

## **Shinji Shobogenzo Book 2, Case 62.**

Written by News Administrator

Tuesday, 30 July 2013 16:57 - Last Updated Tuesday, 30 July 2013 17:11

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### **Koan Commentaries**

Master Unmon said to the assembly; *Say a true word based on the hundreds of miscellaneous things in the world.*

No-one in the assembly had an answer.

Then Master Unmon himself spoke up for the assembly: *Both!*

***Commentary by Nishijima***

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Master Unmon's question can be divided into two parts: one is to demonstrate a word that represents the truth. The other is the matter of things and phenomena – literally, "*hundreds of grasses on the head* ." However, the monks he was preaching to could not answer. Master Unmon answered for the assembly.

"*Both*" here suggests a word that represents the truth and the multitudinous phenomena often mentioned in Buddhism. The word and miscellaneous things are combined into one reality. Master Unmon simply said, "Both" to demonstrate this understanding.

### Commentary by John Fraser

Some people say that everything is one, but if that is so, how do we explain the obvious differentiation that we see? If we say that everything is one, the temptation is to think that there is a true world standing behind this world, which we need to get to. And so we recreate the Ego, this time as a battering ram. Or, we take the familiar metaphor of clouds and sky, and imagine that the sky is somehow behind the clouds, that the clouds are an obstruction. But where does the sky begin, or end?

Our practice is not the eradication of anything. It is not breaking down the door of an empty

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house. It is the actualisation of space.

In vast space, each thing can have its own place.