

KOMYOZO ZANMAI (The Practice of the Treasury of Luminosity)  
by Koun Ejo Zenji (1198-1282)

I sincerely offer these words of advice to those who wish to truly practice:

Do not be pulled around by states of mind or objects. Do not rely on intellectual knowledge. Don't show in your hands what you receive on your seat in the Monks' Hall. Just throw body and mind into the Great Treasury of Luminosity and don't look back.

Don't try to fabricate "enlightenment" or hide from "delusion". Don't push away the arising of thoughts or crave them; don't identify. Stably, calmly, practice shikantaza, just sitting.

If you do not propagate thoughts, they will not continue themselves. Just breathing in. Just breathing out. Just so. Sitting under the open sky, weightless as a flame. Even if eighty-four thousand thoughts come and go, each will display itself as the luminosity of perfect knowing itself if you do not hold to them and allow them to just go on their own way.

This display of luminosity must not just be something you experience in sitting but in each step. This step, this step, are all the walking of luminosity. All through the day be dead to personal views or fragmented thoughts.

Breathing in, breathing out, hearing, touching, without thoughts of separation, is just the silent illumination of luminosity in which body and mind are single. Thus, when someone calls, you immediately answer.

In this luminosity usual people and sages, deluded and enlightened are one. In the midst of impermanence, this luminosity is unobstructed. Forests, flowers, grasses, leaves; humans and animals; large or small, long or short, square or round: all display themselves simultaneously, free of discriminating thoughts or intention. This is luminosity unobstructed in impermanence. Luminosity is its own open brilliance; it does not depend on your mind.

Luminosity has no location. When Buddhas appear in this universe, it does not arise with them. When Buddhas cease, luminosity does not cease. When you are born, luminosity is not born; when you die, luminosity does not die. Buddhas do not have more of it; sentient beings do not have less. If you are deluded, it is not; if you are enlightened, it is not. It has no rank, no form, and no name. This is the Body of Totality of all things.

You cannot grasp it; you cannot throw it away. It is unattainable. Although it is unattainable, it penetrates this whole body. From the highest heaven to the deepest hell, all realms are illuminated perfectly. This is wondrous and inconceivably subtle luminosity.

If you trust and open to the meaning of these words, you won't need to ask anyone what is right or wrong. You will intimately realize reality as if you'd come face to face with your grandfather in the village. Don't practice in order to receive a paper of certification from your teacher or predictions about when you will become a Buddha. Even less so should you be attached to clothes, food or home. Don't give in to attachment or lustful cravings.

From beginninglessness, this samadhi is the seat of Awakening, the Ocean of Awake Awareness. This zazen is the Buddha's own practice, the sitting as Awake Awareness which is transmitted from Buddha to Buddha. You are a child of the Awakened Ones, so sit calmly in your own seat. Don't sit like a hell dweller, a hungry ghost or animal, a human being or jealous beings, or shining beings, those with only hearsay knowledge or those who fabricate enlightenment experiences. Just practice this just sitting of shikantaza. Do not waste time. This is the practice place of Ordinary Mind. This is the complete practice of the Treasury of Luminosity. This is inconceivable freedom.