

## Tenborin Zoom 16 May 2026

To assist us in our meditation practice, Koun Ejo continues with a quotation from the *'Book of Easy Conduct'*. It forms part of the *Lotus Sutra*:

*"Illusion perceives things as existing, real, or having come into being.*

*In a place stripped of all distractions, concentrate your mind. Remain in a state of stability as tranquil as Mount Sumeru. Observe that all phenomena are devoid of existence, that they are like space, without perceptible stability, devoid of birth and emergence. Remain in unity, motionless and unshakeable. This is called the utterly close place. "*

Mount Sumeru is a mythological mountain symbolising the axis of the world, the centre of the universe according to Buddhist cosmology. The summit of this mountain is lost in the infinity of the sky. Mount Sumeru expresses the bodhisattva's unshakeable determination and imperceptible stability, as well as the highest teachings he receives and must fulfil. It is on Mount Sumeru that the guardians of the four cardinal points of the universe reside, symbolised by the four small squares of the rakusu. They protect the practice place and ensure spiritual safety.

To dwell in the tranquillity of Mount Sumeru is to become one with the mountain itself, immovable and unshakeable. Paradoxically, it is also to let go of everything and rely on nothing. Mount Sumeru, in its limitless grandeur, is our own mind, the place where we can understand the very nature of phenomena. As their disappearance occurs at the same time as their appearance, we can say they are *devoid* of birth and death. They are *emptiness*. To see this is Awakening.

It is to see what makes our meditation *'the utterly close place'*. It is nothing other than the heart of our Eye-Treasure. It is the innermost intimacy of ourselves, a super-imposing that expresses that absolute non-separation which takes place during zazen, between the Buddha and ourselves. We are the mountain, and nothing but the mountain.

Commenting on this passage from the *'Book of Easy Conduct'*, Koun Ejo says:

*"This is a direct indication, setting out nothing but the Way without equal, going straight to the goal, far removed from everything imaginary."*

To go directly to the goal is to abide in utter simplicity in the here-and-now, perfectly still there where the moment moves, without allowing oneself to be caught up in the dream of the appearance and disappearance of things. To be Mount Sumeru itself, which has no need to know that it is Mount Sumeru.

Zazen is nothing but to return to Mount Sumeru, and to rediscover there our most intimate inner self, which Master Dogen also calls the *'Shōbōgenzo'*.

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