

Zoom Zazen - Saturday 10 June 2023

Master Wanshi continues:

"By observing what extends beyond your bodily envelope, you can reach its heart, its essence, and free yourself from what is transitory. Just as the reeds blossom in the moonlight, the ancient ferryboat floats out to sea, and the jade thread weaves back and forth in its golden shuttle - so the opportunity arises to turn around, to enter into the world and respond to the multitude of situations. All the dusts¹ are fundamentally your own, and all the dharmas (phenomena) are none other than yourself. So follow the current and row along, free of all obstacles."

To observe the world beyond our bodily envelope and to reach its very heart is to dwell in the world of impermanence and not leave it. It is the *'without before or after'* of our own depths. More directly, it's simply to live in the *now* of our zazen posture - our sensations, our perceptions - without holding anything back or rejecting anything. This is what we call *Shikantaza*. It's to feel yourself, to see yourself and to illuminate yourself *within* yourself.

Seeing can only take place from the source of the gaze, which is the Eye-Treasure.

Seeing is awareness. Seeing is Presence. It is direct knowledge, the immediate vision of what comes to us in the empty field of our own mind. There's no longer any analytical or discriminating thought interposed between that which, within us, looks - and that which is looked at. A luminous non-duality. Absolute simplicity. Forgetting ourselves in the *now*, we *are* as we are, and we can enter the reality of the world without fear. We are in tune with the ten thousand things, and all we have to do is follow the current of impermanence, where the ten thousand things come and go without the least obstruction.

In forgetting the egocentric self, we see clearly that the ten thousand things appear within us, that they flow within us without any of them being able to remain. We *are* the very space where the *dusts* and the *dharmas* (phenomena) are born and pass away instantaneously.

Master Hyakujo gave this teaching to his monks:

"Buddha-nature cannot be realised except through our own mind. The ignorant search for it in the printed word, the wise contemplate their own minds and achieve awakening. The ignorant sow self-interested, senseless acts and wait for them to bear fruit; the wise understand the unchanging nature of the mind. The ignorant cling to their illusory ego believing themselves to be its master; the wise use and seek the wisdom that arises instantaneously. The ignorant are entangled in their addiction to pros and cons; the wise perceive their own nature and understand the wonderful interpenetration of the ten thousand things."

So long as we do not know who we really are, we do not see the wonderful nature of the ten thousand things, nor do we see beings as they are. In our ignorance, the only thing we see is our own image, constructed by the incessant flow of our disordered and tormented thoughts that endlessly turn Samsara, the wheel of life.

To see ourselves, we must reach that depth, that silent light which thought cannot reach and which reveals itself in the heart of our own presence.

¹ In Chinese: *chen*, the six 'sense-objects'. Source: Guo Gu, *Silent Illumination*, Shambala (2021) p. 141