the different editorial resolutions in the 75-fascicle, 60-fascicle, 12-fascicle, and 28-fascicle versions, examining the distinct *Shōbōgenzō* editions compiled during the Edo period. Among these are the 89-fascicle edition compiled by Manzan Dōhaku 円山道白 (1636–1715), and the 95-fascicle edition compiled by Eiheiji’s thirty-fifth abbot Hanjō Kōzen 版橋晃全 (1627–1693), which was established as the “Head-Temple Edition” by the fiftieth abbot Gentō Sokuchū 玄透即中 (1729–1807) (pp. 51–126).

The crux of Tsunoda’s study begins in a section titled “The Core of Dōgen’s Zen” (*Dōgen Zen no kakushin* 道元禅の核心). Here, he discusses Dōgen’s “tremendous doubt” (*dai-gimon* 大疑問) as a young student of the Japanese Tendai School, and how it was pacified during his stay in China. Tsunoda claims that while Dōgen’s doubt caused him to question the necessity for actual practice, his resolution of this doubt seems to be based upon the affirmation of practice as realization, especially through “sitting Zen” (*zazen* 坐禅). He then examines Dōgen’s critiques of several “original awakening” (*honkaku* 本覚) paradigms, which appear in his diary from his stay in China (*Hōkyōki* 寶慶記). Tsunoda’s analysis suggests that while *honkaku* can indeed be understood as leading toward the abandonment of actual practice, Dōgen saw it as a gateway toward the very affirmation of practice. Tsunoda terms this as Dōgen’s “affirmative philosophy” (*kōtei-suru shisō* 肯定する思想), and claims that it is reflected in his consistent emphasis on “just sitting” (*shikantaza* 只管打坐) and the importance of one’s deportment (*igi* 威儀). Tsunoda sees these as indications of “absolute affirmation” (*zettai kōtei* 絶対肯定) of not only the practice but of reality itself (p. 586).

From here begins a detailed inspection by Tsunoda throughout chapters 1 to 9. The first chapter, “Dōgen’s View of Practice” (*Shūshōkan* 修証観), challenges the traditionalist characterization of Dōgen’s characterization of practice as “wondrous practice rooted in innate realization” (*honshō myōshū* 本証妙修), and proposes to define it under the categories of “oneness of practice and realization” (*shūshō ittō* 修証一等) and “the dropping of body and mind” (*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落) (p. 162). Also, Tsunoda clarifies the nuances between *satoru* (覚 and 悟) and *shō* 証, the terminologies by which Dōgen expresses his understanding of the very experience of awakening. While the former indicates some sort of a religious “understanding” and

a spiritual breakthrough, the latter indicates a realization that *is* practice. For Tsunoda, Dōgen was awakened to the realization of the practice that is Buddha (*hotoke no arikata o kaku* 仏のあり方を覚) (p. 229).

This analysis continues into the second chapter, “On the Path of Practice” (*Shūdō-ron* 修道論), where Tsunoda examines Dōgen’s understanding of *shikantaza* and “nonthinking” (*hishiryō* 非思量). By focusing on the dialectics between the notion of “becoming a Buddha” (*jōbutsu* 成仏) and Dōgen’s view of realization, Tsunoda maintains that the oneness of practice and realization does not negate future results, but suggests that these eventual results are rooted in one’s present realization that practice is already “one” with them (pp. 297–307).

The third chapter, “Dōgen’s View of the World” (*Dōgen no sekaikan* 道元の世界観), discusses the affinities between the “Genjōkōan” fascicle, Dōgen’s understanding of “Mind” (*shin* 心), and the “Muchū Setsumu” fascicle. This analysis is further developed in the fourth chapter, “On the Theory of Time” (*Jikan-ron* 時間論), where Tsunoda looks into the terminologies of “being-time” (*uji* 有時), “the passage of time” (*kyōryaku* 経歴), “the negation of past and future” (*zengo saidan* 前後際断), and “the self as time” (*go-uji* 吾有時) (pp. 309–321).

In the fifth chapter, “Theory of Causality” (*Inga-ron* 因果論), Tsunoda discusses the “Daishūgyō” and the “Jinshin Inga” fascicles. He claims that Dōgen does not affirm or deny causality, but rather presents us with a theory of “causality that goes beyond the very theory of causality” (*inga chōetsu no inga-ron* 因果超越の因果論) (p. 429). Tsunoda’s meditations on these metaphysics proceeds into the sixth chapter, “Theory of Buddha Nature” (*Busshō-ron* 仏性論), and the seventh chapter, “The Unity of Body and Mind and Rebirth” (*Shinjin ichinyo to rinne-setsu* 身心一如と輪廻説).

The last two chapters are especially intriguing as they inspect the pedagogical aspects of Dōgen’s thought. Chapter 8, “On Language and Expression” (*Gengo hyōgen* 言語表現), clarifies the vital difference between Dōgen’s apprehension of the nature of words and language (*gengo* 言語) and his emphasis on its performative essence (*dōtoku* 道得), a theme that continues into chapter 9, “Theory of Teaching” (*Kyōka-ron* 教化論).

The work concludes with three appendixes: (1) Dōgen’s movements while in Song China, (2) a reading in the *Fukanzazengi* and the *Gakudō yōjinshū*, and (3) a discussion of the relevance of Dōgen’s Zen in modern society.

In his concluding remarks, Tsunoda acknowledges that his study does not, of course, exhaust what could be said about Dōgen’s thought, pointing toward essential themes such as faith (*shin* 信), compassion (*jishi* 慈悲), wisdom (*chie* 智慧), and Dharma transmission (*shihō* 嗣法) as deserving further clarification (pp. 592–593). Nevertheless, his aim was to present the fruits of his continuing examination into the theoretical crux of Dōgen’s philosophy—a life’s work that is impressive in its scale and depth.

Yet even more than its unique scope, Tsunoda’s work stands out in clarifying the elusive interaction between Dōgen’s philosophy and the actual practice he

promoted. It would seem that for Tsunoda—indeed very much in line with his sectarian dispositions—the grand categories of “knowledge” and “experience” are understood as co-dependent, and equally vital, expressions of realization. He reveals the dynamic dialectics that lie between philosophy and action, theory and performance, within Dōgen’s philosophical writings and the hermeneutics that emerged from them. In this sense, the power of Tsunoda’s analysis lies in broadening our comprehension of the very categories of philosophy and experience in Dōgen’s Zen.

Throughout his research, Tsunoda remains loyal to the traditionalist *sankyū* approach, while still willing to address many materials in a critical fashion. In this sense, his methodological attempts resemble similar efforts made by contemporary Sōtō scholars such as the late Yoshizu Yoshihide, with his model for “Flexible Sōtō Theology” (*yasashii shūgaku* 優しい宗学), and Ishii Shūdō’s model of “New Sōtō Theology” (*Shin shūgaku* 新宗学).

In conclusion, *Dōgen Zenji no shisō-teki kenkyū* is a comprehensive and at times challenging, though rigorously detailed, philological work that enables the reader to closely survey the various aspects of Dōgen’s thought. Though clearly representative of current Sōtō hermeneutics, Tsunoda stretches the scope of his analysis by reaching for an understanding of Dōgen the philosopher, and not *only* Dōgen the founder.

It would have been intriguing, however, to observe Tsunoda’s comments and reflections on recent Western scholarly examinations of Dōgen—a perspective entirely missing from this excellent study. Two themes that are well studied in Western hermeneutics of Dōgen and are very much absent among *shūgaku* scholastics, including Tsunoda’s work, are Dōgen’s poetics and Zen aesthetics.

While Tsunoda does meticulously examine the role of language and performativity in the *Shōbōgenzō*, there is neither mention nor any consideration of Dōgen’s other poetic creations, such as the *tanka* and *kanshi* collections, not to mention the important *jōdō* sermons of the *Eihei Kōroku*. This only reinforces the feeling that while Tsunoda—indeed very much appropriately—describes his book as a study of Dōgen’s philosophy, one cannot but wonder whether it is not a study of the *Shōbōgenzō* philosophy.

This apparent separation between philosophy and aesthetics is but a private example of the differences in methodological frameworks that should be looked into, much in terms of dialogue, between *shūgaku* scholars and Western commentators of Dōgen. Of course, for various reasons—some easily justifiable—such East-West dialogue is rarely realized in current Japanese hermeneutics of Buddhist philosophy, and even less so in the circles of sectarian schools. So, while there is abundant merit and value in Tsunoda’s work for any Westerner capable of engaging with it, perhaps the next major challenge of Japanese Sōtō hermeneutics is in aspiring toward this (admittedly idealistic) broadening of the hermeneutical spectrum itself.