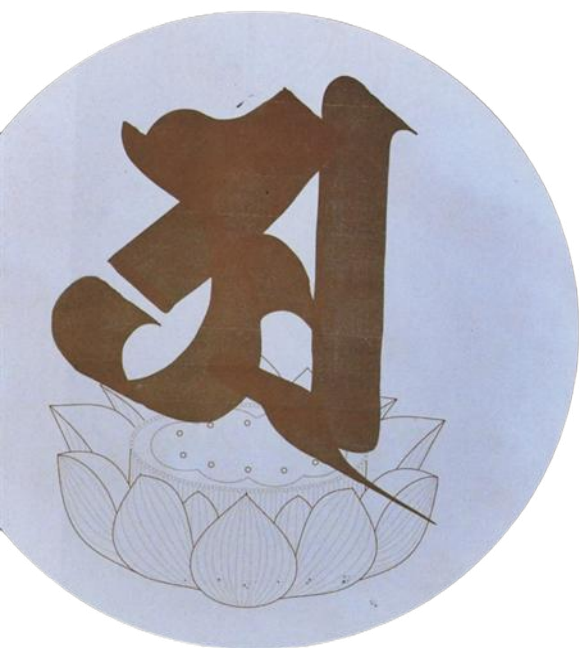


# ***ABSOLUTE WAKEFULNESS***



*"This mountain range constitutes the Womb and Diamond pure land, a twofold mandala that was never constructed and exists in its original state. Its heavily forested ridges and summits comprise the nine courts of the Diamond mandala. Its verdant crags and hollows comprise the eight-petaled lotus blossom of the Womb realm. These mountains, rivers, grasses, and trees are the direct realization of Mahāvairocana... Given these factors, the original eight petals spontaneously blossom, and the letter ah is revealed in its true state. As a path that is simple to cultivate and easy to realize, nothing exceeds the practice of peak entry. Truly, both phenomena and principle are recondite, inner realization is nondualistic, and this marvelous practice constitutes the one mind."*<sup>1</sup>

In the evolution of the dharma, it has been said that we are living in the "Degenerate" or "Dark Age" (*Mappō*), which is characterized by practitioners being of a low capacity, the fact that the dharma cannot be transmitted correctly, and the idea world is beset by so many problems that is not possible to practice. This is attested to, perhaps, by the first internet search result for "*Mappō*" leading to the Massachusetts Association of Public Purchasing Officials. Artist and writer James Bridle has also described the dark age from the perspective of technology, noting that "*we find ourselves today connected to vast repositories of knowledge, and yet we have not learned to think. In fact, the opposite is true: that which was intended to enlighten the world in practice darkens it.*"<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt that the same can be said for Buddhism insofar as it has largely descended into a safe, secular practice that puts a premium on corporate mindfulness techniques and neuroscientific endeavors that search for the cerebral correlates of enlightenment. More generally, *Mappō* is the *Anthropocene*—the name given to the geologic epoch in which we find ourselves. The Anthropocene describes a world where humans are the primary agent for determining whether the earth will continue to be habitable or not.<sup>3</sup> To this we can tack on the idea that rebellion just reproduces the status quo. As the late Mark Fisher wrote, "'Alternative' and 'independent' don't designate something outside mainstream culture; rather they are styles, in fact the dominant styles, within the mainstream."<sup>4</sup> More personally, *Mappō* is seen in the ways we seek to fulfill a sense of fundamental lack through social media. It often seems that human beings have a passion for staying constantly busy and a penchant for wasting time. Spending hour after hour doom-scrolling on our devices, neither having fun nor feeling joy, the logic of addiction unconsciously structures our habits and our normality is actually a mostly unnoticed psychopathology. Given this bleak setting, I wonder what future is possible for the dharma in an era of no future. It seems to me that one possible way forward is *Shugendō*.

<sup>1</sup> Akyūbō. *Collected Key Secrets in A Path into the Mountains: Shugendō and Mount Togakushi* by Caleb Swift Carter. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> James Bridle. *The New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future*. London: Verso Books, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan, Nils Bubandt, eds. *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Mark Fisher. *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*. Washington: Zero Books, 2009.







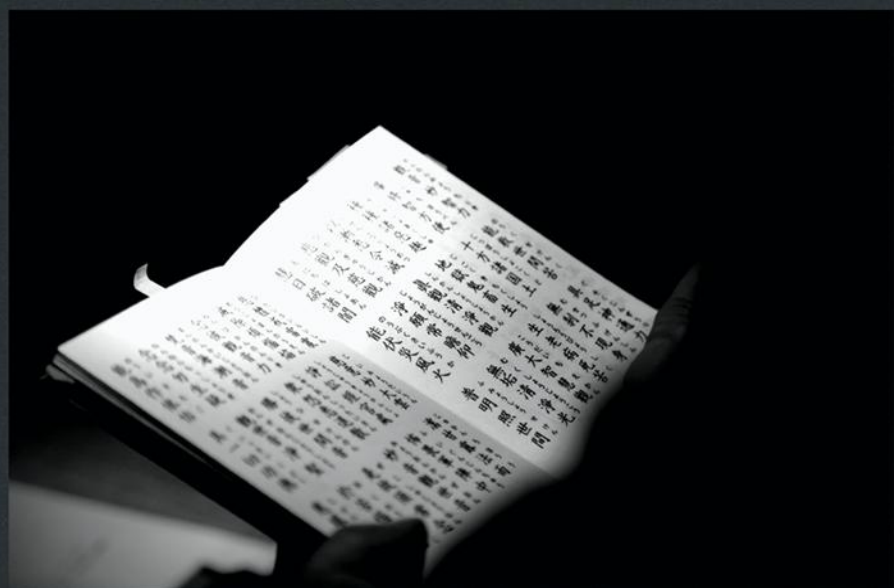
















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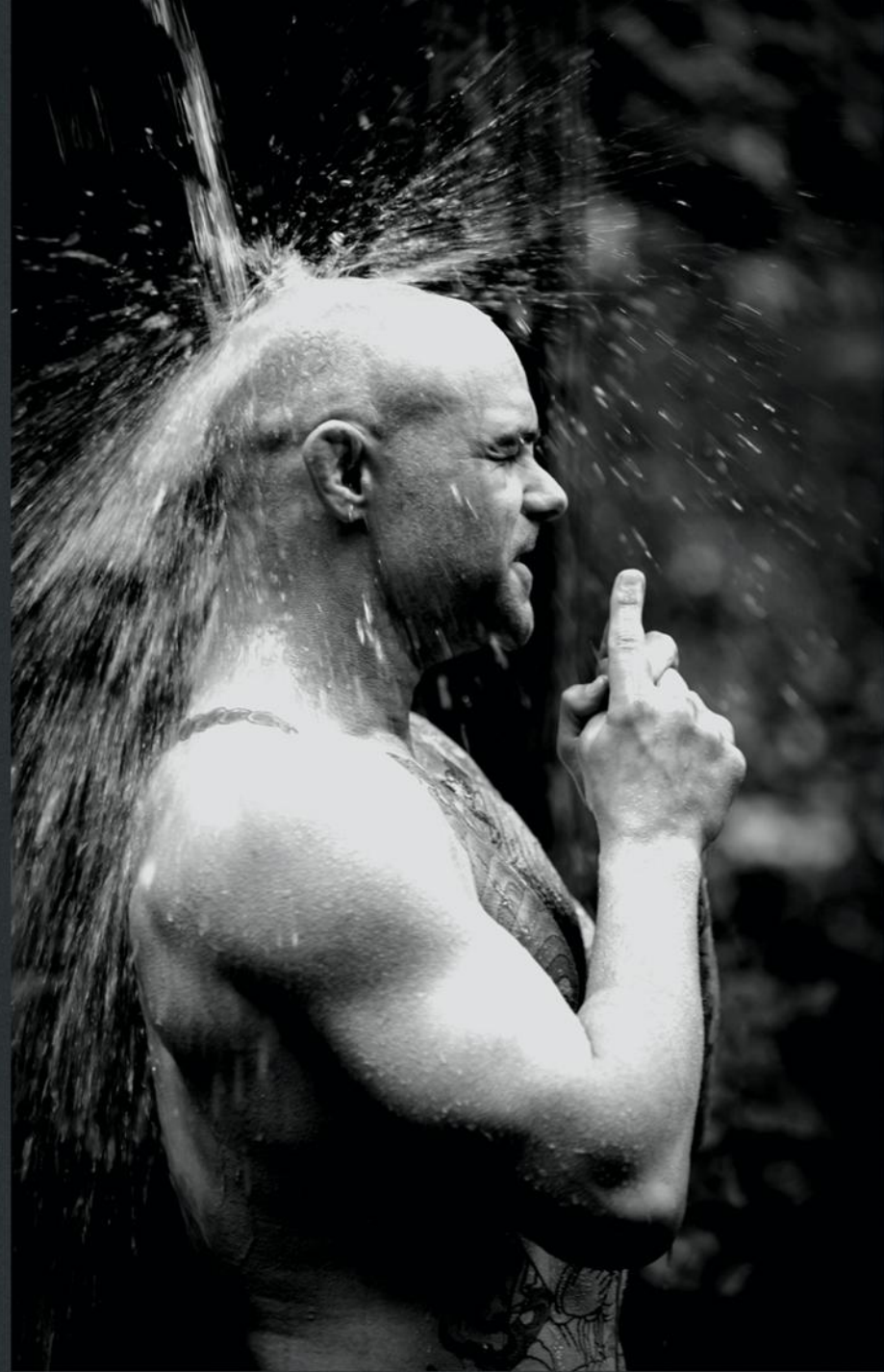


























































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煩惱、尽きること無し  
愚なる集いは声を上げ











































