

# Dogen Bendowa: A Poetic Interpretation of the Zen Master's Teachings

Dogen Bendowa is a collection of 300 koans, or paradoxical teachings, written by the 13th-century Japanese Zen master Dogen Zenji. These koans are intended to challenge the intellect and lead the practitioner to a deeper understanding of the nature of reality.

Dogen Bendowa is not a systematic exposition of Zen Buddhism. Rather, it is a collection of koans, each of which is designed to provoke a particular insight. The koans are often cryptic and paradoxical, and they can be difficult to understand. However, they can also be very powerful if they are approached with the right mindset.



## Warm Zen Practice: A poetic version of Dogen's

**Bendowa** by Tai Sheridan

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 73 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 31 pages



When approaching a koan, it is important to let go of your preconceptions and assumptions. The koan is not meant to be solved like a puzzle. Rather, it is meant to be experienced directly. As you spend time with the koan, it

will begin to work on you, and you will eventually come to a deeper understanding of its meaning.

The following is a translation of one of the koans from Dogen Bendowa:

>

A monk asked Dogen, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?"

Dogen replied, "The sound of two hands clapping."

This koan is a paradox. How can there be the sound of two hands clapping if only one hand is clapping? The koan is designed to challenge the intellect and lead the practitioner to a deeper understanding of the nature of reality.

One way to interpret this koan is to see it as a metaphor for the relationship between the self and the world. The self is like the one hand clapping. The world is like the other hand clapping. The two hands are interdependent. They cannot exist without each other.

Another way to interpret this koan is to see it as a metaphor for the relationship between subject and object. The subject is like the one hand clapping. The object is like the other hand clapping. The subject and object are interdependent. They cannot exist without each other.

This koan is a reminder that the world is not separate from the self. The self and the world are one. This is the ultimate teaching of Zen Buddhism.

Dogen Bendowa is a profound collection of koans that can lead the practitioner to a deeper understanding of the nature of reality. If you are

interested in exploring Zen Buddhism, I encourage you to read Dogen Bendowa.

## Additional Resources

- Dogen Bendowa: 300 Koans Translated by Kazuaki Tanahashi
- Dogen Zenji's Koans from BuddhaNet
- Zen Studies Society

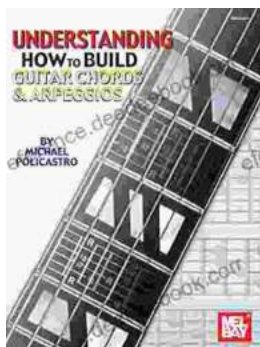


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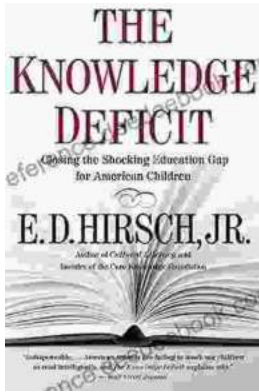
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