
The Way of Buddha

Kusen by Roland Yuno Rech – Grube Louise, October 2022 (Germany)

When we practice zazen, we practice the way of Buddha, we follow the way of Buddha: zazen is not a personal practice. In everyday life, everyone seeks to assert their personality, their difference, their ego. When we practice zazen, we follow the path followed by the Buddha and all the patriarchs. It is not a path that they created, it is the path that Shakyamuni himself rediscovered.

This is the path followed by all the ancient Buddhas. And even if it is very old, when we practice it and follow it, it is realized within us, here and now, in our body, in our mind, beyond our conditioning, in the movement of letting go. This is what Master Dogen called "*shin jin datsu raku*". This was the essence of his awakening. *Jin*: the body, *shin*: the spirit, *datsu raku*: stripped, stripped of everything that separates us from others.

Master Dogen said, "This way of the Buddha cannot be attained without practice. And if we do not study it, it remains hidden. Master Nangaku said, "It's not that there is no practice or realization, but they shouldn't be defiled." »

Not to study the way of Buddha is to risk falling into wrong paths. To practise the way of Buddha is to be Buddha. We are not two separate things. Practice and enlightenment are not two separate things. But the way is not produced by zazen. Zazen allows us to awaken to it and realize it. It is not studying something outside of ourselves.

When you study sutras, when you study the *Shobogenzo*, you have to ask yourself, what does it say to us personally? We must realize that this is basically the essence of our life. It cannot be understood or realized intellectually, or with words. It is not a question of understanding that "I am like this or like that". It's not psychotherapy. Everything that constitutes us, our body, our sensations, our perceptions, our desires, our mental fabrications and even our consciousness, are all totally impermanent and without substance. All this exists, but in total interdependence with the cosmic order. There is no separate ego.

Many people waste a lot of time and energy asserting their personality, to obtain the object of their desire. And when they fail, they get depressed. But when they succeed, they are afraid of losing what they have attained. This is why Master Deshimaru called La Gendronnière "the castle of non-fear", *muijo*. What makes it possible to realize this non-fear is the practice of *mushotoku*. This is the word that I heard most often in Master Deshimaru's mouth: *mushotoku*. And when he criticized his disciples, it was always because they were not *mushotoku*.

To do a sesshin is to practise truly letting go of the attachment to body and mind. It is not a personal development practice. On the contrary, it is abandoning everything that is personal within us and realizing the universal dimension of our existence, which allows us to show solidarity with all beings, to feel connected to all that is living and to realize true life without separation.

When we realize this, we experience great joy, as when we find something again that we thought we had lost.