

Zoom 2nd January 2021

In the New Year's greetings that I've written for you all and that you'll soon receive in your mailbox, I have once again taken up Master Keizan's so expressive words in the Zazen Yojinki, when he talks about the practice of zazen: *"To clarify the world of our experiences and to stand peacefully in our true nature, that is what we call revealing one's original face and unveiling the landscape of our native land."*

There is nothing comparable to our true nature whose original face is emptiness itself. It is the Real, the oneness interpenetrating all forms and all beings, the invisible behind the visible, the untraceable in the multitude of phenomena.

So, how can we see our original face? How can we find the landscape of our homeland, since we cannot see the invisible, nor find the untraceable.

However, by turning within ourselves, by abandoning any notion of inside or outside, by forgetting the 'me' attached to notions of good and evil, to preferences and aversions; by our acceptance of referring to nothing, to being nowhere, the landscape of our homeland is revealed, empty and full of everything. We are That which looks and also we are that which is looked at. There is only one spirit, watching the world appear and disappear within it.

Our practice begins with abandoning the 'me' that constantly formulates in our mind the idea of a goal, an awakening, a reward that would come to recompense our efforts. The paradox of Zen and beings is that to find the truth, we must stop looking for it, because it is always immediately already there in the eternal present which we will never manage to grasp.

Just to sit down and recollect yourself; to contemplate without creating the idea that someone is contemplating; to stop relying on concepts of awakening; to forget the interested 'me' that is meditating in order to grasp or achieve a goal.

To rely on nothing is to make oneself available to look and simply see the way what's alive appears in us and then disappears. What's alive, these are the sensations in the space of the body that present themselves to the consciousness; they are all the perceptions entering through the doors of our five senses (forms, sounds, smells, flavours, tangible things); they are the flows of thoughts with which we must avoid identifying because we have no control over their appearance-disappearance.

To rely on nothing is to realise that our mind is like water or space :

"Clear water," says Master Keizan, "has no place or reverse; space has neither inside nor outside." It's dizzying, if we think deeply ...

"Totally clear and transparent," he continues, "the light of our Spirit shines, even before form and emptiness are created (or separated by the discriminating mind). The objects of the mind themselves (thoughts, concepts, beliefs ...) cannot remain there."

The light of the Spirit is the very gaze of our consciousness becoming aware of itself in presence. The only truth we know at this very moment is "I am", and can we grasp this? This is the light that shines in the now without stopping for a moment. Apart from this immediate truth, can we tell if there is anything real in what comes and goes in our mind? Zazen is the moment when we can understand and see this, without moving, without speaking, without any need to grasp or to dismiss. Nothing is born, nothing dies; there is only appearance and disappearance at the same time. This is the grandiose and marvellous landscape of our homeland where nothing reappears twice in the same way or with the same form.

"It has always been with us, but It has never had a name. The Third Patriarch, Great Master Sosan, conventionally called it Mind, and the Venerable Nagarjuna called it "the body". It is the essence and the luminous form giving birth to the Body of all the buddhas, no more and no less. The full moon symbolises this Mind which illuminates Itself within Itself.

This truth is proclaimed in the Hannya shin gyo: *"Ku soku zen shiki, and shiki soku ze Ku."* This is what it means to see the landscape of our native land when we sit facing the wall. We could say it more poetically:

*"Only one moon is reflected on all the waters,
All the moon's reflections come from one moon."*

And if today I must also wish a Happy New Year to each one of us, it is to wish us to continue the practice of a joyful heart, to see this invisible truth and to find the untraceable by abandoning any idea of obtaining anything whatsoever.
