

## Zoom Zazen Saturday 27 July 2024

*"Be still, right there where the moment moves!"*

*"Simply remain in the middle of this 24 hours!"*

These two recommendations of Master Ōan Donge's<sup>1</sup> talk to us about zazen in an extraordinary and marvellous way. These words lead us directly to our unmoving heart, where the mind stops still by no longer involving itself in the movement of thought. We remain in a motionless contemplation, which contents itself with simply watching impermanence as it moves. This is the non-doing *par excellence* of Zen, where everything is seen without anyone who watches. The self [the 'me'] is forgotten. And it is from this *realisation*<sup>2</sup> that we can evolve harmoniously with one another, with the ten thousand things, in a precious equilibrium with all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

So there's nothing more to do than to remain open, to open up to the gentleness of silence and welcome, unconditionally, whatever comes our way: other people, situations, emotions, difficulties. Because if we remain stuck in the mud of our likes and dislikes, and if we reject what comes to us, the lotus cannot flower.

Letting things be what they are thus engages us in the authentic practice of self-sufficient non-doing. In this way, we till the field of emptiness. Where the moment moves, we see the ten thousand flowers of emptiness bloom and wither instantaneously.

*"With your arms folded across your stomach," says Master Wanshi (you understand that he's talking about zazen), "let go of your body. The Eye-Treasure illuminates itself by itself and it becomes possible to welcome any situation whatsoever. There is recollection, peacefulness, without there being any inside or outside. Thousands of universes are born at the same moment as oneself, and the three times are spontaneously transcended."*

This knowledge of which Master Wanshi speaks cannot discover itself, cannot locate itself! Nor is it either the result of *karma*. Rather, it is an aspiration, an impulse within ourselves that looks for itself among the ten thousand things and that finds itself by letting them go.

*"It's not a question of reaching for ... or entering into ... ", says Master Dogen. "This knowledge is no more the result of a voluntary act than of an involuntary one. It is the body-heart of the one who knows, which is no longer owned by him when he knows. It's as though the Way were nothing other than this yearning, this attraction exercised by this ultimate knowledge itself, which doesn't even have to distinguish between 'there is' and 'there is not'. "*

Let's leave Master Wanshi to conclude this *kusen*:

*"Emptiness is limitless, illuminating itself with its own light. This arises when the illusion of appearances has been exhausted. What cannot be exhausted is the Original Mind, which is not affected by birth and death.*

*So then, enter the field of emptiness and resolutely let go of all dependence."*

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### Note

Additional information taken from Master Ōan Donge's **Chan Instructions** (translation: Thomas Cleary)

*If you want to understand easily, at the arousal of mind and stirring of thought twenty-four hours a day, at this very stirring of thought be immediately open and empty so it cannot be grasped, like empty space, without even any form of empty space, outside and inside one, cognition and objects both disappearing, mystery and understanding both gone, past present and future equal.*

Source: Terebess website

<https://terebess.hu/zen/mesterek/YinganTanhua.html>

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<sup>1</sup> Ōan Donge Zenji (Ying-an T'an-hua, 1103-1186)

<sup>2</sup> i.e. as a result of our making this a reality