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# Becoming the ocean

**By Sergio Gurevich**

The word “sangha” in Sanskrit means “community”. In principle, this term was used to designate the disciples ordained by Buddha: the monks (bhikshus) and the nuns (bhikshunis). Now the term is used to designate a Buddhist community of practitioners, becoming the Sangha, one of the Three Treasures, the others being the Buddha and the Dharma. Far from being a sectarian group, based around an ideology or a dogma, it is an open community, attentive to its practitioners, benevolent and respectful - qualities which stem from the truth of the Buddha and the patriarchs. It is a source of harmony, generosity and wisdom, based on experience.

The Buddha considered the sangha to be the expression of life because it is here that we express the essence which is without separation, funi. Also, Buddha compared the community to the ocean saying; "like rivers flowing to the ocean with their differences, the people who enter the sangha, hearing a teaching and realizing it, are no longer Brahmins or governors or merchants or workers, for they all become equal members in the Sangha. All differences disappear, and like the ocean has the flavour of salt, a teaching has the flavour of freedom to lead one's own life.

Sitting in zazen, with a mushotoku attitude, like rivers we progress to reach the ocean. We let go of our will to want to know, to want to obtain, to want in any way, we let go without becoming attached to anything, or rejecting anything either. There is no more who, what, where from, only a body-spirit breathing on a zafu, which allows us to go beyond, to be one with the universe.

From this individual practice, from this river becoming the ocean, can we extrapolate it out to a practice of social and collective expression? So that it becomes sanghafamily, sanghafriends, sanghacompany, sanghasociety?....

Thus spreading the values of solidarity, responsibility and benevolence, peace and generosity, for the good of all beings.