
The Ego

Mondo with Roland Yuno Rech

Question: *In zen, it's often said to abandon the ego and I've read in master Sosan teaching's that in cosmos there is an absence of ego. I ask myself where is the border with what makes us unique, where does ego begins?*

Roland Yuno Rech: It's a very vast question indeed. Fundamentally, there is no ego to abandon, it's almost ridicule to say: one has to abandon the ego, because actually there is no ego. So if you understand that, you can abandon ego immediately. It's an abrupt manner, but I think it's the best answer. As you can notice, each of us has his/hers personality, differences: that is not what has to be abandoned. Each has his own distinctive features; Master Deshimaru also had strong features. What is to be abandoned is the illusion to believe that mental productions, conditioned by our karma, form an ego. Of course, we have a body, sensations, perceptions, memories, a history, desires, a consciousness. All of this, the five *skandha*, exist, it's what forms a personality. From this point of view, everyone is a little bit different, because of his past karma. But that doesn't form an ego, it's impermanent, totally dependent of history and environment. It's only a net of interdependencies. If one understands this, one can become less egoistic. One can abandon the illusion of having an ego, awaken to the reality, to the true unlimited dimension of our life and become naturally less greedy, less possessive.

Question: *I'd like to know if there isn't a fraction,, a small part of our ego that is permanent (that is beyond life and death?)*

R.Y.R.: Would you like it to be so?

Question: *I think yes, I would find it reassuring. I would like to know whether there is something that subsides after death.*

R.Y.R.: All of the elements that form us don't belong to us, so everything stays actually, except the ego as it is an illusory construction. Everything that forms us belongs to the cosmos and goes back to the cosmos. So there is nothing that disappears. To tell the truth, it's the construction that disappears, but the elements that form us go back to cosmos. The fragments of energy of which our body is made of, go entirely back to cosmos. The influence of our life, of our passage spreads like a wave, a vibration that doesn't stop. Nothing remains in the same condition, everything transforms continually. But precisely, nothing is born and nothing dies. So ask yourself: what's being born, what's dying?

Question: *What's being born , what's dying?*

R.Y.R.: If we realise that at our birth there is not precisely any ego that is being born, we can understand that at the moment of our death there is no ego dying.

Question: *Doesn't the realisation of awakening become ego?*

R.Y.R.: Are you asking whether maybe it's selfish to awake? Wishing to obtain satori can be a selfish attitude if we think that satori is a state of extraordinary well being, of great enjoyment. In that case we want it for ourselves; there are people who have illusions of that kind. They have achieved all kind of pleasures in life and aren't really satisfied, they think that there is something that they are missing and satori is like "the icing on the cake" that they would like to have. It has nothing in common with a genuine Awakening. The genuine Awakening is to understand oneself. It's nothing special, it's abandoning all the illusions in order to live in the most right (true) manner, more in harmony with the reality of one's true nature and this can't be selfish because if "one" person awakes in this true manner, the others that are in touch with her will feel better. The awakening can't be only for oneself. Proper to this awakening is to feel entirely united with the others; it naturally stimulates compassion, the desire to share and to help others to liberate themselves from their own sufferings. There is no selfish awakening.