

Zoom Zazen - Saturday 26 Nov 2022

*"Spiritual and brilliant, vast and radiant,
illuminating all that lies before you, gain directly
that resplendent light and clarity which cannot be
marred by any impurity."*

Master Wanshi does speak of Mokushō-zen, a term he himself gave to the Zen of silent enlightenment, to differentiate it from Kanna Zen, the Zen of contemplation of words, which typified the Rinzai school at that time.

Mokushō-zen emphasised the importance of practising zazen without the aid of external supports such as kōans. Master Dogen would later call Shikantaza the Mokushō-zen of Wanshi. It is known, however, that he himself, in his teisho and teachings, made extensive use of kōans.

When we sit in the posture of the Buddhas, without running after anything, the light of our Eye-Treasure illuminates what comes into the field of our perception. We see, feel, listen and contemplate without striving for anything. Things appear, thoughts, sensations, perceptions, and also our awareness of them. And nothing remains. This is what we experience in every moment of consciousness. Zazen teaches us this, without disguising anything. And in the luminous mirror of our mind, where could the slightest dust stagnate? What impurity could mar this luminous clarity?

We see that it is not possible for anything to remain in our mind from one moment to the next!

Stripped of all attachment to the experience of grasping or rejecting, our Mind becomes once again simply Presence, *Shikantaza*, and knows no limits. It is simply transparent, empty, silent and tranquil, and it is then that we can dare to say that it is silent light shining by itself, illuminating everything that lies before us.

In this luminous stillness there is no sense of wanting, no need to be completed by an experience. For those who know themselves like this, peace and happiness are natural and permeate thoughts, feelings and activities.

And when we allow our inner light to become mixed up or identified with the different aspects of experience that the self offers, it loses its brilliance, becomes veiled and darkened. But it can never be completely lost. When one gives a flavour of tea or coffee to water, with the colour the water loses its clarity, but it does not disappear for all that.

Our mind is that resplendent light and clarity which cannot be tainted by any impurity.

Master Wanshi speaks of this in a wonderful way, in the *Mokushō-ka*, the Song of Silent Illumination, and this is the time to re-read it:

*"This marvellous mind shines with purity and rarity.
Like, at night, the halo of the moon,
like a river of stars,
like pine trees dressed in snow
and the clouds enveloping the summit of the
mountains.
Radiant, their marvellous shimmering
Glistens in the darkness.
Like the heron flying in boundless space,
Like the still pond of a bright autumn.
Limitless time settles on the purposeless
[emptiness]
And not a thing can be discerned."*
