

Zoom 16 January 2021

It is in the nature of thoughts to appear and disappear. This is something we can observe and verify during zazen. That is also why the Buddha teaches that the nature of thoughts is emptiness.

That which, in us, looks at and observes the continuous game of appearance-disappearance of thoughts and also of all phenomena, is Consciousness. We are Consciousness before anything else. Consciousness is the word that designates the very space of our mind, where the play of impermanence manifests itself. This space-Consciousness is without limits, without characteristics, without birth, and thought cannot define It or grasp It because it does not depend on time. And yet we live it in Presence, as Presence. Now! Presence is not to be found because it is always already there. It is the truth that we can understand and live in our meditation.

"It is in the untraceable that we find peace," says Vimalakirti, "because in the untraceable there is no grasping."

And where there is no grasping, there is no selfish, possessive and calculating 'me'. It is then that we find peace, or rather, that it reveals itself to us as the original nature of the mind. No grasping means freedom.

Master Wanshi Shogaku says, " It's like a bird in the sky. It flies according to its fantasy, with nowhere to lean on. In the same way the human beings, according to their fantasies, move in their own mind."

In Yojinki Zazen, "Instructions to be respected during zazen", Master Keizan speaks only of the Mind, because it is the Real, the Consciousness-Presence, our true nature, before illusion brings to light the fallacious idea of a separate 'me'. The practice of the Buddhas is this zazen where we live the motionless Presence which sees the appearance of the Real as our floating illusions, without any movement to try to grasp or reject them.

"It has always been with us, but we cannot find a name for it," continues Master Keizan. "The Third Patriarch conventionally called it the Mind (this is Master Sosan, author of the poem on "Faith in the Mind", the Shin jin mei) and the Venerable Nagarjuna called it the body."

These two great Masters of our school name differently what our nature is because it has no proper name. Master Dogen unites the two in his formula "*Shin jin ichinyo*": body and mind are One.

Master Keizan resumes: "*This mind is the essence and the luminous form, giving birth to the body of all the Buddhas, no more and no less (the original source).*" And to better explain this uniqueness (*soku ze* in Zen), Master Keizan compares the light of this body-mind to the moon. And one cannot fail to remember this truth expressed by the very Zen phrase: "*One single moon is reflected in all the waters; all the reflections of the moon come from one single moon.*"

This expresses the inseparability of essence and form, the perfect identity between emptiness and phenomena (*San do kai*), between the mind itself and what appears in it.

Nagarjuna uses the symbol of the moon to explain the *Samadhi* of zazen, the state of perfect concentration where subject and object vanish in perfect equality, that is to say disappear in pure light, pure awareness of the presence of the Self. This is not what we live as human beings as if we were having an awakening experience, but this is what we are fundamentally in essence and truth. And that is revealed in our own mind in zazen liberated from the illusion of a 'me'.

"The light of this mind shines from a past without beginning and illuminates the Present. It is without characteristics, non-dual and the differences with forms are only the appearance of the Real."

In the Lankavatara sutra it is called Mind-only.
