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Metaphysics as praxis : Rereading Dōgen's Metaphysics through Deleuzian pragmatism and Pratīyasamutpāda

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Cover Page



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GLOSSARY

Buddha-nature: Concept that originally meant an individual's ability or potential of realizing enlightenment. The concept later developed a largely ontological significance when the idea came to include the connotation as an individual-essence equated to the primordialily undefiled Tathāta

Constant-abiding (Jojuū): Hongaku idea that each and every phenomenon is already "enlightened" in virtue of its inclusion within the totality of Tathāta or the primordialily enlightened realm without having to change or transform itself.

Dharma-position (Hōi): Dōgen's idea that each moment in time inhabits a singular position within the total movement of phenomenal reality (Total-function).

Dhātu-vāda: Sanskrit neologism created by Matsumoto designating philosophical views founded on an ontological and/or epistemological 'ground.'

Heterogenesis: Deleuzian term designating how all concepts must first presuppose a wider worldview or cosmological framework within which that concept can be understood as a valid proposition. This implies that concepts do not 'represent' reality, but are an intrinsic system in which the relationship between transcendental concepts which conditions subordinate concepts (e.g. Platonic Ideas / physical reality) are not unilaterally 'representational,' but in effect only possible as each other's prerequisite and precondition.

Hongaku-shisō (Original Enlightenment): Sino-Japanese Buddhist doctrine claiming that all existence is primordialily "enlightened" regardless of practicing or learning the Buddha's teachings.

Jiji-muge-hokkai: Tendai/Huayen Buddhist concept translated as "metaphysical dimension of the unobstructed mutual interpenetration among all things and events." Designates the nature of Tathāta or the Dharma-realm as a metaphysical dimension where each and every other phenomenon exist by causal interdependence thereby forming one beginning-less and endless web of being. Jiji-muge-hokkai can be seen as the consequence of the constant-abiding nature of all phenomena.

Mujyō-seppo: Hongaku idea that non-sentient aspects of reality are 'pure' and 'perfectly' enlightened while sentient beings, although also originally enlightened, are considered qualitatively "less" or far from that "original" state due to their entanglement in discriminative thought. Therefore, Mujyō-seppo claims that sentient beings can only attain "enlightenment" by virtue of being 'taught' enlightenment from the totality of non-sentient reality.

Prajñā: In Buddhism, this is the human faculty of understanding pertaining to analytical and discriminative thought. It is necessary as the basic ability to analyze one's own experience of self and world by applying pratīyasamutpāda to the understanding of one's process of cognition, reaction, habit, etc. This is pursued in order to grasp the cause of one's suffering and to dismantle self-centredness for the sake of cultivating compassion. Prajñā also involves an intuitive intelligence that is believed to grow in response to one's progress in analysis and compassion.

Pratīyasamutpāda: A fundamental doctrine in Buddhism designating all of experienced reality as a product of the process of cause and effect.

Shushō-Ittō: Dōgen's term often interpreted as the "unity (or equality) of practice and enlightenment." However, since this interpretation implies Hongaku-shisō, the current study translates it as 'Practice-confirmation' meaning that, "to practice the Buddha-Dharma (i.e. pratīyasamutpāda) and to confirm the function, effectivity and validity of pratīyasamutpāda is one and the same act."

Skandhas (Five Aggregates): Term utilized in Buddhist phenomenology denoting components of experience. Our experience of ‘self’ and the ‘world’ are considered an effect of the causal process happening amongst the skandhas. The five skandhas include: 1) ‘Form’ (*rūpa*) or reality as it seems to be constituted by matter. 2) Physical or mental ‘sensations’ (*vedanā*) as experienced through the six sensing faculties including eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. 3) ‘Perception’ (*saṃjñā*) or the thought process which associates experience with knowledge and formulates ideas out of experience. 4) ‘Mental formations’ (*samskāra*) which are conditioned or habituated responses formed from past experience. 5) ‘Consciousness’ (*viññāna*) by which is meant mere sensitivity or the neutral mind-field on which the previous four skandhas interact.

Svabhāva: Sanskrit Buddhist term designating the non-Buddhist ontological view that reality intrinsically exists by its own nature and therefore independent of causality. This is considered antithetical to the Buddha’s teaching of no-abiding-self and impermanence. The correct view implying the ‘emptiness’ of ‘essence’ on the other hand is called **asvabhāva**.

Tathātā: Buddhist concept often translated as “thusness” or “suchness” originally designated an enlightened person or the Buddha himself. This eventually came to include an ontological connotation as the ‘true-nature’ of reality in the form of an ‘enlightened’ and pure metaphysical reality prior to concepts.

Total-function (Zenki): Dōgen’s idea that everything is fulfilling a singular and indispensable function within the totality of phenomenal reality and that each function happen by virtue of its interdependence to the function of each and every other phenomenon.

Total-exertion (Gūjin): Dōgen’s idea that everything exerts its own functional abilities to its fullest within the web of Total-function. Every fully exerted activity is a convergent point of Totally-functioning reality. For the follower of Buddhism this means exerting oneself without reserve on spiritual practice as if nothing else is of higher concern.

Twelve Nidānas: Translated as “The twelve-fold chain of co-dependent arising.” Buddha’s claim that suffering arises due to a causal process involving a twelve-fold collection of causal factors (i.e. nidānas). This is a fundamental doctrine in Buddhism implying *pratītyasamutpāda*. Also includes within it the Five Skandhas.

Uji (Living-time): Dōgen’s idea that time is indistinguishable from our experience of ordinary reality. Time is one and the same movement as the process of causality in which we participate. Previous interpretations founded on Hongaku assumptions translated the term as ‘Being-time’ implying an automatic reference to a non-Buddhist idea of an ontological ‘ground’ to existence.

Virtuality/Actuality: A binary ontological concept used by Deleuze to denote the heterogenetic relationship between abstract metaphysical concepts which describe reality on a holistic and universal level (i.e. the virtual) with that of the actual phenomena they purport to describe or condition (e.g. God and man, or Platonic Ideas and physical reality etc.). According to this concept, what is the metaphysical/virtual and what is actually happening always exists in an immanent univocal relationship by virtue of each side sharing one and the same ontological quality (i.e. substance, or ‘sense’). Using this idea allows transcendental concepts referring to the universal, holistic level of existence to be utilized in a manner without having to imply a literal ontological transcendence, reductionism, foundationalism or universalism.