
Shinzan and Hossen Shiki Ceremonies

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Awakening is to become like the moistness of the rain and the frog, Harmonizing our destiny to the mountains, rivers and trees. »

Dogen Zenji

It all started 1978 when three disciples of Master Deshimaru opened a small provincial dojo in Nice, the fifth city of France by the Mediterranean Sea and with the Maritime Alps in its backyard.

This group was growing fairly regularly, in 1997 Roland Yuno Rech arrived and the dojo moved to its current location in the heart of town. From 1997 to 2013, practice developed to this 26th February 2013, when the zen dojo of Nice became the official Sotoshu acknowledged Temple of Gyobutsu Ji.

The first ceremonies of *Shinzan Shiki* and of *Hossen Shiki* in Gyobutsu Ji, took place as a results and thanks to the efforts of the whole zen community descending from Master Taisen Deshimaru.

The sangha of Nice had to prepare the dojo for the ceremonies. We started by painting the front door of the building then the staircase. Some talents were requested to build some pieces of furniture and objects required for the ceremony.

With a stroke of luck we found at the flea market two magnificent ancient Chinese armchairs depicting Manjusri, they were used by Seido Suzuki Roshi and the Abbot Roland Yuno Rech.

Everybody pulled up their kolomo's sleeves while throwing themselves in a three months rehearsals serial, learning texts, gestures, how to move about, ... to the day before February the 26th.

Each rehearsal gave each one the opportunity to deepen his attention, seeking accuracy in each gesture, immersing in the exercise of interdependencies, listening, reflecting, confronting views and thoughts of each, and eventually sharpening observation of one self and of the reactions which didn't fail to arise in our group.

At the time Roland made a kusen in which he compared practitioners to beach pebbles. The sea rolls the pebbles, (practitioners are like rolling stones...), they get rounder by rubbing against each other, eroding their sharp patches and ultimately becoming as smooth as freshly shaven monks heads.

At the request of Roland during the period of *ango* preceding the ceremony of *Hossen Shiki*, I was systematically the shusso of all the zazens, it gave me the possibility to go further and deeper into the immobile sitting, letting my self confidently to what showed up.

Roland spent his time between rehearsals, meetings and sesshins. We distributed the different tasks: hotel, accommodation and restaurants arrangements, greeting of the Sotoshu and the other guests, buffet, getting the presents, suggestions of sight-seeing, etc.

At last, the 26th turned up and it was in a highly concentrated, serene and joyful atmosphere that both ceremonies took place.

During the *Shinzan Shiki*, Roland Yuno Rech was intronised second Abbot of the Temple Gyobutsuji succeeding to Master Taisen Deshimaru, the founder Abbot.

The *Hossen Shiki* followed this first ceremony, consecrating me as first disciple, *Shusso*. On that occasion many godos from the AZI as well as many teachers of the ABZE, heads of dojo of Southern France and practitioners of Gyobutsuji, were present and happy to come and share those important moments.

Unfortunately because of the lack of space of our small dojo we had to limit the number of invitations. We intend to move to a bigger place and we have started to look for it.

Meeting with Seido Suzuki Roshi, humble Master, happily detached and so gentle made a great effect on all of us. The latter and Roland bonded immediately, « shin-twinning » both temples of Gyobutsuji and Toshoji, of which Seido Suzuki Roshi is the Abbot.

The flower of Buddha has turned in Nice on this 26th February, and no doubt many flowers will blossom in Gyobutsuji for the good of all beings.

Like the sea rolls the pebbles, the living Dharma rolls and wears out our ego, in the end isn't it up to us to give ourselves to this wearing process? We do it all the easier that the practice of zazen makes us realize that there is *nothing* to wear out, or *nobody* who would be worn out, and... *no wearing* at all, and this is marvellous!