

正法眼藏第五十七
Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma
Book 57

徧參
Extensive Study
Henzan

Translated by
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INTRODUCTION

This text is extant in two versions: one, included as book 57 in the seventy-five-fascicle redaction of the *Shōbōgenzō*, which is the version translated here; the other, similar but somewhat shorter, occurring as book 37 in the sixty-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō* collection, a translation of which can be found as an appendix below. Both versions bear colophons indicating that the work was produced in the autumn of 1243, at Yamashibu 禪師峰, a temple in Echizen (modern Fukui prefecture), where Dōgen delivered several *Shōbōgenzō* texts following his arrival from the capital in the summer of the same year.

The title theme of the essay, *henzan* (or *hensan*) is the traditional Chan practice of traveling widely to study with various masters. The essay opens with a conversation between two famous Tang-dynasty monks, Xuansha Shibeī 玄沙師備 (835-905) and his teacher, Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰義存 (822-908). Xuefeng suggests that his student undertake a trip of extensive study, but Xuansha remarks that the first Chan ancestor in China, Bodhidharma, never came to China and the second ancestor, Huike, never went to India.

In his comments on this conversation, which occupy the first half of the essay, Dōgen makes it clear that “extensive study” is not a matter of consulting widely but of penetrating the essential meaning of the buddha dharma — what he describes at one point as jumping into Bodhidharma’s eye and plucking it out. Extensive study is not about traveling from place to place but about understanding that, in the words of Xuansha, “all the worlds in the ten directions are the true human body.”

In the second half of the essay, Dōgen turns to an example of extensive study: the odd claim by Xuansha that he and the Buddha Śākyamuni studied together under “the Xie’s third boy in a fishing boat” — i.e., under Xuansha himself when he was boy who loved fishing. Here Dōgen’s comments focus on the notion that extensive study means studying together with another. He quotes a verse by his own master, Tiantong Rujing 天童如淨 (1163-1228), celebrating an assembly of friends with whom Rujing had trained, and goes on to cite the examples of famous Chinese monks who spent years of study with their teachers.

Finally, Dōgen concludes this brief text by invoking a favorite theme of his writing and a famous centerpiece of Sōtō Zen teaching: “Extensive study,” he says, “is just sitting and sloughing off body and mind.”

The translation here is based on the text appearing in Kawamura Kōdō 河村孝道, *Dōgen zenji zenshū* 道元禪師全集, volume 2 (1991), pp. 112-117. A less fully annotated version of the translation appears in *Dharma Eye* 24 (autumn 2009). Other English renderings can be found in Kōsen Nishiyama and John Stevens, *Shōbōgenzō*, volume 2 (1977), pp. 94-98; Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed., *Moon in a Dewdrop* (1985), pp. 197-202; Yuho Yokoi, *The Shobo-genzo* (1986), pp. 665-671; Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross, *Master Dogen's Shobogenzo*, Book 3 (1997), pp. 207-214; and Hubert Nearman, *Shōbōgenzō: The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching* (2007), pp. 718-726.