

有時

Uji

Some Moments¹

¹ This essay, fascicle 20 of Dōgen's opus "Shōbō Genzō" and written in 1240, is his definitive treatment of time, placing him in the company of thinkers such as Heidegger (Sein und Zeit), Kierkegaard, Bergson, and Whitehead. According to Cleary, "This essay has provoked the interest of most modern writers on Dōgen, presenting what seems to be his most original idea: the identity of being and time."

However, these footnotes make no claim to being a commentary or even trying to explain what Dōgen might be saying. They are focused on translation issues, along with a few historical notes.

Our first problem is how to translate 有時/*uji*/exist-time, the name of the fascicle, which turns out to be a huge challenge in itself. In addition to serving as the title, this word stands at the beginning of each line of the introductory poem, and occurs throughout the essay, by itself and combined with other terms. Dōgen presumably expects the first reaction of the reader on seeing this title to be to interpret the term with its everyday meaning "some-times". But as usual Dōgen is playing with the reader, challenging him to find the remaining two or three or half-dozen parsings and nuances. According to standard semantic rules for forming Chinese compounds, 有/*yuu*/exist and 時/*ji*/time could be easily parsed as any or all of "the time which exists", "the time when something exists", "the time which is existence", or "the time for existence".

The following table shows how previous translators have handled the fascicle title and the same term used within the poem which leads it off:

Translator	Fascicle Title	Within Poem
Cleary	Being Time	at a time of being
Kennett	The Theory of Time	existence, time flow
Nishijima/Cross	Uji	sometimes
Masunaga	Uji	uji
Tanahashi	The Time-Being	for the time being
Waddell	Being-Time	for the time being

Starting with 時/*ji*/time, all previous translators have used "time". In English, "time" by itself is an uncountable noun like "water", which refers to the *concept* of time; a definite ("the time") or indefinite ("a time") article can be placed in front of it to change the meaning to *one particular point (or duration) in time*. The problem is that it either means one or the other depending on the presence of absence of the article. It is by no means clear that Dōgen intended a conceptual interpretation. More likely, he intended a blending of the conceptual and concrete meanings, which is essentially impossible to convey in English. Based in no small part of what I believe Dōgen is saying about time in this essay, I've made the decision to focus more on the "point of time" meaning, and convey this by using the word "moment".

With regard to 有/*yuu*/exist, other translators have generally used "being", but this unfortunately, to most Western readers, evokes a dry existentialist philosophical concept. When combined with "time", as in "time-being" or "being-time", the result is English which actually contradicts what Dōgen is trying to say in his essay, or at least prejudices the reader in the wrong direction, in my opinion.

The title "Some Moments" is my best attempt to combine these insights. In particular, it retains the potential for being parsed, with the help of a bit of imagination from the reader, as "certain moments", "moments where something exists", "something and moments", or "moments of/for someness". But depending on the context I've also used the translations "someness moments", "something moments", or "moments of someness". You may think if

1 ²THE OLD BUDDHA³ SAID:

Some moments—standing at the heights of the highest mountain peak;
Some moments—moving through the depths of the deepest ocean trench⁴.
Some moments—the bad angel⁵;
Some moments—the good angel⁶.
Some moments—a staff and a miter⁷;
Some moments—a door or a window⁸.
Some moments—me and the guy next door⁹.
Some moments—the great earth and vacant sky.

you wish of a dash or slash between “some” and “moments” to roughly correspond to the way that Dōgen has lexically combined *u* and *ji*. An alternative translation would use the singular, “Some Moment”.

² Dōgen starts off his essay by presenting a poem from an ancient Chinese master. However we should not assume that he does so because he considers it a definitive statement on the topic of time. For instance, in *Impermanence Is Buddha-Nature: Dogen's Understanding of Temporality*, by Joan Stambaugh; University of Hawaii Press, 1990, she states, “It is as if someone has asked the question, what is *uji*? and each line were an answer to that question”, but I cannot agree with this. More likely Dōgen is presenting this poem as a *starting point* for his discussions and critique, namely as a particular (limited) view of moments as specific points in time where different things happen.

³ 葉山惟儼. C. Yueshan Weiyan, J. Yakusan Igen, 750-834, or 745-828. Disciple of Sekitō.

⁴ According to one commentator, the mountains represent differentiation, the ocean undifferentiated sameness. This could also be “*diving* to the depths”.

⁵ 三頭八臂/*sanzu-happi*/three-head-eight-arm. According to Waddell/Masao, this is an asura, a fierce and wrathful deity or fighting spirit, unenlightened existence in general. Clearly refers to it as a “titan”. However, Anzan Hoshin Rōshi points out that Aizen Myō-ō, one of the five Vidyarajas, who represents the transformation of lustful patterns of attention into the expansiveness of compassionate activity, has three heads and eight arms.

Here and below, Kennett seems to think that this refers to Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. But the opposition of Buddha vs. devil seems much more likely than Buddha vs. Kannon. And Avalokitesvara comes in many shapes and forms, variously with 1000 or 18 or 6 or 2 arms, and one with 1000 faces, but none I am aware of with three heads and eight arms.

⁶ Lit., “eight or sixteen foot”, indicating a Buddha statue in reclining or standing posture.

Dōgen continues to refer to the gargoyle and the statue of the Buddha throughout the essay. However, my sense is that he is using these terms less in a formal Buddhist theological sense than as objects from everyday life familiar to his readers and listeners, proxies for “good” and “evil”, roughly. That’s why I’ve chosen to simply refer to them as the “good angel” and the “bad angel”. Technically speaking, it is not “good” and “evil” themselves being referred to but rather their *representations*.

It goes without saying that Dōgen is not going to plug “good” and denigrate “evil” here, but rather will eventually make his point that they are two sides of the same coin, or, to put it in the terms of this essay, both “moments”.

⁷ Lit., “staff and whisk”, objects carried by the Zen master.

⁸ Lit. “pillar and lantern”, i.e. everyday objects.

⁹ Lit., “third son of Chang and fourth son of Lee”, in other words, “Tom, Dick and Harry.”

2 THE PHRASE “SOME MOMENTS” here reminds us that someness is both intrinsic¹⁰ to each moment and lies entirely within it. There is the moment of the good angel, glowing with its momentary radiant splendor. Let us ponder¹¹ this with the twenty-four hours of moments¹² we are given each day. Then there is the moment of the bad angel¹³, at one¹⁴ with those very twenty-four hours of moments—which we refer to as hours in spite of the fact that we cannot really judge how long or short they actually are. Their passage leaves traces too clear to doubt. But mere lack of doubt does not imply understanding. People do not invariably¹⁵ have doubts about every single thing they fail to understand, and the doubts they do have are not the right ones anyway given what led to them¹⁶. But in any case their doubts will soon¹⁷ just be another moment in time¹⁸.

¹⁰ すでに/*sude-ni*/already.

¹¹ 学習/*gakushuu*/study.

¹² 十二時/*juu-ni-ji*/twelve-hours, referring to twelve periods into which the day was divided. In Japanese, the character for “hour” is the same as that for “time”, and Dōgen is clearly playing off this fact. Simply translating this term as “hour” loses this connection, which is why I have chosen to translate it as “hours of time.”

¹³ Kennett has “the body of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva is exhibited through the aegis of time, and this body permeates the present twelve hours,” although I cannot see where in the original she gets this from.

¹⁴ 一如/*ichinyo*/oneness. Cleary has “one suchness [in the twenty-four hours].”

¹⁵ 一定/*ittei*/fixed. Some translators interpret this as implying that people have different kinds of doubts, or their doubts are not “fixed” or “consistent”. But this ignores the fact that this sentence is trying to explain why as discussed in the previous sentence people sometimes do not have doubts at all even though they don’t understand something.

¹⁶ 疑著の前程/*gicho-no-zentei*. Many translators have interpreted this as “previous doubts,” but the Japanese itself clearly argues for an interpretation of “background/history [leading to] the doubt”; in addition, it seems less likely that Dōgen would be pointing out that a current doubt is inconsistent with a past doubt than that a current doubt is unjustified in terms of what led up to it. Cleary, for some reason, has “future course of their doubtings.”

¹⁷ しばらく/*shibaraku*/soon. Tanahashi omits this; Cleary has “for the moment”. Nishijima/Cross “for the present.”

¹⁸ Nakamura’s modern Japanese translation glosses back into English as something like “doubt is the effect of time,” but it’s hard to see where this comes from.

3 WE FILL OUR UNIVERSE¹⁹ with a mosaic of projections²⁰, each and every particle of which²¹ can be thought of as an individual moment²². And just as individual moments do not bump into each other, neither do the particles filling that universe. *In a single moment many minds arise²³; in a single mind many moments arise²⁴*. The same holds true of practice and attaining the way.

¹⁹ 尽界/*jinkai*/exhaust-world. The character 尽 has the on-yomi “*tsukusu*” which means “exhaust, use up, devote (all of)”. In the compound 尽界/*jinkai* it is usually translated as “whole, entire.” That is the accepted translation, although it seems a little flaccid next to the dynamic nuance of the Japanese, something along the lines of “every last bit of the universe.” The other issue is that in this fascicle this word is one of about a half-dozen which Dōgen is giving special attention to, the others including “time”, of course, and “being”, but also the “form” and “features” which will come later. He combines this word with words like “being”—but simply translating the latter combination as “whole being” fails to communicate Dōgen’s emphasis on this as a key concept. I’ve chosen to translate this using variants of the word “full”, such as “fill”, “filled with”, “the fullness of”, “in its fullness”, etc.

²⁰ われを排列しおきて尽界とせり/*ware wo hairetsu shi-okite jinkai to seri*/self-arrange entire-world-make. A most difficult sentence to interpret and translate. Some translators imagine that the “self” here is your own self or the reader’s self, but it is very hard to imagine how one can “array” or “arrange” the “self” so as to make a universe. Kennett is quite creative, with “Outside of this doubting self no world exists for the world actually is this very self”; the only problem this doesn’t seem to have any connection with what Dōgen wrote, although she was at least trying to connect it to the previous sentence by inserting the “outside of this doubting” part. Tanahashi has “The way the self arrays itself is the form of the entire world”, where both “way” and “form” have no counterparts in Dōgen’s text. Nishijima/Cross has “We put ourselves in order, and see [the resulting state] as the whole Universe.” He brings an important insight to this sentence which is that Dōgen seems to be saying (note the Japanese せり/*seri*/make) that we are *making* the universe via the われを排列/*ware wo hairetsu*/self-arrange process. You can’t arrange a single thing; so obviously Dōgen must be talking about multiple selves, or identities, namely those of all the phenomena and concepts and objects in our world. I’ve tried to convey the “make” aspect of the sentence through the “our” in “our world”.

“Mosaic” seems a reasonable liberty to take with the 排列/*hairetsu*/array. For われ/*ware*/self, the English word “selves” has too strong a connotation of human selves. “Identities” might work, but in this case I feel “projections” conveys the right nuance.

²¹ 頭頭物物/*zuzu motsumotsu*/head-head-thing-thing.

²² 時時/*jiji*/time-time. A Dōgenism.

²³ (in search of the truth).

²⁴ 同時発心、同心発時/*dōji-hosshin doushin-hatsujii*/same-time arise-spirit, same-spirit arise-time. One of Dōgen’s patented anagram-style formulations. Both compounds in the first section are normal Japanese words, 同時/*douji* meaning simultaneous and 発心/*hosshin* meaning arising of the (way-seeking) mind. But there are still at least two possible interpretations: the one I’ve taken, which is that multiple arisings of the mind occur simultaneously, or the arising of the mind occurs simultaneously with something else, but what?

Kennett has “the longing for enlightenment arises naturally as a result of time and, as a result of mind, time arises also”, but one is at a loss to determine where in Dōgen she finds the “...as a result...” part. Tanahashi has “The way-seeking mind arises in this moment”, but this appears to ignore the meaning of 同時/*dōji*/same-time. Cleary has “arouse.”

I’ve italicized this sentence to show how in the original it has the nature of a Chinese aphorism.

4 IT IS THE SELF that sees this mosaic of projections. Thus follows the principle that moments are formed from self. This principle should drive us to explore on our cushions²⁵ how the earth is filled with countless forms and features²⁶; each of those individual features and individual is formed within the fullness of the earth²⁷. It is this type of dynamic²⁸ that

²⁵ 参学/*sangaku*/study. Other translators have “learn” or “study”, but I am assuming that the implication of this particular word is study that occurs in a zazen-based context.

²⁶ Dōgen here and in the following refers to 象/*shō*/phenomenon and 草/*kusa*/grass. Certainly Dōgen was not just randomly choosing words or concepts to string together here. Presumably he was singling out two of the major aspects of reality to focus on, and presumably they are distinct, but somehow at the same conceptual level. Here are what various translators choose for these two terms:

Translator	象/ <i>shō</i> /phenomenon	草/ <i>kusa</i> /grass
Cleary	form	grass
Kennett	thing	grass
Nishijima/Cross	phenomenon	thing
Masunaga	appearance	grass
Tanahashi	form	grass
Waddell	phenomenon	grass [thing]
Nakayama	森羅万象 /each and every phenomenon	
Tamashiro	事象/ <i>jishō</i> /phenomenon	事物/ <i>jibutsu</i> /things
Myers	form	feature

It is somewhat of a mystery as to why Dōgen would have chosen a concrete object like grass to refer to “things,” if in fact that was his intent, while choosing a more abstract word like “phenomenon” to refer to states or processes. Cleary notes that “hundred grasses” or hundred plants is a conventional term for all things or all forms.

Perhaps Dōgen was taking advantage of the fact that the two words have a similar sound in Japanese (*shō* and *sō*). Perhaps he was playfully referring to the meaning of 象 as elephant, implying an animal/vegetable distinction, possibly with a Buddhist reference to the elephants found in India and/or the story about the grass given to Gautama before his period of meditation under the bodhi tree. Perhaps he is using “grass” to refer to words or writings, which is one of its associations.

Such speculation aside, for 象/*shō*/phenomenon, the meaning is relatively clear. I’ve chosen “form.” But what are we to do with “grass”? I have gone with “feature” for “grass”, since there is some support for such as interpretation, and it complements and pairs well with (not to mention being alliterative with) “form.”

²⁷ The original is quite clear in this second part of the phrasal pair: the things and grasses are *in* the earth. And it must be rendered as a dynamic contrast to the first part, since Dōgen refers back to it as a “dynamic” in the following sentence.

But Kennett has “each thing...and grass...is in no way separate from the whole earth” (failing to reverse the order of “thing” and “grass” as it is in the original, although that was certainly no more than a stylistic affectation by Dōgen). Tanahashi, in the same vein, has “...each grass and each form itself is the entire earth.” And Waddell have, similarly, “each of the grasses and each of the forms exists as the entire earth”. However, Dōgen’s original Japanese does not support such interpretations. Cleary has “...each single blade of grass, each single form, is on the whole earth”, which is closer to the original, but just a repetition of the previous phrase, which he gives as “...there are myriad forms, a hundred grasses on the whole earth”, leaving one to wonder why Dōgen would simply say the same thing twice with only a minor variation.

launches us on our practice. The point²⁹ at which you reach this stage in your life³⁰ is itself one of those features or forms³¹, whether or not you engage that form, whether or not you engage that feature³². The moment is exactly and uniquely as it is, which is why each moment of someness reaches a state of fullness; features of someness and forms of someness both are³³ moments, with the fullness of someness and the fullness of the world suffusing every single individual one of those moments³⁴. Stop and think for yourself how someness could reach its fullness, or the world its fullness, were it not for this moment.

²⁸ 往来/*ōrai*/go-come. Dōgen self-referentially describes his own grammar and concept play in the previous sentence. Cleary has “going and coming,” Tanahashi omits it for some reason.

²⁹ Dōgen writes time here as *とき* in hiragana, rather than the Sino-Japanese 時.

³⁰ 田地/*denchi*/paddy-ground. “Viewpoint” (Bennett), “state of suchness” (Cleary), “this place” (Tanahashi), “field of the ineffable” (Nishijima/Cross), “sphere of our journey’s end” (Masunaga), “field of suchness” (Waddell).

³¹ Most translators have something here to the effect that when you reach this point you there will be only one form and one feature, or all forms and features will be one, or whatever. Bennett has “one thing appears and one grass remains.” Cleary: “it is one blade of grass, one form.” Waddell: “it is a single grass, a single form.” Nakayama has the equivalent of “only then will the truth in one blade of grass and one thing become clear.” And so on.

However, neither the syntax of this sentence nor the context supports such a superficial “Zen-like” interpretation. Syntactically, the use of the word *すなわち*/*sunawachi*/and-is is clearly intended here to *equate* the “time” and the “one-grass, one-form.” Contextually, in the immediately preceding sentence Dōgen has just referred to the *beginning* of practice. It seems unlikely that he would jump in the very next sentence to an advanced state of practice where all grasses become one. Kennett bravely, but ultimately unsuccessfully, tries to bridge this gap with “...it is after reaching this viewpoint that we can commence training for, having reached this point in our journey’s end, but one thing appears and one grass remains.” My interpretation is that Dōgen in this sentence is putting the temporal aspect of the beginning of practice in the context of the world’s forms and features.

³² 会象不会象、会草不会草/*eshō fu-eshō, esō fu-esō*/meet-phenomenon-not-meet-phenomenon, meet-grass-not-meet-grass. For 会/*e*/meet, Kennett has “recognized”, most other translators “understanding”, one “meet”; Waddell has “understanding” for the first part and then switches to “grasp” for the second.

The basic problem is how this sentence fits into the flow of the paragraph; or is it just a random faux-Zen aphorism Dōgen tossed in here to confuse us, as most of the translators seem to believe? I think the “form” and “feature” here are directly referencing the form and feature that Dōgen just got done saying, in the previous sentence, are the time when practice begins. In that context, it’s easy to interpret the sentence as “whether you do or do not experience that form/feature.” This is also Mizuno’s interpretation.

The translators who try to interpret this sentence in isolation predictably end up in trouble. They have to decide how to parse each of the two phrases that make up this sentence (presumably both have the same parsing). The major interpretation are (1) that understanding and not-understanding co-exist; that they alternate temporally; (2) that one leads to, or “is” the other. Waddell choose the first: “The forms are understood and not understood...”, as does Tanahashi (“there is understanding of form and no-understanding of form..”). Kennett and Masunaga adopt the second choice (“sometimes that which appears is recognizes and again not always...”, “We sometimes meet the appearance and sometimes not”).

³³ なり/*nari*/is-becomes-forms again.

³⁴ 時時の時/*jiji-no-ji*/time of time-time.

5 BUT THE REACTION OF normal people who haven't studied Buddhism and hear the phrase "some moments" is to think "Well, there were some moments³⁵ that I was talking to the bad angel and then there were some moments that that I was talking to the good angel"—as if these moments were hills or streams in some natural landscape they had passed through. They say to themselves: "The landscape may still be back there but I've come through it and now dwell in the vermilion tower of the jade palace³⁶; I'm here, the scenery is back there, the heavens are up there, and the earth is down here³⁷."

³⁵ あるとき /*aru toki*/sometimes.

³⁶ 玉殿朱楼 /*gyokuden-shurō*/jewel-palace-vermilion-tower. Tanahashi states that both "jeweled palace" and "vermilion tower" refer to enlightenment. And there is a natural tendency to assume the palace represents some kind of desirable location. But remember, Dōgen introduces the vermilion tower in the context of the thinking of a person who did *not* understand *uji*. I think the vermilion tower is meant to indicate an imaginary, unattainable location that the untrained mind is fixated on trying to attain. A contemporary translation would have "the penthouse at the Venetian" here.

Here is how other translators handled this term:

Translator	Translation
Cleary	vermilion tower of the jewel palace
Kennett	lordly mansion
Nishijima/Cross	jeweled palace with crimson towers
Masunaga	stately palace
Tanahashi	jeweled palace and vermilion tower
Waddell	vermilion palace
Nakayama	palace

³⁷ Some translators have "I'm as far away from the scenery as the heavens are from the earth", a not unreasonable interpretation, since the original just says "mountain-river and self, and heavens and earth."

6 BUT THIS IS JUST one way of looking at the situation. If there was an “I” at the moment of climbing some hill or crossing some stream, then that “I” must surely have incorporated³⁸ that moment. The moment could not have just taken off leaving their “I” sitting there. With no past or future aspect, the moment of climbing the hill was the absolute, eternal-now³⁹ in some moment. Even if the moment did retain a past and future aspect, the “I” would have embodied the absolute, eternal now in some moment, the very moment of someness. Do not these moments spent crossing hill and dale drain away⁴⁰ those moments to come in the vermilion tower⁴¹, and do not they then let them all gush forth⁴² again⁴³?

³⁸ われに時あるべし/*ware-ni ji arubeshi*/self-in time must-exist.

³⁹ 而今/*shikin, jikon*.

⁴⁰ 吞却/*donkyaku*/drink-remove. Variously, swallow (up), engulf (Kennett)

⁴¹ of the jade palace.

⁴² 吐却/*tokyaku*/vomit-remove. Spit out, spew forth, vomit, throw up.

⁴³ These footnotes make no claim whatsoever to being a commentary on Uji. But it's nevertheless worthwhile to speculate on what this sentence might mean. Most commentators, including Nagatsuka, take the reasonable-sounding approach that the climbing of mountains and crossing of rivers is an earlier point in time, and the vermilion towers occur at a later point in time; so Dōgen is saying that the earlier time “drinks in”, or “includes”, the later points in time, but also “spits out”, or “excludes”, those times. This certainly sounds very Zen-like: including and excluding at the same time! Nishijima/Cross give a similar exegesis. The modern Japanese translations by Tamashiro and Nakamura are not much help here, just replacing the words Dōgen used with the slight variants corresponding to “drink completely” and “spit out completely”.

I would propose this is exactly *not* what Dōgen is trying to say. I think what Dōgen is saying is that the immediate-presence moments of existence climbing the hills and crossing the streams “drain away” the moments in the imaginary palace in the sense that they are incomparably more real, and then let them gush forth again because there is no need to hang on to them. I believe this interpretation is supported by Dōgen's syntax here, involving two uses of せざらんや/*sezaran'ya*/do-not?, which is meant to emphasize and gain the reader's agreement in the obviousness of what he is saying.

- 7 YESTERDAY THERE WAS A moment where we were talking to the bad angel⁴⁴; today there is a moment where we are talking to the good angel. But do not think of past and present as things that whiz by and disappear somewhere, but rather as a vista of untold thousands of peaks that you can see from directly within the mountains⁴⁵. The bad angel was its own experience⁴⁶ within some moment; it may seem far away but was actually the absolute, eternal now. The good angel is its own experience within some moment; it may seem to be elsewhere but is actually the absolute, eternal now.
- 8 SO A PINE TREE is a moment, a bamboo tree is a moment. Don't think of moments as something that only fly off into the past, and don't imagine that flying off into the past is the only thing moments are good for. If moments kept flying off into the past, what would come in between them⁴⁷? This belief that moments disappear off into the past is what has kept people from understanding the truth about moments and their someness. The crux of the matter is that the all-encompassing somenesses filling every corner of the universe align themselves⁴⁸ to form each and every individual moment. Each is a moment of someness—which makes it a moment of me-someness⁴⁹.

⁴⁴ Lit. horned-devil-image SUBJ time of yesterday. Most translators have something along the lines of “Three heads and eight arms may be yesterday’s time” (Welch/Tanahashi). It may be just a quibble to point out that unfortunately this sentence in English does not mean anything.

⁴⁵ 山のなかに直入/*yama-no-naka-ni-jikinyuu*/mountain-within-direct-enter. Mizuno says this is a quote from a Chinese poem.

⁴⁶ 一經す/*ichikyōsu*/one-experience-do. Cleary: “transpire”; Kennett: “passes on”; Tanahashi: “move forward”; Waddell: “makes a passage”; Nishijima/Cross: “pass instantly”. Dogen has invented a new verb by placing the suffix す/*su*/do on the end of 一經/*ichikyō*/one-passage. Tamashiro uses 経過/*keika*/pass.

⁴⁷ Before the next moment arrived. Or, according to some translators, there would be a gap between time and the self.

⁴⁸ つらなりながら/*tsuranarinagara*. Linked with one another, joined together, makes a continuous series, lined up, lined up in a series, linked.

⁴⁹ 吾有時/*go-ujii*/self-exist-time. Dōgen is playing more of his word games here, by tacking on the character 吾/*go*/me on the front of *uji*. Other translators have interpreted this superficially (Nishijima/Cross: “my Existence Time”; Welch/Tanahashi: “your time being”; Cleary: “my being time”; Waddell: “my being-time”; Kennett: “my own, personal time”), in other words parsing it as 吾有時, but it seems equally possible and probably preferable to parse it as 吾有 時, with the meaning of “me-existing time”, as I have done here.

9 THE INTERESTING THING ABOUT something moments is how they stepflow⁵⁰. They stepflow from today, as we call it, to tomorrow; they stepflow from today to yesterday; they stepflow from yesterday to today. They stepflow from today to today; they stepflow from tomorrow to tomorrow. Because of how moments stepflow, past and present neither fall on top of each other nor overlap; Seigen⁵¹ is a moment, Ōbaku⁵² is a moment, and Baso⁵³ and Sekitō⁵⁴ are moments. The concepts of me and you presuppose moments⁵⁵, which is why practice and enlightenment are a panoply of moments⁵⁶. Plunging into the mud⁵⁷ and diving into the water: these are moments as well. This is the part that is missing from the average person's version of reality⁵⁸, no matter how hard that average person looks at things from his average

⁵⁰ 経歴/*keireki* or *kyōryaku*/history. Kennett: continuity; Tanahashi: quality of flowing; Cleary: passage; Waddell: seriatim passage; Nishijima/Cross: passing in a series of moments, or momentary passing. Nakamura uses *keireki* as is in his modern Japanese translation. It translates as "personal history". Tamashiro uses "*tachime-guru*", modern Japanese which can be rendered roughly as "pass-visit". Masunaga has "continuity".

Although this term is common in modern Japanese, with a completely unrelated meaning, my sense is that it was likely to have been a neologism in Dōgen's time. I assert that Dōgen's intent with this new, or at least unfamiliar, word is to actually present two distinct facets of time, namely its flowing nature and its stepping nature, or, if you prefer, its quantum nature and its wave nature. The *kyō* part is indicative of the flowing, the *ryaku* of stepping. My solution to how to translate the word is then to come up with a neologism of my own: "stepflow".

At the 1985 conference of AAR (American Academy of Religion), in his paper "Selfhood in Nishida Kitaro and A.N. Whitehead" Steve Odin described Dōgen's *uji* as "discontinuous continuity", and compared it to Whitehead's epochal theory of time.

In his *Existential and Ontological Dimensions of Time in Heidegger and Dogen*, Steven Heine refers to this concept as "all-inclusive simultaneous passage".

According to one article I read the scholar Thomas P. Kasulis has used the term "ranging".

⁵¹ 青原行思, C. Qingyuan Xingsi, J. Seigen Gyōshi, 660-740.

⁵² 黄檗希運, C. Huangbo Xiyun J. Ōbaku Kiun), d. 850.

⁵³ 馬祖道一, C. Mazu Daoyi, J. Baso Dōitsu, also 江西大寂, C. Jiangxi Daji, J. Kōzei Daijaku, 709-788,

⁵⁴ 石頭, C. Shitou Xiqian, J. Sekitō Kisen, 700-790.

⁵⁵ 自他/*jita*/self-other, subject/object. Virtually impossible to translate, since it conveys the nuance "self *and* other" at the same time as "the unity of self and other" and even "the self-other problem".

⁵⁶ 諸時/*shoji*/various-time.

⁵⁷ One translator has "being splattered with mud", but this seems to be too imaginative. This and the following "diving into water" allude to a Zen saying 入泥入水/*nyuudei-nyuusui*/enter-mud-enter-water indicating the willingness of the enlightened to go anywhere to save the unenlightened.

⁵⁸ Nearly all of our august translators had trouble here. The Japanese reads 凡夫の法にあらず/*bonpu no hō ni arazu*/normal-person-(poss.)-dharma-not. Typical is Waddell with "It is not the unenlightened person's Dharma", but without saying what "it" refers to here! Some translators have that it is views of the ordinary people which are not the truth of ordinary people, but what is that supposed to mean? Purely from the standpoint of the narrative flow, I believe that it is the truth of the nature of moments that Dōgen has just been discussing that he is saying is not the truth of humans.法/*hō*/dharma. As for 法/*hō*/dharma, some translators have "truth", one "norm".

person perspective with its web of connections and dependencies⁵⁹. That reality has the effect before long⁶⁰ of ensnaring our average person in that very web of connections and dependencies⁶¹. Failing to see the someness, the momentariness within reality, he is unable to perceive the buddha within himself. His attempts to shake off⁶² the absence of his internal buddha are themselves scattered fragments⁶³ of momentary someness, scattered glimpses on the part of one who has not yet validated the truth⁶⁴.

⁵⁹ It is certainly no accident that Dōgen has used the same word 因縁/*in'en*/cause-connection both when referring to human perspectives and to describe the effect that truth has on humans. One dictionary describes this word as referring to the internal and external causes for something, or which cause something to be born or die, but also by extension to the being born and dying itself. Another gives “Causes and conditions; a Buddhist term which refers to the circumstances that bring any single entity into existence in accordance with the principle of karma”. Other translators dutifully translated this as “causes and conditions”, obviously since it’s a Buddhist term appearing in a Buddhist text and therefore can only have one single Buddhist translation. I myself feel that in this context the only meaningful interpretation is the broader one of “connections and dependencies”.

⁶⁰ しばらく/*shibaraku*. One translator has “temporarily”.

⁶¹ 凡夫を因縁せるのみなり/*bonpu wo in'en seru nomi nar*/ordinary-person (obj.) cause-connection make only. None of the translators did really well with this. Literally, it seems to be saying that the 法/*hō*/dharma makes the ordinary person *into* causes and conditions. But even before we get to that, is Dōgen referring to the Dharma with a capital D here, or the human dharma he mentioned in the previous phrase? I believe it is the latter, since it is hard to see how the capital-D Dharma could *make* a human into causes and conditions. Together with a liberal interpretation of 因縁/*in'en*/causes-conditions as described above, it makes sense to me that Dōgen would be commenting here on the effect this “human dharma” has in dragging people into a world of causes and conditions.

⁶² Tanahashi has “...attempts to escape from being the sixteen-foot golden body”, but this doesn’t follow the Japanese syntax, which would lead to “...from *not* being...”. The particle と in the original Japanese われを丈六金身にあらずとのがれんとする seems to support the more common translation, along the lines of Cleary, who has “Trying to escape by claiming that one is not...”. However, the use of “escape” and similar terms such as “evade” found in other translations mistranslates the nuance of のがれる, I think, which should be more along the lines of “get away from, get free of”. This makes sense: Dōgen is not saying that the person in question is trying to escape from something by claiming he is not the buddha, but rather trying to shake free of the fact that he cannot find the buddha within himself.

⁶³ In Japanese “scattered fragments” are 片片, whereas “scattered glimpses are 看看. I’ve tried to convey something of Dōgen’s lexical device of doubling these characters with the word “scattered”.

⁶⁴ 未証拠者/*mishōko-sha*/yet-proof-person. Tanahashi has “those who have not confirmed *this* [the point mentioned in the previous sentence] yet,” but Dōgen’s intent to refer to the unenlightened seems clear. Other translators have “those who have not confirmed (or *verified*) this yet”.

10 WHAT PAINTS⁶⁵ THE HORSE and sheep onto our world today? The ascending and descending and rising and falling that brings things to be the way they are supposed to be. There are mice moments and tiger moments. There are moments of men and moments of gods. Moments illuminate the world in its fullness, whether in the form of the bad angel or the good one. We can take fullness to the extreme⁶⁶ by doing the full world on the full world with the full world. Or doing the gilded angel on the gilded angel, bringing forth the truth-seeking mind, practice, enlightenment, and nirvana, which are all somenesses, are moments. The way moments pervade someness is invariably⁶⁷ extreme in this way. But⁶⁸ even a semi-extreme way of bringing moments of someness to their fullness is an extreme way of bringing moments of semi-someness to their fullness. Places where you seem to stumble⁶⁹ are somenesses as well. Looking more closely⁷⁰, even before and after the stumble becomes apparent we have moments of someness as they should be⁷¹. Assuming with vigor our true dwelling place in the truth: that is a moment of someness. Neither go out of your way to see it as noneness⁷², nor force yourself to see it as someness.

⁶⁵ 排列/*hairetsu/array*, again.

⁶⁶ Our intrepid translators tried “investigating exhaustively”, “penetrating exhaustively”, “thorough practice”, “perfectly realize”, “universally realise”, etc.

⁶⁷ 剩法なし/*jōhō-nashi/extra-law-none*. According to other translators, variously, “with nothing left over”, “no extra being”, “delusion”, “no leftovers”, “nothing surplus”.

⁶⁸ 剩法これ剩法なるがゆゑに/*jōhō kore jōhō naru ga yue ni*. I’ve omitted this, which might mean something like “but even if there are exceptions.”

⁶⁹ さかすとみゆる形段/*sakasu to miyuru indon*. A lot of confusion about what this means. Masunaga: “mistakenly seen”, Nishijima/Cross: “phases in which we seem to be blundering heedlessly”; Tanahashi: “moment that seems missed”.

⁷⁰ Our translators seem to be having a very hard time understanding what Dōgen is saying in this section. For this simple phrase さらにかれにまかすれば/*sara-ni kare-ni makasureba*, we have translations such as “if we leave it utterly up to [existence]”, “if you leave it at mistake [sic]”, “in the same way”, “if you leave it at that”, “on a still broader plane”, “should you do nothing to remedy the mistake”. Nakamura has *tsukitsumeru*, roughly “investigate in more detail”.

⁷¹ 往位/*ōi/dharma position*. Abiding in position. Complete-in-itself. Abide in their place.

⁷² 無と動著/*mu to dōjo/nothing-as-move-author*. Past translators have no more luck with this phrase than they do with anything else in this paragraph. Very basically, it is not clear *what* Dōgen is counseling the reader to not treat as “nothing” or “something”: existing moments, or the discussion of existing moments that has just been given, or both?

Kennett: “Do not waste time believing the above to be trivial.” Tanahashi: “Do not mistakenly confuse it as nonbeing.” Cleary: “Don’t stir it as non-existence.” Waddell: “You must not by your own maneuvering make it into nothingness.” Nishijima/Cross: “We should not disturb it [by interpreting it as] ‘being without’.” Masunaga: “Do not hesitate, thinking it is nothing.”

11 AT LEAST FOCUSING⁷³ STRICTLY on moments as streaming past in one direction will prevent you from intellectualizing them as something out there waiting to arrive⁷⁴. There may be moments for such intellectualization but they are sterile, unconnected to anything else⁷⁵. Looking at moments either way—as coming or as going—will prevent you from seeing deeply into this moment of someness as it is meant to be. And in that case how will you possibly find your moment of liberation? However, you may be able to accept moments as they are and still not know⁷⁶ how to hold on⁷⁷ to who you intrinsically⁷⁸ are. Or you may have long since learned who you are, but still be incessantly casting about for the face right in front of you. If it were up to the human version of moments⁷⁹, enlightenment and nirvana would be mere moments with a bit of coming and going to them.

⁷³ 計功/*kekō*.

⁷⁴ There is a complete lack of unanimity among translators about the meaning of this phrase and indeed the entire paragraph. Syntactic clues in the first sentence such as *nomi* would seem to indicate that Dogen is telling us *not* to treat as something that just passes by; so the next phrase, something about not understanding how time is yet to arrive, is the thing we are supposed to be doing, right? But that phrase uses the term 解会/*gee* which could easily have a negative nuance as “intellectualizing”. Further, Dogen then he continues talking about *gee* with a syntax *iedomo* which lends itself to an interpretation that this is not something desirable either. Finally, in the next sentence, he goes on to say that people who think of time as going and coming will not see deeply etc. How are these connected? My translation, which is that Dogen is saying that neither the view of time as passing (first phrase) nor that of it coming (second phrase) is desirable, represents the best I could do to put the pieces of the puzzle together, but my level of confidence is low here.

One modern Japanese translator thinks that the second phrase of the first sentence means “we will not understand that we have not yet arrived at (divine) time.”

⁷⁵ 他にひかるる縁なし/*hoka-ni hikaruru en nashi*. To give you a flavor of how hard this is to interpret, one translator had “nothing can distract you from this state”. Other attempts include Tanahashi “understanding does not depend on its own arrival”; Cleary “it has no relation drawn with another”; Kennett “it is an incorrect one”, Waddell “there is no chance for them to be drawn in by time”, Nishijima/Cross “no circumstances are ever influenced by [intellectual understanding]”.

⁷⁶ 道得/*dōtoku*/path-acquire. Some translators use “understand” or “learn”, but many have “express” or “assert”. I don’t know where this interpretation comes from.

⁷⁷ 保任/*honin*.

⁷⁸ 既得/*kidoku*/already-acquire(d).

⁷⁹ 凡夫の有時なるに一任すれば/*bonpu-no uji-naru-ni ichinin sureba*. Clearly has tried to read too much into this sentence with his “If we leave ordinary people’s being *being time* at that”. My translation is closer to that of Waddell: “Left entirely to the being-time of the unenlightened”.

12 MOMENTARY SOMENESSES ADMIT OF no impediments⁸⁰ in revealing themselves⁸¹. Heavenly monarchs and multitudes now materializing to the left, now parading on the right⁸², are, even as you read this, such moments of someness, brimming with our energy⁸³. On land and sea, moments of mass someness⁸⁴ unfurl themselves now overflowing in strength. Light or dark, man or beast, we form these someness moments into the present with every drop of our power, we step them through the flow with every fiber of our being. Were it otherwise, not a single object or phenomenon would unveil itself or stepflow whatsoever.

⁸⁰ らろう/*rarou*/net-cage. Consider one translation, “free from desire”.

⁸¹ 現成/*genjo*/manifest. I’ve translated this in this paragraph as “appear” and “present” and “unfurl” and “reveal” and “materialize”.

⁸² Perhaps the king(s) is/are on the left, the multitudes on the right.

⁸³ 尽力/*jinyoku*/exhaust-strength. The first character is the same used throughout this fascicle in other compounds such as 尽界/*jinkai*/full-world. Elsewhere I’ve tried to use variants of “full” but that doesn’t work well when coupled with “strength”. Although normally when Dogen repeats a word I attempt to use the same translation in both places, here that ends up sounding wooden and repetitive, so I’ve gone in the other direction and used a different expression for each of the five times this term appears in this paragraph.

⁸⁴ 衆有時/*shuu-ujii*/multitude-being-time. Structurally reminiscent of Dōgen’s 吾有時/*go-ujii*/self-being-time/“moments of my existence” used earlier, so I’ve adopted the same structure for the English.

- 13 DO NOT THINK OF stepflowing as being like wind and rain moving from east to west. The world is bursting with change⁸⁵, with ebbing and flowing, with stepflowing. Take spring as an example⁸⁶ of stepflowing. There are a multitude of⁸⁷ springscapes, each a stepflow⁸⁸. Stepflowing requires no external assistance. For instance, spring, in stepflowing, simply stepflows across itself. Stepflowing is not something spring has, but rather something it is. Stepflowing comes to fruition⁸⁹ in each spring moment of the now. Roll this back and forth in your mind until you've understood it in detail. Any thought when you hear the word "stepflowing" that the world⁹⁰ is outside of your head and that things that can stepflow⁹¹ might continue slogging past world after world⁹² for eon after eon merely indicates a lack of focus on this point in your studies.
- 14 YAKUSAN⁹³ VISITED THE ZEN master Baso to ask him a question, as it happens at the suggestion of Sekitō⁹⁴. "I've come close to understanding the basics of Buddhist doctrine⁹⁵. But what was the meaning of Bodhidharma coming from the West?" To this query, Baso replied, "*Some moments having him raise his eyebrows and blink his eyes; some moments do not. Some moments having him raise his eyebrows and blink his eyes is it; some moments it is not.*" Hearing this, Yakusan had a great realization, and said to Baso, "When I was studying with Sekitō I felt like a mosquito climbing on an iron ox."

⁸⁵ Dōgen uses the double negative: is *not* not-changing, is *not* not moving back and forth.

⁸⁶ According to one commentator, not in the sense that spring is one of the four seasons, but as a metaphor for the flowering of the soul.

⁸⁷ 許多般/*kotahan* or *kyottahan*.

⁸⁸ This sentence is a bit of a riddle. Literally, "Spring has many aspects, and this/it/they are called stepflowing".

⁸⁹ 成道/*seidō*/become-road.

⁹⁰ *sakai*/boundary.

⁹¹ *nō-kyōryaku no hō*/can-stepflow dharma.

⁹² The original has "to the east"; what would this mean? Waddell notes that this is "like the spring" but in what sense does the spring move east? Like Tanahashi, I omit this.

⁹³ See earlier footnote.

⁹⁴ Referred to in original as 無際大師 (Master Musai), his posthumous name, in original.

⁹⁵ In the original, "the three vehicles and the twelve divisions".

- 15 BASO HAS A UNIQUE way of looking at things. Think of the eyebrows as mountains and the eyes as oceans, for mountains can be eyebrows just as surely as oceans can be eyes. Think of “having him raise” mountains; think of “having him blink” oceans⁹⁶. “Being it” becomes familiar to “him”; “having” leads “him” along. Having him do something does not imply not having him do it; not having him do something does not imply it not being it. Either is a moment of someness. Mountains are moments, and oceans are moments. Neither mountains nor oceans could exist were there not moments within them, and moments could not fail to exist within the immediate now of mountains and oceans. If moments could shatter, mountains and oceans could shatter as well. Since moments cannot shatter, then neither can mountains and oceans. In the light of this truth we see the morning star rising over the enlightened Buddha in the iris of whose eye is reflected the flower raised in his hand⁹⁷. If these were not moments, it could not be so.
- 16 ZEN MASTER KISEI OF Sekken⁹⁸ was of the apostolic line of Rinzai, the successor of Shuzan⁹⁹. There was a time when he pronounced to the assembly: *Some moments, thinking¹⁰⁰ works¹⁰¹ and talking does not; some moments, talking works and thinking does not. Some moments, both talking and thinking work; some moments, neither talking nor thinking does.*

⁹⁶ The majority of translators interpret this as the raising of eyebrows being equivalent to the seeing of mountains, and the blinking of eyes being equivalent to understanding oceans. That does not make any sense to me. It is equally possible to read this sentence syntactically, and makes much more sense, to parse it as “seeing the eyebrows as equivalent to mountains” and “understanding the eyes as equivalent to oceans”. The similarity between the eyebrow and the mountain, in its shape, and to only a slightly lesser extent that between the eye and the ocean, is obvious. Mizuno follows this interpretation.

⁹⁷ I’ve taken some liberties with this sentence, which in its original reads more like “the morning star appears, the tathagata appears, the iris appears, the flower appears”.

⁹⁸ 葉県帰省, C. Shexian Guixing, 10th century.

⁹⁹ 首山省念, J. Shuzan Shonen, C. Shoushan Shengnian, 925-92 or 926-93.

¹⁰⁰ Dōgen uses 意/*i*/meaning and 句/*ku*/phrase. The latter refers to words, but what about the first? Some translators have “mind”, others “intent” (or “will”); a modern Japanese translations uses 思/*omoi*/thought. I think the translation should be driven by the fact that Dōgen clearly means these two as a pair. I don’t see how the interpretation of “intent”, although it would be possible in isolation, pairs up with “words”. But neither does “mind”, really. My conclusion is that “thinking” is the right nuance here.

¹⁰¹ 到/*tou*/arrive or reach. Most translators use “arrive” or “reach”, but what do these words mean in this context? How can “words” “reach” something, or “arrive”? Nishijima/Cross use “present” and “absent” for its opposite, but this misses the nuance of reaching or accomplishing. Kennett has “adequate”. Most translators into modern Japanese just use the equivalent 到る/*itaru*/arrive, reach, which does not help us much. Tamashiro uses 届く

17 THINKING AND TALKING ARE both moments; both them working and them not working are both moments. If the moment of them working is yet to arrive, that [simply] means that the moment of them not working is here¹⁰². Thinking is like a donkey, talking like a horse¹⁰³. We ride on the horse of words and the donkey of thought. Just because we have arrived on them¹⁰⁴ does not mean they worked; just because we have not arrived on them does not mean they have not worked. Moments of someness are like this. If things work too well you lose sight¹⁰⁵ of how well they work. If things work poorly you lose sight of how poorly they work. The way to understand thinking is to stop¹⁰⁶ thinking so much. The way to understand talking is to stop talking so much. The way to understand losing sight of something is to stop losing sight of it. When losing sight loses sight of the loss of sight, that is a moment. Objects outside us¹⁰⁷ may lose sight of us, but nothing has ever completely lost sight of

Itodoku/reach, deliver, but Nakatsuka's comment is right on: reach *where*? He then answers his own question by hypothesizing that Dōgen is talking about reaching *another person*. He then goes on to interpret the following sentences in an interpersonal framework, which is not convincing to me.

At least in modern Japanese, the equivalent word *itaru* has the connotation of success (reaching some goal), as well as multidirectionality (*itaru tokoro*), and/or ubiquity and filling. My solution, "work", has a number of negatives, including being too informal, but seemed preferable to the alternatives.

¹⁰² 来なり/*rai nari*/is-coming.

¹⁰³ Kennett imagines that thought is stubborn like a donkey, while words jump and gallop about like a horse.

¹⁰⁴ Actually, from the original it is nearly impossible to tell what is "arriving", the animals or something else.

¹⁰⁵ 罣礙/*keige*. My Chinese dictionary gives "hinder, disturb, obstruct" for the first character, and "hinder, obstruct, block" for the second. These are the characters (prefixed by 無/*mu*/not) used in the Chinese version of the Heart Sutra, for the mind or spirit being unobscured or unobstructed.

Cleary: "block"; also "impede" (Waddell), "hinder" (Kennett), "overwhelm" (Tanahashi), "restrict" (Nishijima/Cross). In his modern Japanese translation, Nakamura uses 徹し尽くす/*tesshitsuksusu*, meaning something like "be completely devoted to." Nakatsuka gives us no help here, opining only that this sentence indicates that "working" and "not working" are distinct.

According to Waddell, "Impeding is analogous to self-affirmation, the manifesting of true subjectivity. Hence, impeding, which as itself (being-time) is the entire world and all time, signifies the affirming and maintaining of individuality or "selfness," without which there would be a one-sided fall into undifferentiated oneness." Such a fall does indeed sound nasty, and this explanation sounds very scholarly, but what does it mean? Why not just use the word "white" to mean "black"? Why would Dōgen have been saying something that requires a Ph.D. in Eastern Religions to understand? Nishijima/Cross also point to the specialized Buddhist meaning of this word, commenting that "presence restricted by itself means real presence as it is, i.e. presence that is not restricted by worrying about absence", and later "restriction means being as it is. It is the state which real things already have".

With very little confidence, I have chosen this formulation of "losing sight".

¹⁰⁶ さへ/*sae*. Cleary uses "block", Waddell "impede", and Tanahashi "overwhelm", the same terms they used for *keige* above, which seems unlikely. Nishijima/Cross have "hinder". Kennett translates the entire sentence differently: "It is by means of the will that we understand the will."

¹⁰⁷ 他法/*tahou*/other-dharma.

them. Me meeting someone is someone meeting someone. Me meeting myself is what emerges meeting what emerges¹⁰⁸. These things could not be as they are without the benefit of moments. When you think, there is the moment of the mystery of reality¹⁰⁹; when you speak, there is the moment of the opening of the gate of transcendence¹¹⁰. When [thinking and speaking] work, there is the moment we cast off the shell¹¹¹; when they don't, there is the moment one stays and one leaves¹¹². You should affirm this¹¹³. You should momentize someness¹¹⁴.

18 THAT BOTH OF THESE revered teachers would say such things should alert us that there is something more here to learn. They should have added: *thinking and talking half working is [still] a moment of someness; thinking and talking half not working is [also] a moment of someness.*

19 CONSIDER THESE THINGS DEEPLY.

20 *Having him raise his eyebrows and blink his eyes is half a moment of someness; having him raise his eyebrows and blink his eyes is an jumbled¹¹⁵ moment of someness; not having him raise his eyebrows and blink his eyes is a jumbled moment of jumbled someness.*

21 SOME MOMENTS, STUDYING THESE things coming and going, studying them arriving and leaving¹¹⁶; those are the moments in question.

¹⁰⁸ 出/*shutsu*/go-out. Commentators appear divided on whether this refers to someone leaving his house, or the abstract “emergence”.

¹⁰⁹ *genjō-kōan*.

¹¹⁰ higher attainment; “going beyond, unlocking the barrier”, “key of transcendence”.

¹¹¹ 脱体/*dattai*/escape-body. Cleary: “whole body”. Tanahashi: “casting off the body”. Waddell: “body of total emancipation”. Nishijima/Cross: “laying bare the substance”. Tamashiro translates this as cast-off shell.

¹¹² 即此離此/*sokushi-rishi*. Cleary: “one with this, detached from this”. Tanahashi: “one with this, free from this”. Waddell: “one with this, apart from this”. Nishijima/Cross: “sticking to this and parting from this”.

¹¹³ *hanken*. Cleary: “understand”; Waddell: “attest and affirm”; Nishijima/Cross: “draw distinctions”.

¹¹⁴ Dōgen engages in some of his trademark wordplay, making the word *uji* into an imperative verb form.

¹¹⁵ 錯/*saku*/illusion. Tanahashi thinks this means “missed”, although he seems to have missed that the character is doubled in its second appearance in this sentence. Cleary has “amiss being time”, although I do not know what this might mean. Waddell translates this as “Wrong!”, citing a relevant case. Nakamura, in his modern Japanese translation, seems to think that this means “exactly”. Nakatsuda, however, has “mixed”, as do Nishijima/Cross. The dictionary reports meanings of “mixed”, “confused”.

Written this first day of winter, the first year of
Ninji¹¹⁷ at Koushou Hourin-ji.

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¹¹⁶ 有時の時/*uji no ji*/existence-time's time.

¹¹⁷ October, 1240 AD

References

I've consulted the references below. My translation owes much to each of them. I've also borrowed notes from some. I'd like to thank the translators and commentators for their great efforts.

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