
A wider dimension of the existence

Kusen by Roland Yuno Rech – Nice, September 2014

When we practice zazen, it is important to realize the deep dimension of zazen. One can very well practice a “personal” zazen, a kind of psychological introspection during which we spend our time pursuing our thoughts, continuing to function in the mode of the ordinary mind, jumping from one object of thought to another, clinging to what is pleasing, rejecting what we do not like. Of course, with this kind of practice, we can develop a better knowledge of ourselves, of our psychology, ego, personal characteristics... But in the end, to do zazen to achieve that only is not worth it. It is a real pity, because we miss what is essential.

What is essential is to open ourselves to another dimension of our existence, which is no longer our personal existence, when we are locked in an identification to the mental construction which is our ego. Let us drop off this identification to our small ego and open ourselves to a much larger dimension of existence, in which we are totally in harmony with the cosmic system, without duality, with the whole universe: this is the most valuable zazen experience. In other words, in zazen we are not - we should not be - focused on ourselves; we must abandon our personal conscience and this is possible only in a total absorption in the practice of posture and breathing.

At that moment, we can forget ourselves and it allows us to open up to a dimension completely beyond our ego, to a real communion with all beings and above all, to a state of being "here and now", beyond excess and lack, a state of mind completely calm, with no need any longer to pursue anything, or to run away from anything. Then we can feel totally safe, like a swimmer realizing that he doesn't need to struggle in the water to float, that he can just stretch himself and stop moving, stop being agitated, stop pursuing anything, and really just be present, here and then.

This harmony between ourselves and the cosmos is practically impossible to achieve with our ego, with our personal conscience. But it happens naturally when one abandons oneself to the practice itself. This is why Master Deshimaru, in his commentary on *Shin Jin Mei*, said: “Zazen must become a “cosmic” zazen, not selfish, because if zazen is a “personal” zazen, till our death it will remain ineffective. On the opposite, “cosmic” zazen, which is in unity with Reality, can be called “satori-zazen”, or “Buddha-zazen”: a fully awoken zazen”.

Master Dogen, in the chapter of the *Shobogenzo* called “Life and death” indicated the way to go forward. He said: “When we abandon our own body, our personal conscience, we enter the house of Buddha, and this without using our will, our personal conscience”. At that moment, life and death are abandoned, the so-called *samsara*, and we realize the state of Buddha.

Becoming Buddha, to awake, is not so difficult. There is only one direct method: harmony with the cosmic order. Zazen realizes this for us, making us abandon our personal consciousness and develop the *hishiryō* state of consciousness, which is beyond the conscience that measures, compares, separates, discriminates. *Hishiryō* is harmony with the Dharma, the cosmic order. Our practice of zazen must tend to realize this state of consciousness, otherwise we waste our time. And we know that time passes very quickly ...
So please, focus on your posture and just be attentive to your breathing only.