

# Seeing the Cries of the World: ASL in an American Zen Community

DOUGLASS FUGAN DINEEN

---

*Abstract: Over the past five years, Village Zendo, a Manhattan-based Zen Buddhist community, has been incorporating American Sign Language into its daily liturgy. The resulting vocal-manual chanting, in which liturgy is sung and signed, is a new development in American Zen. Through vocal-manual chanting, this community addresses audism (discrimination based on the ability to hear) while moving toward greater inclusion and equity. Moreover, hearing members report gains in their Zen practice due to the incorporation of sign language. This essay examines the development, meanings, and repercussions of vocal-manual chanting in the contexts of Sōtō Zen Buddhism, Buddhist chant, and Deaf musicking.*

*Résumé : Au cours des cinq dernières années, le Village Zendo, une communauté bouddhiste zen de Manhattan, a incorporé la langue des signes américaine à sa liturgie quotidienne. Les psalmodies vocales et manuelles qui en résultent, où la liturgie est à la fois chantée et exprimée par signes, représentent un nouveau développement du zen américain. À travers les psalmodies de la voix et du geste, cette communauté répond à l'audisme (la discrimination à l'égard des sourds) tout en s'orientant vers davantage d'inclusion et d'équité. En outre, les membres entendants affirment constater une amélioration de leur pratique du zen grâce à l'incorporation du langage des signes. Cet article examine l'évolution, les significations et les repercussions des psalmodies de la voix et de la main dans les contextes du bouddhisme zen sōtō, du chant bouddhique et de la pratique musicale des sourds.*

---

In Mahayana Buddhism, Avalokiteśvara is the *bodhisattva* of great compassion. Her name can be translated as “the one who perceives the cries of the world.” As a bodhisattva (a being manifesting the Buddha’s compassionate aspect),<sup>1</sup> she foregoes *nirvana* (understood by Buddhists as an exit from suffering in the continuous cycle of birth and death) and stays in the world, working toward saving all beings. In some images, Avalokiteśvara

is depicted with a thousand arms and hands; in the palm of each hand is an eye. Some of her hands hold sacred items while others hold simple tools — a stethoscope, a tape measure, a ladle (Fig. 1). Encountering the pain of the world through these many hands and eyes, she acts to alleviate suffering.

Over the past five years, the Village Zendo, a Manhattan-based Zen Buddhist community, has been incorporating ASL (American Sign Language) into its daily chanting. Inspired by a Deaf<sup>2</sup> practitioner, the *sangha* (community) has literally begun to speak with its hands and hear with its eyes. When the sangha uses sign language to chant with its hands and eyes, it is like an embodiment of Avalokiteśvara's many arms, hands, and eyes in compassionate action. In this essay, I examine the first chant that Village Zendo began signing: The Four Bodhisattva Vows,<sup>3</sup> which express the heart of the Mahayana Buddhist imperative.

Sentient beings are numberless, I vow to save them.  
 Desires are inexhaustible, I vow to put an end to them.  
 The Dharmas are boundless, I vow to master them.  
 The Buddha way is unattainable, I vow to attain it.

Shinryu Sensei, a senior teacher at Village Zendo, sums up The Four Bodhisattva Vows as being “a statement of the ideals of what Mahayana practice are: not to



Fig. 1. Avalokiteśvara. Photo by Hung Chung Chih, Getty Images. 465567713.

engage in spiritual practice just for one's own spiritual elevation or purification, but to try to help all beings be free from suffering" (interview, July 30, 2017). He suggests that chanting The Four Vows "is a way we have to channel our energy, and it's a way we have to channel our intentions. When we chant them, we can realize that intention and we can save all beings" (interview, July 30, 2017).

The English language version of the vows fits into a broad paradigm, spanning continents and centuries, in which Buddhist models have continually been adapted to changing circumstances. In this paper, I consider how the addition of ASL to Zen chanting significantly extends the scope of Buddhist adaptations by engaging a previously excluded group (the Deaf community) and by providing an expanded experience of the vows for hearing practitioners. The openings engendered through vocal-manual (i.e., voice and sign) chanting at Village Zendo fall under the rubric of "Deaf Gain," a term coined by H-Dirksen L. Bauman and Joseph J. Murray to describe "the unique cognitive, creative, and cultural gains manifested through deaf ways of being in the world" (2014: xv).

The chanted/signed vows can be productively analyzed as a hybrid expression in line with Mikhail M. Bakhtin's formulation of hybridity as "an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or some other factor" (1981: 358).<sup>4</sup> While the English and ASL used to chant the vows are both complete natural languages, the emphasis on visual understanding, kinesthetic awareness, and an increased use of iconicity<sup>5</sup> in signing provide alternate ways of encountering The Four Vows. Below, I explore relevant places of difference between English and ASL — especially in their transmission modes — and the newness of their encounter in vocal-manual Zen chanting.

This newness resonates with Zen Buddhism's focus on encountering the world as it is, in this moment, and manifests in individuals' personal experiences of chanting, in ritual practice, and in community dynamics. It can also be seen as a challenge on the institutional level of American Sōtō Zen where hybridity "creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation" (Bhabha 1994: 10). Specifically, vocal-manual Zen chanting works towards dismantling audism — discrimination based on the ability to hear — in an environment typically inhospitable to d/Deaf participation.

Social action and political engagement were built into the foundations of the Village Zendo, which was co-founded by Roshi Pat Enkyo O'Hara (Fig. 2) in 1986 in Greenwich Village. Enkyo Roshi played an early and leading role ministering during the AIDS epidemic; she is a founding teacher and spiritual



Fig. 2. Enkyo Roshi. Photo by Pablo Koman Alanes.

director of the Zen Peacemaker Order, which emphasizes engaged Buddhism; and she has continually been involved in movements for social justice. Ordained by Enkyo Roshi, Hoshi R. Liam Ōshin Jennings (Fig. 3), the monk at the centre of this movement, is the first Deaf Zen Buddhist priest and the only American monk fluent in ASL.<sup>6</sup> In addition to developing sign language liturgy, Ōshin is undertaking groundbreaking work teaching and lecturing to make the *dharma* (the Buddhist teachings) accessible to broader audiences. He is the founder of No Barriers Zen Temple in Washington, DC. Housed at Gallaudet University, this community focuses on dismantling perceived and imposed limitations for variously-abled Zen practitioners.



Fig. 3. Ōshin Hoshi. Photo by A. Jesse Jiryu Davis.

## Methodology

In her study of Japanese dance, Tomie Hahn suggests that the senses are “beautiful transmission devices, through which we take in information, comprehend the experience, assign meaning, and often react to the stimuli” (2007: 3). This essay highlights the effects of alternate transmission devices (in ASL) on communication, transmission, and experience in the specialized contexts of

Zen liturgical practice. Benjamin Bahan describes human communications as adhering to two basic sensory orientations: audio-vocal and visual-tactile (2014: 234). I begin framing the Village Zendo experiment by contrasting the audio-vocal preference built into Zen practice and Buddhist chant with the predominantly visual-tactile model of Deaf communications and, especially, Deaf musicking. I locate the rift between the two sense models in the larger history of audism and discrimination found in the Sōtō Zen lineage and also provide examples of audism in American Zen that accentuate the importance of the Village Zendo initiative.

As a member of the Village Zendo community since 2000, I conducted this research as a participant-observer. Although I have been engaged with the development of vocal-manual chanting at Village Zendo from the start, the ethnography for this project was primarily undertaken during the 2017 summer retreat: a yearly, five-week intensive residential training in upstate New York. Daily interactions, formal interviews, a roundtable discussion, and informal reflections provided me with sangha members' perspectives on this innovation. In addition, my own impressions of how ASL has transformed the inner experience of The Four Vows — a chant that has been part of my practice for over 30 years — inform this narrative. The intersecting trajectories in this essay put it at the crossroads of Deaf studies, Buddhist studies, and ethnomusicology.

## Putting the Vows in Context

Chanting at Village Zendo can be divided into four categories, three of which adhere to Pi-yen Chen's (2004) observations on Chinese Buddhist liturgical music. These are: 1) chants that praise the Buddha/s; 2) chants from scripture; and 3) *gāthā-s* (83). *Ekō-s* (dedications of merit), an important feature of the daily liturgy, comprise the fourth category. The Four Bodhisattva Vows fall under the rubric of *gāthā* (verse). *Gāthā-s* are short verses, sometimes used in personal practice to bring concentrated attention to daily tasks. Chanted as liturgy, as is the case with The Four Bodhisattva Vows, *gāthā-s* focus communal attention on tenets of Buddhist practice.

The three daily services done during *sesshin* (intensive retreat practice) are highly formalized combinations of the aforementioned liturgical musics chanted in a designated hall (known as the Buddha Hall). Practitioners stand in assigned positions, trained members assume varying roles, ritual movements are choreographed throughout, and the event is led by an officiant and *ino* (chant leader). The officiant focuses the group's energy (with

individual movements, offerings, and gestures) while the ino recites solo melodic introductions and vocally conducts the chanting. The ino also recites an *ekō* after each chant. In a typical day, the sangha performs five separate chants in the Buddha Hall. Each chant requires specifically choreographed movements by the officiant along with a unique introduction and *ekō* recited by the ino. The chants are accompanied by, and coordinated with, an array of percussion instruments.

Performance of The Four Bodhisattva Vows contrasts sharply with these daily services. Instead of taking place in the Buddha Hall, the vows are chanted in the *zendo*: a space devoted to sitting meditation. They are recited together, in monotone heterophony, directly following *zazen* (seated meditation) and after dharma talks. “The heterophonic texture,” notes Paul D. Greene, “renders audible the priority that chanting is about conveying the *dhamma*<sup>7</sup> together, as a collective expression” (2016: 4). The sangha remains in *zazen* posture while chanting the vows, linking the practice to the inner focus and intimacy of sitting meditation. Moreover, there is uniformity in roles while chanting the vows that contrasts with the specialization of daily service. With the exception of the *doan*, an instrumentalist who rings the bells, everyone chants The Four Bodhisattva Vows together as a community. There is no solo vocal introduction nor dedication of merit by the ino, nor is there an officiant. “Through co-performance,” says Greene, “chanting heightens a sense of community and solidarity” (2).

## Sensory Communications in Zen Practice and Buddhist Chant

In Zen practice, sensory input is highly controlled; gestures, sartorial choices, speech, sounds, movements, the position of one’s gaze, respirations, and even mental states are often prescribed. On retreat, practitioners maintain silence outside of liturgy. Instructions for sesshin include the admonition to keep one’s eyes down at all times so as not to engage others. Likewise, there is an unstated but nearly total prohibition on touching. (While sight can manifest in an asymmetric sensory relationship — i.e., one can see without being seen — “haptic encounters,” which Donna Jo Napoli describes as “touch events that are voluntarily initiated” [2014: 212], necessarily engender “an exchange, an interaction in which each participant experiences something” [213].) Communications through the eyes and touch are avoided as they break both parties’ focus, thereby disrupting the internal silence being cultivated. From a d/Deaf perspective, in which both eye contact and physical contact are critical to interpersonal relations, this proscription can be especially isolating.



Fig. 4. Village Zendo Practitioners Chanting in Gassho. Photo by A. Jesse Jiryu Davis.

During zazen, eyes are cast downwards with an unfocused gaze. Lighting in the meditation hall is usually natural, with early morning and evening sittings only brightened by candlelight. In the typical style of chanting The Four Vows, sans signing, the gaze conforms to that of zazen. The only change from meditation posture comes with the formation of the *gassho mudra*, a palms-together ritual gesture in which the hands are held in front of the face at nose height. Gassho is held throughout the chant (which further occludes vision, see Fig. 4). The severe limiting of visibility during chanting, zazen, and on sesshin in general is intended to remove distractions. Psychologically and practically, sound takes on a heightened significance for hearing practitioners in this low-vision setting. Deaf individuals, by contrast, are figuratively (and often literally) left in the dark.

At the end of *zazen*, a three-stroke bell pattern audibly signals the beginning of The Four Vows, which are recited three times through. The group acquires the pitch and tempo by listening for the voice of the *ino* and to the *sangha* as a whole. A single sounding of the bell signals the beginning of rounds two and three. The final round is also punctuated by a bell struck between the second and third, and the third and fourth vows. (These two bells are a ubiquitous signaling device indicating the end of any chant.) Immediately after the sound of the final word dies away, a double strike on a smaller bell indicates that meditators should stand. The group then follows a series of interspersed sonic cues played on a different set of small bells that coordinate three full prostrations, the teacher's formal exit from the *zendo*, and the accompanying bows. The cues organizing recitation of The Four Bodhisattva Vows and the formal exit are part of a much larger sonic scheme — comprising vocal and instrumental sounds — that coordinates all chanting, the daily schedule, individual and group movements, and ritual functions of a Zen community on retreat. A popular aphorism in Zen is that one can navigate *sesshin* simply by following the sounded cues. The importance of sound, however, goes deeper than logistics.

According to Greene, “during the first three centuries of Buddhism, the entirety of the Buddha’s teaching — the Dhamma — was composed, learned, and propagated orally throughout Asia in the form of memorized

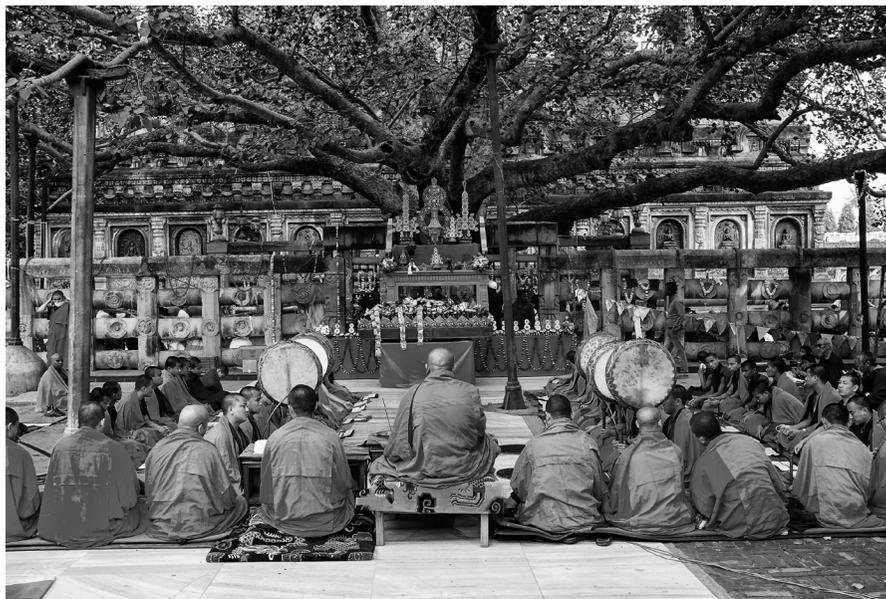


Fig. 5. Tibetan Monks Chanting at Bodhgaya, India. Photo by Anadoart. Getty Images. 494762077.

and regularly rehearsed sound” (2004: 46). And while the Buddhist canon was eventually committed to writing (notably, in the vernacular language of Pali rather than in literary Sanskrit), “oral teaching, memorization, and chanting has continued over the ensuing twenty-one centuries” (46). This is reflected in an emphasis on what Greene dubs “sonic praxis”: i.e., the transmission and internalization of Buddhist teachings through sounded chant (44).<sup>8</sup>

The importance of sonic praxis in Zen reflects deep currents in Buddhism. The six sense organs — eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind (along with their associated actions and objects) — operate as vehicles for Zen practice. “In Mahayana Buddhism,” comments Chen, “hearing is ... regarded as the best method for living beings to achieve the Supreme Bodhi,” or awakening (2001: 47). The body, as the seat of hearing (and source of speech and chant), resides at the centre of this sonic structure, which “is designed to be soteriologically effective” (32). In other words, chanting itself becomes a means of salvation. Zen master Seung Sahn puts it like this:

Chanting meditation means keeping a not-moving mind and perceiving the sound of your own voice. Perceiving your voice means perceiving your true self or true nature. Then you and the sound are never separate, which means that you and the whole universe are never separate. ... So when you are chanting, you must perceive the sound of your voice: you and the universe have already become one, suffering disappears, true happiness appears. (1996: v)

In sum, communications in Zen practice and Buddhist chanting mainly adhere to Bahan’s audio-vocal orientation (2014: 234). This is clear in a typical recitation of The Four Bodhisattva Vows in which sounds communicate: the impending start of the chant via an introductory bell pattern; the pitch, tempo, volume, and repetitions of the chant; cues to stand and bow; and the teacher’s exit. Extensive limiting of visual stimulus in zazen and admonitions against eye and physical contact on retreat further this orientation. Likewise, the elevation of the sense of hearing and emphasis on vocal chanting as a means of community cohesion, and path to enlightenment, depend on audio-vocal modalities. In contrast to these elements in Zen, which are anathema to d/Deaf participation, Deaf culture relies largely on visual-tactile communications in which sight, haptic feedback, and kinesthetic modalities take precedence.

## Sensory Communications in Deaf Culture

Contemporary Deaf culture has been developing since the 1970s, when “Deaf people began to see themselves as belonging to the fold of human cultures” (Bauman 2007: 2). Deaf identity, like other cultural and ethnic identities,<sup>9</sup> is multivalent. To approach the complexity of Deafness, notes Bauman, requires “a broad construction that encompasses the myriad ways of being d/Deaf, yet while maintaining some critical features that distinguish the existential state of being Deaf from other identities” (13). While some features of Deaf identity are uncontested, like the use of sign language, others, including audiological deafness, are debated (12). Central to most constructions of Deafness, however, is an orientation based on the sense modes of vision and touch.

For making, experiencing, and enjoying music,<sup>10</sup> Deaf people rely on visual cues and tactile sensations rather than voice and auditory hearing. Feeling vibrations in the body, from amplifiers, instruments, or vocalization, is one way that Deaf people experience sound as musical. Bahan notes that “the construction of the ideology of hearing sound has undervalued the tactile



Fig. 6. Evelyn Glennie. Photo by Philipp Rathmer.

feeling of sound” (2014: 245). Renowned percussionist Evelyn Glennie (Fig. 6), who lost most of her hearing as a child, goes further. “Hearing,” she says, “is basically a specialized form of touch. ... For some reason we tend to make a distinction between hearing a sound and feeling a vibration, in reality they are the same thing” (2015).<sup>11</sup>

Bahan describes the bi-annual Gallaudet University Rock Festival — a raucous “bash with blaring music” — as “a ‘tactile party’ where music is felt throughout the body” (2014: 245). While a zendo is anything but blaring, the large gongs and drums used in chanting create vibrations which can provide an avenue for experiencing sound outside the typical ideology

of hearing through the ears. Ōshin, for example, feels the vibrations of the percussion accompaniment to chanting, as long as he is not too far away from the instrument (email communication, October 12, 2017). Deaf people's ability to perceive sound through somatosensory input relies on enhanced tactile sensitivity developed in response to deafness (Napoli 2014: 211). Moreover, it "is further developed by the more frequent and more extensive haptic events common to Deaf culture" (223).

Beyond tactile interpretations of sound waves as music, Deaf people can experience music through movement interpreted as visual rhythm. "The vehicle that Deaf people have substituted for sound," notes Summer Loeffler, "is rhythm" (2014: 444). Reviewing literature on sensory interpretation, Loeffler notes that "native Deaf signers are significantly faster than hearing nonsigners in detecting motion" (443). This visual acuity may enable Deaf people to "experience a sensory overlap wherein the visual and tactile components 'take over' the function of the auditory cortex through the expansion of the visual cortex" (443). Neuroimaging studies in which visual and linguistic cues (in sign), along with somatosensory stimulus, are seen to activate the auditory cortex in deaf brains (see Neary 2001; Merabet and Pascual-Leone 2010; Karns, Dow, and Neville 2012) suggest that the brain's neuroplasticity is fundamental to this type of cross-modal sensory mapping.

## Audism and Discrimination in Zen

The preceding accounts mark a chasm between the sense modes active in typical American Zen practice and in Deaf culture. In many ways, the audio-vocal mode of Zen chanting and retreat, with active suppression of visual and tactile encounters, is hostile to d/Deaf participation. Yet there are exceptions. Because speech is limited, or absent, in many Zen contexts, all practitioners experience the increased anonymity that comes with speechlessness. And while the downcast gaze puts the focus on hearing, peripheral vision also comes into play. Ritual gestures and coordinated group movements — not to mention attention to the movements of the monitor, silently roaming the zendo with a stick<sup>12</sup> — are communicated through cues seen in the periphery. With increased peripheral vision awareness, deaf practitioners are potentially better aware of these practice elements.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, to understand the context of the Village Zendo's work with ASL, it is worth considering historical discriminations based on disability (as well as class and gender) that are a part of the zendo's Sōtō lineage.

William Bodiford (1996) documents a long history of social discrimination by the Sōtō School in Japan (along with recent, sometimes

clumsy efforts to redress these wrongs).<sup>14</sup> For example, texts for funeral rites dating to 1611 show “Sōtō Zen teachers already had developed special funeral rituals for people of ‘non-human’ (*hinin* 非人, i.e., outcaste) status as well as for victims of mental illness, leprosy, and other socially unaccepted diseases” (13). Similarly, after 1635, temple necrologies maintained by Zen priests included sensitive family information, which was sometimes used for political purposes and for social segregation, including marriage taboos (9). Separate registries were kept for undesirables such as former Christians and their descendants (8). “In many cases,” notes Bodiford, “families of outcastes, criminals, homeless people, lepers, and the disabled were also recorded separately” (8).

Such discrimination was supported by readings of Buddhist texts positing disability as karmic retribution.<sup>15</sup> The 9th century collection of Buddhist anecdotes, the *Nihon Ryōiki*, gives an early example in which deafness is meted out as punishment for speaking ill of the Lotus sutra (Kekai 2013: 162).<sup>16</sup> The notion of disability resulting from past action (in this life or previous ones) also appears in specifically Sōtō texts. Bodiford recounts that Sōtō “documents and recorded sermons frequently cite similar karmic notions not only to justify existing social distinctions but also to assert that outcastes, the disabled, and other people deemed useless to society cannot possibly attain awakening” (1996: 14).<sup>17</sup>

This harsh theology, however, existed alongside tangible efforts by Buddhist temples to care for those in need. Sanctuaries for the disabled and poor established by the 8th century Buddhist monk Gyōki, for example, became the template for an extensive system of temple schools and, eventually, public education in Japan (Nakamura 2006: 34). Thirteenth century monks such as Eison and Ninshō were known for building temples and hospitals that housed disabled and destitute people (36). Nevertheless, by the middle of the Tokugawa shogunate (1600-1868), with the growth of urban centres and merchant culture, deafness was firmly (and negatively) associated with beggars (37-38).

American Sōtō Zen is largely free from Japanese Zen’s historical biases against deafness and disability. While I have first-hand knowledge of at least one monastery refusing to ordain people with disabilities, under the rationale they will be a burden to the community, the overall tenor of American Zen is one of inclusiveness.<sup>18</sup> And yet audism is present. Often, as seen in my earlier descriptions of Zen practice and Buddhist chant, it is revealed in institutional biases in which “the dominant culture’s sensory norms are imposed” (Bahan 2014: 252). Other times, however, discrimination is active. As an example, consider the following story recounted by Ōshin.

I was visiting a monastery not that long ago ... and they [said], “Please sit up here” [in a prominent position called the *ryoban*]. And then when they saw the person who was going to be signing with me, when they saw the interpreter with me, I went from the *ryoban* to maybe the end of this row. Because they thought I would be too distracting if the dharma talk was going to happen. So, I take the seat.... Then the monitor came and asked me, “Would you actually move back around here?” ... They wanted me to sit behind [a] wall so no one could see me during the dharma talk. It was a really back-of-the-bus experience.... I progressively got pushed out of the *ryoban*, dharma line, to the end of the row, and then was actually asked as the dharma talk started, would you move out of, basically, out of the *zendo*. (interview, August 14, 2017)

While Ōshin has rarely been treated so poorly in Zen communities, this example demonstrates how narrow attention to Zen forms — in this case, maintaining stillness in ceremonial settings — can quickly transform into discrimination.

Beyond being offensive and discriminatory, the idea of “correct form” held by the monitor who asked Ōshin to move is, itself, a limited reading of Zen practice. A related critique was voiced during a roundtable discussion about signing the vows at Village Zendo: “If you do have traditional experience,” one practitioner stated, “it’s really disconcerting to come into a *zendo*, where the emphasis traditionally is always on absolute stillness, [and] to have people waving their arms around” (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017). In response, Enkyo Roshi asked: “What are you calling an authentic Zen experience? In Japan,” she went on to point out, “there’s a lot of movement in the *zendo*: in the sitting, when different things are happening. So, it’s not that we Americans are going crazy, dancing around, and that [the signing is] not authentic Zen” (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017).

## The Four Bodhisattva Vows at Village Zendo

Pi-yen Chen describes daily chanting as “the principal site of cultural construction” for the Buddhist sangha (2001: 31). “Chanters,” she says, “use chanting not only to further their own spiritual training but also to communicate their insight with each other and to engender a momentum of common commitment in the community. Chanting thereby facilitates both personal and communal harmony” (36). While it may not accord with some students’

ideas of how Zen should look, the incorporation of ASL into chanting emerged from the Village Zendo's mission to promote "true expression" (a translation of the temple's Japanese name, *Dotokuji*) and harmony in community. It follows the imperative of making the teachings accessible and, against the backdrop of audism, it aligns with Village Zendo members' commitment to social justice.

If chanting at Village Zendo is designed to, as Chen suggests, provide "a communicative space for communal participation" (2004: 93), the adoption of ASL in response to a Deaf practitioner could be seen as a natural outcome. But having a large portion of the sangha signing the vows was not inevitable, nor is the resulting practice about accommodation. The implications and impacts are much broader than simply allowing one member to fully participate.

According to Ōshin, "when I started signing a little bit in the zendo, it was actually Roshi's enthusiasm to try to learn to sign with me that made it okay, and others started to learn as well" (interview, August 14, 2017). Early on,



Fig. 7. Vocal-Manual Chanting at Village Zendo. Photo by A. Jesse Jiryu Davis.

Ōshin offered a workshop on ASL designed to introduce the sangha to signing (in a spiritual context). The actual practice of signing the vows, however, developed in a grass-roots fashion. "There was never anything formal," says Ōshin, "people started signing what they could see.... Slowly but surely, it just kind of spread out" (interview, August 14, 2017). Even today, there is no formal instruction on signing the vows; it is not required, nor is it overtly encouraged. Like most forms in the zendo, practitioners learn by observing and participating. Myoko Sensei applauds this kind of learning. "If you totally knew what everything meant," she told me, "then you would be

like, ‘Oh, am I doing this right?’ You wouldn’t have that feeling of finding your way that’s so beautiful. It’s how we teach, really, everything” (interview, August 14, 2017).

Many zendo members describe the signs for The Four Vows as being “intuitive” or “natural.” As Myoko Sensei puts it: “It seems so natural that you wouldn’t have to think about it. It seems like, ‘Oh, this is just how it came out of the ground’” (interview, August 14, 2017). And yet a lot of thought, time, and energy has gone into developing ASL liturgy. Because there is little Buddhist-specific language in ASL, Ōshin basically started from scratch.<sup>19</sup> “It takes a lot of discriminate knowledge,” he says, “looking to know and to feel what feels right in terms of my practice experience” (interview, August 14, 2017). Along with his own insights, Ōshin has researched spiritual gestures, consulted Deaf teachers from other spiritual traditions, and has borrowed and adapted signs from other sign languages.<sup>20</sup>

The meanings of ASL signs are sometimes modified in chanting, often through repetition. “Numberless,” for example, is an extension of “many” in ASL. “You’re making it ten-fold by doing it two or three times. Just once doesn’t hold that meaning,” says Ōshin (interview, August 14, 2017). Likewise, “dharma” is derived from the ASL sign for “teaching.” Done multiple times, the teachings take on the universal quality of the dharmas, which are all around us. The sign for “desires” comes from the ASL sign for “hungry.” “Done repeatedly,” says Ōshin, it “means lust. In ASL from hunger to lusting, craving, it’s all in the way you sign it. And so, ‘desires’ is everything from those body-felt hungers all the way to *desire* desire. It has shades of meaning” (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017).

While ASL can be highly abstract and conceptual, as Oliver Sacks notes, it also “retains a direct power of portrayal that has no analogue in, cannot be translated into, the language of speech” (1989: 98). This directness is often on display in iconic signs. For example, the sign for “desires,” in which the hands alternately trace a path down the windpipe (see Fig. 8), iconically conveys physical consumption. In doing so, it requires significantly more hand-to-body contact than the other signs. This may help explain the powerful effect it has on practitioners. Roshi says:

When I make the sign for . . . desires, it feels like all the desires that there are, are kind of embodied in that movement. Rather than the word desire, which has various valences and can go in other directions. It’s just very clearly what we’re talking about when we do that. (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017)



Fig. 8. ASL “Desires.” Screenshot of video by Ōshin Hoshi.

A senior student, YuJin, expresses the visceral feeling she has when signing the vow. “It makes me think of the things that choke you,” she says, “I can feel them. I’m pulling on them” (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017).

### Reciting the Vows at Village Zendo

The Four Bodhisattva Vows are chanted slowly, in a unison monotone/heterophonic texture. While the signs follow basic ASL grammar, Ōshin consciously designed them to conform to the rhythms and timing of the voiced chant. “Some of the signs are slightly reduced and the grammar is not really perfect,” he says, “it’s made to align with these rhythms that are naturally already occurring in the spoken chant” (interview, August 14, 2017). By aligning signs and spoken phrases, the vows’ meanings are shared across both idioms.

Bauman points out that in simultaneous communication, or SimCom (speech paired with ASL), “spoken English comes across clearly, whereas the signs that accompany it are often scattered signifiers that do not add up to intelligible communication, let alone grammatically correct language use” (2004: 241). Understandably, SimCom is frowned upon in Deaf culture and, on at least one occasion, Ōshin has received pushback on this point. For him, however, “the goal is that the sign supports the chant and the chant supports the sign, people get to sign and chant” (interview, August 14, 2017). Ōshin goes on to say:

I've had Deaf people come in the doors and everybody just bursts into Sign all of a sudden. It's like, "I've been going to such-and-such a church for years and I've never seen that." They have this powerful experience when we do this; they're not looking at "Oh, he didn't use the right grammar." (interview, August 14, 2017)

This impulse towards inclusivity (along with the clarity of the signs' meanings) may ameliorate some criticism arising from SimCom in vocal-manual chanting. More pertinently, the vows themselves are inherently distinct from ordinary communications. The anaphora, slow tempo, legato articulation, and monotone heterophony heard in the oral version of the vows conform to the norms of chanted *gāthā*-s in American Sōtō Zen. Ōshin's signs are comparable in form and function. Both sign and speech, I contend, should be understood as stylized utterances designed for Zen Buddhist chanting. Performed together, as vocal-manual chanting, they become a hybrid, multisensory vehicle for communal expression.

The visual aspect of this communal expression is especially striking in the normally still context of American Zen. Many practitioners have commented on the beauty of seeing the sangha signing together. Myoko Sensei describes it as seeing "a giant wave with all these little waves" (interview, August 14, 2017). As an analogue to the melodic heterophony heard in *The Four Vows* (in which chanters' voices add slight variations to the single melodic line), I propose considering the signed aspect "visual heterophony" (see Fig. 9). "You'll have the same thing but all a little different," says Myoko, "and it's really beautiful to see" (interview, August 14, 2017).

## Making Sense of Vocal-Manual Chanting at Village Zendo

Embodiment is crucial in Zen practice: on the cushion, in chanting, during meals, and throughout daily activity. Although vocal chanting (like speech) is an embodied practice, "sign is fully embodied in a way speech isn't" (Sacks 1989: 95). Napoli suggests the distinction resides in the somatosensory basis of sign and the greater bodily involvement needed for its articulation (2014: 224). Moreover, she notes, "because the signer's body movements, shapes, and positions are, to a much greater extent, strongly related to meaning, the signer experiences language differently at a cognitive level" (224). When signing, writes Napoli, "language becomes the signer; the signer becomes language" (224).



Fig. 9. Vocal-Manual Chanting of The Four Bodhisattva Vows. Screenshot of video by author.

Napoli's reflections resonate with Myoko Sensei's description of embodying the vows through sign. When Myoko started signing, she says, "It was just kind of like my body was feeling the meaning of the words and that was amazing.... To bring those expressions into my body feels amazing — beyond meaning; or maybe that is the meaning" (interview, August 14, 2017). Tokuyu Hoshi relates his experience signing vows to working with *koan*-s, a teaching tool in Zen in which language is used to push one's experience beyond the normal confines of language. "It was naturally like koan work," he says; signing is "embodying something instead of attaching words to it" (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017). And while the signs themselves are words, what Bauman describes as "the visual-kinetic-spatial modality of sign" (2004: 244) differentiates ASL from the linear (and two-dimensional) constructs of spoken languages.

Kristen A. Lindgren observes that Deaf authors writing in English negotiate "two linguistic forms: manual-visual languages and oral-aural languages with a written form"; she notes that "these multiple boundary crossings engender hybrid forms" (2012: 342). Deaf writers' hybrid works are what Lindgren terms "contact zones," i.e., spaces where Deaf and hearing worlds meet (343). Vocal-manual chanting is also a contact zone, one in which the Village Zendo performs a productive hybridity. This vivid encounter of

“two linguistic consciousnesses” (Bakhtin 1981: 358) creates meanings both internal and communal that can be transformative. As Enkyo Roshi notes: “We see that when we speak a different language, we become a slightly different person. It’s a wonderful feeling when we realize that we’re different because of our mode of expression” (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017). For Zen practitioners, the sensory knowledge gained through expressing the hybrid vows points directly to the essence of practice, allowing “an encounter with ‘newness’ that is not part of the continuum of past and present” (Bhabha 1994: 10).

## Conclusions

In vocal-manual chanting, The Four Bodhisattva Vows are transformed into “sensuous acts which draw upon the signers’ visual and kinesthetic experience of real things” (Thoutenhoofd 2000: 274). The sensuous act of signing affords hearing practitioners a fresh perspective on this old set of vows. This perspective is rooted in the embodiment central to Zen, in the activation of diverse sense modalities, and in the newness of this liturgical expression. For Deaf Zen practitioners, the immediate benefit of an ASL version of The Four Bodhisattva Vows is obvious: native signers can participate in a central liturgical element of Zen Buddhism in their first language. At the same time, because Deaf and hearing practitioners chant together in the vocal-manual version, this innovation fosters integration and harmony in the sangha. “It shows,” according to Enkyo Roshi, “a kind of grace and maturity in practice” (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017). Greene’s earlier observations on musical texture and community can now be expanded: “The heterophonic texture renders audible [and visible] the priority that chanting is about conveying the *dhamma* together, as a collective expression” (2016: 4). Being literally hands-on, vocal-manual chanting aligns the entire sangha with Avalokiteśvara’s thousand figurative arms, hands, and eyes — all taking action to save all beings.

Over the five years that the sangha has been signing, the practice has evolved to the point where it has little to do with Ōshin. This was made especially clear to him on a visit to the zendo some months after relocating from Manhattan to the DC area. As he recounts:

I’m seated, and somebody started signing something and I wasn’t. I just wanted to see who’s here and who’s signing. And the guy was like, “this is [and he demonstrates the sign].” He doesn’t know who I am. So that’s a beautiful point that the sign isn’t necessarily for me. (interview, August 14, 2017)

The positive experiences reported by signing sangha members reinforce the notion that the benefits of this practice go beyond the important work of promoting inclusiveness and combating audism in Zen. Ōshin equates this to the “curb-cut effect” in which supporting one group or community benefits everyone. The name derives from the improvements walkers, delivery workers, people wheeling strollers or grocery carts, and others got when curbs became wheelchair-friendly ramps due to the pressure of disabled activism. Examples of the curb-cut effect are all around us: in seatbelt legislation, affirmative action, non-smoking laws, bike lanes, and even in the GI Bill (Glover Blackwell 2017: 30-31). At the zendo, says Ōshin, people may have begun “doing this because [they] want Ōshin, or any Deaf person to feel welcome.” He goes on:

And then, all of a sudden, they got something out of it and they experienced some spiritual impact from doing this. And that’s been kind of my message all along: when everybody has a seat at the table it’s actually better for everyone. (roundtable discussion, August 14, 2017) 🌸

## Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the members of the Village Zendo sangha who graciously participated in this study. I would especially like to thank Enkyo Roshi, Myoko Sensei, Tokuyu Hoshi, and Giyu for their insights and contributions. I also want to thank Shinryu Sensei for his thoughtful and detailed feedback on early drafts of this essay and Amy Walenga, David Nelson, and Marc Slobin for encouraging me to pursue this research. Finally, I am indebted to R. Liam Ōshin Jennings; without his collaboration and ongoing dialogue, this project would not have been possible.

## Notes

1. Bodhisattva translates from Sanskrit as “enlightenment being.” In Mahayana Buddhism, anyone who raises the aspiration for awakening out of compassion for others can embark on the bodhisattva path.

2. Adhering to contemporary convention in American Deaf studies, I use capital D when referring to Deaf culture and Deaf politics and lower-case d for medical aspects of deafness. When both audiological deafness and cultural Deafness are being invoked, I use the combined term: d/Deaf.

3. The Mahayana version of The Four Bodhisattva Vows (also known as The Four Great Vows, Chinese *si hongshiyuan*) is widely credited to 6th century Chinese master Zhiyi (538-597), founder of the Tiantai sect of Buddhism (Bushwell et al. 2014: 818).

4. Use of the term “hybrid” has waned in this new century of ethnomusicological scholarship. While it may be, as Mark Slobin suggests, “insufficient to describe the range and complexity of people’s music-making in complex contexts” (2007: 109), I believe the concept of hybridity (especially in terms of language) provides a profitable space for the current discussion. This is most relevant when considering how vocal-manual chanting integrates divergent modes of communication (and diverse communicators) and the ways that this unique expression broadens Zen practitioners’ experiences.

5. While iconic representation is more prevalent in signed versus spoken languages, the significance of iconicity in the cognition of sign language is still contested. See Bosworth and Emmory (2010) for an overview of this debate.

6. While there have undoubtedly been deaf Zen priests, Ōshin is the first culturally Deaf priest either he or I have located in our research.

7. *Dhamma* is a transliteration from Pali common in English-language Theravada Buddhist texts. It is comparable to the Sanskrit-derived term, *dharma*, used in Mahayana-based sects like Zen.

8. Greene’s (2004) positioning of Buddhist chant as sonic praxis is based on a comparative study of *paritta sutta* chanting in Theravada Buddhism. While there are critical differences between these forms and Zen Buddhist chant, I believe his analysis of chanting as a sonic practice vehicle “with distinctive features that facilitate memorization and also shape the practitioner’s mindfulness of the Buddha’s discourses” (44) is applicable to the present study.

9. In *People of the Eye: Deaf Ethnicity and Ancestry* (2011), Harlan L. Lane, Richard Pillard, and Ulf Hedberg convincingly portray the American Deaf community as an ethnic minority, which shares a language, a sense of belonging, cultural rules, social institutions, arts, history, ethnic territory, kinship, ancestry, socialization practices, and boundaries.

10. Alice-Ann Darrow has noted some areas where d/Deaf participation in musicking falls below that of hearing populations (and, more significantly, how different cultural associations among d/Deaf people affect their musicality) (1993: 105). While her study productively questions whether the value placed on music in Deaf education and Deaf studies is a reflection of preoccupations among hearing educators and scholars (94), its results reinforce the notion that d/Deaf individuals and communities, like their hearing counterparts, have diverse relationships to music.

11. In an earlier draft of this essay, I took Glennie’s observations on the nature of hearing as license to analyze Deaf individuals’ tactile experiences of sound, as well as their visual interpretations of rhythmic movement, as a specialized (or expanded) type of “hearing.” Because a common translation of Avalokiteśvara’s name is “the one who hears the cries of the world,” and her “hearing” does not rely on auditory signals received through the ear, this analysis felt natural — especially in the Buddhist contexts under discussion. Soon, however, I recognized that my application of the term “hearing” to Deaf encounters with sound, no matter the qualifications, was an attempt to bring Deafness in line with hearing models of musicking, and that this

effort constituted a type “metaphysical audism,” defined by Hilde Haualand as “the orientation that defines human communities as groups of people who hear (the) same” (2007: 121). In fact, it is the distinct modalities of Deaf communications and interpretations that make vocal-manual chanting such a valuable practice at Village Zendo.

12. The *kyōsaku* (also pronounced *keisaku*) is a flat wooden stick used in Zen Buddhism to awaken sleepy meditators, relieve physical tension, and concentrate the mind. Translated variously as “admonishing stick,” “wake-up stick,” or “encouragement stick,” the *kyōsaku* is used to strike the shoulders and/or upper back area (at the practitioner’s request) during meditation.

13. Matthew Dye’s (2014) review of psychological visual-perception studies highlights an increase in peripheral visual attention in deaf adults and children in comparison to hearing individuals. As with the enhanced ability to quickly detect motion (noted earlier), “these changes in visual function are associated with changes in the brains of deaf individuals” (205).

14. Japanese Shintoism and Confucianism also comment on disability. Early Shinto texts associate disability with the impurity of one’s parents (Nakamura 2006: 33), which resonates with the karmic view on disability developed in Japanese Buddhism. In contrast, Japanese law based on Confucianism categorized deafness as a minor disability (Jpn. *zan’ shichi*) because in a rural setting deaf people could be productive and contribute to society (35).

15. Women, too, suffer karmic retribution in Sōtō Zen, especially in relation to menstruation. “Because of this evil karma,” notes Bodiford, “they are doomed to a special Buddhist Blood Hell, from which only Sōtō Zen monks can save them” (1996: 15). Misogynistic rites associated with these beliefs were present in official Japanese Sōtō texts as recently as 1988 (when distribution of the *Menstruation Hell Scripture*, the *ketsuban kyō*, ceased) (16).

16. Conversely, deafness may be healed by faith in, and listening to, recitation of Mahayana sutras (Kekai 2013: 27-28).

17. While in this worldview blind people were also barred from awakening because they cannot read scripture (Bodiford 1996: 15), blind communities have (at times) been closely associated with Buddhist practice and even the priesthood. *Biwa hōshi*, blind itinerant priests playing lute and reciting sutras for the dead, first appear in 10th century court accounts (Morley 2007: 50). *Biwa hōshi* may have formed ties with temples and participated in ritual ceremonies (Bialock 2002-2003: 230). “By the 15th century, however, the *biwa hōshi* had evolved into the secular entertainers” who performed the *Heike Monogatari* (*Tales of Heike*) (Morley 2007: 51). While *biwa hōshi* belonged to an official guild (the *Tōdō Za*) with rights to perform this epic, as blind itinerant entertainers, they still maintained a “borderline outcaste status” (Bialock 2002-2003: 229).

18. Nevertheless, the sect remains overwhelmingly white and middle class.

19. In contrast, there is a significant repertoire of ASL for Christianity due to the extensive history of Christian educational initiatives among the deaf (VanGlider 2015: 391-392).

20. For example, Ōshin adopted the DGS (German Sign Language) sign for the word “nirvana,” which he learned from Deaf German Buddhists (interview, August 14, 2017).

## References

- Bahan, Benjamin. 2014. Senses and Culture: Exploring Sensory Orientations. In *Deaf Gain: Raising the Stakes for Human Diversity*, 233-254. Ed. H-Dirksen L. Bauman and Joseph J. Murray. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail M. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bauman, H-Dirksen L. 2004. Audism: Exploring the Metaphysics of Oppression. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education* 9 (2): 239-246.
- Bauman, H-Dirksen L., ed. 2007. *Open your Eyes: Deaf Studies Talking*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bauman, H-Dirksen L. and Joseph J. Murray, eds. 2014. *Deaf Gain: Raising the Stakes for Human Diversity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bhabha, Homi K. 1994. *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bialock, David T. 2002-2003. Outcasts, Emperorship, and Dragon Cults in “The Tale of Heike.” *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 13: 227-310.
- Bodiford, William. 1996. Zen and the Art of Religious Prejudice: Efforts to Reform a Tradition of Social Discrimination. *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23 (1/2): 1-27.
- Bosworth, Rain G. and Karen Emmorey. 2010. Effects of Iconicity and Semantic Relatedness on Lexical Access in American Sign Language. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 36 (6): 1573-1581.
- Bushwell, Robert E. Jr., Donald S. Lopez Jr., Juhn Ahn, J. Wayne Bass, William Chu, Amanda Coodman, Hyoung Seok Ham, et al. 2014. S. In *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 726-884. Ed. Robert E. Bushwell Jr. and Donald S. Lopez Jr. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Chen, Pi-yen. 2001. Sound and Emptiness: Music, Philosophy, and the Monastic Practice of Buddhist Doctrine. *History of Religions* 41 (1): 24-48.
- . 2004. The Chant of the Pure and the Music of the Popular: Conceptual Transformations in Contemporary Chinese Buddhist Chants. *Asian Music* 35 (2): 79-97.
- Darrow, Alice-Ann. 1993. The Role of Music in Deaf Culture: Implications for Music Educators. *Journal of Research in Music Education* 41 (2): 93-110.
- Dye, Matthew. 2014. Seeing the World through Deaf Eyes. In *Deaf Gain: Raising the Stakes for Human Diversity*, 193-210. Ed. H-Dirksen L. Bauman and Joseph J. Murray. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Glennie, Evelyn. 2015. Hearing Essay. *Evelyn Glennie: Teach the World to Listen*. Evelyn Glennie. <https://www.evelyn.co.uk/hearing-essay/> (accessed October 11, 2017).

- Glover Blackwell, Angela. 2017. The Curb-Cut Effect. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter 2017: 28-33.
- Greene, Paul D. 2004. The Dhamma as Sonic Praxis: Paritta Chant in Burmese Theravada Buddhism. *Asian Music* 35 (2): 43-78.
- . 2016. Contemporary Buddhist Chanting and Music. In *Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Buddhism*, 1-11. Ed. Jerryson Michael. <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com> (accessed April 25, 2017).
- Hahn, Tomie. 2007. *Sensational Knowledge: Embodying Culture through Japanese Dance*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- Haualand, Hilde. 2007. Sound and Belonging: What is Community? In *Open Your Eyes: Deaf Studies Talking*, 111-124. Ed. H-Dirksen L. Bauman. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Karns, Christina M., Mark W. Dow, and Helen J. Neville. 2012. Altered Cross-Modal Processing in the Primary Auditory Cortex of Congenitally Deaf Adults: A Visual-Somatosensory fMRI Study with a Double-Flash Illusion. *The Journal of Neuroscience* 32 (28): 9626-9638.
- Keikai. 2013. *Record of Miraculous Events in Japan: The Nihon Ryōiki*. Trans. Burton Watson. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lane, Harlan L., Richard Pillard, and Ulf Hedberg. 2011. *The People of the Eye: Deaf Ethnicity and Ancestry*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lindgren, Kristin A. 2012. Contact Zones and Border Crossings: Writing Deaf Lives. *Biography* 35 (2): 342-359.
- Loeffler, Summer. 2014. Deaf Music: Embodying Language and Rhythm. In *Deaf Gain: Raising the Stakes for Human Diversity*, 436-456. Ed. H-Dirksen L. Bauman and Joseph J. Murray. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Merabet, Lotfi B. and Alvaro Pascual-Leone. 2010. Neural Reorganization Following Sensory Loss: The Opportunity of Change. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 11 (1): 44-52.
- Morley, Carolyn Anne. 2007. Chakagi Zatō (The Tea Sniffing Blind Men). *Asian Theatre Journal* 24 (1): 50-60.
- Nakamura, Karen. 2006. *Deaf in Japan: Signing and the Politics of Identity*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Napoli, Donna Jo. 2014. A Magic Touch: Deaf Gain and the Benefits of Tactile Sensation. In *Deaf Gain: Raising the Stakes for Human Diversity*, 211-232. Ed. H-Dirksen L. Bauman and Joseph J. Murray. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Neary, Walter. 2001. Brains Of Deaf People Rewire To “Hear” Music. *UW News*. November 27. University of Washington. <https://goo.gl/F5tS2Z> (accessed October 12, 2017).
- Sacks, Oliver. 1989. *Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Sahn, Seung. 1996. Forward. In *Chanting with English Translations and Temple Rules*, v-vi. Cumberland: Kwan Um School of Zen.

- Slobin, Mark. 2007. Musical Multiplicity: Emerging Thoughts. *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 39: 108-116.
- Thoutenhoofd, Ernst Daniël. 2000. Philosophy's Real-World Consequences for Deaf People: Thoughts on Iconicity, Sign Language and Being Deaf. *Human Studies* 23 (3): 261-279.
- VanGilder, Kirk A. 2015. Deaf, Education of the. In *Encyclopedia of Christian Education*, 391-392. Ed. George Thomas Kurian and Mark A. Lamport. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

## Interviews

- Jennings, R. Liam Ōshin. 2017. Interview with author. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY. August 14.
- . 2017. Roundtable Discussion. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY. August 14.
- Manasia, Jeremy Tokuyu. 2017. Roundtable Discussion. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY. August 14.
- O'Hara, Pat Enkyo. 2017. Roundtable Discussion. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY. August 14.
- Steele, Ayn YuJin. 2017. Roundtable Discussion. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY. August 14.
- Terestman, Julie Myoko. 2017. Interview with author. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY. August 14.
- Thomson, Sinclair Shinryu. 2017. Interview with author. Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY. July 30.