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正法眼藏第五十五
Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma
Book 55

十方
The Ten Directions
(*Jippō*)

Translated by
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INTRODUCTION

This fascicle of the *Shōbōgenzō* was composed late in 1243, at Kippōji 吉峰寺, the monastery in the province of Echizen (modern Fukui prefecture) where Dōgen resided following his departure from Heian-kyō in the summer of that year. It occurs as book 55 of the 75-fascicle redaction of the *Shōbōgenzō* and book 45 in the 60-fascicle redaction.

As its title indicates, this text focuses on several passages using the expression “the ten directions” (i.e., the four cardinal and four ordinal points, plus the zenith and nadir), a standard Buddhist locution for “in all directions,” “everywhere.” The discussion opens with comments on a reference, by the Buddha Śākyamuni, to “buddha lands of the ten directions.” Dōgen warns us not to think of the buddhas, their lands, and the ten directions as separate, much less to judge among the various buddhas — no doubt a criticism of those among his contemporaries who favored the western Pure Land of the Buddha Amitābha over our defiled Sahā realm of the Buddha Śākyamuni. He goes on to identify the ten directions with the “one direction,” or location, in which each thing occurs, and concludes, “the buddhas and buddha lands are not two . . . they are just the ten directions.”

The text then takes up a series of sayings, by the ninth-century Chan Master Changsha Jingcen 長沙景岑, that identify “all the worlds in the ten directions” with the eye, speech, and body of a monk, and with the “radiance of the self.” After commenting on two more Chan sayings, the work ends with the remark, “In sum, we just study that the living nose is the ten directions.”

This translation is based on the edition of the text in Kawamura Kōdō, *Dōgen zenji zenshū* 道元禪師全集, volume 2 (1993), pp. 92-97. Other English renderings of this work can be found in Kōsen Nishiyama and John Stevens, *Shōbōgenzō*, volume 1 (1975), pp. 103-107; Yuho Yokoi, *The Shobo-genzo* (1986), pp. 645-650; Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross, *Master Dogen's Shobogenzo*, Book 3 (1997), pp. 185-190; and Hubert Nearman, *The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching* (2007), pp. 696-702.