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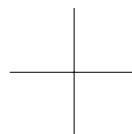
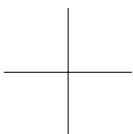
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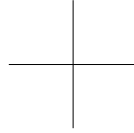
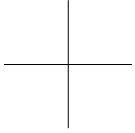
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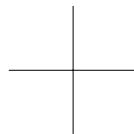
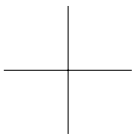
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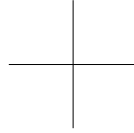
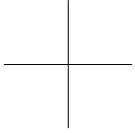
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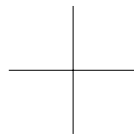
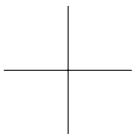
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who truly seek the TRUTH.

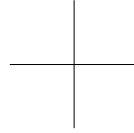
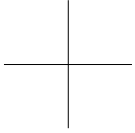




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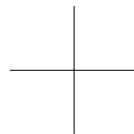
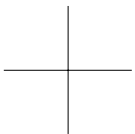




## SPECIAL NOTE FOR SECOND EDITION

A number of readers of the first edition have queried why Keizan stopped his account with Dōgen's Dharma heir Kōun Ejō and did not continue with his own story or that of his Master Tettsū Gikai, who was one of Ejō's Dharma heirs. While Keizan does not give any explicit reason, when he began composing the *Denkōroku* in 1300 Ejō was already dead, whereas his Master Gikai was still alive, and it would have been unseemly for Keizan to openly discuss his living Master's or his own spiritual experiences.

Rev. Hubert Nearman





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## INTRODUCTION

Having studied the *Denkōroku* for the best part of thirty years, I now feel that the present work is, for me, the definitive translation. The translation of the first fifteen chapters which has appeared in *Selling Water by the River* and *Zen Is Eternal Life* was made by one of my teachers and myself; I did not wholly agree with his translation when I was working with him. Thanks to the great scholarship of one of my disciples, Rev. Hubert Nearman (Dr. Mark J Nearman), who has made this very excellent translation, and working with him, I am now, as consultant and editor, able to present a book which I believe to be both spiritually and academically accurate.

This translation was, originally, not meant for anything other than private publication since I felt that non-monastic readers ran the risk of losing the exquisite underlying Truth that runs, like a jade thread through a golden needle, throughout the book; on second thoughts, however, I decided to go ahead with the publication since I believe that this translation can truly be of use to all even if they do not fully understand it.

This is not a book that the average person will understand, nor, for that matter, will many of the laity. It is a book that was written in the fourteenth century for members of the priesthood who were doing serious and sincere training and who wished to penetrate to the core of spirituality; as such, its meaning is beyond doctrines, practices, ideologies and theories of religion. I make no apology for the great length of some sentences which I know will possibly annoy some American readers, however, if one would understand the kaleidoscopic mind of the true Buddhist, one must be willing to hold a point in stillness whilst seeing all of its ramifications and facets without those ramifications and facets being broken up into separate

sentences in which the point has possibly been lost as a result of the interpolation of a full stop; one should understand that the style of this work is, quite possibly, not going to please the reader. There is no glossary with this translation; those who wish to read it should look for terms used herein to be found in the glossary of *Zen Is Eternal Life*, however, this book is much too advanced for people who have not thought deeply on the meaning of Buddhist teachings.

Keizan Zenji was born in Fukui Prefecture, in 1267, and entered Eihei-ji, under Koun Ejō, at the age of twelve; thereafter he studied under Tettsū Gikai of the same temple. Much of his life was spent in establishing temples, in different parts of Japan, until he became Chief Abbot of Daijō-ji, in Ishikawa Prefecture, where he spent ten years teaching. In 1321, at the request of Jōken-risshi, he became Chief Abbot of Shōgaku-ji; he renamed this temple Shōgaku-zan Sōji-ji. Sōji-ji, which was made an Imperial Prayer Temple under Emperor Gō-Daigo (1318–1339), became one of the two head temples of the Sōtō Zen Church of Japan, ranking as equal with Eihei-ji, and Keizan Zenji became the greatest of the Sōtō Zen Ancestors after Dōgen Zenji. The main ikon of the Sōtō Zen Church shows Shakyamuni Buddha at the top, in the centre, with Dōgen Zenji on His right hand and Keizan Zenji on His left, both being slightly below Him. Dōgen is regarded as the father of Sōtō Zen and Keizan as its mother.

Before Keizan's advent, Sōtō Zen had been confined to a few small monasteries in Japan, none of which were to be found in Kyoto, the spiritual centre of Japan at that time. As a result of Keizan's genius, Sōtō not only flourished but became the largest of all the Buddhist churches, eventually rivalling the Shin Church in later centuries.

Keizan Zenji's writings are highly intuitive. Whereas Dōgen was sometimes somewhat like a puritanical father constantly exhorting his children to the utmost sincerity in

their meditation, Keizan, as will be seen from the following translation, was an intuitive genius; Dōgen was also very intuitive but expressed it less directly. Keizan's works include the *Denkōroku* and the *Sankon-zazen-setsu*, as well as the majority, if not the entirety, of the ceremonies presently used in the Sōtō Zen Church. From the point of view of understanding Buddhism, however, his most important work, by far, is the *Denkōroku, The Record of the Transmission of the Light*.

The term 'Buddha' does not imply 'God' any more than do the terms 'It', 'Substance' and all the other terms we use such as 'Eternal' and 'Lord of the House'. 'It' and all the other terms should be understood as that which, within every fibre of our being, we know as THAT WHICH IS UNBORN, UNCHANGING, UNDYING, UNCREATED, frequently called IT. The doctrines of karma and anatta should be understood from the viewpoint of IT; in the case of the doctrine of karma this means 'No doer is there who does the deed nor is there one who feels the fruit' and, in the case of the doctrine of anatta, that there is no separate, egocentric self outside of the TRUE 'I', or TRUE SELF, which is the UNBORN, UNDYING, UNCREATED, UNCHANGING. Unfortunately there have been many muddles, especially in the West, as a result of an indiscriminate proliferation of terms used for the indefinable UNBORN, UNDYING, UNCREATED, UNCHANGING, without their being directly connected up to what the terms 'Buddha', 'It' and the others above and throughout this book refer to. Some scholars have been so afraid to try and give any definition whatsoever that the whole fabric of what Buddhism is teaching becomes unravelled. One must understand that one must not be afraid of words and one must not become a slave to them. All of the terms above are used to describe IT and can help us to acquire the kaleidoscopic mind that can allow us to know IT, in every sense of the word 'know', at all times, thus, with the above understanding of their meaning, the proliferation of terms for IT in this book is very

important. Because of a common misconception of the doctrine of anatta, the doctrine of no permanent, separate self, the doctrines of karmic consequence and that of rebirth often have been muddled badly; however, if it is understood that, at the very deepest level, there is no self that does the deed nor one that feels the fruit because there is no separate self when one is with the UNBORN, UNDYING, UNCREATED, UNCHANGING, then the muddle is much easier to unravel and we can put rebirth and karmic consequence in their proper perspective. Because of clinging to life as the world understands it, there is rebirth and a constant being born here and dying there. When we know for certain that there is no separate self because we are one with the UNBORN, UNDYING, UNCREATED, UNCHANGING, then there is, indeed, no rebirth on the wheel of becoming. Because of our memories of what happened in this lifetime, there is a time of birth and of actions of this lifetime and of deaths; however, when we understand our oneness with the UNBORN, UNDYING, UNCREATED, UNCHANGING, birth and death are merely positions in time as created by man; they are no longer of importance for to be one with the UNBORN, UNDYING, UNCREATED, UNCHANGING is to be in timelessness, eternity. It is we ourselves who cause our own rebirths, born here and dying there as Keizan says, and with us we take our good and bad karma. So long as there is guilt there is karmic repayment, as in the case of the monk and the mushrooms (see Chapter 17). When there is all-acceptance, although the law of karma is inexorable, there is, indeed, no doer who does the deed and no one that feels the fruit. This is to be one with the UNBORN, UNDYING, UNCREATED, UNCHANGING.

The following notes will explain my somewhat unusual use of type styles throughout this book.

1. In order to help the reader to know intuitively what I have spoken of above, and thus obtain the maximum

help from this book, I am taking the unusual step of using different type styles here and there throughout it. For example, the name of the Buddha prior to His realization was Siddhartha Gautama: in the first chapter (and only in the first chapter) the name “Gautama” will always be in ordinary style type; the name “Shakyamuni,” which refers only to the Buddha after His realization, will always be in italics in this chapter. One would think that the difference in the words would be sufficient to make the distinction between this spiritual understanding before and after His realization clear but experience has shown me that this is not so.

2. Verbs, when referring to the state of enlightenment, appear in bold italics and are used in past, present and future form thus:– “When *Shakyamuni saw, sees and will see* the morning star.” Whenever these three tenses are used in any verb the reader should understand that what is being spoken of here is eternity as it is understood in Buddhism. Buddhist eternity is looked at from a slightly different viewpoint to that of other religions; I have laboured long to try and find how to put this viewpoint into words and have come to the conclusion that the above is the best way I know. Past, present and future are eternity but be careful of getting caught up in the word “eternity;” eternity may be said to be movement in stillness and stillness in movement both backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards and in all directions.
3. When the word “I” appears in ordinary type face and within single quotes, it refers to the old, egocentric “I”; the apparent relationship of this “I” to the universe prior to the realization of enlightenment is expressed by “with”. When both “I” and “with” appear in italics they

refer to the non-egocentric state and an “at oneness” *with* the universe; I hesitate to say an “old I” and a “new I” because one immediately gets into opposites. The word “I”, appearing in one form and then in another, somehow helps me to understand the change that takes place.

4. When small capitals are used, such as in the passage “Truly I should not seek for the TRUTH from others...”, the word capitalized should be understood as pointing to an ultimate REALITY, IT, which is beyond the opposites, and for which there is really no suitable word. Such words indicate something in a flowing, third position. The use of small capitals also implies the presence of a certainty in which faith may be placed; an absolute certainty wherein there can be no shadow of the possibility of the shadow of the thought of a possibility of doubt, a certainty that can only come forth from the UNBORN, UNDYING, UNCREATED, UNCHANGING. Thus in any sentence in which a word in this type occurs, that word should be understood as the most important word and any word in the same sentence that is underlined should be understood as the next most important word.
5. The poem at the end of each chapter should, at some time, be read in sequence with all the others; they will then be perceived as one long, ROLLING OF THE WHEEL OF THE ETERNAL.

P. T. N. H. Jiyu-Kennett,  
Abbess,  
Shasta Abbey,  
Mt. Shasta, California.  
18th. January, 1993.

FOOTNOTE.

In Chapter 29 there appears the following passage:—

Bodaidaruma passed nine years without ever preaching in a harsh or critical manner and without being quick to point things out. After the nine years he handed down his ‘skin, flesh, bones and marrow’, respectively, to his four disciples Dōfuku, Dōiku, Sōji and Eka (C. Tao-fu, Tao-yü, Tsung-ch’ih and Hui-k’o) for he knew their spiritual potential had already ripened.

His disciple Sōji was a woman.

Although the Buddha made some disparaging remarks concerning women as a result of the importunity of his aunt, begging that women be admitted to the Order, it should be clearly understood that these remarks did not apply to the spiritual ability of women. In our Order’s books the term ‘monk’ has been used for both male and female members of the priesthood; this is because the term ‘nun’, as used in the Christian Church, in no way resembles what is implied in Buddhism as a female monk. Male and female monks trained together in the Mahayana temples of our Ancestors and Dōgen Zenji openly admitted that both men and women were spiritually equal. The Japanese for a male Buddhist priest is ‘soryo’ whilst the word for a female priest is ‘ni-soryo’, the ‘ni’ meaning ‘female’. The term ‘unsui’ is applied equally to both male and female trainees. Whilst I have no objection to using the term ‘nun’, and there are many who do so, it would seem to my mind to be a little unwise to use a term which, given what I understand to be the outlook with regard to women in the west as a result of the teachings of the Catholic Church, would seem to imply a spiritually second-class being. The Buddha made it very clear that the spiritual abilities of both men and women were identical:—

[Ānanda said,] “Lord, if women go forth from the home to the homeless life into discipline of Dhamma,

declared by the tathāgata, can they realize the fruit of Stream-winning, of Once-returning, of Non-returning and of Arahantship?”

[The Buddha said,] “They can, Ānanda.”

*The Book of the Gradual Sayings*  
(*Anguttara-Nikāya*), trans. E. M. Hare,  
(London: Pali Text Society, 1978),  
Vol. IV, p. 183.

There are female Zen masters; works are only now appearing on these female masters. Scholars, it would seem, have deliberately avoided speaking of them since they felt people would not be interested.

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[Rev. Master P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett died in 1996. For this edition, a few minor editorial changes have been made to her introduction. H.N.]



