

THE SOUND OF ONE HAND

*Paintings & Calligraphy by
Zen Master Hakuin*

AUDREY YOSHIKO SEO
& STEPHEN ADDISS



\$65.00

(Canada \$76.00)

HAKUIN EKAKU (1685–1768) is one of the most influential figures in the history of Zen. He can be considered the founder of the modern Japanese Rinzai tradition, for which he famously emphasized the importance of koan practice in awakening, and he revitalized the monastic life of his day. But his teaching was by no means limited to monastery or temple. Hakuin was the quintessential Zen master of the people, renowned for taking his teaching to all parts of society, to people in every walk of life, and his painting and calligraphy were particularly powerful vehicles for that teaching. Using traditional Buddhist images and sayings—but also themes from folklore and daily life—Hakuin created a new visual language for Zen: profound, whimsical, and unlike anything that came before.

In his long life, Hakuin created many thousands of paintings and calligraphies. This art, combined with his voluminous writings, stands as a monument to his teaching, revealing why he is the most important Zen master of the past five hundred years.

The Sound of One Hand is a study of Hakuin and his enduringly appealing art, illustrated with a wealth of examples of his work, both familiar pieces like “Three Blind Men on a Bridge” as well as lesser known masterworks.

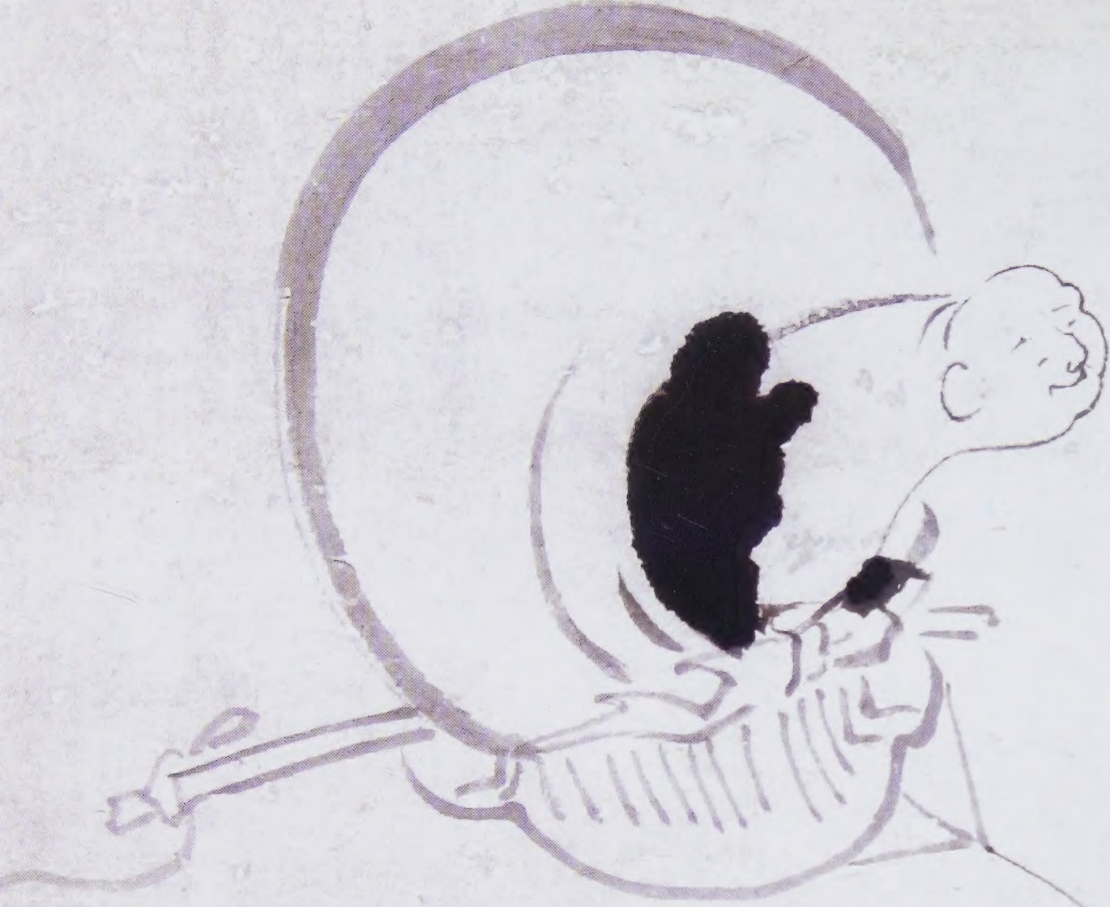
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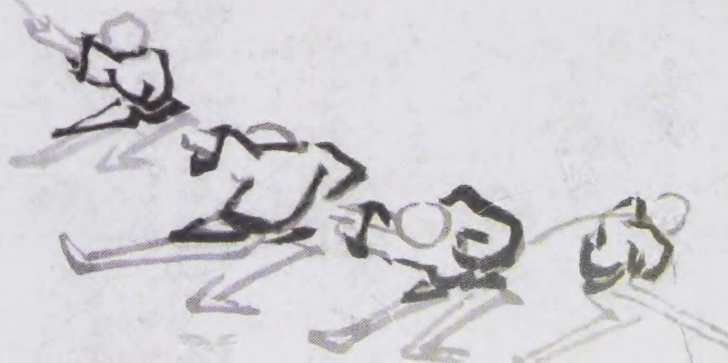
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THE SOUND OF ONE HAND

Paintings and Calligraphy
by Zen Master Hakuin

Audrey Yoshiko Seo & Stephen Addiss

Foreword by Keidō Fukushima



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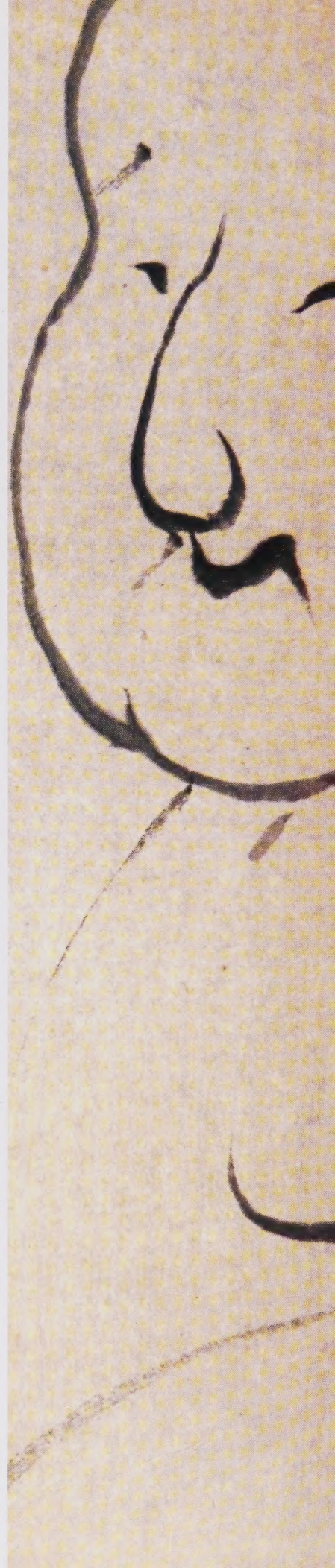
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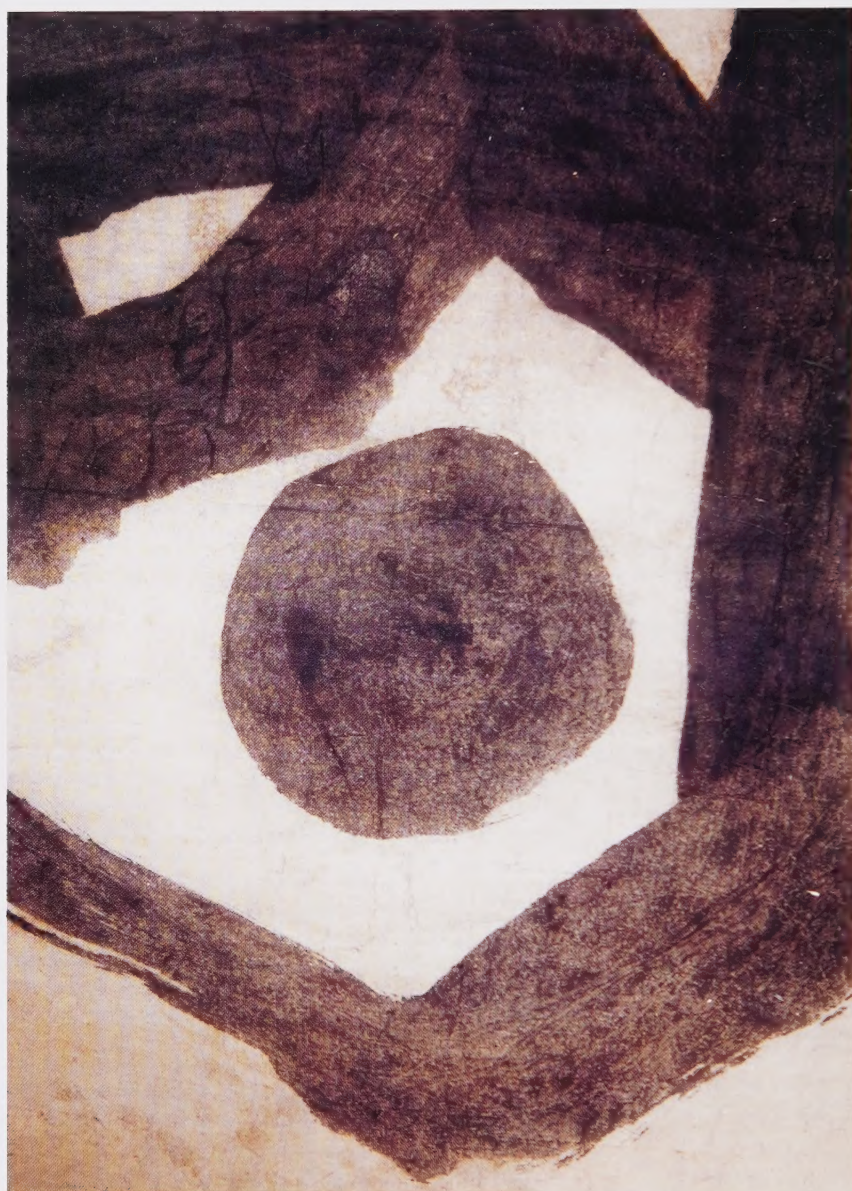
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FOREWORD

Zen master Hakuin is considered the restorer of Japanese Zen Buddhism. His Zen style is truly superb and eludes any attempt at imitation. Since his youth he had many interests, including the practice of painting and calligraphy. Thus, after completing his training as a monk, he amply expressed his Zen in painting and calligraphy that is absolutely first-rate and utterly unique. In this sense, Hakuin's Zen is not only something that he himself realized and lived, it is a cultural revelation of the highest order.

It is a rare delight to join in this fine exhibition of Zen master Hakuin's artwork in the United States. Since it is organized by Dr. Stephen Addiss and Dr. Audrey Yoshiko Seo, leading scholars of Zen art in the United States, it will surely be a great success. It is a grand exhibit, displaying a large number of works. I sincerely hope that through this exhibition Americans will come to appreciate more deeply the religion of Zen Buddhism.

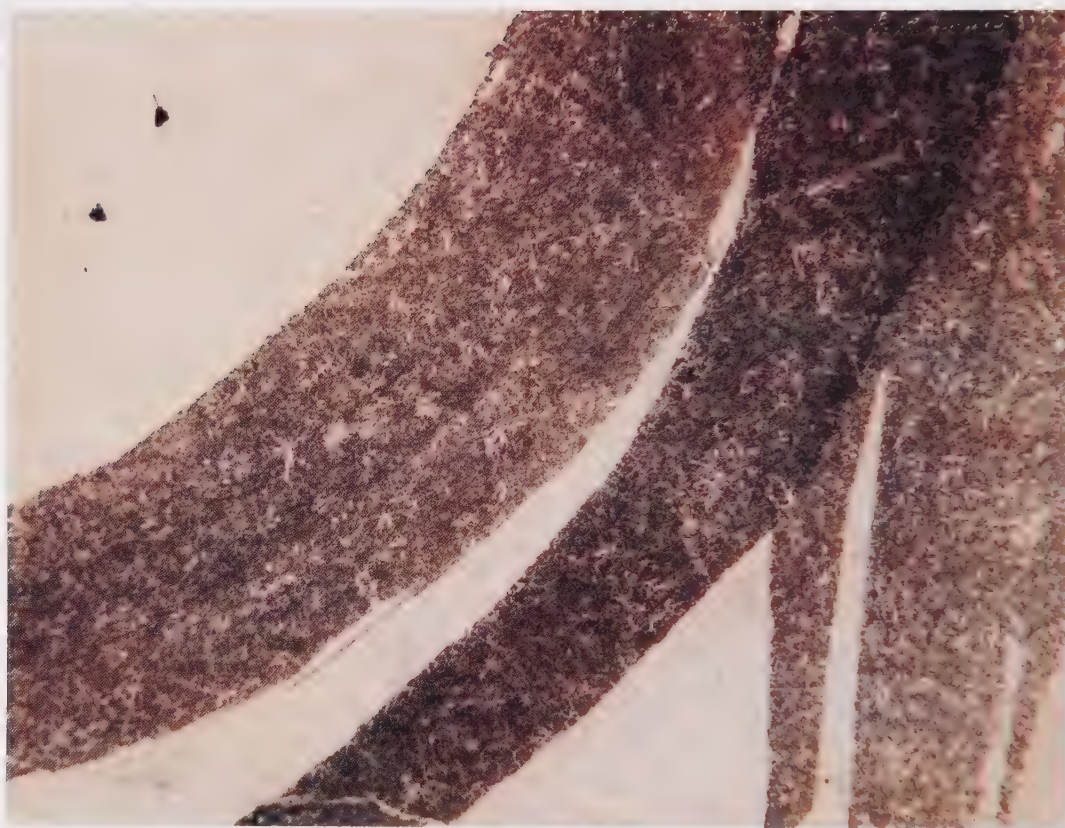
KEIDŌ FUKUSHIMA

Tōfuku-ji Head Abbot

Zen Master of Tōfuku-ji

Training Monastery

October 30, 2007



PREFACE

On February 14, 2009, contestants on the game show *Jeopardy* were asked, from what form of Mahayana Buddhism does the phrase, “What is the sound of one hand clapping” come? This was immediately answered correctly as “Zen.”

How have this phrase and Zen Buddhism permeated the mainstream vernacular so deeply as to become a game show question? Much of the answer is Hakuin.

The art, writings, and Zen teachings of Hakuin Ekaku (1685–1768) encompass an enormous amount of material, too much to be fully covered in any one project. Therefore we hope in this book and the accompanying exhibition to introduce people to a portion of the vast legacy left by Hakuin.

We begin with a few notes:

First, since there is no word for “clapping” in Hakuin’s phrase “*sekishu no onjō*” (Sound of One Hand), we omit it here despite its common use in English.

Second, we are using the traditional dates for Hakuin’s birth and death as 1685–1768. Some scholars prefer 1686–1769, since he both was born and died in the last months of those lunar years, technically corresponding to the following year in the Western calendar.

Third, we should also note that Japanese ages are usually counted as one year older than in the West, so when Hakuin signs a painting as “age eighty-three,” he would be eighty-two by Western count. We are using the Japanese system since it corresponds to Hakuin’s usage.

Finally, all translations in this text are by the authors unless otherwise noted.

The study of Hakuin and his art has been a huge and daunting task. We have tried to divide our selection of his paintings and calligraphy into manageable sections, utilizing categories and themes that we believe might prove appealing to general readers. While we have tried to incorporate Hakuin’s Zen teachings, utilizing his own words as much as possible, we realize that this is first and foremost a study of his art that is meant to supplement the already established

and growing body of work on his Zen writings by scholars in other fields. Even in terms of his art, we have merely been able to scratch the surface; Hakuin left thousands of examples of paintings and calligraphy, many of which are only now beginning to reappear. While we provide a general overview of Hakuin's vast artistic oeuvre, there is much more that can be studied, and we hope scholars, students, collectors, and others so inclined will continue to explore the incredible body of work left by this most influential of all later Zen masters.

In our study of Hakuin's painting and calligraphy we have relied greatly on previous scholarship. We are especially appreciative of Professor Yoshizawa Katsuhiro at Hanazono University, who has dedicated himself to exploring the complicated and often abstruse Edo-period social and cultural references from which Hakuin drew inspiration. Professor Yoshizawa has also scoured Japan, documenting and photographing as many examples of Hakuin's paintings and calligraphies as he can find, in the process discovering new subject matter and many works previously unknown to the scholarly world. His photographs have recently been published in *Hakuin zenga bokuseki* (Tokyo: Nigensha, 2009).

We are also extremely grateful to Norman Waddell for his help, and for his unparalleled translations of Hakuin's writings. Translating Zen texts is an art form in itself, and Professor Waddell's work reveals a wonderful sense of grace, ease, and humor, enabling readers to experience not only Hakuin's teachings but also his remarkable personality. Our study of Hakuin's art would be greatly diminished without the diligent and accomplished work of Professor Waddell.

As always, we are very thankful to the many scholars, collectors, dealers, and friends who have helped us over the years, furthering our study of Japanese art by helping us to discover works and locate research materials. We would like to thank Professors Kono Motoaki, Sasaki Johei, Kobayashi Tadashi, Kawai Masatomo, and Tsuji Nobuo for their help and support, and Yanagi Takashi, Yanagi Koichi, Yanagi Hiroshi, Yanagi Harumi, Yabumoto Shunichi, Tanaka Daizaburo, Tanaka Haruki, Yoshida Yasuhiro, Arimura Yoshio, Marui Kenzaburo, and Kami Kensuke for providing access to many wonderful works of art. We are also grateful to the Eisei Bunko Foundation and its curator, Miyake Hidekazu, for allowing us to study and photograph many important works in their collection, although they ultimately did not agree to lend. In America, we thank the curators Matthew Welch of the Minneapolis Art Institute, John Tera-moto of the Indianapolis Museum of Art, and Hollis Goodall of the Los Angeles County Museum.

For assisting us in our research, our appreciation goes to the University of Richmond Faculty Research Fund and the Metropolitan Center for Far Eastern Art Studies. We are particularly grateful to Joseph Seubert for his unfailing warmth, enthusiasm, and superb help in locating written materials. Also, we thank Jonathan Chaves, Fumiko and Akira Yamamoto, and John Carpenter for help with translations, and we are grateful to Taylor Dabney for his excellent photographs of a group of the scrolls. We particularly give our thanks to all of the lenders to this exhibition, both in Japan and in the United States, whose

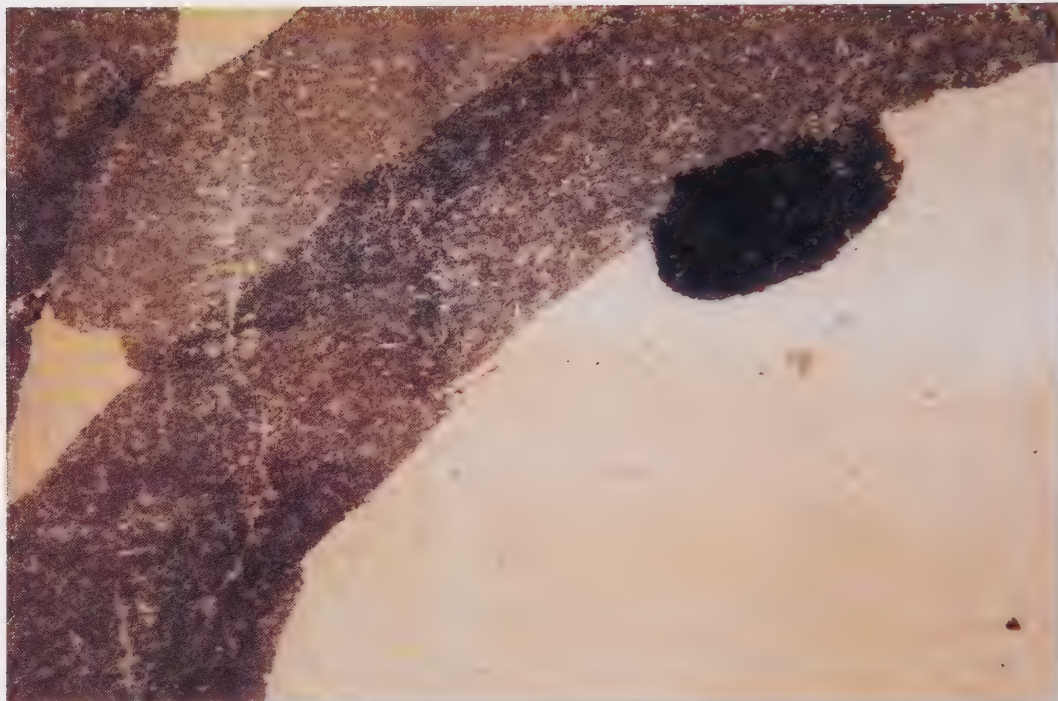
kindness and generosity have made this immense and sometimes unwieldy project possible.

For their support and presentation of the exhibition, we are very grateful to the New Orleans Museum of Art, especially its director, John Bullard, and its assistant director for art and curator of Asian art, Lisa Rotondo-McCord, for their willingness to serve as the host venue. We are also honored that the show will also be seen at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, thanks to its curator, Robert Singer, and at the Japan Society Gallery, New York, due to the efforts of its director, Joe Earle.

For their strong commitment to a produce first-rate book catalog, our thanks go to Shambhala Publications and its entire staff in Boston, especially to Peter Turner and to our editor, David O'Neal, both of whom truly understand and appreciate the spiritual and artistic depth of Hakuin's work.

Finally, we are deeply indebted to Keidō Fukushima Rōshi of Tōfuku-ji Monastery for being a wonderful source of information, inspiration, and friendship over the years, and for gracing this book with his foreword.

THE SOUND OF ONE HAND



INTRODUCTION

Hakuin in Japanese Zen History

If Hakuin had not inherited the succession, perhaps our religion would not have continued to our times. Hakuin is the great, outstanding figure of the last five hundred years of our Zen Sect. He cleared away the accumulated evil customs, and cleansed the “inner caves” of our “Law.” There is no other man to whom we can point as the restorer of our pure teaching. That is why we are grateful to our Emperor for granting to him the posthumous title of “Sho-Shu Kokushi” (National Teacher of the Right Religion). After Hakuin, the state of our sect greatly improved. Its rules and regulations were reformed and many good teachers have come forth. All of us, his successors, owe much to him.¹

Known as the “revitalizer of Rinzai Zen in Japan” despite spending most of his career in a small rural temple, Hakuin achieved this accolade by restructuring Zen training methods, by deepening monastic practice, by insisting upon “postenlightenment” training, and by consciously and enthusiastically reaching out to lay parishioners in new ways. As a result of his reorganization of Zen monastic training, as well as his sheer force as a teacher and Zen lecturer, Hakuin’s position in Zen history was solidified. In fact, today virtually all Japanese Rinzai Zen monks and priests can trace their training lineages back to Hakuin through one of his Dharma grandsons, Inzan Ien (1751–1814) or Takujū Kosen (1760–1833). In all, the revitalized form of Zen that Hakuin left was significantly and sufficiently rejuvenated that it became widely acknowledged as “Hakuin Zen” and was passed down through his numerous disciples, completely revamping Rinzai Zen monastic training as it entered the modern age.

HAKUIN’S ZEN LINEAGE

Among the numerous Zen teaching lines that had been transmitted from China to Japan in the early thirteenth century, the most important for Hakuin was the one introduced by a Japanese disciple of Hsü-t’ang Chih-yü (Jp.: Kidō Chigu)

(1185–1269) named Shōmyō Nanpō (1235–1309), better known by his posthumous name, Daiō Kokushi. Daiō had spent several years training in China under Hsü-t'ang and eventually received his sanction. Upon Daiō's return to Japan, Hsü-t'ang wrote a poem that concluded with the line, "My descendants will increase daily beyond the Eastern seas." This became known in Japan as "Kidō's Prophecy."²

After Hsü-t'ang's death, the teaching of his line in China, according to Hakuin, fell into rapid decline as the result of the incorporation of Pure Land Buddhist practices into Zen training. Hakuin therefore had great reverence for Daiō, who had returned to Japan in 1267 and taught for over forty years. Hakuin believed that Daiō had literally saved the purity of Hsü-t'ang's Zen by transmitting it to Japan. In the margins of a copy of the *Daiō roku* (Record of Daiō), Hakuin wrote,

Daiō was the only priest who attained the true, untransmittable essence that had been handed down from the great masters of the T'ang. He was the Japanese Bodhidharma. . . . Because Daiō went to China and returned having received the direct transmission of the Zen Dharma from Master Hsu-t'ang . . . he is the most eminent by far of the twenty-four teachers who introduced Zen into Japan. For that reason, from the time I was a young priest, whenever I made an offering of incense, I never failed to offer some of it in honor of Daiō.³

Daiō's most noted student was Shūhō Myōchō (1282–1338), better known by his posthumous name, Daitō Kokushi. Daitō became the founder of Daitoku-ji in Kyoto, the temple that took precedence in Japanese Zen, largely through strong political alliances, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁴ Daitō's Dharma heir, Kanzan Egen (1277–1360), in turn eventually became the founder of Myōshin-ji in Kyoto.⁵ During the early Edo period, largely due to changes in the political patronage of Zen, the Daitoku-ji line began to decline in prominence. In turn, the influence of other Kyoto monasteries began to grow, among them Myōshin-ji, the temple to which Hakuin traced his lineage. Although they are situated primarily in smaller, provincial temples such as Hakuin's Shōin-ji in present-day Shizuoka Prefecture, Myōshin-ji priests dominated Rinzai Zen throughout the Edo period under the auspices of great Zen masters and abbots such as Gudō Tōshoku (1579–1661).⁶

In his attempt to resurrect and maintain the pure Zen transmitted by Daiō in the thirteenth century, Hakuin organized Zen training methods and called upon Zen practitioners to return to the traditional practice that had flourished in Sung Dynasty (960–1279) China under Hsü-tang and that formed the basis of the Zen tradition that was transmitted to Japan. Hakuin believed that much of the Zen being taught during his day was false and ineffective. He stressed that the only way to true enlightenment was through rigorous koan training, the meditation upon seemingly paradoxical statements and phrases provided by masters to help students break through conventional modes of thought and

duality-based logic. This path to finding one's true nature (*kenshō*) required nothing short of total dedication to the Zen life.⁷

KOAN

The Chinese Zen master Chung-feng Ming-pen (Jp.: Chuhō Myōhan) (1263–1323) described koans as meditation subjects that could not be understood with logic, transmitted by words, explained in writing, or measured by reason. “When these *kōan* are understood and accepted, then there will be an end to feeling and discrimination; when there is an end to feeling and discrimination, birth-and-death will become empty; when birth-and-death become empty, the Buddha-way will be ordered.”⁸ However, while the historical existence of koans in Zen was widely acknowledged, the extent of their use and importance in training was long debated. By the twelfth century in China the two major schools of Zen, Rinzai (Ch.: Lin-chi) and Sōtō (Ch.: Ts’ao-tung), while both acknowledging koans, had different emphases in their training practices.⁹ To this extent, the Rinzai school became known as *kanna* (Ch.: *k’an-hua*, “introspecting on koans”) Zen, and the Sōtō school became known as *mokushō* (Ch.: *mo-chao*, “silent meditation”) Zen.¹⁰

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Japanese Rinzai Zen was establishing itself in Japan under the influence of both Shinchō Kakushin (1207–98), who studied in China under Wu-men Hui-kai (Jp.: Mumon Ekai) (1183–1260), and Daitō Kokushi. Kakushin had brought back to Japan his master’s collection of koans, the *Wu-men kuan* (Jp.: *Mumonkan*), which became a staple of Japanese Zen koan training along with the *Hekiganroku* (Ch.: *Piyen lu*), or the *Blue Cliff Record*. Daitō also left his own koan collection, the *Daitō Kokushi hyakunijissoku*. While the Japanese monks who trained in China had brought back koans handed down to them by their Chinese masters, and continued to utilize them in their own teachings, few altered the koans or their answers from what their lineages had traditionally passed down, and few new koans were created at this time.¹¹

Because Hakuin had studied with many masters during his own training, he was familiar with the teaching methods of various lineages. This may have facilitated his attempt to reorganize koan study. Prior to Hakuin, koans were divided into three categories: *richi* (attaining the principle); *kikan* (action); and *kōjō* (going beyond). These categories have been attributed to both Daiō and Enni Ben’en (1202–80).¹² Generally speaking, Hakuin is credited with broadening these three categories into five: *hosshin* (Dharma body); *kikan*; *gonsen* (verbal expression); *nantō* (difficult to penetrate); and *kōjō*.¹³ Unfortunately, how much of this Hakuin actually implemented and how much he simply developed organically over time within the Rinzai tradition is unclear because there are no known documents outlining his changes or systemization of koan study. However, the point of the reorganization seems to be a matter of continuously deepening one’s *kenshō* by moving through the series of increasingly difficult koans. *Hosshin* koans correspond to achieving an initial *kenshō*, but once this is accomplished, it should

be followed up with further koans such as *nantō* koans to prevent stagnation and complacency.¹⁴ Of the *nantō* koans, Hakuin wrote, “Individuals of strong resolve, you must fiercely mobilize your energy and see your nature once. As soon as you realize an unequivocal *kenshō*, drop it and resolve [this matter] by practice on the cases difficult to penetrate.”¹⁵ Hakuin further explained,

Each and every person has an essential self-nature he can see into and the belief in a principle by which this self-nature can be fully penetrated. Even though you attain this belief, you cannot break through and penetrate to total awakening unless feelings of fundamental doubt arise as you work on the difficult-to-pass [*nantō*] koans. And even if these doubts build up, and crystallize, and you yourself become a “great doubting mass,” you will be unable to break that doubting mass apart unless you constantly bore into those koans with a great, burning tenacity of purpose.¹⁶

Hakuin’s disciples may have formulated the koan system based on their training under the master, but no specific documentation has come to light. Hakuin’s disciple, Tōrei Enji (1721–92), however, commented on training,

So the matter of transmission from the teacher is all-important. The old masters, having broken through many barriers, at last arrived at the source of seeing into the True Nature. Those who have clearly come to the end with not the slightest doubt remaining, who have already been about on pilgrimage and are well settled, when at least they meet a true teacher of our school who is endowed with the Great Single Eye, then for the first time they come to know of the one salient point of Advanced Practice. If they then train whole-heartedly and with determination, then finally it becomes clear why transmission from the teacher is essential. Such a one then also knows how much gratitude he owes to the Dharma, not forgetting it for even a moment—only then may he be called a Dharma heir. In such manner all the patriarchs of the past have correctly inherited.¹⁷

Hakuin broadened koan practice by increasing the categories of koans, but it was not just a matter of new labels; the essence was to deepen and extend training and practice with “postenlightenment” training, to the extent that ultimately it encompassed one’s whole life. Zen practice becomes a continuous experience; a single *kenshō* enlightenment is not the finite end—in fact it is a mere beginning. Hakuin’s system of working through koans served to prevent complacency in one’s achievement.

Although early Japanese Zen masters relied on established Chinese koan collections, Hakuin created his own koans including the *sekishu no onjō* (Sound of One Hand) of which he wrote at the age of sixty-nine,

Five or six years ago I made up my mind to instruct everyone by saying, “Listen to the Sound of the Single Hand.” I have come to realize that this

koan is infinitely more effective in instructing people than any of the other methods I had used before. It seems to raise the ball of doubt in people much more easily and the readiness with which progress in meditation is made has been as different as the clouds are from the earth. . . . What is the Sound of the Single Hand? . . . This is something that can by no means be heard with the ear. If conceptions and discriminations are not mixed within it and it is quite apart from seeing, hearing, perceiving, and knowing, and if, while walking, standing, sitting, and reclining, you proceed straightforwardly without interruption in the study of this koan, then in the place where reason is exhausted and words are ended, you will suddenly pluck out the karmic root of birth and death and break down the cave of ignorance.¹⁸

Hakuin used this as the basis of his teaching for both monastic and lay followers along with the “*Mu*” koan in which the Zen master Jōshū (Ch.: Chao-chou) was asked, “Does a dog have the Buddha nature?” to which Jōshū replied, “*Mu*” (no, nothing).¹⁹ Both of these koans are considered *shōkan* (First Barrier), and monks are expected to experience their first *kenshō* through meditation on one of them, a process that can take up to several years. Also, it should be noted that monks do not simply progress from one koan directly to another; each koan can break down into subquestions, thus the “main case” (*honsoku*) is followed by varying numbers of “checking questions” (*sassho*). These *sassho* serve to confirm to the master the monk’s initial *kenshō*, and also serve to push the monk deeper into the initial koan. For instance, the “Sound of One Hand” may be followed by checking questions such as “What is the Sound of One Hand from in front and from behind?” There may be over a hundred *sassho* for any given koan, thus ensuring a practitioner’s full insight.²⁰

HAKUIN’S TEACHINGS

Hakuin was determined and staunch in his ideas about Zen training and teaching; his main points were carefully worked out and reiterated throughout his career. However, according to Norman Waddell, his four main themes were consolidated as early as 1740, when Hakuin began composing the *Sokkō roku kaien fusetsu* (“Introduction to the Sayings of Sokkō”),²¹ which resulted from a series of talks on the “Records of Sokkō” given at Shōin-ji in the spring of that year.²² The main themes stressed by Hakuin throughout his life were as follows:

- The necessity of studying what he referred to as the “poison words” (koan), until a spiritual breakthrough is achieved
- The need for postenlightenment training in order to deepen the initial awakening
- The importance of using one’s own enlightened contribution as a legacy to perplex future students of Zen
- A continued denunciation of those who contribute to the decline of Zen,

particularly through the incorporation of Pure Land Buddhist practices and/or the sole use of “silent meditation”²³

In particular, Hakuin believed that if only silent meditation were practiced, it could potentially lead to the downfall of the nation. To this extent, he wrote in 1748,

If you think that dead sitting and silent illumination are sufficient then you spend your whole life in error and transgress greatly against the Buddha Way. Not only do you set yourself against the Buddha Way, but you reject the lay world as well. Why is this so? If the various lords and high officials were to neglect their visits to court and to cast aside their governmental duties and practice dead sitting and silent illumination; if the warriors were to neglect their archery and charioteering, forget the martial arts, and practice dead sitting and silent illumination; if the merchants were to lock their shops and smash their abacuses, and practice dead sitting and silent illumination; if the farmers were to throw away their ploughs and hoes, cease their cultivation, and practice dead sitting and silent illumination; . . . the country would collapse and the people drop with exhaustion. Bandits would arise everywhere and the nation would be in grievous danger. Then the people, in their anger and resentment, would be sure to say that Zen was an evil and an ill-omened thing.²⁴

Instead of “silent meditation,” Hakuin stressed the importance of activity in Zen practice as well as in daily life. For him, action in Zen life was crucial; he even considered the daily temple maintenance by monks (sweeping, cleaning, gardening), to be a form of koan study.²⁵ While not instructing people to disregard quiet meditation completely, Hakuin wrote,

What is most worthy of respect is a pure koan meditation that neither knows nor is conscious of the two aspects, the quiet and the active. This is why it has been said that the true practicing monk walks but does not know he is walking, sits but does not know he is sitting. For penetrating to the depths of one’s own true self-nature, and for attaining a vitality valid on all occasions, nothing can surpass meditation on the midst of activity.²⁶

The idea of integrating meditation into activity, particularly secular activity, was not, however, original to Hakuin. He was stressing the ideas of the Chinese master Ta-hui Tsung-kao (Jp.: Daie Soko) (1089–1163). Ta-hui wrote,

Precisely if you like stillness and dislike agitation it is appropriate to exert your force (or to make a constant effort). When you clash head-on against agitation with the state [acquired in] stillness, the force [you exert] is infinitely superior to what [is obtained by sitting] on a bamboo chair or a cushion.²⁷

This concept of meditation while the body is in action was not merely a means for Hakuin to bring Zen practice to the everyday life and activities of lay followers; it went much deeper, to the extent that Hakuin described how mind and body needed to function together for optimum result. To this end, Hakuin defined and described the actual practice of meditation more fully than previous masters. As noted by Michel Mohr in his examination of Hakuin's influence on Rinzai koan practice, Hakuin stressed that koan practice was not limited to concentration of the mind, but involved the whole body:

Straighten your spine and adjust your body evenly. Begin by contemplating the count of your breaths [*susokkan*]. Among the innumerable *samādhis* this is the unsurpassable one. Having filled your lower-abdomen [*tanden*] with vital energy [*ki*], take one *kōan*. [Thus,] it is essential to cut the very root of life.²⁸

According to Mohr, the sequence of practice given here is not arbitrary, and is fundamental to all Japanese and Chinese Zen traditions. Hakuin, however, introduces the specific use of terms such as *tanden* (the center of energy in the lower abdomen), *ki* (vital energy), and *susokkan* (counting of breaths), which suggests a clear awareness of Taoist practices and Chinese medicine, both of which interested Hakuin. Moreover, his emphasis on *susokkan*, counting one's breaths during meditation, helps the practitioner to focus on the continuous and repetitive flow of the body's energy, going beyond mere analytical fixation on the koan. Mohr explains, "One could say that the circulation of energy activated by the bellows of breathing takes over from discursive consciousness and allows one to maintain a certain degree of awareness of the *kōan* while being engaged, for instance, in manual labor."²⁹ Thus, if the mind remains engaged with the uninterrupted flow of breath energy within the body, it is not preoccupied with analytical focus on the koan. Instead, both aspects work at the same time as a single, integrated process, and thus meditation accompanies the energized state of the body in all activities. This concept of meditation within activity would become the core of Hakuin's Zen teachings.

POSTENLIGHTENMENT TRAINING

If proper and focused meditation within everyday activities leading toward *satori* was the first of Hakuin's two great teachings, the second was postenlightenment training. Determined that his followers should not remain stagnant in their spiritual lives, he often emphasized the story of how he became proud and vainglorious after his first *kenshō* in order to show that he too needed further work following his great breakthrough on "*Mu*." To this extent, although he had initially started his own students out on the "*Mu*" koan, in his seventies he switched to the double koan of his own making, the "Sound of One Hand and Put a Stop to All Sounds."

For his monastic and lay pupils, Hakuin wrote, “In order to attain *kenshō* . . . you must first of all hear the sound of one hand. Nor must you be satisfied with hearing that sound; you must go on and put a stop to all sounds.” (This second part of Hakuin’s famous koan is not well known.) Hakuin continued, “Even then you cannot relax your efforts—the deeper your enlightenment becomes, the greater the effort you must expend . . . [after passing the most difficult koans] you must read extensively in Buddhist and non-Buddhist literature, accumulate an inexhaustible store of Dharma assets, then devote your life exclusively to the endless practice of preaching the Dharma and guiding beings to liberation.”³⁰ Thus, the practitioner returned to another of Hakuin’s main themes, using one’s own enlightenment to guide future students.

As Norman Waddell notes, Hakuin did not use the term “postenlightenment” (*gogo*), until he was in his mid-seventies.³¹ At this point it became an important aspect of his writing, including two texts that were largely geared to lay practitioners, *Sakushin osana monogatari* (“The Tale of My Childhood”) and *Takayama Yūkichi monogatari* (“The Tale of Yūkichi Takayama”). According to Hakuin, it was about this time that he began receiving requests from lay followers for a text dealing with this issue.³² Hakuin’s message in these engaging tales never wavers; the *Tale of Yūkichi*, for instance, includes this passage clearly stating the path students were expected to follow:

At first he [Hakuin] taught using the Mu koan; then he erected a two-fold barrier of koans—the Sound of One Hand and Put a Stop to All Sounds. He called these barriers the “claw and fangs of the Dharma cave,” “divine, death-dealing amulets.” But even if an authentic Zen student—a patrician of secret depths—breaks past that double barrier, he still has ten thousand additional barriers, an endless thicket of impenetrable thorns and briars, to pass through, not to mention one final, firmly closed, tightly locked gate. Once he has succeeded in passing through all these barriers one by one, he must arouse Bodhi-mind and devote his life to carrying out the great matter of post-satori practice.³³

THE SPREAD OF HAKUIN’S TEACHINGS

Ironically, while Hakuin had harsh words for some of the practices of other Zen traditions, his own Zen teaching was soon to influence them. During Hakuin’s time his teaching and guidance were sought by priests from other sects, including Kakushū Jōchō (1711–90), who sought Hakuin’s advice in 1749 regarding the teaching of the *Goi* (Five Ranks) (see page 155). This encounter is significant because, upon being appointed the twenty-second abbot of Manpuku-ji in 1786, Kakushū first brought Hakuin’s influence into the Ōbaku sect.³⁴ Hakuin also interacted with Sōtō priests, including Genrō Ōryū (1720–1813), the author of *Tetteki tōsui* (The Iron Flute Blown Upside Down).

Hakuin’s impact on other sects continued after his death as new Zen

masters took up abbotships in various monasteries. For example, in 1851 Ryōchū Nyoryū (1793–1868) was appointed the thirty-third abbot of Manpuku-ji, but before becoming an Ōbaku monk, Ryōchū had been trained in the Hakuin lineage, receiving certification from Takujū Kosen. As a result, with his appointment as abbot, koan practice in the Ōbaku sect took on a distinctly Rinzai flavor.³⁵

Within the Rinzai sect, after Hakuin's death in 1768, Zen training in Japan continued to evolve. New training halls (*sōdō*) were established at several temples, and most significantly, the Zen masters (*rōshi*) at these *sōdō* were largely disciples of Hakuin, of whom he is said to have had at least one hundred and fifty, although only some fifty are now known. Prior to the Edo period (1600–1868), the large monastic complexes such as Daitoku-ji and Myōshin-ji had been a series of independently run temples, but the establishment of Manpuku-ji in 1661 as well as government economic reforms had facilitated the need for Rinzai priests to reevaluate the sect's system of organization. In 1729, Tōfuku-ji had first established retreat periods devoted to *kessei* (collective practice), and in 1787 Hakuin's disciple Ishin Eryō (1720–69) established Enpuku-ji as the first "officially approved monastery" (*kōnin sōdō*) of the Myōshin-ji line.³⁶ The daily regimen within the monasteries now followed a regular curriculum of koan study, meditation, labor, begging, and sutra chanting, revealing again that all activity had been important to Hakuin. The training year was divided into spring and autumn terms of three months each, during which time the monks lived in the *sōdō*. Each term was followed by a three-month break during which monks were encouraged to make pilgrimages to other temples.³⁷

The systematic training structure largely influenced by Hakuin was more fully developed by his Dharma heir, Gasan Jitō (1727–97). But it was under Gasan's heirs, Inzan Ien and Takujū Kosen, that the full emergence and establishment of "Hakuin Zen" was felt. Neither Hakuin nor any of his disciples left any published collections of koans; instead koan training revolved around long-established collections such as the *Mumonkan* and *Hekiganroku*, along with Hakuin's new koans. However, the approach to these koans differed between the two lines. Practitioners in the Takujū line systematically work their way through the *Mumonkan*, then the *Kattō shū*, and then the *Hekiganroku*. Those in the Inzan line mix koans from the different collections, but still in an established order.³⁸ The subtle difference between the two teaching traditions is sometimes described as "Sharp Inzan, scrupulous Takujū."

Although the answers to the koans remained fairly standard among the followers of Inzan and Takujū, there was a difference concerning the use of *jakugo* (capping phrases).³⁹ It had been a long tradition going back to China that Zen monks would, upon satisfactory completion of a koan, provide a "capping phrase" summarizing their full understanding of the koan. While the earliest *jakugo* were original works of prose and poetry, for later Zen students the appropriate phrases were generally taken from earlier literature. The followers of Inzan's line use the *jakugo* for most but not all koans, while those of the Takujū line use them for all koans. The two lines also draw from slightly different bodies of literature for their capping phrases. This difference helps

to distinguish the two lineages descended from Hakuin. Furthermore, according to Mohr, of the twenty-four early lineage transmissions of Zen from China, only the Daiō branch had survived beyond the nineteenth century. Therefore of the fifteen *daihonzan* (lineages) of Rinzai Zen that exist today, all are emanations of the Myōshin-ji line. For all intents and purposes, the Rinzai Zen practiced in Japan since the mid-eighteenth century has been Hakuin Zen.⁴⁰

LAY FOLLOWERS

Hakuin had begun accepting a few students in his late thirties and early forties. However, by the early 1740s, when he was in his fifties, people from all stations of society and representing all occupations came flocking from throughout Japan as word of his Zen teachings spread across the country. Being a small, poor country temple, Shōin-ji did not have the resources to support the number of students converging on the temple to receive Hakuin's instruction. As a result, they found shelter anywhere they could near the temple—abandoned buildings, dilapidated shrines and temples, and old farmhouses.

Although a fierce teacher with his Zen disciples, Hakuin had great respect, sympathy, and warmth for his lay followers. Just as he was determined to lead his monastic disciples down the true path of *kenshō*, he also hoped to lead the general populace to the Buddhist truth, but at the same time he was keenly aware of different lifestyles and thus different limitations and obstacles.

Even should you live in the forests or the wilderness, eat one meal a day, and practice the Way both day and night, it is still difficult to devote yourself to purity in your works. How much harder must it be then for one who lives with his wife and relatives amid the dusts and turmoils of this busy life. But if you do not have the eye to see into your own nature, you will not have the slightest chance of being responsive to the teaching. Therefore Bodhidharma has said: "If you wish to attain the Buddha Way, you must first see into your own nature."⁴¹

As a result of this broader and more varied audience, Hakuin developed new ways of modifying or adapting his teaching methods. Aware that many of his lay followers had little or no education and completely different life experiences, Hakuin approached them accordingly. He incorporated folk and popular themes and images into his paintings, writings, and sermons in order to convey his Zen teachings through more familiar and identifiable contexts, often using colloquial language in the inscriptions and writing them in the Japanese *kana* syllabary rather than traditional Chinese.⁴² It should also be noted that Hakuin used popular references when teaching monks as well, saying, "When I teach or talk to them about Zen I sometimes employ snatches of country songs and popular street jingles in the local Suruga dialect. Otherwise, their ration is nothing but harsh scolding outbursts and a steady rain of abuse."⁴³



FIGURE 1
Shrimp
Ink on paper, 46 x 75 cm.
Private collection

Hakuin tried to structure his teachings and methods to better assist his monastic disciples along their journey, often utilizing stories from his own personal experiences and those of past Zen masters to demonstrate the tremendous struggles of this path, as well as its great spiritual rewards. Similarly, he also felt that familiar and approachable examples would be most effective for inspiring laypersons. This directness and sense of familiarity lent itself well to Zen teaching, making often-abstruse concepts more accessible. In one sermon he stated,

Every single sentient being in this mortal world of ours, whatever his state, whether prince or commoner, old or young, priest or layman, man or woman—yes, even horses, cows, dogs, pigs, apes, monkeys, deer—there is not one single one of all these which has not been provided with the great property, viz. the truly essential uncreated Buddha nature.⁴⁴

Likewise, Hakuin also made subtle changes to his artistic images depending on the intended audience. For instance, he often painted images of shrimp, likening his disciples in their old age to the auspicious crustacean (fig. 1). He would inscribe these images with the phrase “If you want to live a long life until your whiskers are long and your body is bent over, eat moderately and sleep alone.” However, on some images of shrimp he left out the words, “and sleep alone,” implying that for lay followers, this would not be practical.⁴⁵

The audience for Hakuin’s brushwork was not typical in terms of art patronage. People did not purchase his paintings and calligraphy, nor did they commission them the way much Buddhist art had been created in Japan. Although Hakuin was acquainted with people at all levels of Japanese society, including *daimyo* (feudal lords), his art was more likely given to lay followers as gestures of encouragement, and in the case of his dragon staff *inka* (see

chapter 3) as recognition of spiritual advancement. Hakuin may have believed that certain subjects were particularly suited as Zen teachings for particular followers. Other works were probably given to monks from other temples who admired Hakuin's Zen teachings.

There are accounts in the *Hakuin Oshō nenpu* (Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin) that describe Hakuin doing works specifically for certain temples on special occasions.⁴⁶ For example, there is the specific mention in the *Nenpu* of Hakuin doing a painting depicting the efforts of the lay follower Yotsugi Masayuki, to aid starving peasants.⁴⁷ This is important because now the act of an ordinary person has been included in Hakuin's oeuvre, alongside folk subjects, Buddhist figures, and Zen patriarchs. His artworks served as a catalyst through which Hakuin reached people, people reached Zen, and Zen became part of everyday reality. Furthermore, not only could people better understand Zen teachings through the images, but as in the case of Yotsugi Masayuki, they could become a part of the actual teaching tradition thanks to Hakuin's breadth of vision and desire to widen his audience.

Aside from his art, Hakuin also composed simple songs to use as forms of teachings, again utilizing colloquial speech to convey complex Zen themes to ordinary people. For instance, in his song "Kusatori Uta" (While Hoeing Weeds), he encourages his farming followers to cut off their worldly desires and ties at the roots like grass. Similarly, in his "Kōdō Wasan" (Song of Filial Piety for Children), he instructs children to be grateful to their parents, from whom they have received their body. Perhaps his most famous of these popular songs is the "Zazen Wasan" (Song of Meditation) in which he praises meditation (See page 226 for complete translation). It should also be noted, however, that these simple songs are, in fact, full of rather complex Zen teachings.

As well as his concerns for the well-being of common people, Hakuin took great interest in the spiritual welfare of numerous feudal lords, noting in several letters to them the importance of just and humane government. He wrote in one letter,

It is essential that you do not keep yourself in a lofty position, but that from today you withdraw from it, as if from a dangerous place you despise, and become a person devoted to humane government and filial compassion. Gain an understanding of the lowly official and servant, whose estate is so different from your own, and of the debased position of the lackey.⁴⁸

In a sense, this was a secular reflection of his monastic teachings to monks not to cloister themselves in quietude, oblivious to the bustling world.

Hakuin believed that not only should meditation and Zen practice permeate daily life, but daily life must permeate practice. Spiritual leaders, like government officials, were largely useless if they could not assist others in the world at large. For Hakuin, Zen was a practice and a means to *kenshō* for all beings in all situations and stations of life. Just as each individual brought

his or her own experiences to Zen practice, the Zen experience must be taken back into the world in order to flourish and fully aid people in their journey. Hakuin passed this broad outlook on to his disciples, and Tōrei later wrote,

The true Dharma of the Zen school does not differentiate between monk and layman, man and woman; nor does it choose between high and low, old and young; in it there is neither great nor little, neither acute nor dull energy/motive power—but only the great-hearted will finally and without fail attain. So believe profoundly in this Dharma and seek deliverance with diligence. Start walking according to your ability and do not speculate whether the Way is long or short.⁴⁹

It was this generous spirit and open-minded approach, available to all, along with his reformatations and clarifications to traditional monastic practice, that led to the emergence of what is now often referred to simply as “Hakuin Zen.”

—AUDREY YOSHIKO SEO

選佛場中為千佛
 群靈為群靈
 挫今時默照
 墨迹以新無
 這般醜惡被
 醜上落醜又
 明初元年
 普明



LIFE IN ART, ART IN LIFE

Biographical Influences in Hakuin's Painting and Calligraphy

I wanta read about Hakuin, who went to see this old man who lived in a cave, slept with deer and ate chestnuts and the old man told him to quit meditating and quit thinking about koans. . . .

—JACK KEROUAC, *The Dharma Bums*, 1958

We know very little about the lives of most great Zen masters, and much of what we do know is hagiographic in nature; their lives are traditionally embellished with tales and episodes meant to convey Zen lessons more than historic truth. In contrast to the usual sparse accounts, however, there is an abundance of biographical material associated with Hakuin. The plethora of materials left by him and compiled by his disciples provides a rich description of the master's life and paints a vivid picture of his Zen experience.

Moreover, the unprecedented amount of written material concerning Hakuin's life is reflected and enhanced by an enormous visual record. One of the most prolific Zen artists, Hakuin was greatly influenced by his life experiences and used them in his art. Thus, beyond a textual biography, we have a rare visual biography as well. Few, if any, other Zen master-artists left such rich artistic reflections of their lives and Zen experiences.

EARLY INFLUENCES (1685–1707)

According to the *Hakuin Oshō nenpu*, a biography compiled by Hakuin's most noted student, Tōrei Enji, and published in 1820 by Tōrei's disciple Taikan Bunshū (1766–1842), even Hakuin's conception was marked with an auspicious sign. His mother dreamed she saw a figure flying toward the house from the south, the direction of the Imperial Shrine at Ise. The figure landed upon the roof and held out an amulet from the shrine. Hakuin's

FACING PAGE
Self-portrait
See page 41.

mother was startled at its appearance. When she awoke, she had conceived a child. The dream recurred on the night of Hakuin's birth, and as it ended, his mother was filled with a sense of joy that she would give birth to a male child.¹ Hakuin was the fifth child in the Nagasawa family, who ran an inn that catered to traveling *daimyō* retainers. His father was actually a member of the Sugiyama samurai family, but was adopted by Hakuin's mother's family, the Nagasawa, at marriage, a very common Japanese practice. Hakuin's given name was Iwajirō.

Hakuin's early religious encounters included accompanying his mother at the age of eleven to the village temple, Shōgenkyō-ji, to hear a sermon by the Nichiren priest, Nichigon Shōnin, who lectured on the "Great Concentration and Insight."² As Hakuin described,

People came from all around the village to hear him. They flocked in like clouds. I went with my mother, and we heard him describe in graphic detail the torments in each of the Eight Scorching Hells. He had every knee in the audience quaking, every liver in the house frozen stiff with fear. As little as I was, I was certainly no exception. My whole body shook in mortal terror.³

This frightening experience had a deep effect on young Hakuin's psyche. He declared, "I'm rambunctious and undisciplined, always causing trouble. For me there is no hope of escaping the unending torments of hell."⁴ In order to pacify the troubled youngster, his mother suggested he appeal to Kitano Tenjin, the spirit of Tenmangū Shrine, housed in Sainen-ji, a temple located adjacent to the family's home. "This deity of great virtue and power can save people from all sufferings that karma may create, so go and pray sincerely to Tenjin."⁵

Hakuin was born in the year of the ox, as well as the month, day, and hour of the ox, the animal associated with Tenjin. Thus, Hakuin maintained a strong affinity for the deity throughout his life, and placed himself under the spiritual protection of Tenjin, offering prayers to the deity and waiting for some divine signal. One day, while playing with his toy bow and arrow, young Hakuin decided to try his hand at target shooting, using the chrysanthemum pattern on the sliding doors as a target. Unfortunately, the arrow missed its target and shot through the room, striking a painting of the poet Saigyō (1118–90) which was hanging in the *tokonoma* (display alcove), piercing Saigyō's left eye. The painting was highly treasured by Hakuin's elder brother, and as a result Hakuin began to tremble with fear at the outcome of this deed. Pressing his palms together in prayer, he appealed to Tenjin to come to his rescue: "I place myself in your hands. Please, use your infinite compassion and the power of your marvelous vow to protect me. Keep this deed of mine from becoming known."⁶

While Hakuin was appealing for help, however, his brother returned home and discovered the damage. The brother ran to their mother and reported the incident with great fury, while Hakuin cowered. His mother did not scold Hakuin, but his belief in Tenjin was deeply shaken by the experience. "‘Ah, Tenjin,’ I thought, ‘You are a rather doubtful kind of deity. You can’t even keep a



PLATE 1.1

Tenjin Shrine

Ink on paper, 90 x 28 cm.

Kikuan Collection

relatively minor matter like this one covered up. How can I possibly rely on you to save me from the fires of hell?’”⁷

Despite this apparent loss of faith, Hakuin continued to have a strong reverence for Tenjin, and later in life he painted numerous images associated with the Shinto deity. In some works Hakuin merely depicts the *torii* gate (a gate denoting a Shinto site) of a Shinto shrine, pine tree, and some plum branches, implying the presence of the deity through the use of these well-known attributes (plate 1.1). In fact, his inscription on the painting merely states, “Pine and plum; I need not inquire about the shrine inside.” In his later years Hakuin developed figural images of Tenjin, innovatively manipulating calligraphic text into a playful composition (see chapter 5).

Later in his youth Hakuin heard that a person in spiritual need should look toward the bodhisattva Kannon (Skt.: Avalokitesvara), whose compassionate strength was unsurpassed by any other Buddhist or Shinto deity. As a result, Hakuin became increasingly interested in the spiritual powers of Kannon (sometimes also known as Kanzeon in Japanese), and he memorized and diligently recited the *Kannon gyō* (*Kannon Sutra*) and the *Dharani of the Great Compassionate One*. Kannon was also a frequent subject for Hakuin’s later paintings (see chapter 2), and he wrote the phrase “Always Concentrate on Kanzeon Bodhisattva” numerous times.

Despite his great faith and dutiful recitation of Buddhist sutras, Hakuin realized that unless he left home and experienced the spiritual purity and liberation of the priesthood, he could never hope to understand or attain the unobstructed mind. His parents, however, were at first unwilling to allow their son to follow this path. But when Hakuin began the daily practice of climbing Mount Yanagizawa to meditate and recite sutras, they realized the depth of his devotion.⁸ Hakuin began his formal Buddhist studies at the age of fourteen at Tokugen-ji in Hara, where he learned to read Chinese texts and began to study Chinese Zen materials such as the *Kuzō-shi*, a Zen phrase anthology. He wrote later, “Only later did it occur to me that in reading through this work—which is said to have taken a novice three years to master—in only sixty days, I had received unseen help from the deity Tenjin.”⁹ In 1699, at the age of fifteen Hakuin was taken by his parents to the priest Tanrei Soden (d. 1701) at the temple Shōin-ji, also in Hara, where Tanrei administered the tonsure, making him a Buddhist monk. Hakuin was given the name Ekaku (Wise Crane). Soon after, Tanrei sent Hakuin to Daishō-ji in Numazu to serve as an attendant to the abbot, Sokudō Fueki (d. 1712).

At the age of nineteen, Hakuin traveled to the village of Shimizu, in Suruga Province, and entered the *sōdō* of Zensō-ji. During a lecture Hakuin heard the story of Yen-t’ou Ch’uan-huo (Jp.: Gantō Zenkatsu) (828–87), a Zen priest who had lived as a ferryman during the ninth century.¹⁰ When bandits killed Yen-t’ou, the sound of his death cry was heard for miles. This story created grave doubts in Hakuin’s mind, for if Yen-t’ou had been unable to protect himself from bandits despite his religious faith and training, how then would Hakuin ever be able to protect himself from the torments of hell? “If that is all a great Zen master can do, how can someone like me hope to escape hell’s torments? Judg-

ing from this account it is difficult to understand what can be gained from the study of Zen. Ahh! How can I believe in such unreliable a Buddhist teaching?"

This subject, too, returned in Hakuin's later life as a theme in his painting (fig. 1.1), further revealing the wide body of influences that he absorbed into his visual Zen expression. In his image, Yen-t'ou appears as a gruff old man dressed in a straw rain cloak and sedge hat, guiding his boat from amid the tall river grasses with a long bamboo pole. The horizontal composition, with the suggestion of a breeze bending the grasses and blowing the rain cloak, serves to push the boat along toward the inscription, which reads,

<i>Yoshi ashi ya</i>	Amid the reeds,
<i>koki wa naretaru</i>	the ferryman
<i>watashi mo ri.</i>	accompanies me.

With its 5-7-5 syllables, this calligraphy takes the form of a haiku; in his efforts to reach as many people as possible, Hakuin may have been the first Zen master to inscribe haiku on a number of his paintings, thus creating both Zenga (Zen painting) and haiga (haiku painting) simultaneously.

As in all good haiku, the meanings here are not merely one-dimensional. In this inscription, reeds are called *yoshi* and *ashi*, creating a pun. In some parts of Japan reeds are referred to as *yoshi*, which can also mean "good," while in other parts of Japan they are referred to as *ashi*, which can also mean "bad." Thus, the ferryman is not only maneuvering through reeds but also metaphorically through good and evil. However, as the Zen master Yamada Mumon (1900–1988) noted in his commentary on the *Ten Oxherding Pictures*, "No



FIGURE 1.1
Yen-t'ou the Ferryman
Ink on paper, 90 x 28 cm.
Kikuan collection

matter what you call it, the reed is the same, after all. Similarly, how trivial it is when people fight over whether something is good or bad; both sides are lost in the world of discrimination and making judgments about everything. So long as they are blundering about in the world of discrimination, both sides are bad, both sides are *ashi*. . . . To penetrate right through judgments about good or bad, isn't that your original face, isn't that buddha-nature?"¹²

Here Hakuin's spidery calligraphy echoes the tall reeds from which the ferryman emerges (perhaps emphasizing the inescapable presence of reeds to the ferryman and of the good and evil of the world to Hakuin). Yen-t'ou's bamboo pole as well as his wind-swept cloak also point directly to the calligraphy, serving as a directional guide for the viewer. Yen-t'ou's scowling face, depicted in great detail compared to the rest of the painting, reveals the tough, enlightened state that Hakuin associated with him. Hakuin also effectively juxtaposes the rough, sweeping quality of the brushstrokes in the figure's raincoat with the fine, delicate lines of Yen-t'ou's face, feet, and robe hem.

As a result of his questions about life and death, Hakuin was thrown into greater spiritual despair and doubt. Having left home to devote his life to Buddhism, he could not return to the life of a layman. Instead, he decided to pursue personal pleasures, "From now on I might as well just enjoy myself, following my own desires and inclinations."¹³ He turned his attentions to the studies of literature, painting, and calligraphy. "I would try to earn universal praise as one of the master artists of the age. The matter of my future existence could take its own course. I began to familiarize myself with the major writers of the T'ang period [618–906]—Li Po, Tu Fu, Han Yu, and Liu Tsung-yuan. In calligraphy I studied the models of Sōn'en and Yōsetsu."¹⁴

In the winter of 1706, Hakuin was invited to attend a Buddhist memorial feast at the residence of a high-ranking official of the local clan.¹⁵ During this visit, the host brought out a number of scrolls for the guests to view. One particularly treasured scroll was a calligraphy by the Rinzaï Zen priest Daigu Sōchiku (1584–1669),¹⁶ and as it was unrolled, Hakuin was moved by the experience. He wrote in his autobiography, *Isumadegusa* (*Wild Ivy*),

There was one scroll that was nested in a set of double wooden boxes. This was encased in turn within a bag of fine silk brocade. We watched with a mixture of wonder and reverence as the scroll was carefully taken out for our inspection. It was a piece of calligraphy by Daigu Sōchiku. His vigorous brush strokes and the words he had chosen both seemed altogether fitting and natural. Everything about it was just as it should be. I thought to myself: This is the product of truly enlightened activity. That calligraphy meant far more to me than any of the other scrolls—my interest in which immediately vanished.¹⁷

This episode reveals Hakuin's renewed appreciation for the art of calligraphy and, more importantly, the relationship that he perceived Zen brushwork could have with the enlightened mind. After this incident Hakuin returned



FIGURE 1.2

“Mu”

Ink on paper, 42.5 x 42.2 cm.

Private Collection, Japan

home and burned his small collection of calligraphy, including examples of his own work. Discouraged because these works did not reveal the enlightened spirit he observed in Daigu’s work, he abandoned his own artistic ambitions and devoted his time to Zen.

ZEN AND BUDDHIST INFLUENCES (1708–42)

Hakuin continued his *zazen* practice diligently, meditating on “Mu,” traditionally the first koan a monk begins working on. In the spring of 1708 at the age of twenty-four, Hakuin began having enlightenment experiences. He later described his first satori:

Night and day I did not sleep; I forgot both to eat and rest. Suddenly a great doubt manifested itself before me. It was as though I were frozen solid in the midst of an ice sheet extending for tens of thousands of miles. A purity filled my breast, and I could neither go forward nor retreat. To all intents and purposes I was out of my mind and the *Mu* alone remained. . . . This state lasted for several days. Then I chanced to hear the sound of the temple bell and I was suddenly transformed. It was as if a sheet of ice had been smashed. . . . All my former doubts vanished as though ice had melted away. In a loud voice I called: “Wonderful, wonderful.”⁸

One of Hakuin's most unusual later calligraphic works is a single character "Mu" (fig. 1.2). The word sits squarely in the middle of the composition, yet reveals a powerful sense of gestural expression and spiritual intensity. The energy of Hakuin's raw brushstrokes runs both vertically and horizontally and is enhanced by the mottled ink tones and freckles of ink within the strokes. In this one scroll of a single character the essence of Zen is revealed with unabashed directness.

According to his own accounts, Hakuin's initial satori experience caused him to become arrogant and overly confident in his understanding of Zen. "My pride soared up like a majestic mountain, my arrogance surged forward like the tide. Smugly I thought to myself: 'In the past two or three hundred years no one could have accomplished such a marvelous breakthrough as this.'"¹⁹ This self-assuredness was quickly deflated when Hakuin was taken by a fellow monk named Sōkaku to visit the priest Shōju Etan (Shōju Rōjin) (1642–1721) in a remote village called Iiyama (in what is now Nagano).²⁰ When Shōju ques-

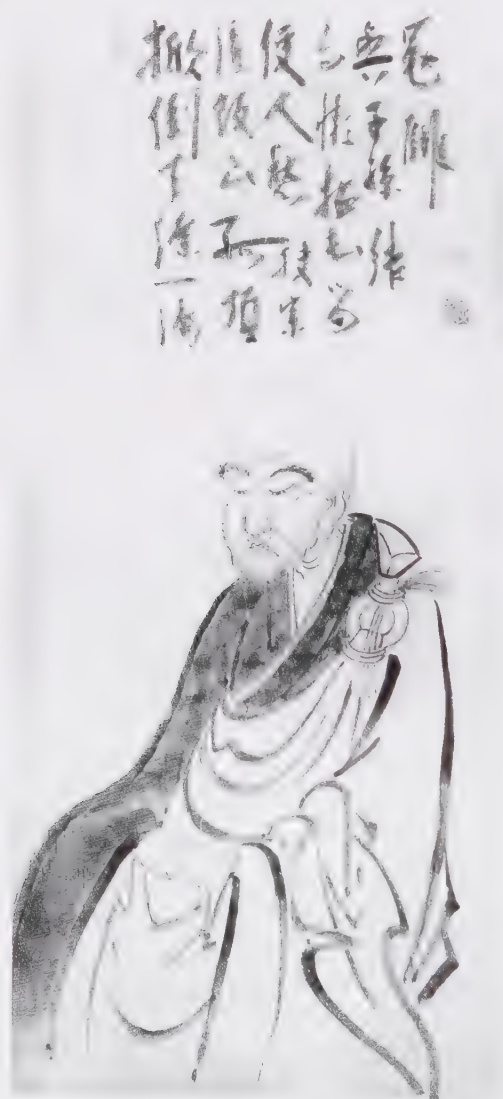


FIGURE 1.3
Portrait of Shōju Rōjin (1753)
Ink on paper, 127.6 x 54.7 cm.
Ryūtaku-ji

tioned Hakuin on his understanding of Jōshū's "Mu," Hakuin replied, "There is no way for a hand or foot to grasp it." At that, Shōju reached out and grabbed Hakuin's nose, saying, "Well, how's that for a good grasp on it?" Hakuin was humbled.²¹

When Hakuin eventually achieved a further breakthrough, Shōju patted him on the back three times with his fan and said, "Excellent. Excellent." But he also warned Hakuin not to be "satisfied with this minor attainment. The further you proceed into enlightenment, the harder you must strive. The greater the understanding you achieve, the more effort you must exert. Do not cease striving until the day you die."²² When Hakuin eventually took leave of his master, Shōju said, "When you leave here do not, even for a small interval of time, relax your efforts. Strive, and continue to strive at all times to extend the gift of the Dharma for the liberation of all beings."²³ Thus, at this early stage in his own training, two of Hakuin's main themes in teaching were already established: the importance of postenlightenment training and the importance of helping others in their spiritual realization.

Hakuin remained with Shōju for eight months, receiving instruction day and night. Shōju's only concern was to produce one great heir who would carry on his teachings and breathe new life into Zen.²⁴ He believed strongly that Zen had been in decline since the Sung Dynasty and had reached its full demise during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). Despite its transmission to Japan, finding true Zen was difficult.²⁵ Shōju referred to his students as imposters, "You look like Zen monks, but you don't understand Zen. . . . What then are you really like? I'll tell you. Large rice-bags, fitted all out in black robes."²⁶

Shōju, deeply concerned for the future of Zen, instructed Hakuin, "I want you to dedicate yourself to producing one or two true monks. Don't aim for a large number. If you do, it will be difficult to train even one excellent student. If you can cultivate one or two true seedlings, the age-old winds of Zen will begin to blow again."²⁷ Shōju's judgments and ideals were severe, and even Hakuin had a difficult time understanding them at first. He wrote,

Whenever I heard Shōju deliver harsh judgments on other Zen teachers, I used to think to myself, "Why does the old fellow do that? Why does he get so riled up about respected temple priests, men known throughout the country for their great virtue?" I even wondered if the reason might not be because they belonged to a different teaching line. After I left him, though, I traveled the length and breadth of the land. I visited many different teachers, but not once during that time did I meet up with an authentic Zen master—not one person who possessed the true and absolute Dharma eye. I was then able to understand how far Shōju's Zen surpassed all the others.²⁸

Over the years, Hakuin painted numerous portraits of important Zen masters, including his teacher Shōju Rōjin. On a portrait commemorating the thirty-third anniversary of Shōju's death (fig. 1.3) Hakuin, then age seventy, added the following inscription:

Raising a single drop from the heavenly source, he casts it
down,
Producing grief and pain deep within the mountains of
Iiyama;
Weary of thinking up phrases [koans] for his followers,
He stops giving them, binding up his enemies.²⁹

This inscription is paradoxical because it seems Shōju Rōjin is causing suffering, when actually he is teaching Zen. In the portrait, Shōju is depicted with his hands folded and eyes downcast in meditation. In contrast to many of Hakuin's other portraits of Zen masters, this one is quite serene.

Hakuin spent the winter of 1708 at Shōin-ji, then, in the spring, began traveling to various temples to hear Zen lectures. He spent the winter of 1709 at Hōun-ji in Suruga helping Keirin Oshō (n.d.) to instruct students. In 1710 he left Hōun-ji and returned to Shōin-ji. During this time he continued to adhere faithfully to Shōju's request that he pursue his training and not settle for a small attainment. As a result, Hakuin experienced several more enlightenments. However, despite the deepening of understanding that these enlightenments brought him, they also began to take a physical toll on him. He contracted what is referred to as "meditation sickness" (*zen-byō*), which manifested itself in twelve symptoms:

1. firelike burning in the head
2. loins and legs cold as ice
3. eyes constantly watering
4. ringing in the ears
5. instinctive shrinking from sunlight
6. irrepressible sadness in darkness or shade
7. thinking an intolerable burden
8. recurrent bad dreams that sapped one's strength
9. emission of semen during sleep
10. restlessness and nervousness during waking hours
11. difficulty digesting food
12. cold chills unrelieved by layers of clothing³⁰

Hakuin left Shōin-ji and set out west in search of someone who might be able to cure his illness. He explained in the *Yasen kanna* (Evening Chats on a Boat), written in 1757,

When reflecting on my daily life, those two conditions of life, activity and non-activity had become entirely out of harmony. The two inclinations in me towards finiteness and infinity had become indistinct in my mind. I could not make up my mind to do or not do.³¹

Unwittingly, Hakuin had formulated what would become one of the core issues of his teaching. Along his journey he was told of a recluse named Hakuyū (1646–ca. 1710), living in the hills of Shirakawa in the eastern part of Kyoto, who might be of some help. According to his autobiographical writings, Hakuin found Hakuyū and asked for his assistance, but the old man humbly replied that he was neither a physician nor a sage and could be of no service.³² Finally, when pressed, Hakuyū briefly examined Hakuin and replied seriously,

Alas! Your meditation has been too unmeasured and your aceticism too strict. The chance of cure has been lost. You are too seriously ill. This meditation sickness of yours will indeed be difficult to cure. Even if you were to try all the three curative measures, acupuncture, moxacautery and medicines, hoping to be cured by them, and even if the most famous doctors were to use all their medical knowledge you would not see any wonderful results. . . . Unless you now heap up the goodness of the method of introspection you will find that at last you will not even be able to stand.³³

Hakuin then asked Hakuyū to teach him the essentials of introspective meditation, which he was to incorporate into his practice.³⁴ Hakuin took Hakuyū's advice deeply to heart, and he later wrote that after he left the old recluse,

I went directly back to Shōin-ji. There I devoted myself to Introspective Meditation, practicing it over and over on my own. In less than three years—without recourse to medicine, acupuncture, or moxacautery—the illnesses that had been plaguing me for years cleared up of themselves. What is more, during the same period I experienced the immense joy of great satori six or seven times. . . . I attained countless small satoris as well, which sent me waltzing about waving my hands in the air in mindless dance.³⁵

Upon his return to Shōin-ji, Hakuin spent time concentrating on his new meditation technique, while also traveling to various temples with other monks. In the winter of 1711, he received news that Sokudō Fueki had become seriously ill, and so Hakuin left to care for him at Daishō-ji, again revealing his loyalty to his masters. In the summer of 1712 at the age of twenty-eight, he returned to Shōin-ji. That autumn Sokudō passed away and his ashes were brought to Shōin-ji.

In 1713, at the urging of Egoku Dōmyō (1624–ca. 1713)³⁶ of Hōun-ji, Hakuin set out to live alone on Mount Makinoo; however, his plan had to be abandoned when the abbot of the temple that owned the mountain refused Hakuin's request to stay. Hakuin spent the next two years traveling to Inryō-ji in Izumi Province and then Hōfuku-ji in Mino. In 1714 he wrote *Nunotsuzumi* (Cloth Bag), his first book, in which he relayed the perils and misfortunes that result from unfilial and evil behavior.³⁷ The following year, at the age of thirty-one, Hakuin again sought out a secluded place for solitary meditation. This time he

set out for Mount Kokei in Owari. On his journey he by chance encountered the temple Manshaku-ji in Ota, which was at that time tended to by an old acquaintance of his, Chin Shuza. When the two friends parted the next morning, Chin suggested that he might have another place for Hakuin if Mount Kokei was not to his liking.

Hakuin traveled through the mountains and encountered another of his old colleagues, now the priest at a small temple. The two spent several days together becoming familiar with each other's personal views. When it was decided that the two had little in common, Hakuin left and returned to the Manshaku-ji. At this point his friend Chin suggested that Hakuin try a quiet sanctuary called Iwataki, just north of his temple. Chin had made arrangements for a small hermitage to be built there for Hakuin. Hakuin settled into his small hut and began a routine of severe meditation.

My body and mind were both fired with a great surge of spirit and resolve. My nights were *zazen*. My days were sutra-recitation. I never let up. During this period, I experienced small satoris and large satoris in numbers beyond count. How many times did I jump up and jubilantly dance around, oblivious of all else! . . . As for sitting, sitting is something that should include fits of ecstatic laughter—brayings that make you slump to the ground clutching your belly. And when you struggle to your feet after the first spasm passes, it should send you kneeling to earth in yet further contortions of joy.³⁸

That year he also consolidated the *Kanrin ihō*, a collection of verses and famous Zen phrases that Hakuin considered to be essential in the teaching of Zen. The manuscript was published by Tōrei in 1769.³⁹

In 1716 the health of Hakuin's father began to decline. As a result, an elderly servant was dispatched to return Hakuin to Shōin-ji, the family temple, which had fallen into great disrepair. Hakuin was reluctant to leave his solitary mountain, but was nonetheless obliged to follow his father's wishes, so he returned with the old servant. He was therefore installed as the resident priest of his original temple, and set to work refurbishing Shōin-ji's dilapidated condition.

Shōin-ji had fallen into an almost indescribable state of ruin. Stars shone through the roofs at night. The floors were constantly saturated by rain and dew. It was necessary for the master to wear a straw raincoat as he moved about the temple attending to his duties. He needed sandals inside the main hall when he went there to conduct ceremonies. Temple assets had passed into the hands of creditors, the temple equipment had all been pawned. . . . About the only thing worth noting around here, he said, "is the moonlight and the sound of the wind."⁴⁰

But Hakuin's determination was steadfast. Tōrei later wrote of Hakuin's first ten years at Shōin-ji,

He applied himself single-mindedly to his practice. He endured great privation without ever deviating from his spare, simple way of life. He didn't adhere to any fixed schedule for sutra-chanting or other temple rituals. When darkness fell he would climb inside a derelict old palanquin and set himself on a cushion he placed on the floorboard. One of the young boys studying at the temple would come, wrap the master's body in a futon, and cinch him up tightly into this position with ropes. There he would remain motionless, like a painting of Bodhidharma, until the following day when the boy would come to untie him so that he could relieve his bowels and take some food. The same routine was repeated nightly.⁴¹

Hakuin spent parts of the next year traveling from Shōin-ji to give various Zen lectures, including talks on *Zenmon hōkun* (Precious Lessons of the Zen School)⁴² and Bodhidharma's *Hason ron* (Breaking through Form).⁴³ In 1717 he composed a poem:

Both the good times and difficult times have passed;
Now I am content—
Never again will I search
For another mountain.⁴⁴

The poem suggests that Hakuin had resolved to relinquish his solitary pursuits in the mountains and devote his time and energy to running Shōin-ji and to teaching. Despite an honorary appointment at his headquarters monastery, Myōshin-ji, Hakuin remained based at Shōin-ji for the rest of his life.

In the autumn of 1720 the monk Gedatsu (d. 1746)⁴⁵ from Muryō-an went to Shōin-ji and began to study with Hakuin; he was the first monk formally accepted by Hakuin as a student. In the winter of 1721 a group of twenty traveling monks arrived at Shōin-ji and requested permission to remain at the temple to study. Hakuin refused the monks, but they simply sat down at the edge of the garden and remained there until Hakuin allowed them to enter the temple. At about this time Hakuin also received news of Shōju Rōjin's death.

Hakuin would write about Shōju's approach to teaching and expanding Zen in *Itsumadegusa*, which recorded events in Shōju's final years. Resolved to giving up his solitary meditation, he had decided to heed Shōju's advice and devote his energies "to liberating the countless suffering beings of the world by imparting the great gift of the Dharma. . . . Little by little, I worked out methods for imparting the Dharma gift. At first, I had only two or three monks here with me. Later, they were joined by others, like attracting like, until eventually their number swelled to more than a hundred and fifty. In recent years, we usually have three hundred monks in residence in and around the temple."⁴⁶

Hakuin at this point was beginning to understand his role as a Zen teacher, and although he never adopted a prominent administrative-type position within the Zen training system, neither did he seek a life of spiritual solitude. This is reflected in an inscription he wrote on a painting of Hotei, the god of good fortune (see chapter 6), who is gleefully pointing to wind chimes:

新鋒小尺千秋之善法昔文自法後據所知
 當時之善人其法活法稱文以束之見之也土
 全之為室松岳妻米大婦組負亮石靴束純
 素布履紐字婦途且法其道心者什世賢若
 了江為^下轉也身願^下州着志上人之心全上
 作^下之^下後^下心^下山^下野^下方^下系^下未^下一^下着^下子^下直^下下^下
 冬^下之^下新^下上^下之^下作^下一^下履^下布^下衫^下市^下七^下斤
 元文正二丁巳夏^下之^下對^下之^下杖^下山^下江^下是^下次^下口^下又^下之^下杖^下
 乃柄石杖岳^下之^下泰^下州^下之^下妻^下米^下大^下婦^下組^下負^下亮^下石^下靴^下束^下純^下
 乃柄石杖岳^下之^下泰^下州^下之^下妻^下米^下大^下婦^下組^下負^下亮^下石^下靴^下束^下純^下

PLATE 1.2

Calligraphy Giving a

Dharma Name (age 53)

Ink on paper, 65.4 x 26.5 cm.

Chikusei Collection

Unless the sound of the wind chime stops
There is no reason for a priest
To live in seclusion.⁴⁷

It is curious how much fame Hakuin received as a Zen teacher, considering the fact that he never promoted himself very much and spent most of his life at a small rural temple.

Painting and calligraphy were an important aspect of Hakuin's life from the time he saw the calligraphy by Daigu, and he used them as important teaching tools throughout the second half of his life. Although he rarely commented on them as aspects of Zen teaching or as works of art, there are several references to Hakuin doing calligraphy included in the *Nenpu*. The first instance occurs in 1729, when Hakuin was forty-five. His pupil Gedatsu brought the layman Furugori Kentsū (1695–1746) to Hakuin and asked the master to give Kentsū a koan in order to teach him Zen. Hakuin replied, “Why give or take at all? Everything is here under his nose. Nothing is missing.” Gedatsu explained that his friend was just a beginner and implored the master to “use some of your abilities.” At this, Hakuin picked up his brush and wrote out the inscription “What is the nature that sees, hears, thinks, and knows?” Kentsū received the calligraphy, bowed, and departed. About a year later Kentsū experienced enlightenment. From that point on Kentsū became a regular member of a lay practice group that studied under Hakuin.⁴⁸

If we examine a multiline work of calligraphy from this period, dated age 53, we can see the quality that denotes Hakuin's brushwork at this period of his life (plate 1.2). The brushstrokes are long, not particularly modulated, and reveal a clear vertical tendency punctuated by terse accents and occasional severe angles. This work states that Matsutake Juei, wife of Tsuchiya Ryoo of Mitaka village in Edo, serves as a dutiful wife and compassionate mother, not unlike Kannon. Hakuin goes on to explain that he gave her the koan on the “Final Word” and that she worked her way through to the koan of Seishū's “Seven Pounds of Flax.” In the second year of Genbun (1737), she attended a Dharma meeting with her husband held at Jozan-ji. The next day Hakuin gave her the Dharma name Shōgaku; her husband had also previously received a Dharma name. In this calligraphy, Hakuin includes the phrase “Everyone is imbued with an intrinsic Buddha nature. Who does not possess a round and perfect mind?” We may also note that in the center of the inscription (fifth line, ninth character) is the character *mu* (無), here created simply from three vertical strokes and a single horizontal crossing through them.

HAKUIN AS A ZEN MASTER (1743–63)

In the autumn of 1746, Hakuin visited Hōrin-ji in Kai to conduct a meeting. During this visit he painted an image of Kannon with Sixteen Arhats (enlightened beings) (fig. 1.4), which he presented to the temple's abbot, Sesshū Sōbai (n.d.). The painting contains the inscription,

Sixteen superior arhats, jewels among men,
 A cold waterfall, a hundred thousand feet long.
 Who says my Bodhisattva vow to save all sentient beings
 is as deep as the ocean?
 Having cut all ties with this dusty world, I can steal a little
 leisure.⁴⁹

Even in this elaborately painted image of large-scale and reverent subject matter, Hakuin reveals his humor and playfulness, both as a painter and a Zen master. Within this complex composition, Hakuin innovatively and playfully integrates the calligraphic inscription into the image by placing it in a scroll being examined by four Zen exemplars: the poets Kanzan and Jittoku, the Zen master Bukan, and Bukan's pet tiger.⁵⁰ This enables him to include the text while at the same time maintaining a sense of aesthetic unity and cohesion in the already large and compositionally full space. As a result, the text does not encumber the space nor detract from the spiritual serenity of the figures.

As a Zen master, Hakuin also injected a bit of humor by suggesting in his inscription that the ever-compassionate Kannon may actually attempt to



FIGURE 1.4
 Kannon and Sixteen Arhats
 Ink and color on paper, 136 x 111.8 cm.
 Hōrin-ji

steal a moment of peace and leisure away from the duties of helping others attain salvation. Thus, Kannon appears dreamily lost in private thought. This image is an example of the intricate, refined brushwork of which Hakuin was capable, but for which he was not always noted. This refinement is readily apparent in the great variation of facial expressions of the numerous figures and creatures.

The image of Kannon relaxing also reflects the words of the Zen master Yamada Mumon, who wrote in his commentary on the *Ten Oxherding Pictures*,

Once a student came to me and asked me, “What is the purpose of life?” When I replied, “To play,” he was disappointed. “Just to play, is it?” he asked and went away. But, if you are still thinking that life must have a purpose, then you have not yet arrived at the last station at the end of the railroad of life. When you arrive at the last station at the end of the line, you play. In the Kannon sutra, it is written, “How does the Bodhisattva Kannon play in this Saha world of suffering?” When Kannon comes to save sentient beings in this world, the Bodhisattva is “playing.” When you have reached the last station at the end of the line, there is nothing to seek—all one does is play.⁵¹

Hakuin was now entering his most prolific and important stage as a teacher. It was during his sixties that he not only began doing paintings and calligraphies more seriously, but he also accepted and trained some of his most important disciples, including Tōrei Enji, who entered Shōin-ji during the second month of 1743, as well as Suiō Genrō (1717–89). Hakuin was also lecturing extensively at other temples and fully substantiating his reputation as a major Zen teacher. All these aspects are of course linked—his reputation as a lecturer brought him the best students, who in turn continued to spread the word of his excellence as a Zen teacher. Also, his reputation as a lecturer and teacher enhanced the importance of his role within the Zen world, which caused followers and lay parishioners to request examples of his painting and calligraphy.⁵²

Hakuin was becoming increasingly aware of the impact Zen could have on lay practitioners, and as a result, he became interested in new ways of conveying Zen teachings to monks and lay followers alike. Because Hakuin had studied with many masters during his own training, he was familiar with the teaching methods of various lineages. This may have facilitated his systematic organization of koan study as well as encouraging the creation of his own koan, the *sekishu no onjō* (Sound of One Hand).⁵³

Hakuin painted several images revealing this teaching throughout his career. In one somewhat early example, he depicts Hotei standing on his cloth bag, toes curled to grip the bag’s surface (plate 1.3). In his left hand he grasps his fan, while he holds his right hand up, palm facing out. The inscription reads,

Hakojō, no matter what you say,
if you don’t hear the sound of one hand, it’s all rubbish!



PLATE 1.3

Hotei's Sound of One

Hand (early)

Ink on paper, 97.5 x 28 cm.

Hosei-an

The calligraphy reflects the lucid, spidery style for which Hakuin was noted in his sixties, as do the simple, unencumbered lines and straightforward structure of the figure, enhanced only by the fluid black line of the robe falling from his shoulders. Most importantly, it reveals Hakuin's ability early on to express one of his most fundamental teachings in a simple, direct, visually engaging and approachable manner.

In 1751, at the age of sixty-seven, Hakuin traveled to Shōrin-ji in Okayama and Hōfuku-ji in Iyama (both in Bizen Province) to give lectures. On his return journey to Shōin-ji he stopped in Kyoto and stayed in the home of Yotsugi Masayuki, a wealthy Kyoto merchant. During this stay, artists Ike Taiga (1723–76) came to receive his instruction.⁵⁴ Taiga was one of the most prominent literati painters of the day, and in the 1750s he was entering a period of great intellectual, spiritual, and artistic investigation and discovery.⁵⁵ He also wrote a poem to Hakuin revealing his comments on the koan about the sound of one hand:

POEM DEDICATED TO HAKUIN

How can the ear hear “the sound of one hand?”

—The ear may be obliterated, but still the Mind will remain!

But should Mind be obliterated, then it would really be hard
to get!

—Just as I realize your kindness, master, but cannot grasp
its depth.

—Presented to Honorable Old Zen Master Hakuin,
Requesting His Instruction ⁵⁶

Subsequently, in 1758, Taiga wrote the calligraphy for the covers and title pages of Hakuin's text *Keisō dokuzui* (Poison Flowers in a Thicket of Thorns). The manuscript had been transcribed by Hakuin's disciple Teishū (b. 1720), who became an admirer of Taiga's art, and in 1764 upon becoming abbot of Jishō-ji in Oita, Teishū arranged for the temple to acquire forty-six paintings and calligraphies by Taiga.⁵⁷

During Hakuin's visit to Kyoto, the courtesan Ōhashi-jo also came to receive his instruction. According to the *Nenpu*, she was the daughter of a high-ranking official who faced financial ruin. Unable to accept her family's condition, Ōhashi begged him to sell her into prostitution. Her parents protested, but Ōhashi implored them to let her help the family's situation and she was reluctantly sold to a Kyoto brothel.⁵⁸ During her tenure as a courtesan she was unable to forget her past life. One day a customer, intrigued by her troubles, suggested that she learn to detach herself from worldly ideas and practices, and to allow her inner Buddha nature to emerge.

Ōhashi took his advice and put it into practice. In the mid-1740s a series of violent storms occurred in Kyoto. Ōhashi tried to temper her fear of the storm by doing *zazen*. In a particularly strong storm, lightning struck the garden outside her room. Ōhashi fainted, but when she awoke, she realized her senses

were transformed. At this point she desired to consult with a Zen master in order to confirm her enlightenment experience. However, due to her status in the brothel, she was unable to do so. Eventually, a man she would later marry purchased her brothel contract. When he died, she married a layman named Kurihara Isso, who had been studying with Hakuin. Ōhashi began to accompany her husband on his visits to Hakuin, and Isso subsequently allowed her to leave their marriage to receive ordination as a nun.

While intriguing as a story in itself, this also shows that Hakuin had great compassion and sympathy for women sold into prostitution as a means of helping to support their families; he compared them to bodhisattvas (enlightened beings who remain on earth) for their selflessness in aiding others. Hakuin painted many images of compassionate prostitutes, generally in the guise of the courtesan Otafuku.⁵⁹ The kindly woman is usually shown with her broad face smiling as she busies herself in the kitchen or, in one case, treats a case of hemorrhoids burdening one of her customers.⁶⁰ In another image, Otafuku sits patiently as she cooks skewers of *dango* (dumplings). She holds her long cooking chopsticks, with her pipe and tobacco bag placed in front of her (plate 1.4). To the left Hakuin has written,

The *dango* skewers are ready.
At night I wait, but he doesn't come—
Poor man, his throat is closed.

In Hakuin's inscription the third character of the first line, *kushi* (串) (skewer), reveals its pictographic origins, clearly resembling Otafuku's skewered dumplings. The inscription has been interpreted as comparing the man with the closed throat to the idea of someone with a "narrow mind," in other words, a person whose mind is not yet open to the teachings of the Buddha.⁶¹ This poor man who can't enjoy the tiny treats lovingly prepared for him by Otafuku is like a person whose mind is not yet ready for the joys of Buddha's teachings.⁶²

Hakuin's tenure at Shōin-ji did not preclude him from experiencing the activities of Edo-period Japan. Not only did he travel extensively giving Zen lectures, he also maintained lively contact with his numerous lay followers at all levels of Japanese society, from farmers to *daimyō*. Despite its rural location, Shōin-ji was situated near the Tōkaidō road, the most important highway in Japan, and thus the comings and goings of Japanese culture and society were well within Hakuin's reach.

During the Edo period, the Korean government sent regular envoys to the Tokugawa government. These diplomatic delegations included musicians, dancers, and other performers, including acrobats. The procession traveled along the Tōkaidō on its way to Edo (Tokyo), so Hakuin was probably quite familiar with the festive events; he even opened a letter to Lord Nabeshima with, "It must be a great relief to have successfully brought to a finish your entertainment of the Koreans."⁶³



PLATE 1.4

Otafuku Making Dango

Ink on paper, 35.7 x 54.7 cm.

Shin'wa-an



PLATE 1.5

Korean Acrobats

Ink and color on paper,

44.5 x 56.5 cm.

Behr Collection

Hakuin painted at least three works featuring the marvels of the Korean trick horseback riders. In one image (plate 1.5), probably done in the mid-1740s,⁶⁴ three acrobats and their horses are shown performing their daring tricks one after the other: a single rider balancing upon the backs of two horses; a rider doing a back bend on top of his horse; and the third doing a handstand.⁶⁵ The performers, in their brightly colored tunics, seem to have emerged from a large gourd in the lower right corner. This is possibly a reference to the Zen idea that even the most remarkable things can come from the seemingly ordinary.⁶⁶ In the lower left Hakuin has written,

Koreans with their foreign saddles—
Gallop, gallop in unison.
Bending, twisting, jumping on and off.
Jumping on and off.

In the spring of 1752 Hakuin completed a series of lectures on the Chinese koan collection *Hekiganroku* at Shōin-ji. According to the *Nenpu*, the hall was filled with monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen.⁶⁷ In the fourth month of the same year Hakuin was recognized as the founder of the temple Muryō-ji, and he quickly appointed Tōrei to assist him as abbot. In the autumn, while on a visit to Kiichi-ji in Izu Province, Hakuin painted the picture of Yotsugi Masayuki mentioned earlier.

The 1750s were a prolific period for Hakuin's writing; in 1753 he completed *Yabukōji* (Evergreen Shrub), published in 1792, which was a letter to the lord of Okayama Castle relaying the merits of Zen practice, particularly meditation on the koan "The Sound of One Hand." In 1754, Hakuin celebrated his seventieth year and was presented with congratulatory verses by his disciples. He also composed the *Hebi-ichigō* (Snake-strawberry), printed in 1862. This takes the form of another letter, this one to Lord Nabeshima, expounding the virtues of benevolent and just rulers and the fates accorded to those who are not. And in 1756, Hakuin's *goroku*, or recorded sayings, was completed. The work contains the master's sermons, lectures, poetry, letters, commentaries, and other materials compiled by his students and printed in 1758 under the title *Keisō dokuzui*. In 1757, the first published version of Hakuin's most famous work, the *Yasen kanna*, appeared, his detailed account of his fabled encounter with the hermit Hakuyū, who helped Hakuin cure his meditation sickness by teaching him the techniques of introspective meditation.

In 1758, Hakuin was invited to lecture at Rurikō-ji in Mino Province. Upon his arrival, he wrote a letter proposing that he give a series of Zen talks (*teishō*) on the *Hekiganroku* in commemoration of the one-hundredth anniversary of Gudō Tōshoku's death; this letter was sent to temples throughout Japan.⁶⁸ As a result, Hakuin's lectures on the *Hekiganroku* were attended by many priests and monks, including Reigen Etō (1721–85), who would become another of Hakuin's most important followers. Hakuin shared the teaching seat with Tōrei, who also

lectured to the group. To mark this august occasion, Hakuin wrote to the senior priests in Gudō's teaching lineage, urging them to facilitate the publishing of Gudō's Zen records. Although the matter was initially discussed, no plans could be decided upon.

While traveling to his next series of lecture engagements, also in Mino Province, Hakuin began to ponder the lack of interest he sensed from the other monks in publishing Gudō's records. In disgust, he composed *Hōkan ishō* (Gudō's Linger- ing Radiance), 1,308 lines of seven-character verse promoting the virtues of Gudō's Zen teachings and criticizing the attitudes of contemporary Zen teachers.⁶⁹

Hakuin's admiration for Gudō was not merely academic. Shōju Rōjin was a Dharma heir of Shidō Bunan, Gudō's Dharma heir, so Hakuin was paying hom- age to his own Zen lineage and establishing his place within this revered tradi- tion. Hakuin also captured Gudō in portraits. In an image dated age 68, Hakuin depicts Gudō as a wizened old monk, his bald head dotted with stubble, eyes bulging in a fierce stare (fig. 1.5). The fine details of Gudō's face contrast greatly with the broad brushstrokes delineating his voluminous robes, but Hakuin enhanced the depth of the master's robes with gradations of ink and carefully delineated patterns in the brocade cloth.



FIGURE 1.5

Portrait of Gudō (DETAIL)

Ink and color on paper, 128.2 x 54.8 cm.

Ryū'un-ji



PLATE 1.6
Self-portrait
Ink on paper, 101.6 x 28.6 cm.
Eisei Bunko Foundation

In the winter, Hakuin returned to Shōin-ji. During the New Year's holiday of 1759, he was visited by a group of lay followers and priests who had previously studied under him. The group had raised money and purchased a dilapidated temple named Ryūtaku-ji near the Mishima post station (near present-day Numazu), planning to reconstruct the temple and recognize Hakuin as its founder. Hakuin agreed with the group's suggestion that Tōrei be appointed abbot of the temple.⁷⁰ This same year a woodblock book containing reproductions of fifty-one of Hakuin's paintings was published in Kyoto under the title *Hakuin Oshō shigasanshō* (A Collection of the Monk Hakuin's Paintings and Inscriptions). Although the quality and accuracy of the images leaves something to be desired, they are clearly based on Hakuin's works (see chapter 6 for examples). It is significant that the publication of a book such as this, produced for the public, occurred during Hakuin's lifetime, revealing the enormous influence (and to a certain extent mass popularity) Hakuin had achieved as a Buddhist teacher for whom art was a valid expression of Zen.

FINAL YEARS

In 1764, Hakuin painted one of his numerous self-portraits (plate 1.6), depicting himself seated in meditation within a circle, and inscribed,

Within the Meditation Hall
 I am hated by the thousand Buddhas;
 In the company of myriad demons
 I am despised by the myriad demons.
 I crush those who practice false Zen
 And annihilate those blind monks who can't penetrate *Mu*.
 This evil worn-out old shavepate
 Adds one more layer of ugliness to ugliness.⁷¹

These are powerful words for a Zen teacher in the final years of his life, but the paradoxes are full of Zen spirit. Hakuin's sentiments are juxtaposed against a rather gentle image in which he sits serenely, eyes downcast and hands folded in meditation. The focus on his face is enhanced not only by the circular frame, but also by the soft washes of ink surrounding his head and shoulders. The self-portrait and its inscription suggest that Hakuin has, at this point in his life, come to a full understanding of himself and his role as a Zen teacher.

In 1765 Hakuin began work on *Itsumadegusa*, the autobiographical work in which he chronicles his experiences as a young monk, including his training with Shōju Rōjin.⁷² During his eighty-first year Hakuin also created a painting of himself as a young acolyte in his early twenties meditating outdoors (fig. 1.6). As a monk, he had been accused of fathering a child with the daughter of an oil merchant. Although the charges were unfounded, Hakuin took responsibility for the child until the true father spoke up some time later. The child is said to have later become the monk Sōrei, who entered the temple Ryūshō-ji in Iida the year this painting was done. This painting is believed to have been a gift from Hakuin to Sōrei as he entered the temple.⁷³

Hakuin continued to paint and do calligraphy to the end of his life, often adding bits of amusing observation. For instance, at the age of eighty-three he painted an image of chestnut branches (plate 1.7) on which he inscribed,



FIGURE 1.6
 Self-portrait as a Young Monk
 Ink on paper, 33.3 x 57.6 cm.
 Ryūshō-ji



PLATE 1.7

Chestnuts (age 83)

Ink on paper, 46.3 x 58 cm.

Ginshu Collection



PLATE 1.8

"Chū"

Ink on paper, 134.9 x 29.6 cm.

Private Collection, Japan

When people get together to make a haiku on
Honrai mu ichi butsu [originally not one thing]:
Chestnut husks,
even the laughing faces
smashed.

This haiku about chestnuts thus becomes the specific embodiment of the spirit of the Zen phrase. Hakuin then added, “Not bad for an eighty-three-year-old man without his eyeglasses!” He never lost his sense of humor.

In the winter of 1767, Hakuin lectured at Ryūtaku-ji, and more than two hundred fifty monks from throughout Japan attended. However, Hakuin was becoming increasingly fatigued by his teaching duties, and Tōrei was again asked to share his teaching seat, providing many supplementary lectures. That New Year at Ryūtaku-ji, Hakuin offered the following verse:

Sauntering freely among the highest peaks at Dragon
Marsh,
My old face is uncommonly thick-skinned this New Year’s
morning,
An elder monk of eighty-four, I welcome in yet one more
year;
And I owe it all—everything—to the Sound of One Hand
barrier.⁷⁴

Upon completing his verse, he declared in a loud voice, “This year I am eighty-four years old. I am grateful to Tōrei for making this the most wonderful New Year.”⁷⁵ Tōrei then offered some New Year’s rice cakes to the master; Hakuin took a few bites and then left the remainder for his students.

Despite his advanced age and declining health, Hakuin could still wield a powerful brush. Late in life he wrote out Ta-hui Tsung-kao’s phrase, “Contemplation amid activity is a hundred million times better than contemplation in stillness,” which had become one of Hakuin’s central teachings (plate 1.8; see introduction).⁷⁶ Boldly, he wrote the character *chū* (中) (middle or amid), in the center, dragging the vertical stroke down the length of the paper. The character is dramatic and direct and visually punctuates the meaning of the phrase. And like the calligraphy by Daigu that he saw many years earlier, it reflects the idea of being “a product of truly enlightened activity.” Hakuin believed that the person who actively participates in the world without fear should be compared to “the perfect bodhisattva who, while striving for his own enlightenment, helps to guide all sentient beings.”⁷⁷

This large, bold style of calligraphy is indicative of Hakuin’s last works. In his final years his brushstrokes became heavy and broad with little modulation or flourish but revealing lively ink tones. This blocky style can be seen in a huge horizontal calligraphy that reads, “*Chi Fuku Zen*” (Place of Good Zen). Here the three large characters are tightly but evenly placed within the space, almost but



Plate 1.9

"Chi Foku Zen"

Ink on paper, 46.4 x 115.7 cm.

Private Collection, Osaka

not quite touching (plate 1.9). The solid, even brushstrokes with their variety of rich, deep ink tones create a feeling of architectural stability—like massive blocks of ink stacked against one another—while the slight angle of some of the strokes adds a sense of movement to the blocky characters, preventing the work from becoming stagnant.

At the end of the winter training session in late 1767, Hakuin retired to his sickbed. The doctor declared that the master was too fond of sweets and that he must purge the sugar from his system. After a brief treatment, his health improved. He returned to Shōin-ji in the seventh month of 1768 and continued his various lecture excursions to nearby temples. During the eleventh month, when Hakuin returned to Shōin-ji from his travels, his condition had clearly weakened. During the twelfth month, a freak storm occurred in the area. The doctor arrived to examine the master. When questioned, the doctor replied that the master's health was nothing out of the ordinary, to which Hakuin responded, "How can a person be considered a doctor if he cannot see that the patient will live only three more days?" The doctor bowed his head.⁷⁸

On the tenth day Hakuin requested to see Suiō, and entrusted him with his personal affairs after death. The following morning the master was sleeping peacefully, when he gave a single loud groan and died. The funeral was held on the fifteenth, but a violent storm prevented the carrying of Hakuin's body to the funeral pyre, so the cremation was postponed until the following day. According to the *Nenpu*, among the ashes were many relics, including tiny pebbles the color of precious blue gems, considered to be the fruits of the master's meditation and wisdom. The relics were divided and enshrined in Hakuin's three temples: Shōin-ji, Muryō-ji, and Ryūtaku-ji.

CONCLUSION

Hakuin's biography can make for lively reading, sometimes because facts have become embellished in his autobiographical writings for the purpose of making a point. He himself was modest about his books, commenting,

There is an old saying: "When a superior man speaks a thousand words, he may make a single mistake. When an inferior man speaks a thousand words, he may achieve a single benefit." If within this rambling nonsense of mine a single benefit is indeed to be found, it might perhaps serve as a small Dharma gift.

My writing is gross-grained, the strokes of my brush a thick, vulgar chicken-scratch. Both of them are riddled with blunders of various kinds. Characters miswritten. One word mistaken for another. I just scribble it down on the paper, make them a "fair copy." They take it and carve it into wooden blocks and print it off. Altogether I must have written twenty books that way. No matter. Any wise man who claps eyes on them is sure to fling them to the ground in disgust and spew them contemptuously with spit.⁷⁹

This is, of course, humorously exaggerated, but it is true that the incidents in the biography cannot always be taken as strict fact. However, since history is largely interpretive, we can use Hakuin's approach to his writings to deduce what was most important to him. If we accept his biography as being hagiographic, based primarily on autobiographical narratives, we can then use its content and information to analyze how Hakuin perceived himself, his role as a Zen teacher, and his views on Zen.⁸⁰

Most useful are Hakuin's anecdotes about previous Zen masters, because they reveal his respect for the past. This also relates to his concern that his students learn from the experiences of past masters in order to understand their own experiences in Zen. Hakuin also includes anecdotes from his own childhood, possibly for the same purpose, although these seem not only for his monk disciples but perhaps even more for his lay followers. While monk disciples need Zen history, lay followers could better understand anecdotes and themes such as the sermon by the Nichiren preacher, the references to Tenjin, and most importantly, Hakuin's own early self-doubt concerning his spiritual well-being.

Hakuin's numerous references to experiences throughout his life distinguish his autobiographical writings from those of other Zen masters. Although brief *nenpu* (chronological biographies) have been compiled for many important monks, they are mainly short accounts of the major religious events in their lives. The body of their own writings consist of their Zen teachings. In Hakuin's case, he left two lengthy autobiographical texts, the *Hakuin Oshō nenpu* and *Isumadegusa*. Despite the fact that these accounts sometimes contradict each other and have both been embellished, they provide us with more information about Hakuin than do the writings of any other Zen master.

From the viewpoint of art history, the most important aspects of these biographical writings are the comments on subject matter, Zen or otherwise. These again reveal what was important to Hakuin as personal references or teaching tools. Since the subjects he wrote about often reappeared in his paintings or calligraphies, he must have felt that they held particular value in conveying Zen teachings. Both the paintings and the texts are extensions of his role as a teacher; students are expected to learn from the painted references as they would from the textual ones. Understanding when and why these subjects emerged in Hakuin's life provides a useful context for his body of art.

Missing in the biographical material are specific references to doing brushwork or creating art. However, by understanding this lack of reference to what would seem to be a major aspect of his life, we better understand Hakuin's view of himself. He was first and foremost a Zen master. As such, his art was less an aspect of himself than an extension of his Zen teachings, and that gives both the texts and the art his special breadth, humor, and spiritual depth.

During his mature years, Hakuin created several thousand paintings

and calligraphies. Combined with his voluminous writings, they stand as a unique record of his artistic teachings, and are part of the reason that Hakuin became the most important and influential Zen master of the past five hundred years.

—AUDREY YOSHIKO SEO

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道日達蓮性坊
食下付倒騎馬
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BUDDHIST, SHINTO, AND FOLK DEITIES

One of the marks of deep experiential understanding is the ability to encompass opposites. This is especially true in Zen, where duality is both acknowledged and transcended. Hakuin's attitude toward other forms of religion is a case in point: he both praised and encouraged them, and yet insisted that his own Zen students stay on the single path of meditation, enlightenment, and postenlightenment training.

In Hakuin's day, Neo confucianism was strongly supported by the government, Taoism had an influence on many thinkers, the indigenous religion of Shinto was revered, and there were several forms of Buddhism flourishing in Japan. Buddhist sects and schools were divided into several basic groups. These include the esoteric sects of Shingon and Tendai; the sects such as Nichiren focusing upon the *Lotus Sutra*; the Pure Land Buddhist sects; and the Zen sects of Rinzaï, Sôtô, and Ôbaku. In the past there had not always been a clear division between these, but by Hakuin's day the Tokugawa government's insistence that every family register at a temple tended to reinforce the divisions between sects and traditions.

In his dual role of reaching out to every segment of the populace while still concentrating on the spiritual training of his own monastic pupils, Hakuin wrote, lectured, and painted not only for Buddhists of every school, but also for Confucians, for believers in Shinto, and for those who placed their trust in folk deities. This broad appeal is especially true in his works of art, which go far beyond what any other monk had painted in the past, both in subject matter and in style. In effect, Hakuin created a new visual language for Zen.

THE HISTORICAL BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI

While inventing many new themes for his painting and calligraphy, Hakuin did not neglect the traditional subjects of Buddhism, starting with the historical Buddha Shakyamuni. In one painting putting him in a wider context, Hakuin

FACING PAGE
Renshōbō on a Horse
See page 75.

created his own combination of two interpenetrating themes that had been popular in the previous Muromachi Period (1392–1568): the “Three Tasters” and the “Unity of the Three Creeds.”¹ Both of these are unifications of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism—the first showing a scholar-poet, a Taoist, and a Buddhist monk tasting wine together only to find that it had turned to vinegar, and the second consisting of a meeting between Confucius, Lao-tzu, and Shakyamuni. Hakuin has combined them into a single image where the founders of the three creeds gather around the wine pot (plate 2.1).

Hakuin’s inscription consists of four lines of four Chinese characters each:

Three creeds, one creed—
One creed, three creeds—
After all, what do they come to?
Attaining supreme virtue.

That Hakuin should paint this subject is appropriate, since he was certainly ecumenical in his own beliefs. In one of his autobiographical writings, he recalled that “Four or five years after shaving my head, I was still at sixes and sevens, had no idea what to do with my life. . . . which of the paths—Buddhism, Confucianism, or Taoism—I should follow.”² He also wrote, “The true place to which the sages of all three religions have attained is, to a large measure, the same. Although the degree of efficacy is based on the depth and the quality of the perseverance in practice, the content of the first step is the same. The Confucians call this place the Ultimate Good, the Undeveloped Mean. Taoists call it Nothingness or Nature.”³

In this scroll, the figure on the left is Lao-tzu (old one), the early semi-mythical sage of Taoism, here wearing a simple robe and strumming his long white beard. Since Taoism was a strong influence on Zen, it is no surprise that Hakuin often referred to Taoist images and texts. For example, following the Taoist emphasis upon nurturing life while considering the broader social picture, he wrote that “The art of nurturing life can be compared to the techniques of governing a country.”⁴ This suggests Lao-tzu’s marvelous dictum that one should “govern big countries like you cook little fish.”⁵

On the right is Confucius, whose ethical doctrines Hakuin also admired (see chapter 4). Confucius believed in “the examination of things,” so here he is portrayed tasting the wine with one finger while holding the pot with his other hand. Dressed a little more elaborately than Lao-tzu, he also seems a little younger, perhaps suggesting that Taoist doctrines were more ancient.

Standing in the center behind the pot is Shakyamuni, larger in size than the others and revealing several of his special signifiers, called *laksana*, including long earlobes, a small circle of hair in the middle of his forehead, “snail-shell” curls in his hair, and the protrusion on the top of his head representing expanded consciousness. Shakyamuni looks down at the wine jar with the hint of a smile, and the unity of the three figures is made clear as they overlap into a single triangular form.



PLATE 2.1

The Three Tasters

Ink and color on paper,

44.5 x 46.3 cm.

Genshin/LACMA

Judging by the style of the brushwork and calligraphy, this is a relatively early work by Hakuin and includes the use of light colors, which are more common at this stage of his painting than in his final decade. The arrangement of figures is symmetrical, but the calligraphy in the upper right corner adds an asymmetrical element that keeps the total composition from being static. Despite the varied expressions on the three faces, the most eye-catching element is the large pot, as though Hakuin wanted his viewers to share the same experience as the founders of the three creeds. Is the pot filled with wine or with vinegar—or might that depend on who is doing the tasting?

Hakuin also painted Shakyamuni alone several times, sometimes seated in meditation but more often descending from snowy mountains after six years of extreme asceticism (plate 2.2). Realizing that denying all aspects of life is not the answer to his religious quest, he comes down to meditate under the *bodhi* tree, where he will find enlightenment. In his realization that human desires and cravings are the causes of suffering, he finds his “middle way” between hedonism and total renunciation.

“Shakyamuni Descending from the Mountains” has been a notable subject of Zen paintings since at least the tenth century in China and the thirteenth in Japan.⁶ In these scrolls he is pictured not as a luminous deity, but rather as a human who has sought his own enlightenment through many difficulties. This theme has remained significant in Zen considerations of the selfless self. For example, Shidō Bunan, the teacher of Hakuin’s teacher, wrote in one of his *dōka* (Buddhist *waka*-style poems in Japanese),

Kill, kill, kill your body,
And when it has totally perished,
You are nothing but nothingness itself—
And then you may teach others.

In the same spirit, Shidō inscribed a traditional “Shakyamuni Descending from the Mountains” painting with the following poem:

“Buddha” is the name attached to what remains alive
After the body has thoroughly died.⁷

How then does Hakuin envision Shakyamuni? In his paintings he usually follows traditional iconography to some extent while emphasizing several specific features. In some depictions, he focuses attention on the semistarved appearance of the Buddha, whom Hakuin described elsewhere as “so emaciated that he looked like a tile bound with rope and his bones stuck to his skin.”⁸ Hakuin also sometimes repeats the iconic snail-shell curls of Shakyamuni’s hair on his beard, ribs, shoulders, and feet, extending a pattern that harkens back to some of the early Buddhist images from Gandhara, fifteen hundred years earlier.⁹



PLATE 2.2

Shakyamuni

Ink on paper, 133.5 x 59.7 cm.

Shin'wa-an

In all of Hakuin's portrayals of Shakyamuni, however, the precision of the snail-shell brushwork is strongly contrasted with the broad gray flowing lines of the robe; in this painting one may see Hakuin's original outlines showing Shakyamuni wearing a *kesa* (priestly patched garment) rather than a plain robe. While his gaze is inward, even melancholy, he is brought forward by the gray wash behind him, a technique that allows the contrasting white of the paper to appear especially bright. Although Shakyamuni is presumably not yet fully awakened at this moment in his life, he is graced with a halo, perhaps suggesting the timeless nature of the Buddha's enlightenment. In this regard, Hakuin wrote, "The totality of time is not apart from the immediate moment. The first moment continues from before birth, the single moment in which ordinary mortals become Buddhas."¹⁰

Next to the figure, Hakuin has inscribed a couplet in Chinese about nature, consisting of fourteen characters in small but forceful cursive script:

Cold clouds encage the snow, weighty in setting sunlight;
Mountain moon glows on plums, pure are the night colors."

What does this mean in the context of Shakyamuni? The snow can certainly refer to the mountains, but what of the moonlight on plums—might this signify satori? If we investigate Hakuin's further use of this couplet, which is probably his own composition, we may see how he has been able to develop its meanings. For example, Jonathan Chaves translates two extended examples of this couplet in Hakuin's *Kaian kokugo* (Comments from the Dreamland of Huai-an). The title refers to the T'ang dynasty tale of a man who fell asleep under a locust tree—upon awakening, he realized that his whole life there had been a dream.

The Great Way is vast and lonely, with no flaw anywhere.
How may the Golden Body at midnight be achieved?
Cold clouds encage the snow, weighty in setting sunlight;
Mountain moon glows on plums, pure are the night colors.
—In the Precious Hall of Universal Light,
one is never parted from the Way.

The Great Way is vast and lonely, with no flaw anywhere.
What is it that the gray-headed old geezer can hope to
achieve?
Cold clouds encage the snow, weighty in setting sunlight;
Mountain moon glows on plums, pure are the night colors.

—If this is so, I would like to ask all of you: In what sense can one achieve the Way? One should not *force* living silkworms to produce threads. It is something like matrix stone enclosing jade; one would not realize [from looking at the outside] that the jade is in fact flawless. Or it is like low-lying

mountains not realizing the lonely precipitateness of a solitary peak. If you grasp this, then don't expect any "recompense of benevolence"; just allow the old guy to realize it [for himself]. But if you don't let the old guy intuit it, that is the same as being incapable of grasping it.

One may see the "geezer" or "old guy" as Shakyamuni on his solitary journey, or as Hakuin himself, or perhaps as any of us. This inscribed couplet, which ties together the cold of winter and the first signs of spring, is now included in compendia of Zen "capping phrases," which are used to show one's understanding of a koan.

In his groundbreaking book on Hakuin's art in 1964, Takeuchi Naoji wrote that the theme of Shakyamuni coming down from the mountains also indicates Hakuin's belief that Zen monks must return to the world with compassion after their training. In this regard, he quotes Hakuin's comment to Suiō that he should not only live in the mountains (see chapter 7).¹²

Although the historical Buddha appears as a contemplative and sometimes emaciated human being in Hakuin's paintings, in his writings Shakyamuni can be represented quite differently, depending on the potential audience. For example, in a public sermon of 1764, Hakuin compared him to a shop owner:

From the days of his youth [Shakyamuni] became fond of going about the world, just as if he had been a merchant. . . . at the end of thirty years he was able to open up his own store. . . . Here he had a splendid stock of goods for sale. . . . Shakyamuni pointed straight back at the heart of man and said that within one's own heart there is to be found the true Buddha-nature. . . . This good is the main truth which has been handed down in succession from one generation of disciples to another. Open your eyes and look. What is Shakyamuni? And what are we? . . . An ordinary mortal can become a Buddha!¹³

In contrast, when giving a series of lectures to his Zen pupils, Hakuin began a short history of Zen with musical metaphors, starting with a description of Shakyamuni's life and teachings;

When [he] went into the fastness of the Snowy Mountains long ago to begin his first retreat, he cradled secretly in his arms an ancient, stringless lute. He strummed it with blind devotion for over six years until, one morning, he saw a beam of light shining down from a bad star,¹⁴ and was startled out of his senses. . . . From that moment, he found that whenever he so much as moved a finger, sounds came forth that wrought successions of wondrous events, enlightening human beings of every kind. . . . His repertoire reached a total of five thousand forty scrolls of marvelously wrought music.¹⁵

One of the most famous legendary events in Shakyamuni's life was preaching the *Lotus Sutra* on Vulture Peak. Amounting to a vast compendium of sermons, parables, dramatic scenes, and revelations in poetry and

prose, the *Lotus Sutra* was actually compiled in the first century C.E., about five hundred years after Shakyamuni's death, and it presents several themes that became extremely significant in East Asian Buddhism. First among these is the importance of bodhisattvas as enlightened beings who remain on earth to help all sentient creatures. Second is the Buddha as an eternal being transcending time and space, rather than merely as a historical figure. Third is the acceptance of many Buddhist paths as "skillful means," leading to a final teaching that goes beyond words. These skillful means include creating art:

If there are persons who for the sake of the Buddha
fashion and set up images . . .
If they employ pigments to paint Buddha images
endowing them with the characteristics of hundredfold
merit,
if they make them themselves or have others make them,
then all have attained the Buddha way.
Even if little boys in play
should use a piece of grass or wood or a brush,
or perhaps a fingernail
to draw an image of the Buddha,
such persons as these
bit by bit will pile up merit
and will become fully endowed with a mind of great com-
passion;
they all have attained the Buddha way.¹⁶

Although Hakuin later wrote that he had not fully appreciated the *Lotus Sutra* in his youth, in his mature years it became a major text for him. His interest lay both in its rich and multilayered doctrines, and in the way it could reach people from all walks of life. For example, Hakuin occasionally painted subjects merely by their attributes or other visual clues, and in several cases he incorporated Shakyamuni's timeless teachings on Vulture Peak within a landscape that specifically depicts the seaside of Numazu, a fishing village near Hakuin's temple in Hara (plate 2.3).

Visually, the scene is dominated by the dark and dramatic form of a bending vulture or eagle within the tallest mountain which was named after Shakyamuni's Vulture Peak.¹⁷ Five huts on shore and three fishing boats in the flowing waters seem dwarfed by this image, and yet there is a sense of serenity in their untroubled ordinary existence.

If you look up, Mount Washizu [Vulture Mountain];
If you look down, fishing boats along the Shigeshishi
shore.



PLATE 2.3

Vulture Peak

Ink on paper, 43.6 x 58.6 cm.

Shin'wa-an

Although Hakuin has here inscribed the name Mount Washizu, which rises over the seashore at Numazu, it is also clearly the Vulture Peak of Shakyamuni. The rich varieties of ink tones, from the dark brushwork in the mountains to the gentle lines and washes of gray among and below them, bring forth the power of nature harmonizing with the daily life of humanity. Hakuin here makes the timeless teachings of the Buddha immediate to the world in which people live their everyday lives, as if to say “it’s all in how you look and what you see, right here and right now.”

BODHISATTVAS

Helping others, rather than merely finding one’s own enlightenment, was crucial to Hakuin; he therefore sometimes painted bodhisattvas as the embodiments of compassion. They are described in the *Vimalakirti Sutra* as spiritual heroes who, without having to be asked, become the spiritual benefactors of all living beings, perfected in mindfulness, intelligence, realization, meditation, and eloquence. Expert in knowing the spiritual abilities of all sentient beings, they comprehend the ultimate incomprehensibility of all things, penetrate the profound principle of relativity, and destroy the instinctual mental habits that lead to all convictions about finitude and infinitude.¹⁸

Hakuin himself wrote in a poem accompanying his comments on the *Heart Sutra*,

Bodhisattva. Enlightened Person! Great Being!
In Chinese, “Sentient Being of Great Heart.”
He enters the Three Ways, takes our suffering on himself;
Unbidden, he proceeds joyfully through every realm;
Vowing never to accept the meager fruits of partial truth
He pursues higher enlightenment while working to save others.¹⁹

Hakuin stresses that an enlightenment experience is not enough, but that Zen Buddhists must continue their practice and take it out into the world with great compassion for all sentient beings. “All the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas were at one time ordinary mortals like ourselves. They attained to enlightenment and accomplished all the virtues perfectly and now they are free to help all sentient beings to cross to the other shore.”²⁰

MANJUSRI

In paintings and sculpture, Shakyamuni is often shown accompanied by the bodhisattvas Samantabhadra (Jp.: Fugen) and Manjusri (Jp.: Monju). One of Hakuin’s most carefully and beautifully rendered images depicts Manjusri seated upon a lion, which represents the power to overcome all obstacles (plate 2.4). Manjusri represents wisdom, so students pray to him for help in



PLATE 2.4

Manjusri

Ink on paper, 81.2 x 27 cm.

Chikusei Collection

examinations, and he is often the principle image in Zen meditation halls. He is sometimes portrayed with a flaming sword that cuts through ignorance; similarly, the monk patrolling the meditation hall carries a flat stick (*keisaku*), which is regarded as the deity's sword. Hakuin here depicts Manjusri holding the *Prajnaparamita* (Wisdom) *Sutra* in his right hand, while the lotus flower in his left hand, representing complete enlightenment, supports an esoteric *vajra*, which symbolizes spiritual energy and power as a thunderbolt.

Hakuin's portrayal of Manjusri shows him as a beautiful and youthful deity—his name can mean “auspicious youth”—somewhat in the style of the earlier Zen artist Minchō (1352–1431). Manjusri's eyes look gently downward, his hair flows smoothly down his back, and his robes are painted with smooth and elegant lines. In contrast, the lion below him is depicted in broader, rougher, and darker strokes, his eyes peering upward in a slightly comical pose. The gray wash in the background helps to bring the figure forward toward the viewer, and also allows the unpainted halo behind Manjusri's head to shine like a giant moon.²¹ Hakuin took special care with this unusually elaborated image, but he also warned his Zen students that Manjusri “cannot be located by the wrong kind of equanimity in which there is no enlightenment, no delusion, no sainthood, and no nirvana.”²² In other words, he must be understood experientially through Zen practice.

Hakuin almost always inscribed his own paintings, but here a comment has been added by his student Tairei Shōkan (1724–1807), who describes his teacher as “the old reprobate under the sala tree who enters into the painting, leading the Seven Buddhas.” The “Seven Buddhas” are Shakyamuni and the six buddhas who preceded him; Manjusri is sometimes considered to have been their teacher. In other words, Tairei sees Hakuin himself as Manjusri.

VIMALAKIRTI

One of the most celebrated stories about Manjusri is his meeting with the Buddhist layman Vimalakirti. This is described at some length in the *Vimalakirti Sutra*: at first many bodhisattvas and disciples of the Buddha decline to visit Vimalakirti because they have previously been overawed by his great understanding and eloquence. Finally “the crown prince of wisdom” Manjusri agrees to go, accompanied by monks and deities, and they engage Vimalakirti in a discussion of Buddhist truths. The heart of the sutra comes when the bodhisattvas, one by one, try to describe the entrance to nonduality as a time when “self” and “selflessness” are transcended; likewise matter and void, eye and form, elements and space, happiness and misery, good and evil, and other apparent opposites. Finally Manjusri tells them that they have spoken well but that their explanations are themselves dualistic, and therefore to teach, say, and express nothingness is the entrance to nonduality. He then asks Vimalakirti to elucidate the teaching of the principle of

二
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 王
 馬
 子
 子
 時
 曼
 珠
 仁



PLATE 2.5

Vimalakirti

Ink on paper, 127 x 69.3 cm.

Minneapolis Museum of Art

nonduality, and Vimalakirti keeps silent. “Excellent, excellent,” exclaims Manjusri.

Although this event has sometimes been considered a debate, it is better described as a meeting in which Vimalakirti shines forth as the most profound teacher who needs no words. However, while Zen masters admire this silence, they do not cling to it, as a Zen capping phrase suggests:

Vimalakirti refuses to open his mouth,
But on a bough a cicada is singing.²³

Another capping phrase offers an interesting comparison:

Manjusri holds aloft the sword that slays people
Vimalakirti draws the sword that gives people life.²⁴

The idea that a layman could successfully interact with a bodhisattva was important in the spread of Buddhism in East Asia. It was also significant for Hakuin because he did so much to encourage laypeople of all kinds. For example, he wrote that if people want to reach Nirvana, “first of all be careful to make your minds calm, discipline your hearts, and examine yourselves. . . . In this matter there is no difference between man and woman, priest and layman, poor and rich, good or bad looking people.”²⁵ He further wrote, “Is the Buddha not the independent wayfarer inherently complete in everyone, presently listening to this teaching? That is what Manjusri meant by saying that Buddha presently exists.”²⁶

Hakuin occasionally quotes from the *Vimalakirti Sutra* in his writings,²⁷ and Vimalakirti appears several times in his art. In his portraits, Hakuin envisions the layman quite differently from Manjusri; instead of a beautiful deity, he is shown as an old man with a long, flowing beard (plate 2.5). Looking somewhat similar to Hakuin’s paintings of Daruma (Bodhidharma) (see chapter 3), he has a flowing robe, broad and slightly bent nose, long eyelashes, extended earlobes, and the wide, staring eyes of a “foreigner.” As he peers out at us from three-quarter profile, Vimalakirti is comfortably seated, resting one elbow within his robe on the ornate arm of the Buddhist chair.

As in many of Hakuin’s paintings, there is an effective contrast between more detailed, slender, refined brushwork and rougher, broader strokes that are nevertheless still fluent and descriptive. In this case, the lines of his robe show variations of ink tones, widths, and wetness/dryness, creating a sense of pulsating liveliness. It is as though Vimalakirti is still and his robe is flowing. This may seem a fanciful description, but Hakuin once commented in his autobiography (*Wild Ivy*) that “All the way home, it seemed as if I were not moving at all but standing in the road alone, and the people, houses, and trees that lined the way were all moving.”²⁸

Hakuin’s inscription is a quatrain of seven-character lines in Chinese. To add a second rhythm to the poem, the actual columns of calligraphy (read-

ing in this case from the top left) contain 5-5-5-5-3 characters, so a line of the poem never ends at the bottom of a line of calligraphy until the end, and even this column seems to conclude in midair. Further counterpoint is added by the range of scripts from regular to cursive, and by the occasional long diagonals, most apparent in the fourth character in the fifth column. Curiously, the bottom character in each column is slightly flattened, even though there is plenty of room below it, as if Hakuin were determined to maintain some space between the figure and the inscription.

The poem itself refers to the Dharma teaching at the most important moment in the sutra:

When Prince Monju spoke with Vimalakirti on behalf of the
multitude,
Everyone listened carefully about the Gate of Nonduality.
At the time that the beautiful Prince of Dharma
For the multitudes asked Vimalakirti to investigate words,
We each followed his explanation completely—
What can equal this unique entrance to the Dharma?

Since it is Vimalakirti's silence that Hakuin refers to, this quatrain makes the paradox of the silent explanation even stronger.

KANNON

One of Hakuin's favorite painting subjects was the most popular of all bodhisattvas, Kannon. As the centuries progressed, a number of different aspects of this deity had been celebrated, and particularly in China, Kannon transformed from male to female. Just as the human need for a compassionate female deity brought increased worship to the Virgin Mary in medieval Europe, the same need magnified the importance of Kannon in East Asia.

Each major form of Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) Buddhism imagines Kannon differently. In esoteric traditions, the deity may be represented with thirteen heads and a thousand arms, while in Pure Land sects Kannon is often shown holding a lotus throne upon which to carry the soul of a dying believer to the Western Paradise of Amida Buddha. In Zen, however, Kannon is usually pictured meditating alone on a rocky shore, known as either "White-Robed Kannon" or "Water-Moon Kannon."²⁹

Hakuin pictured Kannon in various guises, usually following traditional iconography. In one earlier painting he depicts one of the multiple forms of Kannon, an idea that was elaborated in the *Lotus Sutra*, which tells how Kannon, "taking on a variety of different forms, goes about among the lands saving living beings."³⁰ The early thirty-three forms of Kannon corresponded to the needs of believers, although in later centuries they changed somewhat in artistic representations to suit popular worship. One of these latter forms



PLATE 2.6

Clam Kannon

Ink and color on
paper, 129 x 57 cm.

Eisei Bunko Foundation

is the “Clam Kannon” seen in this painting, in which the body of the bodhisattva emerges from a giant clam (plate 2.6). There may be some influence here from a story from China that tells how the T’ang Dynasty emperor Wen-tsung was so fond of clams that officials went searching for the tastiest examples. In the year 831, one clam could not be pried apart, so the emperor had prayers chanted and incense burned until the clam finally opened and the figure of Kannon appeared; he thereupon had images of the bodhisattva placed in temples throughout China.³¹

In Hakuin’s scroll, Kannon holds both a bowl and the sprig of willow, which can be an offering to ward off disasters and a wand used to cure human illness.³² Circled around the lower part of the painting are a number of figures, including (reading counterclockwise from the left) the dragon king with a dragon over his back and the character for “long life” on his crown, the goddess Benten with a fashionable comb in her hair, laughing children, a woman offering a fish with a turtle in her hair, a long-nose goblin, several figures with sea creatures on their heads, the friendly and homely courtesan Otafuku, a swindler who becomes a sea serpent, a smiling man, an old couple with their son, and finally a pious old man, the latter all with lucky shrimps. These figures may be regarded as a gentle parody of the “Sixteen Arhats,” seen in a previously noted Kannon painting by Hakuin (fig. 1.4). They also represent familiar images for people in the fishing villages near Hakuin’s temple, all receiving the compassion of the deity. As Hakuin told his parishioners,

Kannon signifies the ideas of vision and hearing, combining the characters for “see” (見) and “sound” (音). Kannon is the one who perceives and hears the sounds or prayers of all sentient beings. All these can be summarized in our Zen teaching about the sound of one hand. If you understand that meaning, then you are truly awake, and if you are truly awake, the whole world is Kannon.³³

It was significant to Hakuin that the name Kannon presents the element of synesthesia, the mixing of senses that Zen masters sometimes advocate in order to go beyond usual conceptions and dualities.

Hakuin’s inscription on the painting is simple and to the point:

The one who can cross over in the body of a clam
Reveals how the clam body also explains the Dharma.

“Crossing over” is an important Buddhist concept, but by utilizing folkloric humor and adding light colors, Hakuin is clearly enjoying himself as a painter and inviting his viewers to enjoy themselves as well—as if to say that religion need not be stiflingly serious.

福聚海無量
慈眼視衆生



PLATE 2.7

White-Robed Kannon

Ink on paper, 121 x 38 cm.

Ginshu Collection

Another painting of Kannon, also done in Hakuin's sixties, shows the bodhisattva in meditation with the willow branch now resting in a vase (plate 2.7). Gone are the other figures, the clam, the extreme elaborations of the headdress, and even the halo. Instead, Hakuin focuses attention on the deity by adding a gray wash around the figure, while strengthening the brushwork on the outlines of the rocky ledge and adding wavelets at the bottom. Now, rather than other figures and the use of colors, we see a significant element of empty space. The sense of meditation within the void is strongly expressed, and the inscription is written forcefully in two parallel columns of easy-to-read standard script directly over Kannon's head:

Regarding with compassionate eyes all sentient beings
And accumulating good fortune like an ocean without limit.

This couplet is a slight variation of the penultimate two lines of a long poem near the end of the *Kannon Sutra*, which itself forms chapter 25 of the *Lotus Sutra*.

Now graced with an ornate Buddhist-style mounting,³⁴ a third version of the same Kannon theme is much smaller, perhaps meant to be hung in a home altar or taken along while traveling (plate 2.8). Although this is also a relatively early work, it is typical for Hakuin that each version of the same subject is different. This very personal painting has an intriguing use of color as well as a sense of translucent light that is accomplished in part by adding gray washes around the figure of Kannon, the vase with a willow branch, and the white lotus flower. The more ethereal feeling here is also created by what is left out—interior strokes in the rocks, which are often added to landscape scenes to give a sense of texture—have been omitted, leaving the simple gray rocky outlines bare.

Iconographically, Kannon now meditates above a lotus pond with three colorful open leaves as well as one white and two radiant pink flowers. These are each a different size and stage of development: the small pink bud, the pure white blossom, and the pink flower opening to a pod. Professor Seo suggests that these might represent the three stages of Zen life: working toward *kenshō*, the purity of enlightenment, and then postenlightenment satori training and spreading the Dharma.

Hakuin also painted the leaves forming Kannon's seating mat with tones of pink and green—he uses color in this scroll only for flowers and leaves while the bodhisattva, like the pure lotus blossom, is white with gray outlines. Another special feature of this painting is the layers of curling clouds around the large halo, enlivening the space as though the halo itself were a huge lotus blossom floating in the sky.

Kannon, whose headdress features a lotus flower, looks down peacefully into the lotus pond, perhaps itself a reflection and representation of the deity. As Hakuin wrote, "Enlightened beings of higher faculties always sit and recline



PLATE 2.8

Kannon Meditating

Ink and color on paper,

54 x 19.7 cm.

Behr Collection

in the midst of the variety of different situations in action; you see everything before your eyes as your own original true clean face, just as if you were looking at your face in a mirror.”³⁵

The inscription, five small characters in cursive script, literally reads, “No land not manifest.” It also comes from the Kannon chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* (known as the *Kannon Sutra*), as one line of the much longer poem that would have been known to Hakuin’s contemporaries, here in an excerpt:

Endowed with transcendent powers,
And widely practicing expedient wisdom,
Through the world in the ten directions,
There is no land [in which Kannon] does not manifest.

Within the universality of the deity, this particular manifestation of meditating on a rocky ledge is one of the simplest and yet most resonant, exemplifying the Zen spirit of maintaining an enlightened vision within the world of nature.

Hakuin also celebrated Kannon (also known as Kanzeon) in calligraphy. One of his most often-brushed texts is “Always Concentrate on Kanzeon Bodhisattva,” with the opening character *tsune* (常) (always) emphasized by extending its closing vertical stroke down almost the entire length of the scroll (plate 2.9). English cannot reproduce the same effect, but it might be suggested by writing “ALLLLLWAYS Concentrate on Kanzeon Bodhisattva.”

This text works equally well both for believers in outer-directed forms of Buddhism, in which case the concentration takes the form of a prayer to a deity, and for Zen followers, who concentrate their meditation within themselves. In Hakuin’s words, “Whether you sit in meditation, recite the sutras, intone the *dhārani* [sacred ritual phrase] or call the Buddha’s name, if you devote all your efforts to what you are doing and attain to the ultimate, you will kick down the dark cave of ignorance . . . and attain to the understanding of the Great Matter. The content of the practices may vary but what difference is there in the goal that is reached?”³⁶

The broad and confident power of the calligraphy marks this as one of Hakuin’s later works. The composition is enlivened by the slight diagonal of the long vertical and the placement of the other characters, one below it and the others to the left side, leaving the right side empty for the two closing seals. In this scroll, by utilizing old ink and nonabsorbent paper, Hakuin was able to create varied ink tones so that we can see how his brush moved, where it overlapped, and where it traveled more quickly or more slowly. In effect, we can internally reproduce the process of creating the work, sharing Hakuin’s own experience, and this is why “brush traces” of revered Zen masters are so highly regarded in Japan. Viewing such a scroll, we have Hakuin himself before us, not in stasis but in his own breath resonance.



PLATE 2.9

"Tsune"

Ink on paper, 137.9 x 29 cm.

Ginshu Collection

PURE LAND BUDDHISM

Although he was deeply committed to his Zen followers, Hakuin also created works for believers in other sects, including Pure Land Buddhism. For example, he often wrote out the mantra “*Namu Amida Butsu*” (Hail to Amida Buddha). Devotees believed that if they chanted this phrase with perfect sincerity, at their death they would be reborn in Amida’s Western Paradise. This form of “outer-directed” Buddhism is quite different from Zen’s “inner-directed” practice, but Hakuin believed that all paths of Buddhism were admirable if they encouraged faith and compassion among the people.

One late-period example of “*Namu Amida Butsu*” is among Hakuin’s most powerful works of calligraphy (plate 2.10). The brushwork is broad and eloquent, and without any spaces between the six characters, it can be difficult to know where one ends and the next begins. The second character, *mu* (無), is particularly architectural here, emphasized by its three horizontals bisected by four verticals, with four dots at the bottom. Although the ink is dark, there are variations in tone, showing us where Hakuin moved the brush more quickly or paused, and the uneven sizing of the paper also allowed lighter spots to appear within some of the brushstrokes.

The massive and confident nature of this calligraphy makes clear that Hakuin was not halfhearted about creating a work on a Pure Land theme, yet he was adamant that each form of Buddhism should be kept distinct. More specifically, Hakuin told his Zen followers who were studying the “*Mu*” koan, “Even if you cannot see your nature clearly, by the power of calling on the name you will without fail be reborn in Paradise. But if what you are really trying to do is to cleverly accomplish both things at the same time, then by all means discard at once the practice of calling the Buddha’s name and take up in purity the ‘*Mu*’ koan.”³⁷

Readers of Hakuin’s works may find it confusing that he sometimes seems to praise Pure Land Buddhism and at other times to criticize it. The reason for the latter is that the teachings of the two sects had gradually become mingled in China and Korea, and when a group of Chinese monks immigrated to Japan in the mid-seventeenth century and formed the Ōbaku sect, they brought with them this syncretic form of Buddhism. This distressed Hakuin a good deal, and in 1753 he wrote,

A hundred years ago the true style changed and Zen followers adopted an obnoxious teaching. Those who would combine Pure Land with Zen are [as common] as hemp and millet. . . . The deterioration of Buddhism in Japan must not continue for long. Don’t tell me that the combination of Zen and Pure Land is like fitting wings to a tiger. This is all wrong. . . . If Zen is combined with Pure Land, Zen cannot last for long and will surely be destroyed. How I grieve for Zen!³⁸



PLATE 2.10

"Namu Amida Butsu"

Ink on paper, 136.5 x 35.2 cm.

Shin'wa-an

Hakuin firmly believed that mixing the two paths was a great mistake for Zen pupils, especially if they were to follow the Pure Land practice of chanting the mantra to Amida. On the one hand, he taught that “those who think that the ‘*Mu*’ koan and the recitation of the Buddha’s name are two different things belong to the class of evil heretics.”³⁹ On the other hand, for those studying Zen, he wrote that to combine the two paths was an obnoxious teaching “like mixing milk and water in one vessel.”⁴⁰

Hakuin’s many books, sermons, and other teachings make clear that he insisted that his Zen pupils follow the path of meditation, koan study, “seeing one’s nature,” postenlightenment practice, and compassionate activity in the world. At the same time, for the everyday people that he reached out to with his public lectures, poems, paintings, and calligraphy, he could not have been more encouraging to every kind of belief. This went beyond creating images of Buddhist deities; he even painted a well-known figure from Japanese history to show his respect for the Pure Land tradition. This was Kumagai Jirō Naozane (Renshōbō), a warrior in the devastating twelfth-century battles between the Taira and Minamoto clans as immortalized in the *Tale of the Heike* (plate 2.11).

The Minamoto warrior Kumagai was riding near the shore after the successful battle of Ichi no tani when he saw an enemy captain attempting to reach one of the Taira ships. He engaged him in combat, knocked him to the ground,



PLATE 2.11
Renshōbō on a Horse
Ink on paper, 118 x 56 cm.
Manyōan Collection

and ripped off his helmet in order to decapitate him. Seeing that the enemy he had defeated was Atsumori, a youth of only sixteen or seventeen years, Kumagai thought of his own son, but before he could spare the youth, he saw a group of other Minamoto warriors approaching. Realizing that if he didn't complete the execution, someone else would, so Kumagai cut off the young man's head. With tears in his eyes, Kumagai then lamented, "What life is so difficult as that of a warrior! Only because I was born to a samurai family must I now suffer this misfortune—how deplorable it is to have to commit such cruelties!"

From this moment Kumagai turned to the religious life, eventually becoming a monk of the Pure Land sect, and his story became celebrated in Japanese myth and literature. In a famous Noh drama by Zeami entitled *Atsumori*, Kumagai is forgiven by the young man's ghost, who recites that they will be "in the end, reborn, together, on the same lotus flower."⁴¹

Hakuin's painting includes his extensive inscription, first in Chinese and then in Japanese, which tells how Kumagai was determined to face only in the direction of Amida Buddha's Western Paradise.

Originally named Kumagai Jirō,
After becoming a monk he called himself Renshōbō.
Visiting Kamakura, he rode backward on his horse
So he could always face toward the West.
At the time of becoming a monk he composed a verse:
I've decided upon
facing to the West
and never looking back.
Recently someone turned this around:
Even devils would crudely shout "turn"
if when facing to the West
he ever looked back.

The "someone" in this case was certainly Hakuin himself, adding a gentle humor to Kumagai's vow.

The painting itself is quite elaborate, with the figure of the warrior-monk brought forward by a light wash behind him. Kumagai's horse is rendered dramatically in dark ink, contrasting with the mane, saddle, boots, and blanket that vibrate in patterned tones of gray. Although the warrior-monk is painted in large size, the horse does not appear to be struggling; lacking the active attention of his rider, he has bent his head down for a tasty morsel along the path. This extra touch of humor does not detract from the respect that Hakuin shows Kumagai, whose face in profile is suffused with contemplation.

Since he painted this subject several times, it is clear that Hakuin had no problem creating such a work for a Pure Land believer, perhaps someone from a warrior family. Nevertheless, Hakuin believed that the Zen path, while the most difficult, was also the most direct and all-encompassing. Seeing into one's own Buddha nature was crucial, because "outside your own mind there is no

Pure Land; outside your nature there is no Buddha.”⁴² Even more specifically, he wrote, “There is no Pure Land existing apart from Zen; there is no mind or Buddha separate from Zen.”⁴³

ESOTERIC BUDDHISM AND FUDŌ

Hakuin also encouraged laypeople who believed in the esoteric sects of Buddhism, for example, warning his parishioners not to think that their teachings are worse or lower. The complex and elaborate sects of Shingon and Tendai had reached the height of their influence in Japan during the court-dominated ninth and tenth centuries, but still maintained an important position in Japanese religious life. Their stress on complex religious disciplines, such as sequentially visualizing and meditating upon the many sections of a mandala, was quite unlike the inner focus of Zen, but the goal of enlightenment was the same.

In dealing with such different practices, Hakuin found ways to relate the deities of one Buddhist tradition to another in order to show their essential unity. For example, he equated the historical Buddha Shakyamuni with Vairocana, the Cosmic Buddha of the esoteric sects who was also known in Japan as Dainichi, the Great Sun Buddha.⁴⁴

Hakuin occasionally wrote out a calligraphic mantra on Fudō, one of the “five guardian kings” who is sometimes considered a fierce manifestation of Dainichi (plate 2.12). The text reads “*Taishō Fudō Myō-ō*,” literally meaning “Great Sage Immovable Bright King,” a translation of the Sanskrit “*Acala-vidyaraaja*.” The name Fudō is made of characters meaning “not move” (不動), and he is an implacable obstacle to anyone who would try to harm Buddhism. In painted and sculpted images, Fudō is traditionally shown as a frightening deity with a scowling face and fangs, holding a sword and a rope in front of a flaming mandorla (fig. 2.1). Although in this guise Fudō is primarily a deity of the esoteric sects, with their profusion of supernatural beings, he gradually became popular with Japanese Buddhists of all denominations. For example, he could be seen in a Zen context, as Hakuin described in one of his sermons:

Look at the image of Fudō, who is so much in the fashion today. His image is made so that it shall be a manifestation to all men of the five duties of life. The rope which hangs on his left arm symbolizes the tying up of illusions of sentient beings in order that these illusions may not operate. The sword which he holds in his right hand shows that he cuts off all illusory ideas of sentient beings. The flame that rises behind him is the symbol of the burning up of illusions. . . . The aspect of his body is that of a fierce deity whose right eye looks up towards heaven, and whose left eye looks down towards the earth. He is standing like an awe-inspiring warrior. All this is an allegory telling men that they must not wander away in the senses of the illusory and transient world.⁴⁵

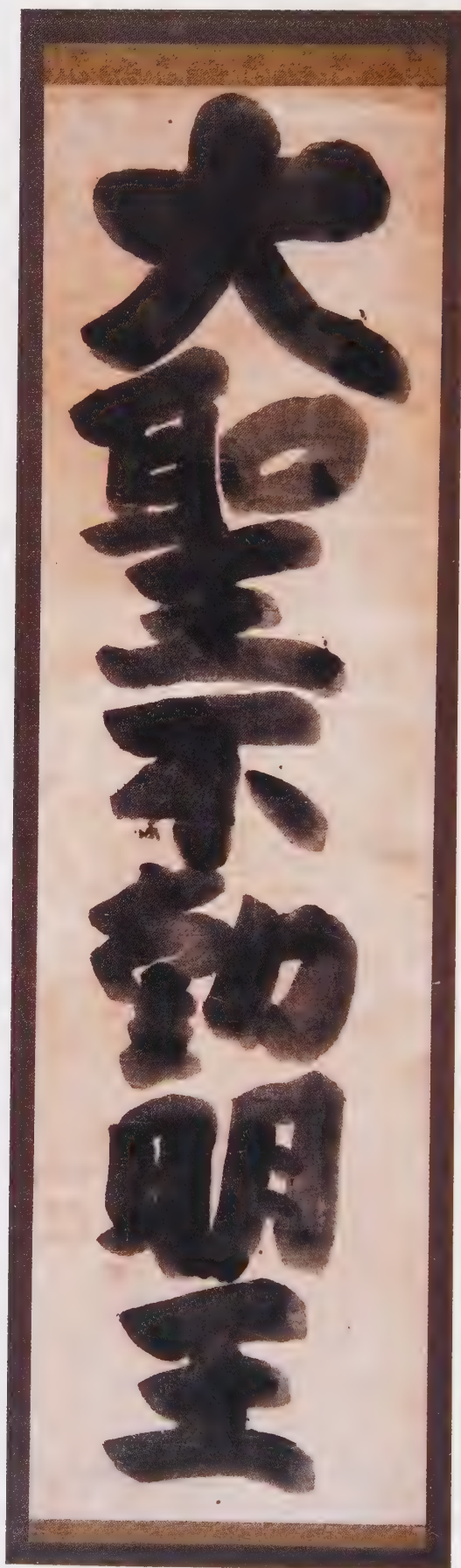


PLATE 2.12

"Fudō"

Ink on paper, 94 x 26.1 cm.

Chikusei Collection



FIGURE 2.1
Anonymous
Fudō Sculpture (ca. 839)
Painted wood, 173.2 cm. tall
Tō-ji, Kyoto

Hakuin may also have had a personal interest in Fudō imagery; the fierce face of the guardian may remind us of Hakuin’s paradoxical description of the follower a Zen master has a responsibility to train: “Without the least human feeling he produces an unsurpassedly evil, stupid, blind oaf, be it one person or merely half a person, with teeth sharp as the sword-trees of hell, and a gaping mouth like a tray of blood. Thus will he recompense his deep obligation to the Buddhas and the Patriarchs.”⁴⁶

This Fudō calligraphy itself, done in Hakuin’s final years, has a majestic power. Like the previous “*Namu Amida Butsu*” scroll, the six characters are written in standard script with simple blocky forms, but now there is a little more room between them, allowing each character to remain distinct. Although Hakuin’s broad brushstrokes leave very little space inside the characters, these small “negative” areas are important to the total effect by showing subtle size variations of their own. In addition, by using old (rather than freshly ground) ink upon treated paper that absorbed very slowly, Hakuin has let his brushstrokes dry unevenly. This gives the scroll a rich texture of tonal gradations; at a few points the ink has also splashed or dripped.

In their simplicity, it almost seems as if these characters could have been written by a child, but for their unobtrusive skill. Each character may be studied individually: first how it is composed, with strokes touching or crossing, and

then how it relates to the characters above and below it. Although the first character “large/great” (大) is the boldest and darkest in ink, the second character is given so much space that one may almost read seven total visual units rather than six. This word “sage” (聖) is composed of an “ear” (耳) at the top left, a “mouth” (口) at the top right, and a “king” (王) below, suggesting someone to whom a king speaks and listens. Next come the two characters for “Fudō” (不動) (not move), and then “bright” made up of a sun on the left and a moon on the right (明). At the bottom of the scroll comes “king” (王), and although the six words seem to narrow as they descend, this concluding glyph forms a triple horizontal base upon which they all can stand.

A parallel work that seems unique within Hakuin’s art is the name of Fudō written in *bonji*, a form of Sanskrit considered in East Asia to have deep religious significance since it evokes early Buddhism in India (plate 2.13). Here the name of the deity is written in the seed syllables “*hammam*” with the kind of flat (rather than round and pointed) brush that is often used in rendering Sanskrit (also called Siddham script). Flat brushes can be made of animal hairs, or even pieces of wood, and they allow the kind of even-width strokes twisting to very thin lines that can be seen in this work. What makes Hakuin’s calligraphy unique, however, is his relaxed and individualized movement of the flat brush creating varied gray ink tones, heaviest where he began the calligraphy near the upper left and becoming lighter as the calligraphy continued downward.

This use of *bonji* has almost exclusively appeared in esoteric sects, although the true nature of Sanskrit, a language with an alphabet rather than word-characters such as in Sino-Japanese, was understood only by a small minority of Buddhist monks.⁴⁷ The fact that Hakuin created this version of the name Fudō shows not only his respect for other forms of Buddhism, but probably also his enjoyment of trying another form of calligraphy for the use of a Buddhist believer. We may note, however, that the semicircle at the middle here bends in a clockwise direction where it would normally have a counterclockwise movement (fig. 2.2), another example of Hakuin’s creativity rather than strict adherence to formula.

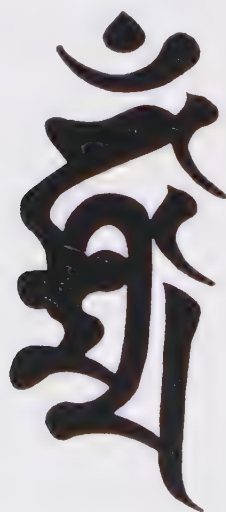


FIGURE 2.2
Bonji Character for “Fudō”



PLATE 2.13

"Fudō" in Bonji

Ink on paper, 113 x 57 cm.

Eisei Bunko Foundation

SHINTO

Beyond different Buddhist sects and images, Hakuin also created works for followers of Shinto, who revere a multitude of deities in nature. He wrote a number of stories about the relationships between Buddhism and Shinto in his “*Tsuji dangi*” (A Wayside Sermon) of 1762, noting that Buddhism and Shinto are “like the two wings of a bird enabling it to fly.”⁴⁸ More specifically, he compared Shinto to the most fundamental Zen practices:

Zazen is the foundation of all spiritual paths. In Shinto tradition our body is considered to be the condensation of heaven and earth, while heaven and earth are considered to be our great vast body. Seven generations of celestial deities and eight million other deities are all enshrined in our vast body. If you want to serve these enshrined deities, you must observe the saying in the Shinto tradition, “Unless you govern the head of the spirit, you cannot serve the deities.” To govern the head of the spirit is none other than Zen *samādhi* [concentration, focused attention].⁴⁹

As part of his ecumenical approach, Hakuin frequently wrote out calligraphic mantras to Shinto deities. One relatively common subject for such works is “*Akibayama Dai Gongen*” (Great Avatar of Mount Akiba), sometimes paired with “*Kompira Dai Gongen*” (Great Avatar of Mount Kompira). In his book *Yaemugura* (Goose Grass) of 1759, Hakuin wrote,

Have the calligraphy of the sacred names of Kompira and Akiba mounted, hang them at the place of honor in an alcove of your house, and occasionally offer an incense stick, join your hands, and bow to them. There is no wholesome act that excels it as a means of avoiding fire and theft, destroying the seven disasters, bringing forth the five-fold happiness, attaining luck in arms, receiving a long life, and having peace not only for your own home but also for the world, and the long future succession of your family.⁵⁰

Because a calligraphy to *Akibayama* functioned as a talisman, Hakuin must have received many requests from Shinto believers (who might concurrently be followers of Buddhism) to write it out in large scale. In one example from his later years, Hakuin brushed the six characters with both force and subtlety (plate 2.14). The six glyphs (秋葉山大権現) literally read “autumn-leaf-mountain (*Akibayama*) great (*dai*) power-discloser (*gongen*).” As in the Fudō calligraphy, there is only a little empty space within and between the characters, and yet Hakuin has given each glyph the room it needs. The second character, “leaf,” for example, takes up three times as much vertical space as the following “mountain,” while the following “great” nestles nicely below the curving horizontal above it. The subtlety of the work comes from the ink

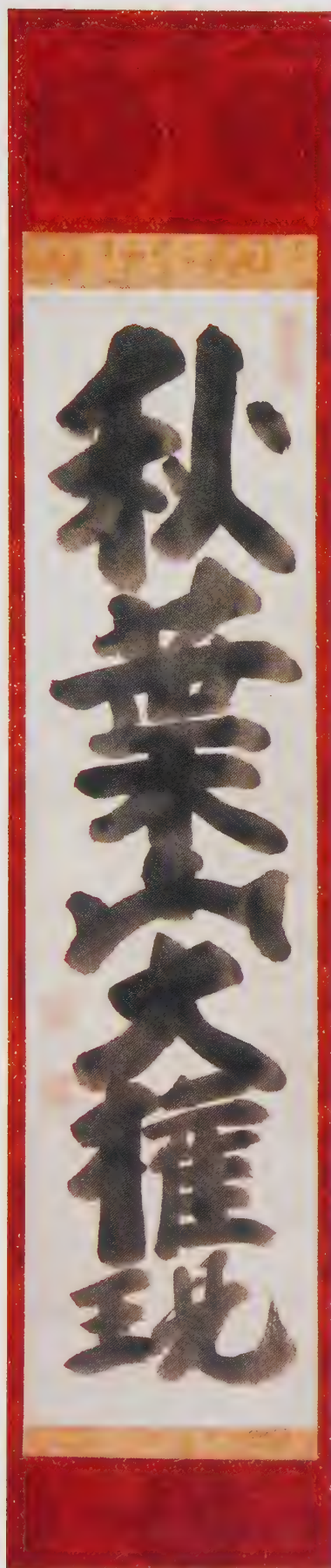


PLATE 2.14

"Akibayama"

Ink on paper, 57.5 x 14.7 cm.

Private Collection

tones, which range from lustrous black through many depths of gray, with interesting textures occurring where the strokes overlap. By using standard script for such scrolls, Hakuin made it easy for people even with a limited knowledge of reading Chinese characters to understand and appreciate the visual mantras.

Hakuin did not merely celebrate the avatar of Mount Akiba in calligraphy; occasionally he painted Sanjakubō, the deity of Akiba Mountain who can be regarded as a manifestation of Fudō. Hakuin's image was so popular that in 1755, he had it carved on a large woodblock, resembling the white-on-black style of a stone rubbing, so that prints could be made and distributed (plate 2.15). This Shinto god resembles (and serves as an avatar for) Fudō by carrying a rope and sword within a mandorla of flames. A deity for subduing fire, Sanjakubō is sometimes represented as a long-nosed goblin, with a bird's face and human body, who rides upon a white fox. Hakuin, however, gives him a human face while the cloud behind him resembles a bird's head; the inscription is placed to either side of the deity:

He who practices one thousand fire ceremonies a day,
Immediately enters the realm where the dharma body and
heart arise,
And brings limitless benefit to sentient beings.
This is Sanjakubō from Echigo Province.

According to legend, Sanjakubō was originally from Shinano, and did not renounce the world until he reached the age of sixty-seven. Becoming a teacher of esoteric Buddhism, he was made abbot of the Sanjakubō Shrine in Echigo, where he practiced concentration on Fudō and was inspired by the fabulous garuda, a bird who feeds on dragons. Eventually, Sanjakubō achieved magical powers and flew off to live on Mount Akiba.⁵¹

FOLK DEITIES

Beyond Buddhism and Shinto, folk deities were also common subjects for Hakuin's art, including the Seven Gods of Good Fortune. There are several combinations of the seven, but they always feature Daikoku, the god of agriculture and merchants; Ebisu, the god of fishing; and Hotei, the wandering monk who became a god of abundance (see chapter 6). In addition, the seven usually include one or both of the gods of long life, Fukurokuju and Jurōjin; the goddess of music and poetry, Benzaiten; the god of warriors, Bishamonten; and occasionally the goddess of happiness, Kichijōten, or the "demon-queller" Shōki (see chapter 5). Although these are considered Japanese gods, in fact all but Ebisu came originally from India or China; they have long since been thoroughly assimilated into Japanese consciousness.



PLATE 2.15

Akibayama Woodblock Print

Ink on paper, 93 x 30.5 cm.

Chikusei Collection

One of Hakuin's most complex and colorful versions of the seven gods shows a New Year's scene (plate 2.16). The main focus is Daikoku, sitting in meditation as he wears a headdress with "long life" written upon it. His mallet for pounding grain suggests a good harvest, and he is attended by mice in the robes of monks, Shinto priests, entertainers, and courtiers. Placed in front of Daikoku are the traditional New Year *mochi* (pounded rice cakes), and to his right are six gods enjoying themselves. Shōki, with his long, bending beard and green coat, is dancing while Hotei (with Hakuin's original sketch lines clearly evident) plays the drum. Below him, Ebisu recites a chant from the Noh drama *Shōki*, while above him Fukurokuju and Jurōjin strike handheld drums and Benzaiten plays the flute.

Hakuin has added several texts. One of the attending mice brandishes a long flat stick that resembles the *keisaku* used to whack monks when they get drowsy during meditation sessions. On it is written, "A mouse master one day banged his mallet and said to his fellows, 'When you see a cat coming, hit him on the head.'" Since the word *myōtō* can mean both "cat's head" and "brightness," this text can be seen as a parody on a well-known statement by the Chinese Zen eccentric Pu-hua (Jp.: Fuke) (see chapter 3), "What comes from brightness, I strike with brightness."

Behind Daikoku is a large horizontal scroll with two Confucian-influenced poems, the first in Chinese and the second in Japanese, here reading from left to right:

Without extravagance, no greed,
 Without laziness, no poverty;
 If you serve your parents devotedly—
 Daikoku Tenjin.
 If people are loyal to their lord
 and filial to their parents,
 I'll give them my straw coat, hat, mallet, and bag.

At the far right is a bamboo container with a sprig of plum blossoms, the harbinger of spring, which serves as one more element to help create a mood of extraordinary festivity and joy. The artistic care that Hakuin lavished on this scene is evident from the unusually intense use of colors enriching the elaborate composition.

Hakuin also painted the gods of good fortune singly, such as in a smaller scroll showing Ebisu (plate 2.17). Although primarily associated with fishing, Ebisu is also venerated in agricultural communities and by merchants. Prayers are offered to Ebisu in the first month, asking for good fishing, abundant crops, and profitable business dealings, while in the tenth month he is also venerated with a sense of thanksgiving. Here he does a traditional dance, his face smiling happily while he holds a red sea bream. As this fish is called *tai* in Japanese, the final syllable of *medetai* (happy and congratulatory), it is frequently brought forth and served on auspicious occasions.



PLATE 2.16

Seven Gods of Good Fortune

Ink and color on paper,

58.5 x 84.5 cm.

Shin'wa-an



PLATE 2.17

Ebisu

Ink and color on paper,

41 x 54 cm.

Kikuan Collection

Ebisu, the only one of the seven gods to have originated in Japan, is sometimes identified as Hiruko-no-Mikoto or Kotoshironushi-no-kami, a grandson of the progenitor deities in early origin legends. Like other Shinto deities, he is often depicted wearing a nobleman's costume with baggy trousers, a stiff jacket, and a tall court hat. Here the composition is balanced by Ebisu's fishing pole extending upward to the right while he dances leftward toward a haiku poem, making this another work that is both Zenga and haiga.

<i>Hiru kutoya</i>	Arriving in the daytime
<i>hate nani ga sate</i>	or whenever you come—
<i>yoi Ebisu</i>	welcome, Ebisu!

The poem identifies the occasion when one would hang this scroll, the evening of the ninth or during the tenth day of the first month when Ebisu is supposed to arrive. Since the word *yoi* can suggest both “evening” and “good,” there is a humorous conflation of possible interpretations for the final line of the haiku. The short, stubby body of the deity, contrasted with his tall hat, also adds a sense of drollery not often found in “religious” art. Hakuin’s strong use of color and his still-visible sketch lines also attest to the attention he gave to this popular subject.

Several paintings by Hakuin are even more comic; it is a feature both of Zen and more particularly of Hakuin’s work that humor can express what more serious texts and pictures cannot. Perhaps this is because jokes have a break in logic that resembles in miniature the break in logic that takes the Zen student beyond conceptual thought. “Why is six afraid of seven? Because seven eight



FIGURE 2.3
One Hundred Demons (detail)
Ink and color on paper, 35.1 x 41.3 cm.
Kondai-ji

nine.” This children’s riddle is very simple, but it takes us beyond linear thinking at the moment that *eight* suddenly becomes *ate*. The ability to turn things upside down, to abandon a conventional fixed-point perspective and suddenly see another meaning, is crucial to Zen, and helps explain why masters often seem to speak in opposites.

Although he usually emphasized the here-and-now in his Zen teachings rather than otherworldly matters, at one point in his sixties Hakuin painted a hand scroll of the supernatural subject “One Hundred Demons.”⁵² In popular folklore, these are the strange beasts that come out of their crannies at night, only to retreat at the first light of dawn, and they were painted by artists of various schools. Among the fearsome demons that Hakuin depicts is a one-eyed goblin, here accompanied by two animalistic creatures (fig. 2.3). While these three ghouls may seem scary, they are also humorous, perhaps suggesting the value of laughing at our fears.

Hakuin carries the paradox of fear and humor one step farther with an ink painting of a one-eyed goblin meeting a blind man (plate 2.18). The scroll itself is quite simple: the blind man strolling in his high *geta* (wooden shoes) calls out to the apparition before him:

Who’s that gr-gr-growling over there?
What? A one-eyed goblin?
I’m not afraid of you—
Since I have no eyes at all,
You should be scared of me!

Of course, in its own strange way, this is perfectly reasonable—if only one eye is frightening, no eyes should be even more so. This has various ramifications: in Zen the images used for satori are “seeing one’s nature” and “enlightenment,” both of which suggest the visual, while “blind” often indicates the unawakened state (see chapter 4). Yet many Zen writings through the centuries insist that we cannot be too literal. In this scroll, the look of quiet satisfaction on the face of the blind man certainly indicates that he is “seeing” beyond the use of eyes, perhaps relating to the Zen capping phrase “The blindest of the blind has an eye.”⁵³

A story told by Tōrei in his *Hakuin Oshō nenpu*, from when the master was thirty years old, may also shed light on his later use of this theme:

One night as he was doing *zazen*, a sudden fear took hold in his heart. He could not bring himself to venture outside his hut. “What am I afraid of?” he asked. “I’m afraid the goblin will suddenly thrust his loathsome face up in front of me,” he answered. “But, after all, what is that face? If a goblin does appear, become a goblin yourself. Confront the goblin with a goblin. What is there to fear? If you are a Buddha, it will be a Buddha as well. . . . Goblins and Buddhas have the same nature. False and true are identical. Where in all the universe can you set up a ‘self’ or ‘other’?”⁵⁴

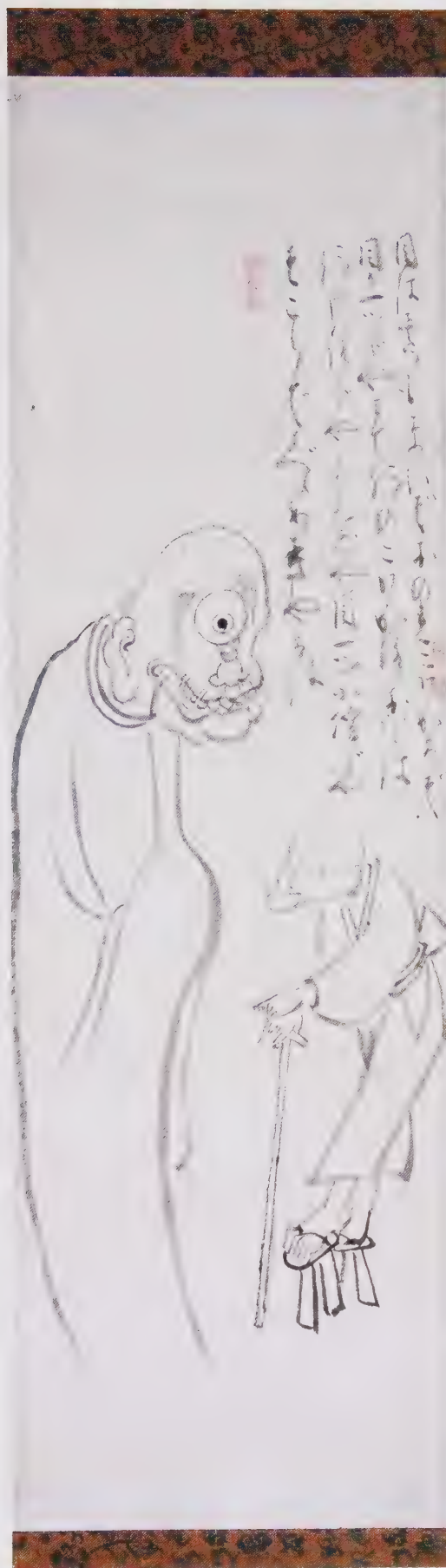


PLATE 2.18

Goblin

Ink on paper, 55.7 x 17 cm.

Behr Collection

Whether in serious images or humorous folk subjects, Hakuin often made use of Zen paradoxes. Of course, in their talks and writings, Zen masters frequently use words to go beyond words; perhaps this is why Hakuin so often turned to art, particularly in his later decades. That suchness which exceeds verbal explanations may be expressed in Shōki's *noh* dance, in folk deities playing musical instruments, and in brush painting and calligraphy. For those who appreciate Zen art, Hakuin's ink traces approach what he called, "the realm where verbal explanation cannot reach, transcending the realm of buddhas and the realm of Zen masters."⁵⁵

—STEPHEN ADDISS

喝



OLD DRAGONS, NEW DRAGONS

Hakuin's Zen Subjects

Beyond his extensive depiction of other religious subjects, Hakuin painted a wide range of Zen themes, the majority of which are portraits of patriarchs and important Zen masters throughout the ages. While Hakuin is rightfully credited for opening up the visual world of Zen painting in order to reach as many people as possible, he also understood the importance of reinforcing the past.

Few of Hakuin's predecessors painted the vast number of patriarchs and Zen masters that Hakuin did. Moreover, not only was Hakuin able to reinforce his lineage with visual reminders linking past to present, but he also created innovative images that represented these masters and their teachings without always relying on figural depictions, instead utilizing well-known attributes that created a visual play that stimulated his audience. Occasionally, Hakuin also mixed these historical Zen themes with local cultural references, as in plate 2.3, further playing on the curiosity of his varied audience. This ability to integrate Zen subjects with contemporary interests, thereby making them more accessible and approachable to the general public, was one of Hakuin's enduring contributions to Zen.

DARUMA PORTRAITS

Portraits of the First Zen Patriarch Daruma (Bodhidharma, who died before 534 and was considered the Twenty-eighth Patriarch following the historical Buddha Shakyamuni) are central to Zen painting, and became a subject for which Hakuin was greatly admired. Extant historical Daruma images date to the eleventh and twelfth centuries (although the practice probably began during the T'ang Dyanasty, 618–907), and often depict Daruma with Hui-k'o (Jp.: Eka) (487–593), his first disciple and eventual successor. These works, similar to the famous image by Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506),¹ notably emphasize the transmission and lineage of Zen, a concrete reminder of the master-disciple connection. By the thirteenth century, however, three-quarter bust portraits (Jp.: *hanshinzō*)

FACING PAGE
Rinzai "Katsu"
See page 113.

of Daruma became the artistic norm. In these images, Daruma is depicted as a large, burly figure with distinctly foreign features. His head is round and full, bald or partially covered with his robe, while a beard and bushy brows accentuate his broad facial features. Daruma typically sports one or two earrings, and his large body is draped in an ebullient but nondescript robe, sometimes painted red.²

By the time these portrait images became popular, the legendary adventures and feats of Daruma were probably well known among practitioners, and as a result, Daruma himself developed into a larger-than-life figure who came to represent Zen practice and dedication. This bust portrait style was passed down almost unchanged into the Edo period, and Hakuin, like numerous Zen painters before him, looked to this tradition from quite early in his career. Hakuin's earliest Daruma portraits seem remarkably like Muromachi period examples, including a very early work dated 1720, when Hakuin was only thirty-six years old (fig. 3.1). This image provides little evidence of the personal style that would develop later; Hakuin was clearly following traditional Zen painting aesthetics from another era. The juxtaposition of finely delineated brushwork for the

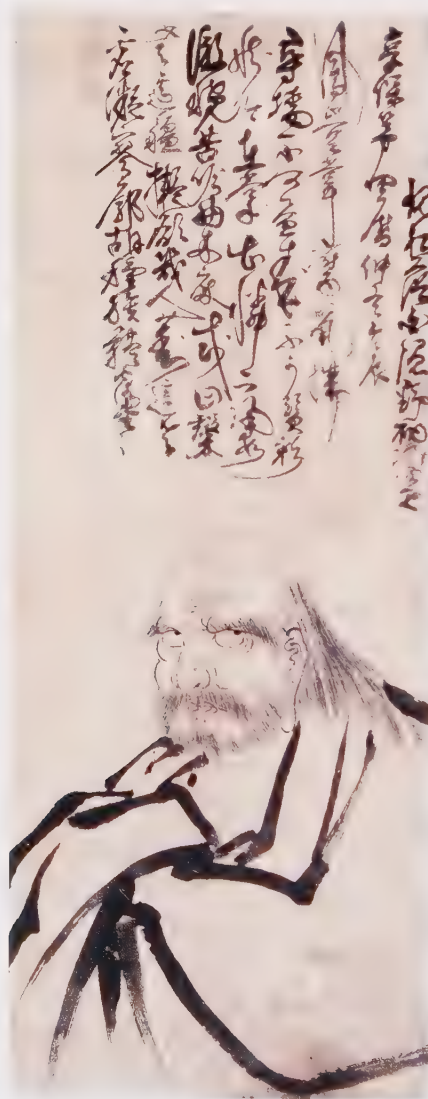


FIGURE 3.1
Daruma (age 36)
Ink on paper, 92.4 x 36 cm.
Private Collection, Japan



FIGURE 3.2
Daruma (age 67)
Ink on paper, 224.8 x 136.4 cm.
Shōjū-ji

facial features with the bolder treatment of the robe is a stylistic trait common to many Muromachi-period Zen paintings and their Chinese Southern Sung Dynasty (1127–1279) predecessors.

Gradually, as Hakuin developed a more individual brush style, he began creating more personal and powerful portraits of the patriarch, but he was still aware of the relationships between the visual portrayal and the spirit of the figure, inscribing one work at the age of fifty-four,

I have painted several thousand Daruma, yet have never depicted his face. This is only natural, for the moment I spread the paper to draw it, the original form disappears. All of you, what is this Daruma that cannot be drawn?³

Among the few dated works from Hakuin's sixties, one painting of Daruma, dated 1751 when Hakuin was sixty-seven (fig. 3.2) reveals great progression from the 1720 Daruma, most notably in the figure's boldness in terms of brushwork, size, and sheer presence. More importantly, certain details begin to reflect traits that will distinguish Hakuin's later style, including the large heavy eyes, the bulbous hooked nose, and the ornate treatment of the earring. At the same time, the figure still retains certain traditional qualities, such as the round head with a relatively low forehead. At this point he still seems to be pondering the meaning of these Daruma portraits as well. In his seventies he inscribed one image, "If you think this face is that of Daruma, then you're a cat who can't catch a mouse."⁴

Although Hakuin painted Daruma portraits throughout his career, the images from the last years of his life are considered to be the most powerful, and we see the intensity and directness with which Hakuin imbues his later figures (plate 3.1). As in almost all of the traditional images, the artistic emphasis is placed on the figure's face, here seen scowling intensely as if deep in concentration. The patriarch's eyes seem focused on the inscription above, which reads, "See your own nature and become Buddha," a phrase attributed to Daruma himself and inscribed often on Daruma portraits.⁵ To emphasize the visual impact, Hakuin has placed the inscription close to the image and written in a stocky, bold, and direct manner, visually reinforcing the patriarch and his fundamental teaching.

Hakuin's brushwork throughout the composition is blunt, terse, and bold with very little, if any, modulation of the brush. There is just the rich, dark ink with its mottled tones and intermittent streaks of "flying white" where the white of the paper breaks through the black of the ink. Here the eyes, nose, and roughly brushed eyebrows take on much more distinctly Hakuin characteristics; most significantly, the face and forehead are becoming elongated. In this image Hakuin has condensed the teachings and traditions of Zen into one powerful image: the commitment and directness of his own spirit and Zen experience captured in the intense gaze of the patriarch.

Finally, at the age of eighty-three, Hakuin painted his ultimate Daruma (fig. 3.3). Now completely dominating the space, this figure reveals fierceness and authority befitting a Zen master of Hakuin's age and experience. The size and scale of this painting has allowed Hakuin to add a few details not generally included

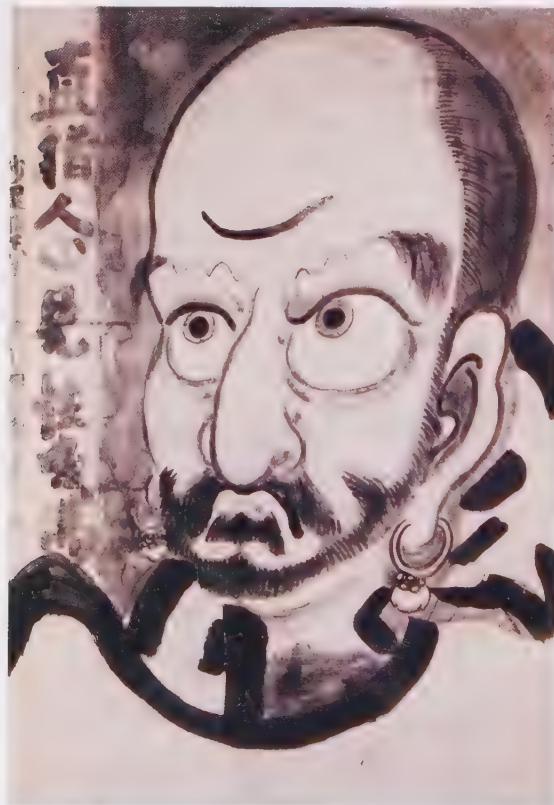


FIGURE 3.3
Daruma (age 83)
Ink on paper, 134 x 91.8 cm.
Shōgen-ji



PLATE 3.1

Large Daruma

Ink on paper, 126 x 55 cm.

Chikusei Collection



PLATE 3.2

Side Daruma

Ink on paper, 108 x 37.3 cm.

Ginshu Collection

in his Daruma images: earrings, irises around the penetrating pupils of the eyes, defined strands of hair, and some shading on the face and throat. Hakuin has used mottled ink tones throughout the composition—including a background wash. The gentle yet penetrating scowl of the eyes looks directly to the inscription, which again reads, “See your own nature and become Buddha.” The placement of the inscription clearly affects the depiction of Daruma, who now looks forward toward the inscription, not directly upward. The calligraphy is done in the final stylistic stage of Hakuin’s work—massive, bold, blocky, unmodulated in line, and extremely architectonic in structure. Although the previous example is more stylistically representative of Hakuin’s Daruma portraits, this later work reveals Hakuin’s ability to continually experiment, never stagnating stylistically even after he had developed an effective and easily identifiable personal style.

SEATED DARUMA

Historically, Daruma is often depicted seated in meditation, representing the ideal of *zazen* in general, but also usually referring to the nine years Daruma spent meditating in front of a wall at the Shaolin Monastery in China. There are also images of Daruma seated meditating on a grass mat, possibly a reference not only to the practice of meditation but also to the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni, and specifically his enlightenment experience. As we have already seen, Hakuin painted images of Shakyamuni descending from the mountains (plate 2.2), but he also painted elaborate images of the figure in meditation seated on a cushion of thick leaves and grass. He also added the grass mat to some images of Daruma, possibly borrowing the historical symbolism to suggest a sign of elevated status for Daruma, or simply to link the two traditions visually.

Early in his painting career Hakuin brushed numerous such images of Daruma seated in profile on grass mats. These early images reflect a rather painterly quality; the brushstrokes are fluid, the compositions spacious and balanced, the overall feeling is more restrained than in his later examples, and there is also greater variation in brushstrokes, with finer, more controlled lines articulating the details of the face (fig. 3.4). The larger compositional space and varied brushstrokes also allow for the lines of the mat to be clearly delineated; the figure is clearly sitting on some form of foliage.

Over time, Hakuin’s compositions became bolder; the figure fills more and more of the space and takes on a much more dominating, almost menacing presence (plate 3.2). The brushwork becomes more uniform in size and tone, and the thick, heavy lines create a powerfully fierce facial expression. The treatment of the figure’s robe also becomes increasingly ambiguous, and the grass mat is more and more coarsely defined, becoming little more than a few terse strokes emerging from beneath the figure. Here, the face is the focus; all other aspects are merely suggested, and the viewer cannot help but be drawn immediately to the deep intensity of the patriarch’s stern gaze. The inscription, here as in the previous example reads,

No matter how you look at him . . .

The ideal represented in Hakuin's seated Daruma portraits—that Daruma and his teachings are always present, no matter how you look at them, no matter how you represent them—is carried even further in an image of a shoe deftly floating on some water reeds. The single shoe also represents Daruma, more specifically, the legend of his experiences in China. According to legend, Daruma had traveled from India to China and visited Emperor Wu (464–549, r. 502–49) of the Southern Liang Dynasty in Nanking. Despite the emperor's devotion to and patronage of Buddhism in China, he could not understand Daruma's Zen teachings. As a result, Daruma left the Liang court and traveled across the Yang-tze River on a reed to the north, where he settled at Shaolin Monastery and meditated for nine years.⁶ Images of Daruma crossing the Yang-tze River on a reed, known in Japan as *Royō Daruma*, date from the thirteenth century.⁷ Hakuin painted this subject numerous times throughout his career, depicting a scowling Daruma figure draped in long, voluminous robes balanced precariously on a few long reeds, the toes of his bare feet curled slightly trying to maintain their grip.



FIGURE 3.4
Side Daruma
Ink on paper, 89.6 x 26.7 cm.
Manyoan Collection

The story continues that after Daruma's death, a Chinese emissary encountered an Indian monk who wore only one shoe and said that he was on his way back to India. The emissary reported his encounter to the Chinese emperor, who ordered Daruma's grave to be opened. It was found empty except for one shoe.⁸ Images of this subject (*Sekiri Daruma*) are less common than other Daruma themes, but Helmut Brinker illustrates one anonymous example with an inscription by Shōmyō Nanpō dated 1296.⁹ Hakuin created several examples of this theme, with the standing figure of Daruma carrying a single shoe (fig. 3.5).

More often, however, Hakuin eliminated the figure of the patriarch and depicted only the shoe. In one example, in plate 3.3, we see it balanced atop some reeds floating on the water. Hakuin seems to have combined two aspects of the Daruma legend: that of crossing the Yang-tze River on a reed and that of Daruma returning to India with his one shoe. There is no spatial or compositional distinction between word and image here; the inscription, "Even this is the Reed Daruma," falls in columns from left to right, trailing around the back of the shoe. Hakuin then visually integrates the work further by cradling the shoe within shorter reeds while one reed rises up on the right, its dotted end of foliage mimicking the calligraphic elements. Although Hakuin painted hundreds of Daruma portraits, this image reinforces the point that the physical image of the patriarch is not the only way to represent his teachings. It also reflects the fact that practitioners must have been familiar with the Daruma legends to recognize this cryptic painting.



FIGURE 3.5
Daruma with Shoe
Ink on paper, 126.4 x 56 cm.
Eisei Bunko Foundation



PLATE 3.3

Daruma's Shoe

Ink on paper, 40 x 54 cm.

Kikuan Collection

THE SIXTH PATRIARCH

The selection of Hui-neng (Jp.: E'no) (638–713) as the Sixth Patriarch marked a major turning point in the development of Zen practice, teaching, and transmission, imbuing it with a distinctly Chinese and egalitarian flavor. Hui-neng was born to a poor family and given no education. Supposedly, at his birth two beams of light rose into the air and the room was filled with a strange fragrance. At dawn two monks visited the family's house and proclaimed, "The child born last night requires an auspicious name; the first character should be 'Hui' and the second, 'Neng.'" His father, Lu Hsing-t'ao, asked what the name meant, and the monks replied, "'Hui' means to bestow beneficence on sentient beings; 'Neng' means the capacity to carry out the affairs of the Buddha."¹⁰ As a young boy Hui-neng supported his widowed mother by selling firewood. One day, while selling wood, he heard a voice reciting the *Diamond Sutra*. Hearing the phrase "Your mind should flow uninterrupted, free of all attachments," he experienced enlightenment. Hui-neng learned that the monk reciting the sutra had been a student of the Zen Fifth Patriarch, Hung-jen (Jp.: Kōnin) (601–74), so Hui-neng decided to visit Hung-jen at his monastery on Mount Huang-mei.

At their initial meeting Hung-jen asked Hui-neng, "Where do you come from?" Hui-neng said, "From the south." The master said, "What are you seeking?" Hui-neng said, "I seek to be a Buddha." The master said, "Southerners have no buddha nature—how can you attain Buddhahood?" Hui-neng said, "As far as people are concerned, there are north and south, but how could that apply to the buddha nature?"¹¹ Hung-jen was greatly impressed by this insight from a beginner. Recognizing Hui-neng's potential, the master invited him to remain at the monastery, and set him to work in the kitchen chopping wood and operating the rice mill.

In terms of painted portraiture, among the oldest recorded sets of portraits of the First Six Patriarchs in China are a set, now lost, of hanging scrolls attributed to the painter Ch'en Hung, who was active in the T'ang court in the mid-eighth century.¹² By the mid-ninth century it became common practice to include portraits of the First Six Patriarchs on monastery walls. The tradition then spread to simple ink illustrations and woodblock prints.

A thirteenth-century Japanese ink drawing of the First Six Patriarchs (after a Chinese woodblock model from 1054) reveals small groupings of figures around each patriarch placed diagonally back and forth down the page, beginning at the upper right with Bodhidharma and Hui-k'o with his severed arm, and ending in the lower left with Hui-neng and two of his followers.¹³ Perhaps the most famous image of the Sixth Patriarch alone is a work attributed to the Chinese painter Liang Kai (active first half of thirteenth century), depicting "The Sixth Patriarch Chopping Bamboo." Other images from the thirteenth century depict Hui-neng as a layperson as he goes off to collect firewood. There are also more formal *chinsō*-style portraits depicting Hui-neng, no longer as a layperson

doing menial work but now fully transformed, wearing formal robes and sitting on the traditional seat of a Zen master.

These established traditions of Sixth Patriarch images were transmitted to Japan, particularly the tradition based on full figural images, or half-figure portraits.¹⁴ However, while early Japanese monk-painters quickly adopted Zen subjects, images of the Sixth Patriarch did not seem to catch on as readily (at least there seem to be fewer extant examples). Later, professional artists such as those of the Kanō School developed an interest in Zen figures from China.¹⁵ Thus, by the early seventh century, the depiction of Hui-neng in Japan was well established, at least among professional painters. However, such Zen figures by monk-artists were less common until depictions of the Sixth Patriarch took on a new format in the hands of Zen-related Japanese artists. Gradually, an artistic approach emerged in which the patriarch is represented merely by a simplified image of a rice mill. The courtier Konoe Nobutada (1565–1614) created one of the simplest (and perhaps one of the earliest) of these rice mill images, simply using two terse dashes of the brush to suggest the shape of the mill.¹⁶ At this point the symbolism of the mill became firmly established in Japanese Zen iconography, and it remained the symbol for the Sixth Patriarch in Japanese Zen imagery.

Although there is a very unusual image by Hakuin of a small figure standing on a very large rice mill,¹⁷ more often Hakuin continued the tradition of simply implying Hui-neng's presence by painting the mill (plate 3.4). In one image, Hakuin dramatically draws the pedal of the mill (*karausu*) across the composition, the heavy end that pounds the rice on the left, punctuated by a heavy pool of ink that emphasizes the weight of the tool. In contrast, the pedal, on the right side of the composition where the user's foot works the mill, is enhanced by a crisp area of flying white breaking up the rich brushstroke. Above, Hakuin writes,

*Ôtsu Naraya ni kitari ya koso
Fumi mo narauta yo karausu o.*

Coming to the Nara-ya in the village of Ôtsu,
You learn to tread the mill.

The reference to Ôtsu is curious. The Nara-ya was a brothel frequented by the numerous travelers who passed through the village of Ôtsu along the Tōkaidō road. The lines have been identified as an old lullaby, in which Hakuin has made a pun on the word *fumi*, which can mean “to tread” (as on the mill), or “to write.” The word *karausu* can mean “rice mill” or (slightly altered as *karauso*) a “lie or untruth.” So the second lines can read, “You learn to tread the rice mill” or “You learn to write and tell lies.” There is a Japanese saying, “*uso mo hoben*,” “lying is also an *upaya*.” *Upaya* is a means of teaching the Dharma or accomplishing something, so lying or stretching the truth is a way of teaching. Hui-neng learned to tread the mill, but also learned that words could lead



PLATE 3.4
Sixth Patriarch's Rice Mill
Ink on paper, 27.5 x 42.5 cm.
Shin'wa-an

to truth, even though in Zen, words are not always truth.¹⁸ The Nara-ya may be a reference to the transition to adulthood.

Others have speculated that Hakuin is actually making a sexual reference, likening the pounding of the rice mill to those who avail themselves of prostitutes.¹⁹ As noted in the first chapter, Hakuin had great respect and admiration for these women, who were generally forced into their situation due to economic necessity; he likened them to bodhisattvas. Is it possible that Hakuin is saying that Zen understanding can be found in anyone—even those who seem most unlikely?

Hakuin's placement of the inscription is unusual; he begins the calligraphy in the center of the composition and has the lines fall in a diagonal pattern to the right. The fine, spidery lines of calligraphy contrast effectively with the weight of the mill, preventing the overall composition from becoming too heavy. Ironically, the final stroke of Hakuin's inscription points down gingerly to the pedal, as if a delicate touch might just set it in motion.

Returning to the story of Hui-neng, when the Fifth Patriarch Hung-jen announced that it was time for him to select a successor, he instructed everyone to write a poem expressing Zen mind. After the monastery's leading monk, Shen-hsiu (ca. 606–700), wrote a poem, the other monks assumed he would win and did not bother to write their own poems. In his poem, Shen-hsiu compared the human body to the bodhi tree:

One's body is like the tree of satori,
One's mind is like a clean mirror.
Continue to polish this mirror
So that no dust can settle.

One day an acolyte passed through the threshing room talking about this poem. Hui-neng asked the acolyte about the poem, and then requested the boy to take him to where the poem was written. "I've been treading the pestle for more than eight months, but haven't been to the hall yet. I beg you to take me to the south corridor so that I can see this verse and make obeisance to it. I also want to recite it so that I can establish causation for my next birth and be born in a Buddha-land."²⁰ Hui-neng went with the acolyte to the hall, and asked him to read the poem to him. He then had him write what Hui-neng composed as his own poetic response:

Satori is not a tree
The mirror has no stand.
Originally, there was not one thing.²¹
So where would the dust settle?

Hung-jen recognized a much deeper understanding of Zen in Hui-neng's poem, but did not make this public.²² Instead, late that night the Fifth Patriarch secretly transmitted the Dharma to Hui-neng, bestowing upon him a robe and a

bowl (*den'e*, the signs of the Dharma transmission), and said, "My Dharma must be transmitted from mind to mind. You must make people awaken to themselves."²³

Hakuin transformed the key line from this poem, "*hon rai mu ichi butsu*" (Originally, [there was] not one thing) into a compositionally creative and dramatic calligraphy (plate 3.5). In this narrow composition, Hakuin has linked the first two characters of the phrase (*hon* 本, and *rai* 来) into a long series of zigzagging gestures down the center of the space, brought together by a single bold vertical stroke running the length of the paper. To the right he then adds the characters *mu* (無) and *ichi* (一), squeezing them between the zigzagging lines in the center. Finally, in the lower left, he ends the phrase with the character *butsu* (物), transforming the shape of the character into an oddly rounded figure. By not only visually transforming the individual characters but also playfully arranging them compositionally, Hakuin has, in effect, written,

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Hung-jeu decided that Hui-neng should succeed him as the Sixth Patriarch. The fact that Hui-neng was an uneducated layperson is important to the development of Zen, since his reception of the patriarchy went against all traditional conventions of the religious establishment. This would have been especially significant to Hakuin, who continued in this vein, bringing Zen teachings and practice to the general populace regardless of education, social standing, or economic situation.

RINZAI

Although not widely known for fine, delicately painted images, Hakuin was capable of remarkable control and finesse with the brush. A significant example of this style is seen in his portrait of Rinzai Gigen (Ch.: Lin-chi I-hsuan) (d. 866). Rinzai was a disciple of the Chinese master Huang-po Hsi-yun (Jp.: Ōbaku Kiun) (d. 850), and was the founder of the Rinzai School of Zen. He was famous for his loud, startling shouts such as "*katsu!*" and sudden blows with a stick to help stun practitioners into realization. Stories about Rinzai are found throughout Zen koan collections, and his own collection of recorded sayings is compiled in the *Rinzai roku* (Ch.: *Lin-chi lu*).



PLATE 3.5

"Mu Ichi Butsu"

Ink on paper, 133 x 28 cm.

Eisei Bunko Foundation

According to one of numerous stories, one day Rinzai went to visit the burial stupa of Daruma. There, he encountered the caretaker, who asked, "Will you bow to the Buddha first, or to the First Patriarch (Daruma)?" Rinzai replied, "I will not bow to either one." The caretaker then asked, "How did they both come to offend you?" Rinzai simply shook his sleeves and departed.²⁴ Rinzai was famous for these seemingly enigmatic gestures and statements, yet it was this approach and understanding that made him such a fierce and revered master. Rinzai's encounters with monks and disciples were equally direct. According to the *Rinzai roku*, a monk asked Rinzai, "What is the essence of Buddhism?" Rinzai raised his fly whisk, and the monk shouted, "*katsu!*" Rinzai hit him.²⁵

Portraits of Rinzai have been known in Japan since the fifteenth century; one of the most famous is attributed to the painter Soga Jasoku (d. 1483) and was kept in the Daitoku-ji subtemple, Yōtoku-in. In this portrait, the master sits, legs folded, with his right fist held sternly in his left hand, and a fierce expression on his face. Hakuin borrows from this tradition for his own portrait of Rinzai (plate 3.6). Although here Rinzai is depicted basically from the waist up, his scowling expression, furled brows, and piercing eyes are quite similar to the Jasoku image. Furthermore, Hakuin also shows Rinzai with his right fist held in his left palm. Hakuin has, however, also added his own specifics to the image. Rinzai appears gaunt, his cheeks sunken and his collarbone and ribs pronounced. These physical features do not, however, suggest any sense of frailty, in fact quite the opposite; the severity of his features enhances the sense of power and focus. Hakuin depicts the master with his mouth slightly open, his tongue protruding as if he is about to give a great "*katsu!*" and the energy of this shout intensified by his clenched fist. In an astonishing manner, Hakuin has managed to capture and convey the physical fierceness and spiritual intensity of this great master through a meticulously and finely brushed painting.

The inscription also reveals Rinzai's irreverent attitude, stating,

As a child unfilial, as a monk uncontrolled.
When meeting guests, he shakes an angry fist.
Seeing people, he emits a frightening "*katsu!*"
To the wondrous bones of the ancestors,
he is indifferent as autumn frost.
Alas, this person has this disease!

In another portrait of Rinzai (plate 3.7), Hakuin uses the same basic composition, but replaces the fine, fluid lines of the previous image with wide, largely unmodulated strokes creating a rougher, less formal quality. The master's face also appears less severe, with wider eyes that look upward rather than outward as in the previous image where his piercing stare directly penetrates the viewer. Here Rinzai appears more wizened than ferocious, commanding less of the composition and enhanced by light washes of color. In terms of Hakuin's artistic development, most notable is the change in the figure's



PLATE 3.6

Portrait of Rinzaï

Ink on paper, 130 x 55.7 cm

Gubutsu-an

nose, which has been transformed into the large hook nose for which Hakuin's figures are most known. Hakuin also eliminates the long, cryptic inscription and replaces it with a simple and direct "Katsu!" written with sweeping angles in mottled ink.

One of Rinzai's friends was the layman Fuke (Ch.: P'u-hua) (d. 860), who was noted for his eccentric behavior, many accounts of which are recounted in the *Rinzai roku*. One of the most delightful stories reveals Fuke sitting in front of the meditation hall eating raw vegetables. Rinzai happens upon him and says, "You look like a donkey." Fuke replied, "Hee-haw, hee-haw," to which Rinzai said, "You thief!" Fuke left, shouting, "Thief, thief!"²⁶

Hakuin depicted another famous story about Fuke, also found in the *Rinzai roku*. One day Fuke was wandering through the streets begging for a robe. Although many people offered him one, he did not take any of them. Rinzai then ordered the cooper to make a coffin. When Fuke returned to the monastery, Rinzai showed him the coffin and said, "I had this robe made for you." Fuke carried the coffin back into town telling everyone, "Rinzai had this robe made for me!" He then announced that he would go to the East Gate to die. People crowded after him, but Fuke said, "No, not today, tomorrow." Fuke did this for three days, until no one believed him any longer. Finally, on the fourth day, Fuke

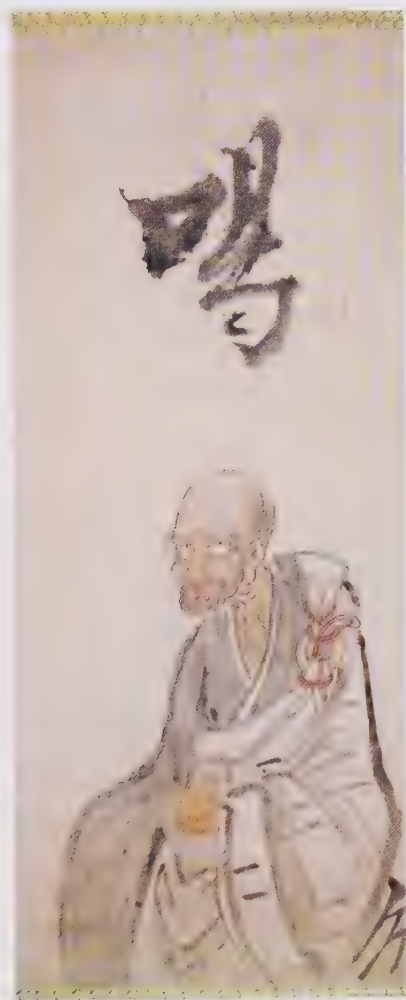


PLATE 3.7
Rinzai "Katsu"
Ink and color on paper, 132.1 x 54.4 cm.
Indianapolis Museum of Art

went alone outside of town and crawled into the coffin. He asked a passerby to nail the lid shut. News of Fuke's death spread through town, and people rushed to see. When they opened the coffin, it was empty, but they could hear the ringing of his handbell up in the sky.²⁷

Hakuin painted this subject several times, but changed his approach each time. In one example, he painted a figure hammering down the lid of the coffin with Fuke rising above, ringing his bell. The inscription says, "The bell still roars after it has stopped. The gates of a thousand thatched huts peel back the madness."²⁸ In another example, Hakuin again depicts a figure hammering the lid of the coffin, but now Fuke's presence is suggested only by his sack, sedge hat, and walking staff placed next to the coffin.²⁹ Hakuin makes note of Fuke's physical absence in the inscription: "The faint sound of the bell, where has it gone?"

In the third example, Hakuin depicts the wonderful moment when Fuke floats up into the sky ringing his bell, leaving his sedge hat and staff behind next to the coffin (plate 3.8). As in the image of the Sixth Patriarch's Mill, Hakuin's inscription makes reference not only to the Zen aspect of the story but to everyday events, and again to a specific place in Japan. Here he writes the same inscription as on his depiction of Vulture Peak (plate 2.3),

If you look up, Mount Washizu;
If you look down, fishing boats along the Shigeshishi shore.

Hakuin again uses the placement of his inscription as a visual link, allowing Fuke to float gracefully up into the sky while at the same time compositionally relating him to the coffin below. As noted in chapter 2, Mount Washizu is located near Numazu, a small seaside town near Ryūtaku-ji, known for its fishing.³⁰

Beyond the Zen ideals of Fuke, whose story was probably fairly familiar to practitioners, Hakuin enhances Fuke's tale by emphasizing the familiar and everyday. Fuke spent his days wandering through a small town, perhaps much like Numazu, and even in death, in the moment he floats up from the earthly to what is beyond, he looks down and sees only the wonderful everyday events and aspects of daily life. Even in death there is no magical, mysterious, glorious transformation; the view is the same: enlightenment reflects the everyday.

Ō-TŌ-KAN

Beyond Rinzai and Fuke, Hakuin also painted images of other famous Chinese Zen masters and teachers, including Yun-men Wenyan (Jp.: Ummon Bun'en), Pai-chang ch'ing-kuei (Jp.: Hyakujō Shingi), and Hsü-t'ang Chih-yü, whom he regarded as his spiritual ancestors. But Hakuin was respectful of Japanese masters as well, painting images of, among others, Daiō Kokushi, Daitō Kokushi, and Kanzan Egen.



PLATE 3.8

Fuke

Ink on paper, 94 x 26 cm.

Hosei-an

As noted in the introduction, these figures represent three of the most important figures in the establishment of Rinzai Zen in Japan (plate 3.9). Daiō, in the center of the triptych, began his training at the age of eighteen at Kenchō-ji in Kamakura under Lan-ch'i Tao-lung (Jp.: Rankei Dōryū) (1203–68 or 1213–78), a Chinese master teaching in Japan. In 1259, Daiō traveled to China to continue his training; there he achieved enlightenment under the Chinese master Hsü-t'ang Chih-yü and became his Dharma successor. Daiō returned to Japan in 1267 and became an active teacher in Kamakura, Kyoto, and Kyushu, where he spent thirty years at Sōfuku-ji. In 1304, he was called to Kyoto to serve as abbot of Manju-ji, then in 1308 he was appointed abbot of Kenchō-ji. During his installation ceremony he is recorded as saying, "On the twenty-ninth day of the twelfth month of this year, my coming is coming from nowhere. On the twenty-ninth day of the twelfth month of next year, my going will be going to nowhere."³¹ He died exactly a year later to the day and left the following death verse:

I rebuke the wind and revile the rain,
I do not know the buddhas and the patriarchs;
My single activity turns in the twinkling of an eye,
Swifter even than a lightning flash.³²

Daiō's most prominent disciple, Daitō, is shown in the portrait to the right. When Daiō was appointed abbot of Kenchō-ji in Kamakura in 1308, Daitō followed him there. Daiō had earlier given his student the koan "Ummon's Barrier," and Daitō had been in Kamakura for only ten days when, according to a statement in his biography,

He suddenly smashed through the "Barrier," and reached the state of the complete harmonization of opposites, the boundless and absolute Truth, where the Great Dharma manifested itself before his very eyes. Sweat drenched his body. He ran directly to the Master's study. "Almost the same path!" he cried. The Kokushi [Daiō], greatly startled, said, "Last night in my dreams I saw Ummon enter my room. Now today you have passed through the Barrier. You must be the second Ummon!" Covering his ears, Shūhō [Daitō] ran out. The next day he presented the master with two verses:

Having once penetrated the Cloud Barrier [Ummon],
The living road opens out north, east, south, and west.
In the evening resting, in the morning roaming, neither
host nor guest.
At every step the pure wind rises.
Having penetrated the Cloud Barrier, there is no old road,
The azure heaven and the bright sun, these are my native
place.

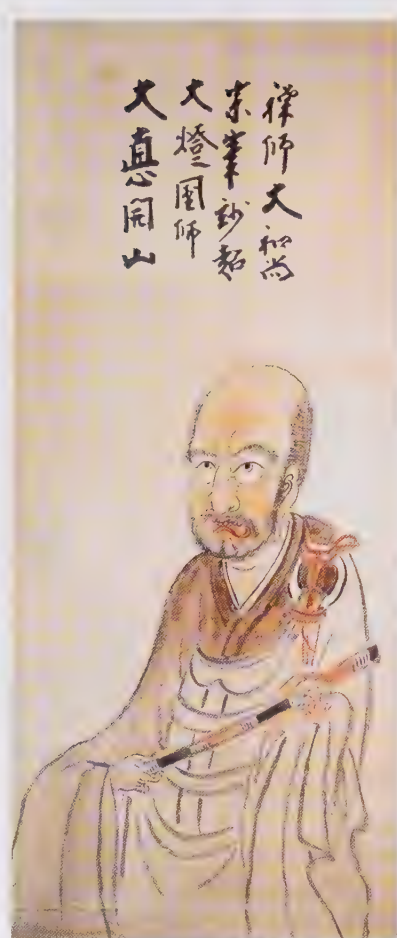
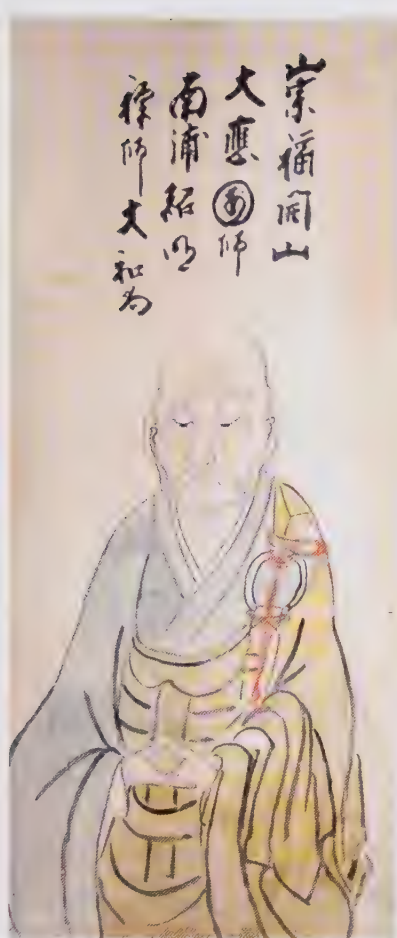
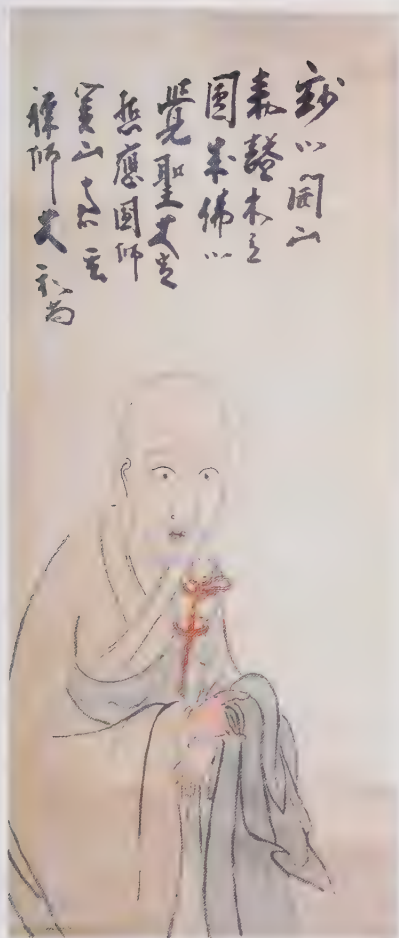


PLATE 3-9
 Triptych: Daiō, Kanzan,
 and Daitō
 Ink and color on paper,
 each 125 x 54 cm.
 Eisei Bunko Foundation

The wheel of free activity constantly changing is difficult to reach.
Even the golden-hued monk (Kasyapa) bows respectfully and returns.

... When the master [Daiō] had read these lines he picked up his brush and wrote [beside them]: “You have already cast away brightness and joined yourself to darkness. I am not like you. Now that my line has reached to you, it is firmly established. But for twenty years you must ripen your spiritual understanding.”³³

Daiō, in his comments, notes the importance of continuing the lineage and acknowledges its “security” with Daitō. Daitō’s twenty years of spiritual deepening would also become an important theme in Zen painting.

Daitō himself had several notable disciples, including Kanzan Egen, depicted in the portrait on the left. Kanzan entered the priesthood as a child, studying under his uncle, Gekkoku Sochu, a disciple of Daiō. In 1308 Gekkoku took his nephew to Kenchō-ji in Kamakura to meet Daiō, who accepted him as a disciple and gave him the name Egen. Unfortunately, Daiō died the following year, and Kanzan returned home and remained there for nearly twenty years. At the age of fifty, Kanzan heard Daiō’s follower, Daitō, lecture, and decided to travel to Kyoto to train under him at Daitoku-ji.

Since Daitō had achieved full enlightenment through the koan “Ummon’s Barrier” (*kan*), he decided to give Kanzan this same koan. Kanzan meditated on it for two years; when he finally penetrated it, Daitō presented him with the following verse:

KANZAN

Where the road is barred and difficult to pass through,
Cold clouds eternally girdle the green mountain peaks.
Though Ummon’s single “*Kan*” has concealed its activity
The true eye discerns [it] far beyond the myriad mountains.
—I herewith present to the “custodian of books” Egen,
the gō [name] “Kanzan.” Mid-spring, fourth year of Karayaku [1329], signed Shūhō Myōchō of the Dragon Peak Mountain.³⁴

After receiving Daitō’s Dharma transmission, Kanzan was instructed to complete his Zen training by living in seclusion in the mountains of Ibuka (Gifu Prefecture). Kanzan worked for eight years as a hired laborer, tending cattle and working the fields. In the evenings, he meditated on a narrow shelf of rock jutting out from a cliff behind Shōgen-ji; a sign still denotes the spot as “Kanzan’s Meditation Stone.” In 1337, upon the recommendation of Daitō, Emperor Hanazono summoned Kanzan to Kyoto to be the founder of a small

temple, formerly a part of his summer residence. This temple became Myōshin-ji, the Rinzai subject to which Hakuin traced his lineage.

Kanzan was sixty years old when he moved to Myōshin-ji. Despite the impressive appointment he had been given, he continued to lead a frugal and simple way of life, wearing tattered robes, raising his own vegetables, and allowing the few buildings in the compound to fall into disrepair. One day Musō Soseki (1275–1351), the revered Zen master and founder of Tenryū-ji, stopped at Myōshin-ji for a visit. Kanzan pulled a few coins from his sleeve and told his attendant to go buy some tea cakes from the local shop. But, having no tray, Kanzan served tea on the lid of his inkstone box. Musō was greatly impressed by this simplicity, and is said to have stated later that Kanzan's lineage would eventually take precedence over his own.

In 1360, after leaving his affairs in the hands of his only Dharma heir, the former courtier Juō Sōhitsu (1296–1380), Kanzan dressed in his traveling clothes and walked to the pond near the temple's front gate. Standing beside the pond, he passed away quietly. No tomb was constructed for him, and out of deference to his memory, no funeral service has ever been performed for a chief priest of Myōshin-ji.

Kanzan left only one Dharma heir, but his Zen lineage, continued through Daitō Kokushi's other heirs, flourished. During the Edo period, Myōshin-ji and its Zen masters dominated Rinzai Zen; Hakuin was the seventeenth generation of Kanzan's line, and from him almost all Rinzai Zen masters trace their lineage. Today Myōshin-ji is the largest headquarters temple of the Japanese Rinzaï sect, overseeing more than three thousand temples throughout Japan.

Because of their unsurpassed contributions to the development and establishment of Zen in Japan, Daiō, Daitō, and Kanzan are often referred to as the “*Ō-tō-kan*,” a term created from syllables in their names. Like the previous portrait of Rinzaï, Hakuin's depictions of the *Ō-tō-kan* are quirky, free, and engaging, but still capture the individuality of each master. Daiō sits tranquilly in the center, hands folded and eyes cast down in meditation, seemingly at peace in the knowledge that the teaching lineage is secure. As in all three portraits, his bright blue and yellow robes are tersely outlined in rough, unmodulated lines, while the patchwork of his *kesa* is distinguished from his plain robes by parallel vertical and horizontal lines.

In contrast to Daiō's serenity, Daitō, on the right, reveals a fierce scowl and wields a menacing *kotsu* (small scepter), looking as if he might yell out or whack someone momentarily. Daitō was a great, eccentric personality, as Hakuin clearly alludes to here.

In the third image, Kanzan, on the left, is shown rather sweetly, eyes wide open, appearing quite approachable, holding part of his robe. Hakuin seems to have captured Kanzan's humble, unassuming nature and simple approach to life, enabling him to appear more accessible than the other two figures. Hakuin noted his personal admiration for Kanzan in *Itsumadegusa*, writing, “The National teacher Kanzan, for example, is said to have walked the entire length of

the Great Eastern Road twenty times without once looking up to notice Mount Fuji as he passed beneath it. I still remember the deep impression that story made on me when I first heard it. It filled me with an admiration for Master Kanzan that has never diminished.”³⁵

The quirky nature of these portraits is enhanced by Hakuin’s use of color, which he adds rather freely, imbuing the figures with great warmth and approachability rather than formality. These are not particularly detailed or complex images, yet Hakuin manages to distinguish each master physically and psychologically. The inscriptions above them simply identify each master with their temples and honorific names, from the right:

FOUNDER OF DAITOKU[-JI]

Daitō Kokushi

Shūhō Myōchō Zenshi

Dai Oshō

FOUNDER OF SŌFUKU[-JI]

Daiō Kokushi

Nanpō Shōmyō Zenshi

Dai Oshō

FOUNDER OF MYŌSHIN[-JI]

Choku Eki Honnu Enjō

Busshin Kakushō

Daijō Shōō Kokushi

Kanzan Egen Zenshi

Dai Oshō

DAITŌ

Upon Daiō’s death, Daitō returned to Kyoto and seemingly disappeared. According to legend, Daitō spent these “Twenty years of Silence” living among the beggars under Gojō Bridge in Kyoto. Eventually, Emperor Hanazono (r. 1308–18) began to hear about this eccentric but highly revered Zen master, and decided to invite him to lecture at the palace. Messengers were dispatched to Gojō Bridge, but Daitō would not reveal himself from among the beggars. Finally, Hanazono, having heard that Daitō had an affinity for a melon called *makuwa-uri*, went himself in disguise to Gojō Bridge carrying a basket of these melons. The emperor distributed the melons one by one to the beggars, carefully looking at their faces. Noticing one beggar with an unusual brilliance in his eyes, Hanazono said, “Take this without using your hands,” as he offered the melon. The beggar replied, “Bring it to me without using your feet.” The emperor realized this was Daitō, who, having revealed himself, could no longer refuse to lecture.

Hakuin captured this period in Daitō’s life in several images of the master, filling the compositions with a wild look and ragged robes. In one example (plate 3.10),



PLATE 3.10

Daitō Kokushi as a Beggar

Ink on paper, 131.8 x 56.4 cm.

Eisei Bunko Foundation

Daitō is shown gesticulating animatedly with one hand while holding a small sack in the other. He wears a tattered robe, straw raincoat, and sedge hat on his back. The end of his wooden staff peeks from beneath the hem of his raincoat, although it is not clear where the top of the staff ends. Although the brushwork appears untrammelled and applied with gestural abandon, if you look carefully, you can see the initial sketch lines that Hakuin used to guide his final brushstrokes.

Daitō's facial features and expression are quite similar to those in the triptych portrait, but Hakuin takes the opportunity to emphasize the years spent under the bridge by lengthening Daitō's hair and giving him a generally more bedraggled appearance. Despite his haggard expression, Daitō's dynamic personality fills the composition, and Hakuin must squeeze his inscription around the top of the figure, reading,

All the great sages of the past
have ensured a bright future [for Zen].
Don't be fooled by the appearance of this old man.
He can take it without using hands,
if you can bring it without using your feet.

Much like the paradoxical aspect of the phrase above, Daitō left a *dōka* that Hakuin wrote out as a calligraphy (fig. 3.6),



FIGURE 3.6
Dōka
Ink on colored paper, 31.3 x 15.1 cm.
Shin'wa-an

<i>Mimi ni mite</i>	If you see with your ears
<i>me ni kiku naraba</i>	and listen with your eyes
<i>utagawaji</i>	all doubts will fall away
<i>onore nari keri</i>	of their own accord
<i>noki no tamamizu</i> ³⁶	like water dropping off leaves. ³⁷

D. T. Suzuki wrote of this poem, “We usually hear the sound of the falling rain with our ears, but this is not what Daitō says when he writes, ‘. . . see with your ear and listen with your eye.’ When we return to the point where all the ways we sense things are not parceled out into their conventional patterns, we enter the dimension he speaks of as ‘the world transformed by the song of the rain falling through the trees.’”³⁸

Hakuin writes the poem in a style called *chirashigaki* (scattered writing); the poem begins in the center of the composition (reading from right to left), then continues with the higher portion, and finally ends at the bottom. The use of colored paper recalls works attributed to the master calligrapher Ono no Michikaze (Ono no Tōfu) (896–966), imparting a sense of antique elegance to the work, but the idiosyncratic, spidery, and oddly angular style of Hakuin distinguishes it from court-style calligraphy.

In 1315 Daitō built a small hermitage to the northwest of Kyoto, which he named Daitoku (Great Virtue). Gradually, with the support of the court, the hermitage was enlarged, and in 1327 the temple Daitoku-ji officially opened under the patronage of Emperor Go-Daigo (r. 1318–39) and retired Emperor Hanazono, who had become a disciple of Daitō. Daitoku-ji then became the leading Rinzaï Zen center during Japan’s Middle Ages.

A crippled leg prevented Daitō from being able to sit in a full lotus position during meditation. On January 21, 1338, feeling his death approaching, he seated himself on his meditation cushion, broke his crippled leg himself, and assumed the full lotus position. Despite the pain, he picked up his brush and wrote his final words:

I have cut off buddhas and patriarchs;
 The Blown Hair [sword] is always burnished;
 When the wheel of free activity turns,
 The empty void gnashes its teeth.³⁹

He dropped his brush and died. His bloodstained hemp robe and last writing are stored at Daitoku-ji and brought out each year on the anniversary of his death. Daitō left fifteen Dharma heirs, and his teachings are contained in the *Daitō Kokushi goroku* (Recorded Words of Daitō Kokushi) and the *Daitō Kokushi hōgo* (Teachings of Daitō Kokushi).

Out of respect for Daitō, Hakuin wrote out his *Shūhō Myōchō daishi shu ni shimesu* (The Admonitions of Shūho Myōchō):

All of you who have come to this monastery have gathered here for the sake of the Way, and not for the sake of clothes or food. As long as you have shoulders there will be something to wear; as long as you have a mouth, there will be something to eat. So, twenty-four hours a day, face the ineffable and investigate it thoroughly. Time passes like an arrow, so do not apply your mind to trivial matters. Exert yourselves! Exert yourselves!

—Written in response to the request of the monk Soto,
by the Old Monk of the Sala Tree, aged 83.⁴⁰

KOANS IN HAKUIN'S ART

Because koans are one of the fundamental features of Rinzai Zen practice and training, central to Zen understanding, Hakuin often made reference to them in his painting and calligraphy. One of the most charming examples is of an ox in front of a window (plate 3.11). This image refers to Case Number 38 in the *Mumonkan* collection. In this koan, Wu-tsu Fa-yen (Jp.: Goso Hōen) (1024–1104) says, “An ox passes by the window. His head, his horns, and his four hooves all go past. But why can’t his tail pass?”

Mumon's Comments: If you make a complete about-face, open your eye, and give a turning word on this point, you will be able to repay the four kinds of love that have favored you and help the sentient beings in the three realms who follow you. If you are still unable to do this, return to this tail and reflect upon it, and then for the first time you will realize something.

MUMON'S VERSE

Passing by, it falls into a ditch;
Coming back, all the worse, it is lost.
This tiny little tail,
What a strange thing it is!⁴¹

This koan was one of Hakuin's “Eight *Nantō* Koans,” those that were particularly difficult to penetrate and that required great clarity to fully understand. Hakuin wrote,

Always the same is the moon before the window.
Yet if there is only a plum branch,
It is no longer the same.
If to this tail anything at all is added, however infinitesimal
it may be, its true form of no-form is forever lost.⁴²



PLATE 3.11

Ox and Window

Ink on paper, 44 x 59.5 cm.

Ginshu Collection

Hakuin painted images of this koan several times, perhaps suggesting not only its importance to him but also the fact that he felt the subject lent itself well to his visual teaching. In this example, the ox sits with a particularly determined expression and fierceness in his eye. Not only do we see bits of gray underdrawing beneath the black of the ox, but there is also a small gray nose ring that is absent in other examples of this subject by Hakuin.

The inscription is simply Goso's question:

An ox passes a window.
The top of its head, its four hooves all pass.
Why can't its tail pass?

Playfully, as the ox sits contemplating the window, the character for "ox" (牛) in the inscription points directly down at the window as well.

As we have seen, the deaths of Zen masters were often as surprising as their lives, and also represented their final teachings. Death for Hakuin was an important theme that he commented on often, knowing it would strike right at the heart not only of his Zen teaching but of human existence. In fact, he often referred to "death" as a koan and wrote,

If you should have the desire to study Zen under a teacher and see into your own nature, you should first investigate the word *shi* [death]. If you want to know how to investigate this word, then at all times while walking, standing, sitting, or reclining, without despising activity, without being caught up in quietude, merely investigate the *kōan*: "After you are dead and cremated, where has the main character gone?" Then in a night or two or at most a few days, you will obtain the decisive and ultimate great joy. Among all the teachings and instructions, the word *death* has the most unpleasant and disgusting connotations. Yet if you once suddenly penetrated this "death" *kōan*, [you will find that] there is no more felicitous teaching than this instruction that serves as the key to the realm in which birth and death are transcended. . . . For the person who has determined this "death" *kōan* even to a small degree, the great matter of seeing into his own nature and attaining awakening is as obvious as looking at the palm of the hand.⁴³

Hakuin wrote the character "Death" followed by a brief inscription several times, varying the inscriptions. In some cases he wrote, "Death: the young person who can penetrate this, becomes great," and "Death: young people, if you are afraid to die, die now. Die once, and you won't have to die again." In the example here (plate 3.12), Hakuin has written,

Death—
From the time of the patriarchs,
the great opportunity for spiritual life.



PLATE 3.12

"Death"

Ink on paper, 33 x 50.5 cm.

Manyoan Collection

The calligraphy captures this important teaching through a glowing example of brushwork with rich, smoky ink and a strong, prominently placed “Death” character (死). This is wonderfully balanced, with the right and left components sitting perfectly under the horizontal top stroke of the character, which here is slightly pitched up to the right, providing a sense of breath and movement within the visual stability of the character.

This powerful character is then offset nicely by the rest of the inscription, with its angular strokes that seem to dance this way and that, in contrast to the single “Death” character with its solemn theme. For Hakuin, death was not a somber message but an opportunity for transcendence. The characters dancing back and forth, in and out, almost reaching out to one another between the two columns, visually suggest a more optimistic sense of life.

CERTIFICATES OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Beyond inspirational messages and specific Zen teachings meant to encourage and influence practitioners, Hakuin also used his art to acknowledge specific moments of achievement by his followers. Throughout much of his career he used images of fly whisks and staffs inscribed with a follower’s name to document the practitioner’s penetration of a koan. Beyond their importance as an aspect of Hakuin’s teaching and his interaction with practitioners, these images are intriguing due to their visual development and artistic transformation over time.

Hakuin gave *Ryūjo Hossu* (Dragon Staff and Whisk) images primarily to lay followers, as certificates (*inka*) recognizing the successful attainment of an enlightenment experience. The imagery of the “Dragon Staff” is derived from Case Number 60 in the *Hekiganroku*, “Ummon’s Staff Becomes a Dragon,” in which the T’ang Dynasty Zen master Ummon (Ch.: Yun-men) (d. 949) says, “My staff has transformed itself into a dragon and swallowed the universe! Where are the mountains, the rivers, and the great world?” The dragon thus becomes a symbol for the student who has successfully experienced enlightenment. The white horsehair whisk is also a symbol of the Zen abbot and his teaching being transmitted from master to student. By examining these images, many of which are dated, we see not only Hakuin’s stylistic development, but more importantly his creativity, imagination, and curiosity in manipulating forms and images.

Until now, little was known about the Dragon Staff certificates except that they seemed to have been given primarily to lay practitioners. Recently, however, Norman Waddell published a translated collection of little-known Hakuin texts that shed new light on Hakuin’s teachings entitled *Hakuin’s Precious Mirror Cave*. These texts include *Sakushin osasna monogatari* (“The Tale of My Childhood”) and *Takayama Yūkichi monogatari* (“The Tale of Yūkichi Takayama”), both composed in Hakuin’s last decade.

In the preface to *The Tale of My Childhood*, Hakuin recalls a visit from an elderly lay practitioner who recounts how in two relatively short teaching visits

to Edo in 1759 and 1761, Hakuin had bestowed some seventy Dragon Staff certificates on lay students who had penetrated the double barrier of the “Sound of One Hand and Put a Stop to All Sounds.”⁴⁴ The elderly gentleman also voiced the concern that some lay practitioners had stopped their practice, naively believing that their initial *kenshō* experience was sufficient. As a result, he implored Hakuin to write about the importance of postenlightenment training, and to compile a list of all the students who had received Dragon Staff certificates, promising to “preserve this list with the greatest care so that in the future we can use it to form a karmic link that will enable us to join together and work toward creating a Buddhland on Earth.”⁴⁵

After completing *The Tale of My Childhood* in 1761, Hakuin began writing *The Tale of Yūkichi Takayama*, in which he reveals even more about his relationships to lay practitioners, the relationships of lay followers to each other, and the significance of the Dragon Staff certificates, while also brilliantly reinforcing the purpose and importance of post-satori training within a rather engaging supernatural tale that is based, at least loosely, on actual events.

Within this fantastic tale of spirit-possession, a Shinto deity from the local Inari shrine possesses and speaks through the body of young Yūkichi. Meanwhile, disparaging priests from other Buddhist sects criticized Hakuin’s Dragon Staff certificates, narrow-mindedly and jealously promoting the idea that the certificates are causing impressionable men and women to fall prey to Hakuin’s flattery that they had passed the double barrier koan and achieved *kenshō*. The certificates are described as “silly” and no better than “fresh used toilet paper.”

In the end, of course, all is vindicated, and we are reassured that “Zen Master Hakuin drew those Dragon Staff certificates and personally awarded them to students because he wanted to encourage them to continue exerting themselves in their practice.”⁴⁶ As noted earlier, Hakuin did not write about his art or its distribution much, so even this short passage is revealing. But most significantly, Hakuin has managed to involve everyone as characters in his dramatic tale. By virtue of having earned a Dragon Staff certificate, a large number of lay followers were emotionally invested in this story and its moral of the importance of maintaining their practice. In the tale, we also get a glimpse of Hakuin’s financial reliance on his lay followers, as they work together to raise money to assure the publication of Hakuin’s work.

This glimpse into the personal interactions (even if embellished by Hakuin) is groundbreaking for the development of lay Zen practice. Although many of Hakuin’s writings rely on the Zen experiences of himself and past masters, here we see him revealing the importance of the lay Zen experience. It is one thing to pass out certificates for encouragement, but quite another to make lay followers part of a text—for them to see themselves as crucial figures within Hakuin’s world. He not only is speaking to them, but is using them to make his point. They are a vital part of the process in many aspects; the Dragon Staff certificates are not just about their own achievements, but part of the larger goal of spreading and maintaining true Zen practice. The supernatural part doesn’t hurt either; you still have to tell a good story.



PLATE 3.13

Inka Staff (1753)

Ink on paper, 132.9 x 38.6 cm.

Kikuan Collection

Most significantly, the tale reveals how these lay students formed local lay Zen societies, calling themselves *jōhotsu nakama* (league of students who have received master Hakuin's Dragon Staff),⁴⁷ keeping track of each other and organizing their own practice meetings, something more generally associated with modern lay Zen in the West.

Hakuin's images of "Dragon Stuffs" began in his sixties as standard depictions of Zen staffs and whisks, the implements of a Zen master. One work, dated 1753 when Hakuin was sixty-nine years old, is a straightforward image of a thin, gnarled staff encircled by the master's flywhisk (plate 3.13). It is personally inscribed to a Mr. Ito, acknowledging a significant spiritual breakthrough. The fact that Hakuin took the time to create these documents reveals that he must have believed they were important as concrete documentation, essential in reaching lay and more rarely monk followers in order to provide encouragement and deepen their commitment and dedication to practice. One must assume that these documents had great personal meaning to their recipients as well.

In subsequent examples, the top of the staff gradually developed a hole, but it still retained the appearance of a wooden staff. Then slowly the top of the staff began to bend slightly and the hole widened, until by the late 1750s the top of the staff had transformed into a dragon's head, complete with a large eye socket and a mouth grasping the whisk. One such image (plate 3.14), dated 1762 when Hakuin was seventy-eight years old, says,

On Buddha's Birthday [April 8] in 1762, Nomura Magabe from a county in Suru [Shizuoka] penetrated my double massive barrier and heard the sound of one hand. I therefore brush this as a certificate for this valiant person.

The inscriptions on most of these certificates are generally the same, acknowledging that a specific person has penetrated the two-part "Sound of One Hand and Put a Stop to All Sounds" koan (or occasionally some other koan).

Hakuin's commitment to the "Sound of One Hand" koan had been firmly established by the early 1750s, and in 1753 he wrote,

When the [Sound of the] Single Hand enters the ear even to the slightest degree, your mind, another's mind, relatives' minds, the Buddha mind, the minds of gods, the minds of all sentient beings are at one glance seen through without the slightest doubt. This is called "the pure supernatural power of seeing into the minds of others." When the [Sound of the] Single Hand enters the ear even to the slightest degree, in the mind with which all men are originally endowed, not one bit of ignorance exists, not one bit of birth and death remains. All is vast perfection, all is vast emptiness. This is called the "pure supernatural power of exhausting all outflowings."⁴⁸

In 1767, at the age of eighty-three, Hakuin acknowledged another student's breakthrough of the two-part "Sound of One Hand" koan (plate 3.15). In this ex-



PLATE 3.14

Inka Staff (1762)

Ink on paper, 127.1 x 28.8 cm.

Manyoan Collection

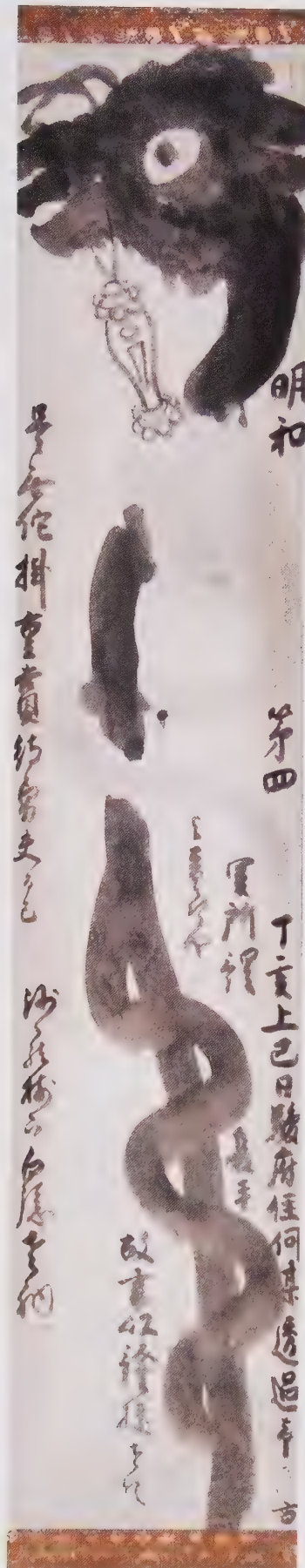


PLATE 3.15

Inka Staff (1767)

Ink on paper, 132 x 29 cm.

Kikuan Collection

ample, Hakuin has added a pupil to the eye socket and the dragon's muzzle has become more pronounced. The image appears to be more dragon than staff, as its head and carefully attenuated facial features—pupil, mouth, and nostril—serve to enhance the sense of animation and animism. That same year Hakuin painted another *inka*, and we can infer by the still more developed style that it is even later. In this example (fig. 3.7) the staff/dragon appears with a fully developed snout and more delineated dragon shape. This is possibly the latest *inka* image known, and at this point, there is no distinction—staff and dragon are the same.

The transformation of these *inka* images as they grow in form and power over the years is not only visually engaging, but also reflects the growth and development of Hakuin as a teacher. Does the graphic metamorphosis reflect a transformation in spiritual or personal perception on Hakuin's part? Or was



FIGURE 3.7
Inka Staff (1767)
Ink on paper, 108.6 x 28.8 cm.
Shin'wa-an

he simply playing with the imagery? The question is, at what point did Hakuin begin consciously transforming the image? Ironically, lest his followers take the image too literally, Hakuin once commented on the koan from the *Hekiganroku*, stating,

There is no such thing as turning into a dragon. From the perspective of the staff directly swallowing the universe, there's no need to turn into a dragon and grab the clouds and fog to fly; even those who have passed through the three tiers of locks are not live dragons.⁴⁹

CONCLUSION

Hakuin's Zen images provide a glimpse into not only how he viewed his role as a teacher, but also how he viewed the role of Zen masters of the past and his own position within this lineage. In these images, we see not only what was important to Hakuin in terms of his own Zen experiences, but also how he felt he could utilize the experiences of past masters as teaching tools in conjunction with his own art. Although many Zen masters and teachers before him had done brushwork, Hakuin was the first master to consciously and effectively use art to reach such a wide audience. His art was not meant exclusively for those practitioners who were already committed and devoted, but was created to intrigue and attract new followers as well. In the case of his dragon/staff *inka* certificates, his art was also a means to personally interact with practitioners by acknowledging their achievements in a concrete manner. Through his art, Hakuin was able to venerate and respect the past, celebrate and appreciate the present, and by doing all this, ensure the future.

—AUDREY YOSHIKO SEO



Handwritten calligraphy in Chinese characters, arranged vertically. The characters are written in a fluid, cursive style. From right to left, the characters appear to be: 飛 (fly), 鳥 (bird), 籠 (cage), 中 (middle/inside), 有 (possessive particle), 鳥 (bird), 籠 (cage), 中 (middle/inside), 有 (possessive particle), 鳥 (bird), 籠 (cage), 中 (middle/inside), 有 (possessive particle).

DAILY LIFE AND LIVING CREATURES

The clearest expression of how Hakuin invented a new visual language for Zen can be seen in his paintings of popular images, showing living creatures of all kinds as well as the supernatural beings seen earlier. In this he agreed with the Indian Buddhist scripture, “In the language of angels, of serpents, of faeries, in the speech of demons that talk of humans, in them all I’ve expounded the Dharma’s deep teachings, and in any tongue that a being may grasp them.”¹

LANDSCAPE AND BLIND MEN

While traditional Zen paintings had generally been limited to Zen exemplars, landscapes, and occasionally symbolic plant subjects such as orchids or bamboo, Hakuin exploded the range of subject matter to include a wide range of new subjects. Even when he took up a theme from the past, he transformed it. For example, a Hakuin landscape painting of 1752 at first seems quite traditional in showing mountains, a few houses and a temple, with monks and other figures in small scale (plate 4.1). This style comes from the Chinese ink-painting tradition that was developed in Japan by monk-painters such as Shūbun (flourished 1414–63) and Sesshū, and later also by professional artists. Hakuin probably enjoyed continuing this tradition, but his creativity led him to add some very personal touches to this work. One of these is the unusual composition itself, with a good deal of empty space right and left, and elements such as houses and the temple’s pagoda slightly tilted to the right.

Hakuin’s special and unique touch, however, comes in adding three blind men on the bridge in the lower center. Trying to cross a dangerous log bridge can be seen as a visual metaphor for crossing over to enlightenment, a familiar Buddhist verbal metaphor such as the chant at the end of the *Heart Sutra*:

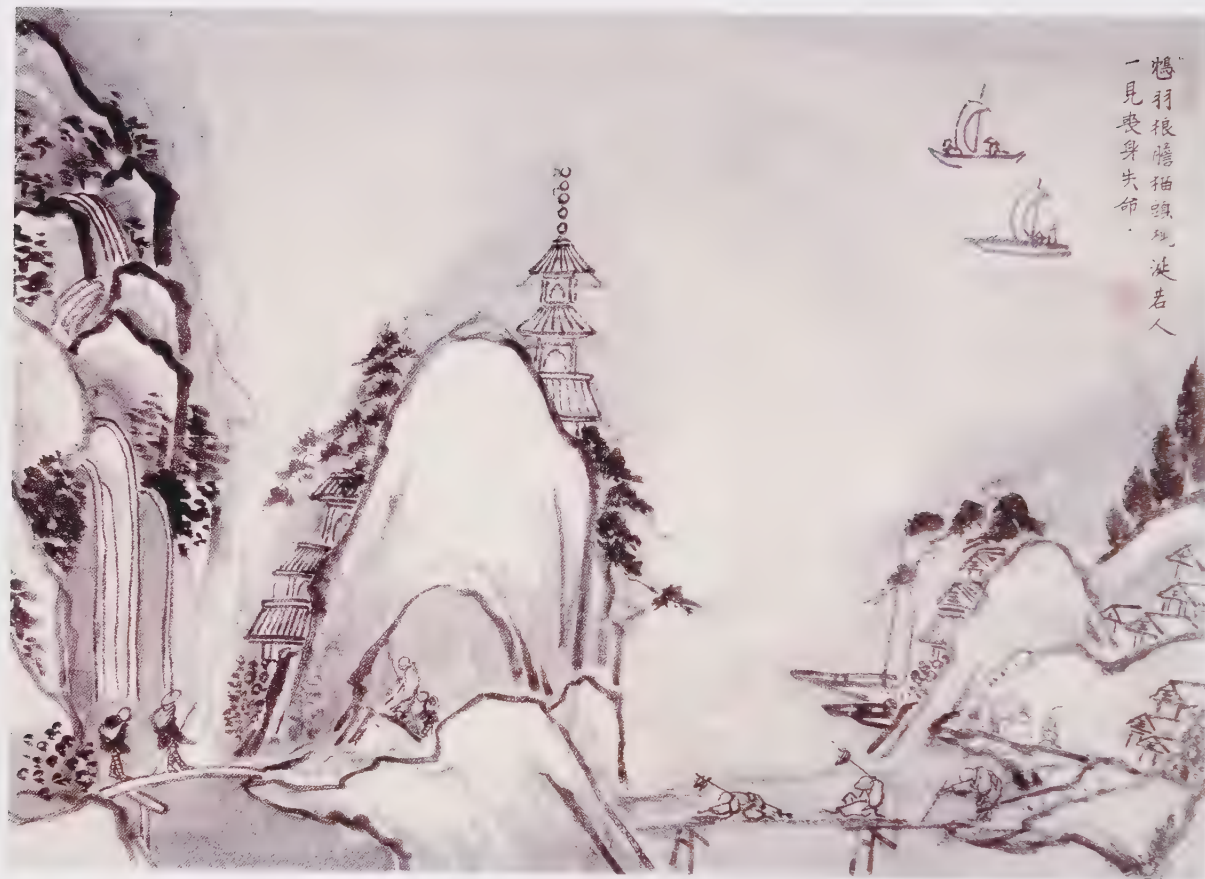
Gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha.

Gone, gone, gone beyond, gone to the other shore, all hail!

FACING PAGE

Only a Wren

See page 154.



鵲羽狼騰猶強，徒若人
 一見喪身失命

PLATE 4.1

Landscape with
 Blind Men (1752)

Ink on paper, 40.9 x 56.6 cm.

Eisei Bunko Foundation

Hakuin noted in his commentary on the *Heart Sutra*, “The Chinese for [*paramita*] means ‘reach the other shore.’ But where is that? . . . Take one more step! . . . Is there a soul on earth who belongs on ‘this shore’? How sad to stand mistaken on a wave-lashed quay!”²

Some Japanese scholars believe this ink landscape represents a particular site where a log bridge over the Kano River connected Chinno in Shizuura to the small twelve-house hamlet of Mamano in Ema village.³ This became known as *Mamano-tsugibashi* (the Log Bridge of Mamano), which had to be replaced every time it was lost to flooding. In Hakuin’s landscape, however, the right side represents the secular world while on the left is the Buddhist world of the mountain temple, which the three small figures in the center are trying to reach. The blind man in the center seems to have almost given up, or perhaps he is just resting, while the other two are making their way carefully forward.⁴

In the upper right corner there is another rare example of one of Hakuin’s pupils inscribing his work; here it was added by Tōrei Enji (see chapter 7). At first this *gatha* (Buddhist poem) seems to bear no relation to the painting at all:

Wings of the cockatrice, gall of the wolf,
Head of a dead cat, spit of the fox!
—Should a man catch sight of this creature,
His life would end, he’d die in a trice!⁵

Who is this fearsome creature? Since the poem doesn’t seem to refer to anything in the painting, might Tōrei be describing his teacher, the great Zen master Hakuin himself? This would certainly be courageous, especially considering that “fox spittle” is a term often used for false Zen teachings, but this kind of vilification can also have a Zen purpose. Hakuin had discussed his need as a Zen teacher to produce “a stupid blind oaf,” so it is certainly possible to imagine Tōrei returning the favor. These insults are all part of the Zen use of opposites; for Tōrei merely to praise Hakuin would be too obvious, reinforcing stereotypes and lazy thinking, while his opprobrium wakes us up.⁶

Hakuin also makes clear through paradox that in one sense a Zen teacher can do nothing for a pupil. For example, he wrote, “The Masters of our school have never imparted one shred of Dharma to their students. Not because they were worried about protecting the Dharma, but because they were worried about protecting their students.”⁷

What, then, can a student do? Hakuin insists that they focus on their own progress: “Independent liberation is when there are no Buddhas above, no sentient beings below, just one person in the universe.”⁸

It is in this context that Hakuin’s paintings can be approached. Blindness may be a benefit when confronting a one-eyed goblin, or a difficulty when trying to cross a bridge. It depends entirely on the person and the situation, and this may be why Hakuin painted the theme of blind men crossing a log bridge at least seven other times as the main subject, with landscape elements reduced to a minimum. Curiously, one painting has nine blind men, one has five, three



PLATE 4.2

Three Blind Men on a Bridge

Ink on paper, 19.2 x 67 cm.

Chikusei Collection

have three, two have two, one has one, and one has only the sketch outline of a single figure; this once again demonstrates how Hakuin continued to change and experiment in his art. It may also bring to mind the statement by John Cage, “A structure is like a bridge from nowhere to nowhere, and anyone may go on it.”⁹

In one of Hakuin’s depictions of three blind men, the shores are simply depicted on the right and left edges of the painting, mountains float in space above, and on the right a few strokes of black ink suggest pine trees pointing toward the figures on the bridge (plate 4.2). Creating a focus for the painting, these blind men are suggested only by very simple short dashes and dots of the brush, yet they are fully alive; they have the combination of seeming fragility and inner strength of the insects that may inherit the earth.

Starting from the right, the blind men seem to be struggling harder and harder to cross the bridge. The first holds his sandals in his hands as he reaches out with his staff, the second puts his staff in his belt and reaches out with his fingers, and the third crawls forward with his sandals tethered at the end of his staff for balance. To make the situation more difficult, the bridge does not quite reach the other shore. Will they all make it across? Or might this be a single blind man in three stages of his journey?

A second version of the theme with only two blind men brings us closer to the figures (plate 4.3). The bridge is now a fuzzing thick gray brushstroke, and there is less background. Again the first blind man reaches out with his staff, but here the second figure is omitted, leading directly to the crawling blind man. Since they are larger, Hakuin enhances them with more variations between gray and black ink, and the blind men become more specific and less universal. Their task is slightly easier as well—this time the bridge seems to reach all the way to the other shore.

Comparing Hakuin’s different versions of the same subject can be fascinating. No matter how similar they first appear, there are always small but significant changes, demonstrating that each time he took up the brush, Hakuin was reenergized with his own creativity. In the case of this second painting, in addition to the different number of figures, there are a few thin lines in the lower right suggesting water, which do not occur in the first, while the total scale changes significantly. Even with three figures rather than two, the first painting suggests more solitude in the vastness of nature by including more empty space, while the second version can be considered more human-centered.

The subject of blind men was not new to Buddhism, but had previously often been presented in a more negative way. For example, here is a capping phrase (which could be applied to a koan) from traditional Zen:

One blind man tugs many blind men;
Pulling each other into the fire pit.



PLATE 4.3

Two Blind Men on a Bridge

Ink on paper, 28 x 83.8 cm.

Manyoan Collection

In his depictions of blind men on a bridge, Hakuin added his own *dōka* poem on both of his paintings in the upper left, using the traditional Japanese five-line *waka* form of 5-7-5-7-7 syllables:

yōjō mo	Both the health of our bodies
ukiyo mo zatō no	and the fleeting world outside us
maruki bashi	are like the blind men's
wataru kokoro ga	round log bridge—a mind/heart
yoki tebiki nari	that can cross over is the best guide

The idea of a perilous bridge maintained its importance to Hakuin through the years. In one of his sermons, entitled “The Awakening from Day-Dreaming,” he takes the voice of a merchant, writing, “The world-bridge which takes us across the floating transient world of ours so lightly is so dangerous for the feet which walk over it.”¹⁰

PILGRIMS AND A MONKEY TRAINER

Hakuin's paintings of blind men crossing the bridge may bring a smile of recognition to viewers, and even more droll is his depiction of pilgrims writing on a temple signboard (plate 4.4). In the eighteenth century, Japanese commoners were generally constrained from traveling from province to province unless they were visiting shrines and temples, so pilgrimages became an excuse for seeing more of the country than one's home village or town. It seems that people everywhere want to leave a record of their presence, and here one traveler stands on the back of another to write on a signboard. The official message is “No Graffiti in This Hall!” to which he adds the rejoinder “I beg your pardon.” Hakuin's irony is clear, and may be his way of gently suggesting that visits to temples could be more sincere. On the other hand, the sprightly quality of the painting takes any sting out of it, as though Hakuin could rejoice even in irreverent behavior.

Many pilgrims to this day journey to a series of thirty-three temples and/or shrines, as designated in several different parts of the country. The text on this pilgrim's traveling robe records the occasion: “Kanzeon [Kannon] Bodhisattva” is written down the center, while on the sides are inscribed, “on the twenty-fourth day, from Kōsuke in Shimōsa Province, a group of thirty pilgrims.” Despite the painting's formal composition of a strongly supported vertical leading up to a rectangle, the empty round hat of the central pilgrim seems to become a point of focus, a moment of emptiness amid activity. Balancing the total composition, Hakuin added an inscription on the left in descending columns, “thirty-three temples in the west, please give us pilgrims alms!”

The long sticklike legs and arms of the figures are in the style of *toba-e*, comic paintings usually found in woodblock books of the period, and the round, simplified face of the helping pilgrim also suggests this style (fig. 4.1). In this illustration from *Toba-e senjōteki* (Sensational Comic Pictures) of 1720, we see



PLATE 4.4

Pilgrims

Ink on paper, 32.3 x 41.9 cm.

Shin'wa-an



FIGURE 4.1

Toba-e Figures from *Toba-e senjōteki* (1720)

Ink on paper, 19.5 x 14.7 cm.

Private collection

four figures climbing on each other, and the stylistic similarities in his art suggest that Hakuin was quite aware of such plebeian images and that he used these references deliberately. While some might see this as the equivalent of a bishop drawing a comic book, for Hakuin it was a way to reach out to everyday people in a style that they would recognize and appreciate. Unlike Zen monk-painters before him, Hakuin felt free to use and transform many different art traditions, whether higher or lower on the social scale, to create his innovative paintings.

In reaching out to people of all social classes and professions, Hakuin was often drawn to subjects of everyday life, sometimes combining them with literary references to include more people in his audience. Such is the case in an unusual early Hakuin painting depicting an old man and a boy by a stream, scrubbing taro roots with two poles and a bucket (plate 4.5). This subject refers to the practice at harvest time of offering taro roots to the autumn moon, the largest and most admired of the year; it can also symbolize enlightenment. With their ax, mallet, and basket discarded for the moment, the two figures seem to be pursuing their task actively, but the old man pauses under the pine branches to gaze at the moon in the upper left corner of the painting. The remainder of the left side of the composition is devoted to three inscriptions. The first, lower and beginning with an oval seal, is a *senryū* (satiric haiku) based on the Japanese proverb “twisting a rope after the thief is captured”:

<i>zoku wo</i>	the rope
<i>toraete nawa ya</i>	that captures a thief—
<i>tsuki no imo</i>	the moon’s taro



PLATE 4.5

Taro Roots

Ink on paper, 33.3 x 52.2 cm.

Shin'wa-an

What might this mean? The original proverb suggests that whatever we are doing, it may already be too late. In Hakuin's painting the old man seems mesmerized by the beauty of the moon; is he too late to offer the taro roots? Is Hakuin implying that we can be caught in our own preoccupations, and yet the moon is always present to be experienced? Or that all such human activities can become part of the enlightened mind?

Above the *senryū* is a quotation from an ode by the Chinese poet Su Shih (also known as Su Tung-p'o) (1036–1101), "The moon will soon rise over the eastern mountains." Following the *senryū*, this surely becomes a note of hope. Finally, on the left edge of the painting is an inscription attesting that this is a genuine painting by Hakuin, written by his pupil Reigen Etō (1721–85).

Another of Hakuin's color paintings from this same period also has a humorous edge in both subject matter and style. Here we see a monkey trainer smiling at his pupil dancing on a bucket, while a drummer in the lower right adds a rhythmic accompaniment (plate 4.6). Hakuin has put everything but the dance on the right side of the painting, including the inscription, leaving a great deal of empty space in which the monkey pretends to run with his open fan. Although the monkey is disguised as a woman with a veiled face, like the figures in the previous painting it is depicted in the *toba-e* style with long sticklike legs, adding another touch of humor to the scene.

Perhaps it is this comic aspect of Hakuin's art that seemed the most unusual to his contemporaries and followers; in 1957, the ninety-two-year-old Yamamoto Gempō, abbot of Ryūtaku-ji, wrote in a preface to a book on Hakuin's life and art, "Among Hakuin Zenshi's many great achievements there was a special focus on popular education and culture. Through his paintings and calligraphy, his warm humor can be seen appearing again before our eyes."¹¹

Even such a charming painting as the Monkey Trainer, however, has several layers of meaning. While this simian dance is often done at New Year's, it also represents loyalty through the seasons; monkey performances were popular street entertainment in the mid-Edo period. Hakuin's inscription, a monkey dance song nestled in the upper right corner, mentions a pilgrim of Kumano, referring to the shrine of Tenjin, the exiled and later deified poet Michizane Sugawara (see chapters 1 and 5) with his characteristic plum branch.

Kumano pilgrim passing there
clad in a thin summer kimono,
plum sprays at shoulder and hem,
pond and arched bridge between.¹²

In addition, the pose of the monkey holding out his fan brings to mind one of the most famous scenes in Japanese historical literature, a poignant and symbolic moment from the *Heike monogatari* ("Tale of the Heike"). This celebrated recounting of the civil warfare between the Minamoto (Genji) and Taira (Heike) clans, previously referred to in chapter 2, includes a moment when a warrior on a Taira boat



PLATE 4.6

Monkey Trainer

Ink and color on paper,

43.3 x 57.6 cm.

Eisei Bunko Foundation

holds out his fan. A samurai on shore from the Minamoto clan then shoots it out of his hand with a well-placed arrow, signaling the eventual defeat of the Taira forces.

Therefore while Hakuin's painting can certainly be enjoyed simply as a delightful moment in everyday life, it also includes a number of other aspects. First is the Buddhist idea of impermanence: even a great noble clan like the Taira was defeated and destroyed. Second is the notion of not taking power and rank too seriously: this is a monkey, not a warrior. Third, we are given a reference to a great poet who was unjustly exiled, died, and later was enshrined. Perhaps there is one more layer of meaning: the monkey is depicted as venturing forth into the void. These are all expressed directly through the arts of painting and calligraphy; as Horace Walpole said in his *Maxims of Writing*, "We must speak to the eyes if we wish to affect the mind."

ANT ON A GRINDSTONE

Hakuin must have enjoyed animals, birds, and insects, since he painted them very often. One subject that he often portrayed is an ant crawling around a grindstone, a task that seems self-defeating since the grindstone turns in the opposite direction. One early scroll of this subject shows the ant painted with a black body and thin gray legs on a wet-brushed, gray-ink mill (plate 4.7). This kind of hand mill is still used for grinding green tea leaves into powder for use in the whisked tea of *chanoyu*, the tea ceremony that remains important in Japanese culture to this day.

The haiku inscription on the left side of the format makes a pun on "grindstone" (mill) and "demon," both pronounced "*ma*."

<i>Ma o meguru</i>	Circling the grindstone,
<i>ari ya sejō no</i>	an ant—this world's
<i>mimikosuri</i>	whisper

In this case, "whisper" may mean a hint of a great truth, as well as the tiny sound of the ant walking. Su Shih, who was a serious student of Zen, had written to his brother in 1080 that his life was like an ant crawling against a turning millstone, although it cannot be certain that Hakuin was aware of this passage. In any case Hakuin wrote in his *Keisō dokuzui* (Poison Flowers in a Thicket of Thorns) a poem in Chinese that he inscribed on a now unknown painting of the same subject.

Circling the rim of an iron grindstone,
An ant goes round and round without rest
Like all beings in the six realms of existence,
Born here and dying there without release,
Now becoming a hungry ghost, then an animal.
If you are searching for freedom from this suffering,
You must hear the sound of one hand.¹³



PLATE 4.7

Ant on a Grindstone (early)
Ink on paper, 38.7 x 59.4 cm.

Manyoan Collection

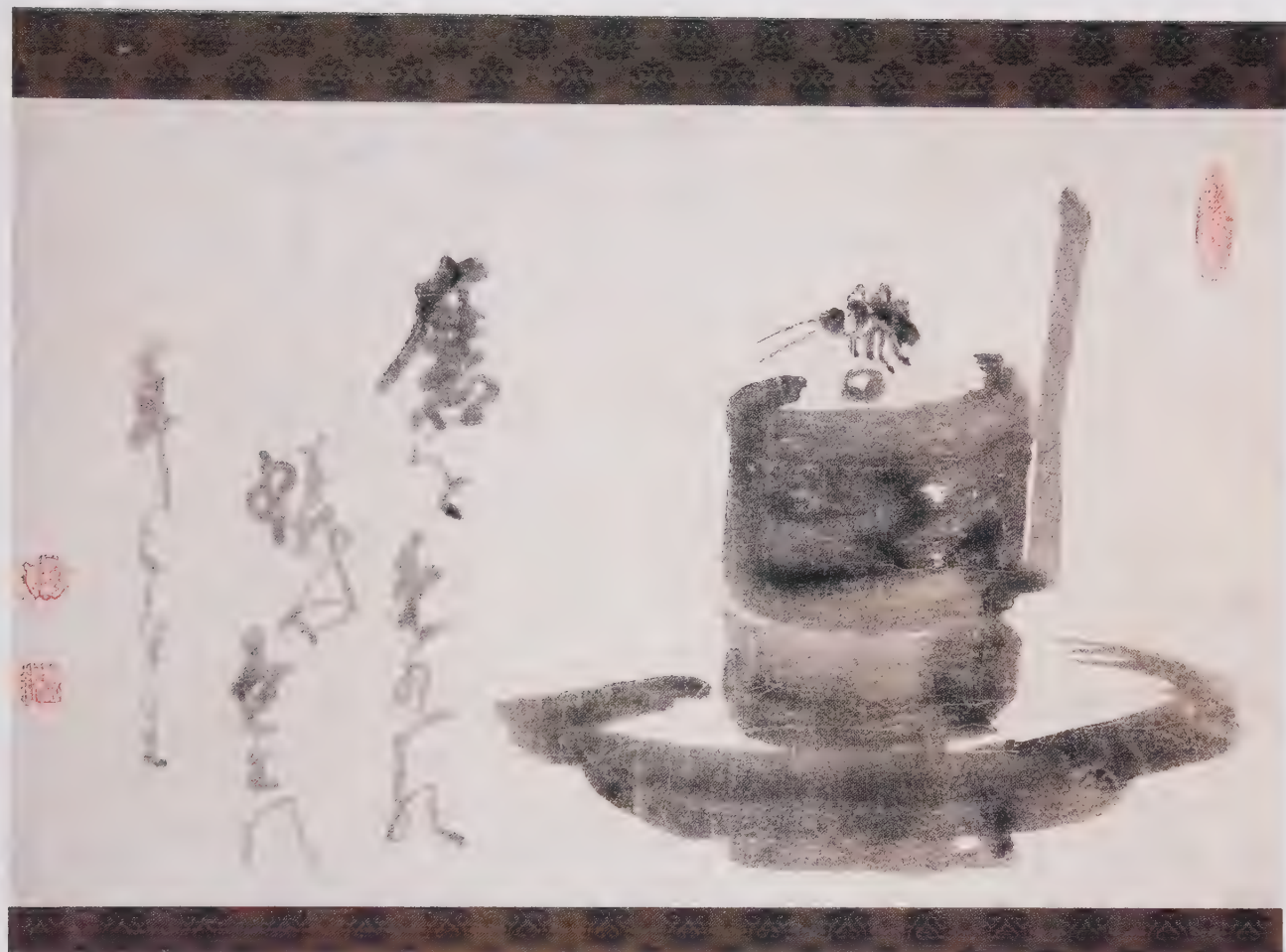


PLATE 4.8

Ant on a Grindstone (late)

Ink on paper, 33.5 x 53.4 cm.

Chikusei Collection

Aside from major Zen themes such as Daruma, most of Hakuin's early subjects were not repeated in the works of his final years, but he continued to paint the ant on the grindstone well into his last decade. This is exemplified by a scroll with a composition that is quite similar to the previous painting, but that also shows several significant changes (plate 4.8). One difference is the much larger size of the ant and the reduction of empty space to bring us closer to the scene. A second change is the ant's visual integration with the grindstone, both showing ranges of gray-to-black merging ink, a feature of Hakuin's late style; the insect no longer seems an interloper, but rather an integral part of the total composition. Finally, the more richly toned inscription is placed closer to the painting, heightening the intensity of the scroll. The result is that we viewers are not merely passive recipients of the painting, but rather we are invited to personally identify with this everyday yet ironic and symbolic activity. As can be seen from many other examples, the charm of Hakuin's earlier style gives way over time to a more powerful style with greater expressive depth, but his humor, as shown by this scroll, remains a significant feature of his art.

Although the two pairs of paintings at first seem quite different, we might not be wrong to see some similarity between the ants and the blind men on the bridge, both metaphorically and in the actual brushwork of circular and short dashes contrasted with larger areas of gray or black ink. The primary difference is that the blind men have a further shore to reach, while the ant seems doomed to go around and around.

BIRDS

While the blind men are bound to the bridge and the ant to the grindstone by gravity, Hakuin also depicted birds in flight, such as one unusual work showing a swallow amid the waves (plate 4.9). Painted in varied tones of ink, this swallow is soaring upward in the empty space beneath the taller of the two strong curling waves. In their power, is there a sense of danger for the bird, or do these great (pre-Hokusai) waves merely emphasize how freely the swallow can fly among them?

Hakuin's inscription, in *dōka* form, makes clear the notion of liberation while again referring to the idea of crossing over:

<i>Hito mo mina</i>	For all people
<i>seishi no umi o</i>	crossing the ocean
<i>koeyotoya</i>	of life and death
<i>urayamashiku mo</i>	how enviable is
<i>tobu tsubame kana</i>	the flight of the swallow

The calligraphy, in Hakuin's spiky earlier style, has several points of interest. Its basic structure creates two diagonal forms: the first three columns and

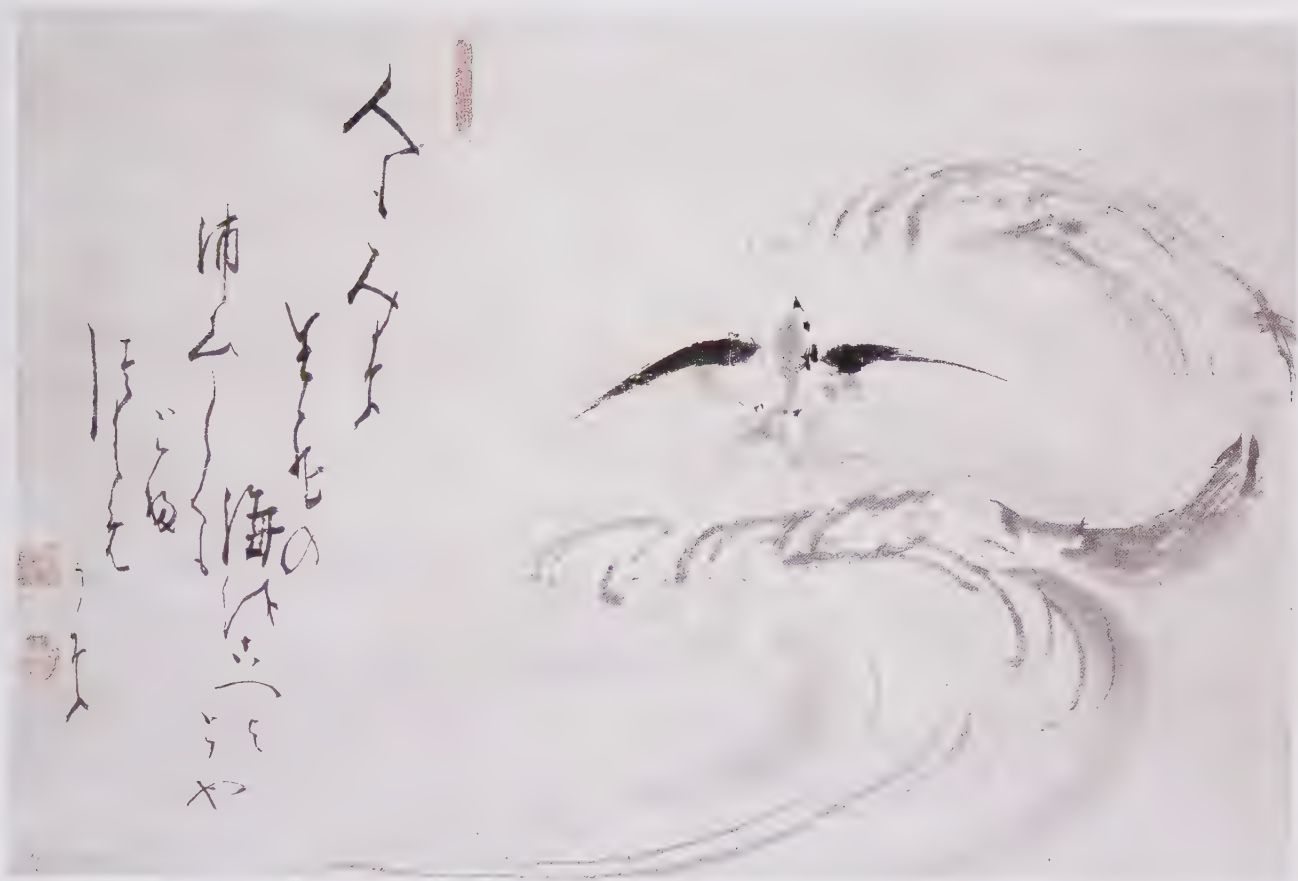


PLATE 4.9
Swallow Among the Waves
Ink on paper, 35 x 52 cm.
Kikuan Collection

PLATE 4.10
Only a Wren
Ink on paper, 39.5 x 57.5 cm.
Shin'wa-an



then the next four. These are enhanced by the opening seal, which begins the first diagonal, and the final two seals, which echo and support the ending of the verse. The composition further divides the five lines of the poem into seven, creating a counterpoint between the poem and its visual presentation. This is especially notable because the penultimate line of the poem is written in a single column, while the final line is divided into three parts; the calligraphic forms rise and fall like waves.

As in much Japanese calligraphy, the different weights of the more complex Chinese characters (*kanji*) and the simpler Japanese syllables (*kana*) help to add a variety of internal rhythms to the inscription, but Hakuin sometimes plays these against one another in unusual ways. For example, the first character is the *kanji* for “person” or “people” (人), attached to the following *kana* for “mo” (も), here even more simplified than usual. Next comes the *kana* for “mi” (み), now written to resemble the opening *kanji* for “people.” This seeming repetition of “people” helps to emphasize the idea of “all people,” and considering that the opening *kanji* originally derived from a pictograph of a person with a body and two legs, Hakuin is able to suggest “people and people” in a completely visual manner.

Another interesting use of calligraphy for an inscription comes in Hakuin’s portrayal of a common house wren (plate 4.10). Here the first character “warbler” (鶯) (*uguisu*) is extended from a strong beginning down the paper, with the “su” (す) added in *kana* to give it a long tail, while the rest of the calligraphy is a good deal smaller in both the size of its forms and the length of its columns. The poem takes the form of a haiku, and may be translated:

*Uguisu ni
nari ga nitatote
misosazai*

How much like
becoming a warbler—
the wren

In Japan the bush warbler, especially loved as a symbol of springtime, is often painted singing melodiously on a branch of flowering plum. Therefore it is comic to imagine a wren pretending to this glory when it is really only chirping on the pestle of a bowl used for grinding food. The humor continues because the word for “wren” is *misosazai*, and miso paste is commonly ground in such a mortar. Since monks eat a good deal of miso in their temple diet, might Hakuin be making fun of those who pretend to be enlightened? If so, his humor is friendly. The little wren, painted with dark ink, calls forth bravely from his diagonal perch, while the mortar and grating bowl are rendered in a restricted tonal range of gray inks that do not intrude on the bird’s visual pre-eminence. The wren may not have a beautiful song, but it chirps directly toward the poem, suggesting that it may be in on the joke, or at least not daunted by it. In China, the wren has sometimes been considered a symbol of honest poverty, so perhaps Hakuin’s final message is that we can be honest with ourselves—not every song needs to be that of a warbler.

Another bird occasionally painted by Hakuin is the night heron, which he depicts stepping upon a *dojō* (loach), a small freshwater fish that resembles an eel (plate 4.11). The inscription begins in the center of the composition, just after the opening oval seal, with the loach complaining,

<i>Nani yatsu da</i>	What are you doing
<i>hito no senaka</i>	climbing
<i>noboriotte</i>	on someone’s back—
<i>dojōbone mo</i>	even a <i>dojō</i> ’s spine
<i>tamaranai zo</i>	can’t take it!

On the far right comes the reply,

<i>Goisagi mashi</i>	It’s a night heron.
----------------------	---------------------

While the painting is simple and charming in its soft gray ink, there are several additional meanings suggested in this inscription. For example, the “*dojō*’s spine” (*dojōbone*) is a pun on the word *doshōbone*, which means “a person with a firm backbone,” suggesting that even people who seem strong must rid themselves of all encumbrances to find their own freedom of spirit.

THE FIVE RANKS

Taking us deeper into Zen philosophy, the word for night heron (*goisagi*) can relate to the Zen conception of “Five Ranks” (*Goi*) of Relative and Absolute (also known as the Apparent and the Real). Developed in China by Zen masters including Tung-shan (Jp.: Tōzan) (807–69), this was a description of spiritual practice through five levels of attainment. Historically of special interest to monks of the Sōtō Zen sect, it also became of great importance to Hakuin in his



PLATE 4.11

Heron and Loach

Ink on paper, 28 x 51 cm.

Kikuan Collection

later years. Although he had studied the Five Ranks under his master Shōju, who called them a compassionate teaching, only in 1748 did their mysteries become perfectly clear to him. At that time, he wrote, “Surely the Five Ranks is a torch on the midnight road, a ferry-boat at the riverside when one has lost one’s way!”¹⁴

As a system of characterizing and epitomizing the different stages along the Zen path, the “Five Ranks” can be considered fundamental, and Hakuin was distressed that they were often ignored by his Zen students, whom he compared to “blind people throwing away their canes, saying they are useless, then getting themselves stuck in the mud.”¹⁵ To encourage his followers, he taught, “If you want to find the profound source, you must search through personal experience. I have labored these thirty years—don’t think it’s easy!”¹⁶

The first of the Five Ranks is the *Relative Absolute (The Apparent within the Real)*. This level can correspond to a first enlightenment experience, and Hakuin wrote, “When genuine practitioners have built up accomplishment at inner seeking and are filled with the power of hidden cultivation, if they suddenly break through, then space itself vanishes. . . . There is neither affliction nor enlightenment. . . . [however] it often happens that people take this rank to be the end of the whole matter; considering it the attainment of Buddhahood, they cling to it obsessively, never letting go. This is called Zen in stagnant water.”¹⁷

The Second Rank is the *Absolute Relative (The Real within the Apparent)*. Here the Zen practitioner moves from primal unity forward to a greater understanding of diversity, and Hakuin comments that it is vital to “see everything before your eyes as your own true clean face. . . . all things become your own precious mirror . . . things and self are not separate.”¹⁸ Yet once again Hakuin stresses that one should not stop at this state, but continue onward.

The Third Rank is *Coming from Within the Absolute (The Coming from Within the Real)*. This corresponds to returning to the world, and Hakuin notes, “In this rank, enlightened beings of the higher vehicle do not dwell in the state of result they have realized; from the ocean of effortlessness, they radiate unconditioned great compassion.”¹⁹

The Fourth Rank is *Arriving in Both (The Arrival at Mutual Integration)*, where the practitioner can spin the wheel of the nonduality of light and dark, just like a lotus blossom springing up from worldly dust. Yet even here one cannot sit in peace, but should continue to the Fifth Rank, *Attainment in Both (Unity Attained)*. This Hakuin does not define or describe, other than to quote Tung-shan’s poem:

Unity Attained:
Who dares to equal him
Who falls into neither being nor non-being!
All men want to leave
The current of daily life
But he, after all, comes back
To sit among the coal and ashes.²⁰



PLATE 4.12

Dancing Foxes

Ink on paper, 32 x 52 cm.

Kikuan Collection

Hakuin’s interpretation of the Five Ranks follows his own two primary messages to monk pupils. He insists first that they should never rest on their spiritual attainments but press onward to ever deeper understanding, and second that they must return to the world with unending compassion.

DANCING FOXES

In another charming depiction of living creatures, the *toba-e* caricature style of painting is apparent in Hakuin’s depiction of dancing foxes (plate 4.12). Although white foxes (*byakko*) are an unusual subject for Zen painting, they have echoes back as far as the eleventh-century *Chōju giga*, the scroll of frolicking animals in which human behavior is satirized. Here, carrying swords at their belts, the two foxes act as a parody through a pun (*yakko* is the word for banner men leading *daimyō* processions in short kimono jackets), but their joyous appearance suggests further meanings. The character written on the robe of the dancer on the left is the word for “gold,” indicating the propitious nature of the image, which may have been meant for the New Year.

The inscription, utilizing slang from Hakuin’s day, takes the form of a *senryū*:

<i>Byakkorasa</i>	White foxes!
<i>bakashite okero no</i>	does bewitching us
<i>hokora de se</i>	make you proud?

Since foxes have long been associated with Shinto deities, often acting as messengers of the gods as well as appearing in folklore as tricksters, we can see the multilayered approach that Hakuin has taken.

In this painting, the tones are gray rather than black, with some fuzzing of wet ink at rhythmic points in both painting and inscription, while the composition is bold, suggesting the form of a cup. The pose of the two foxes creates a strong diagonal repeated in their arms and legs; this diagonal is then echoed more gently in the opening seal and first three columns of the calligraphy, as well as by the final words and the ending seals. While this scroll may appear at first as nothing more than a good-humored cartoon, it has both understated artistic skill and, more important, a sense of enchantment.

In his inclusive attitude toward all living beings, Hakuin often referred to animals and birds in his sermons to the populace. For example, in a colloquial “street chant,” he taught,

A fox bounds over the high shrine gate, and they say he
becomes a deity.
A dove coos, and even though he seems dumb, he has
manners enough to sit three branches below his parents.
A sparrow chirps, reminding you of the road to loyalty.

A crow caws noisily, but feeds his parents with his own
 beak, repaying kindness out of filial piety.
 Birds sing day and night, but you don't lend them your ear.
 You rush around panting all day—this is no way for a hu-
 man to be!
 When you stand or sit, you're always jumpy. That's not the
 way to be a human being, so if someone says you're not
 as good as fish or birds, you can't deny it.
 If you really think you can't deny it, go back to the origin. . . .²¹

MONKEYS

If there is one animal that Hakuin painted more than any other, it is the monkey. This simian appears in various guises—reaching for the reflection of the moon in the water, dangling from a tree, or, in one of Hakuin's happy inspirations, refusing to listen to the song of a cuckoo flying above him (plate 4.13). Here almost the entire painting is done in wet gray ink, with darker tones effectively drawing our attention to the monkey's face and feet. To add even more focus, the monkey is situated in a circular-space cell formed by the cliff and the overhead pines, with a single opening to the left where the cuckoo flies freely toward the inscription. While the image recalls the three “see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil” monkeys, Hakuin has something else in mind as well, as his haiku suggests:

<i>Kikazu to mo</i>	Even when not listening,
<i>katate wageyo</i>	lift up one hand—
<i>hototogisu</i>	the cuckoo!

The sound of the cuckoo has long been celebrated in Japan as the harbinger of summer, and poets and lovers often waited all night to hear its first call. Since the cuckoo is one of the rare birds that sings as it flies, the experience of seeing and hearing it together is an additional joy. But what of the monkey? Instead of simply not hearing evil, this little creature is cutting himself off from the world, avoiding any chance for an enlightening moment.

Is it reading too much into this painting to see the character for “heart/mind” (心) in the ledge under the monkey? Hakuin certainly mixed painting and calligraphy in very inventive fashions, as discussed more fully in the next chapter, but in any case his brushwork is so full of animation that the possibility of words becoming pictures, and pictures becoming words, is certainly evident in many of his scrolls. Perhaps more important, however, is not only the reference to Hakuin's koan on the sound of one hand, but also his urging us not to hide ourselves from experience.



PLATE 4.13
Monkey and Cuckoo
Ink on paper, 55.4 x 43 cm.
Shin'wa-an

Hakuin's concern and sympathy for all beings constantly inform his art, just as they underlie all his Zen teachings. As he wrote for his pupils, "it is essential to conceive an attitude of great compassion and commitment to help all people everywhere."²² He also wrote a poem that expresses his acceptance and delight in the everyday world of living creatures:

Leisurely ants struggle to carry off the wings of a dead
dragonfly,
Spring swallows perch side by side on a willow branch.
Women who work with silkworms, pale and tired, hold
baskets of mulberry leaves,
Village urchins with stolen bamboo shoots creep through
the broken fence.²³

In this context, it becomes clear why paintings of people, animals, and scenes from daily life were creative avenues through which Hakuin could express his compassion for all living beings.

—STEPHEN ADDISS

若何乃尔

(Calligraphy)



CONFUCIAN THEMES AND PAINTING-CALLIGRAPHY INTERACTIONS

As noted in the previous chapters, in his writings and paintings Hakuin reached far beyond the traditional Zen realm of subject matter, and in doing so created new visual and colloquial ways to reach a much broader audience. Hakuin never shied away from having a bit of fun, and did not limit himself to well-known Zen themes or familiar Japanese cultural figures. Many of his images and calligraphies borrowed from Chinese culture, including Taoism, and particularly the Confucian influences that dominated philosophical thought and governmental policies during the Edo period. But Hakuin's approach was not dry and heavy-handed; there is often a bit of play or whimsy, making the images approachable and accessible. In other cases, he used the pure power of his brush to visually stun the viewer into confronting his message. Hakuin, more than any other Zen master, understood this visual power and had the foresight to see art as a means of attracting popular interest in Zen.

Just as the Shingon Buddhist master Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi) (774–835) had believed that paintings should be used as a means of teaching the complexities of esoteric Buddhism, Hakuin too saw the possibilities of utilizing Zen painting and calligraphy as concrete visual representations of the experiences of meditation and enlightenment, experiences that he believed should be associated with everyday life. Kūkai had written,

The Dharma is beyond speech, but without speech it cannot be revealed.
Suchness transcends forms, but without depending on forms it cannot be realized. Though one may at times err by taking the finger pointing at the moon to be the moon itself, the Buddha's teachings which guide people are limitless.¹

Similarly, Hakuin explained of Zen art,

This art, produced by something we cannot fully know, is like the innate nature of the mind that operates in all our daily activities.²

FACING PAGE

Monkey Writing

"Tsurezuregusa"

See page 186.

Hakuin not only used innovative subjects, but also understood the importance of creating lively, engaging compositions in order to capture people's interests. Taking advantage of the increasing literacy of the Edo period, Hakuin was able to integrate into his compositions puns and hidden calligraphic characters. At the same time, he also used his images occasionally to convey personal criticisms of religious and secular society, demonstrating an increased role in social awareness and consciousness by a Zen master who could not only serve his followers' spiritual needs but also inspire their social consciousness. More importantly, new doors were opened for the general population. Not only were people able to enjoy the aesthetic benefits of calligraphy and inscribed paintings, but they were also able to partake in a new forum for spiritual communication and intellectual play. The combination of these factors served to make Edo-period Zen art a major influence on Japanese society, and Hakuin was its most influential practitioner.

Besides making his images approachable, Hakuin experimented with word-image interplay in the arts of calligraphy and painting, integrating the concepts of word and image closer together compositionally to create a visually unified whole. In Hakuin's hands, if a text can teach and an image can reinforce that teaching, why not bring the two together?

SHŌKI

Beyond patriarchs and Buddhist figures, Hakuin realized familiar cultural figures could be used to convey Zen ideals. Moreover, these figures did not have to be Japanese. In particular, Hakuin drew on the imposing, engaging, and visually striking figure of Shōki the Demon Queller from Chinese lore, who provided an entertaining story of personal noble virtue. According to the legend, late one night while sick and feverish, Emperor Ming Huang (r. 713–56) of the T'ang Dynasty dreamed he saw a small demon that had broken into the palace and stolen his jade flute and a purple embroidered bag from his consort, Yang Kuei-fei. The episode is recorded in the *T'ang I-shih*, dated 1589.

Then, instead of escaping, the strange being began frolicking around the palace grounds with the loot. Ming Huang therefore approached him and demanded an explanation. The demon respectfully replied his name was Hsu Hao and explained that "Hsu" stood for "stealing indiscriminately for the sake of fun" and "Hao" for "replacing man's joys with sorrows." Hearing this, the emperor became angry and wanted to call for his bodyguards. But at that very moment, a large size demon, wearing a tattered hat, blue robe, horn waist-belt and black boots appeared and nabbed the thief. Immediately afterwards, he proceeded first to gouge out the victim's eyes, then tore him up into pieces and finally ate him.³

At the emperor's request, the imposing figure identified himself as originally a Chinese scholar named Chung K'uei (Jp.: Shōki) who failed his imperial

examinations in the seventh century, and in despair had struck his head against the palace steps. Upon hearing of this desperate act, then-emperor Kao-tsu (r. 618–27) granted him an official burial. In gratitude, Shōki decided to devote his afterlife to protecting the world from evil. When Ming Huang awoke from his dream, he summoned the painter Wu Tao-tzu (act. 720–60) to paint a portrait of the Demon Queller. Wu captured the figure so successfully that Ming Huang recognized him immediately.

Shōki quickly became a popular subject for both professional and scholar-painters in China; by the tenth century the subject of the Demon Queller seems to have become a standard theme in Chinese painting. Artists based their works largely on Wu Tao-tzu's model (although no examples of Wu Tao-tzu's Shōki images survive), and it became the custom to display paintings of Shōki during the Twelfth Moon (just before the New Year).

The subject was introduced to Japan by the Kamakura period (1185–1392). Shōki appears in a *jigoku zoshi* (hell scroll) from this era, and there is evidence to suggest that Sesshū may have later painted a version of Shōki. Although no such painting remains extant, the book *Shuchin gafu* (A Collection of Rare Paintings, 1802) illustrates sketches by Kanō Tan'yū (1602–74) purported to be based on Sesshū paintings.

It is probable that these types of printed images disseminated the Shōki image into Japanese culture beyond the realm of Chinese texts. Shōki emerged from his previous context into the realm of popular culture, eventually becoming associated with the Boys' Day Festival (May 5), a date previously associated partly with bad luck and evil spirits. By the late eighteenth century, families with young boys under the age of seven began the practice of hanging banners bearing the image of Shōki outside their homes to drive away harm, and during the nineteenth century, other Boys' Day paraphernalia were also displayed inside the house, contributing to the production of more decorative paintings.

Artists of the period seem fascinated with the subject and all the creative opportunities it presented. Despite his fierceness, Shōki is often depicted in humorous ways, sometimes at the mischievous mercy of the little demons he is trying to capture; they can be shown hiding in creative places, including under Shōki's own cap. This playful quality only served to enhance the popularity of the figure and make him a more lovable character in Japanese culture.⁴

Hakuin painted Shōki numerous times; why is unclear, but he must have sensed that Shōki provided a visually exciting and philosophically intriguing figure that already appealed to the general populace. Shōki, who had chosen to rid the world of evil, was the perfect example for Hakuin to teach the benefits of following the Buddhist path, revealing that personal or worldly success isn't everything. Shōki himself had originally failed, but he overcame adversity and chose to rid the world of demons that in a Zen sense represent worldly passions and illusions. At the same time, Shōki has the humor to understand that passions/demons are part of this world, and thus must be taken in stride.

Shōki was also a symbol of personal strength and determination, virtues valued in Zen. Visually striking, menacing, and yet somewhat humorous, his



PLATE 5.1

Shōki

Ink on paper, 130 x 53.7 cm.

Ginshu Collection

hulking figure is said to “tiptoe, tiptoe” around the palace. In one large Hakuin scroll, we see Shōki’s determination, apparent in his glowering expression, as he stands ready to take on demonic forces (plate 5.1). As in almost all cases, Shōki looks upward (or inward), leading the viewer to the calligraphy. This upward-looking eye and the treatment of the head and facial features are in fact similar to Hakuin’s Daruma portraits, and Shōki retains a “foreign” appearance much like Daruma.

Hakuin emphasizes Shōki’s face by framing it with the flaps of his scholar’s cap and the tip of his beard, which flips up in a peculiar manner. The Demon Queller’s physical presence and stature are emphasized by the bold lines delineating the robe, but Hakuin adds a bit of humorous detail with the leopard-spotted mottled boots. Oddly, despite his size, Shōki is perched on rather tiny feet—enhancing the idea of his tiptoeing around. The inscription, written in rather disproportionately small script above the figure, says,

I enter the imperial castle.
Darting around the corridor,
I slip beneath the staircase.
Concealing my long sword,
I tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe.

Neither the figure nor the painting’s inscription is a pure Zen theme or teaching, but Hakuin must have believed that something in what Shōki represented could benefit practitioners of Zen, perhaps the idea of a protector as well as a virtuous ideal.

Although traditionally depicted as a fierce protector, keeping an ever-mindful eye out for pesky *oni* (demons), even Shōki could not be expected to be vigilant all day and night, and occasionally he might be caught having a catnap (plate 5.2). However, even during his brief respite we see that Shōki has the situation under control, dozing peacefully propped against a demon that has already been subdued; while the demon is clearly not pleased with the situation, Shōki seems quite content.

Hakuin’s inscription explains,

The figure of a demon,
thinking he’s been outwitted—
just an afternoon nap.

Hakuin suggests that the demon’s perceived capture may not be the actual situation; perception and illusion cloud our understanding of reality. Has he really been captured, or does he simply think so, trapped by his own perception? Either way, Shōki slumbers contently on his plump pillow with a dreamy look on his face, a vast contrast to the fierce, stern expression in the previous painting. The image reveals a clever juxtaposition of the two figures in size, disposition, and the contrast of negative and positive spaces in their bodies—the



PLATE 5.2

Shōki Sleeping

Ink on paper, 35 x 54.5 cm.

Shin'wa-an

negative space of Shōki's robe versus the complicated pattern on the *oni*'s body. Also the peaceful expression on Shōki's face contrasts with the disconcerted, ignominious look on the *oni*'s, and the wonderful claws of the *oni* balance the heavy boots of Shōki. The figures are snuggled together, but they maintain a sense of horizontal movement through the directional placement of Shōki's feet, the flaps of his cap, his sword, and his right hand.

Occasionally, the formidable Shōki must face his own demons as well. In another image, Hakuin shows the figure frightened by his own reflection in a pool of water (plate 5.3) with the inscription, "My reflection in the water chills my nerves." A powerful yet comical depiction of Shōki, the image conveys the Zen idea of self-reflection, which can lead to self-realization. After chasing away external demons, even Shōki is left to ponder his own self-nature. The lightness of the calligraphy appears quite delicate in contrast to the broad strokes of the sleeves of his robe and the cliff under which he leans. Compositionally, it is a very strong work, with Shōki's figure dominating the space. The inscription, rather small, floats beside Shōki's head like a quiet personal thought.

Not all of Hakuin's Shōki and *oni* images are quite so charming. In a large and stunning image dated May 5, 1767, when he was eighty-three years old, Hakuin depicts Shōki with wild eyes and keen determination as he is about to lower a wooden pestle (*surigaki*) into a mortar (*suribachi*) filled with two pleading *oni* (plate 5.4). The inscription, written tightly around Shōki's head, reads,

Under the corridors of the Imperial Palace,
he conceals his sword.
Silently, secretly,
thinking about grinding *oni* miso,⁵
but it would be too cruel.

Professor Yoshizawa Katsuhiro of Hanazono University interprets this as Hakuin implying that we must crush our evil passions in order to experience spiritual awakening. However, it is also possible that Hakuin is suggesting that while evil is a part of the dualistic world that we must try to control, we must also accept it and deal with it. Acknowledging our own demons becomes a kind of spiritual practice and provides us with our own spiritual food.⁶

TETSUBŌ

The *tetsubō* (iron rod), also known as the Devil's Rod, is traditionally associated with the demons that torment sinners in the realms of hell. Although Zen monks including Hakuin, Tōrei, Shunsō, and others often painted the subject, it is actually more representative of Pure Land Buddhism.⁷ The keepers of these hells are various demons and creatures that torment their victims relentlessly. Traditionally, Emma, the king of hell, is accompanied by red and blue *oni* who carry out his judgments. Images of hell often show little demon figures running



PLATE 5.3

Shōki and Reflection

Ink on paper, 123.5 x 49.2 cm.

Eisei Bunko Foundation



PLATE 5.4

Oni Miso

Ink and color on paper,

132.5 x 57 cm.

Kaizen-ji



PLATE 5.5

Iron Rod

Ink on paper, 129.5 x 27.1 cm.

Ginshu Collection

about wielding large iron rods to scare their charges into submission. However, despite their primary association with Pure Land ideology and imagery, Zen masters often borrowed the subject of the iron rod for their own art. In place of the elaborate, graphic images of hell that serve as a narrative deterrent to ill behavior, Zen artists simply painted large, powerful images of the *tetsubō*, which dramatically serve as a direct symbols of the torments of hell.

Hakuin painted images of *tetsubō* numerous times, and followed the same format repeatedly, never really varying the composition or the inscription; as a result, *tetsubō* are some of his most dramatic and powerful works (plate 5.5). His iron rods generally fill the vertical composition with thick, richly applied ink moving down from the solid ring at the top through the sturdy vertical portion of the rod into a thickly twisted area. Hakuin then begins the inscription to the right of the rod and completes it on the left side. The inscription, “Those who fear this will go to paradise,” reflects the directness of the imagery; no long descriptive narrative, no details about levels of purgatory or cause and effect between sins and punishments are needed. Hakuin makes the image and inscription as direct and succinct as possible.

Although this *tetsubō* at first seems like a relatively simple image without complicated details, Hakuin actually gave it a great deal of care and control; it was not made with a quick, sweeping gesture. The ring was carefully delineated with the brush; although not a perfect circle, it is balanced in shape, brush-stroke, and ink tone. We can imagine Hakuin slowly and deliberately moving his brush around, carefully closing the circle. He then lifted his brush momentarily, placed it squarely at the base of the circle, and began pulling it down the page, again slowly and deliberately. Toward the middle of the composition Hakuin turned his brush back and forth in a zigzagging manner, creating the twisted portion of the rod. While depicting this heavy, foreboding part of the *tetsubō*, Hakuin also created the most beautiful portion of his painting. The curving, twisting motion of the brush causes the ink to swirl in broken tones, adding depth and dimension to this part of the rod.

Of course, even in the most profound, thought-provoking moments there is room for pause. Just as the practitioner has begun to fear the wrath of the demons and of hell, Hakuin reminds us that these, too, are only perceptions. Just as the *oni* may have misjudged his situation with Shōki, perhaps we have not fully understood *oni* either. In one very charming, slightly haunting image, we find only the *tetsubō* and a leopard-skin skirt, seemingly abandoned (plate 5.6). The inscription informs us,

Oni is not here,
Probably off to the bathhouse.

So while we are worried about encountering an *oni*, he’s laid down his skirt and iron rod and gone off to soak in a hot bath. So much for preconceived notions.



PLATE 5.6

Oni Bathing

Ink on paper, 25.5 x 34.7 cm.

Shin'wa-an

The subject of an *oni* bathing was not invented by Hakuin; it was a popular folk *ōtsu-e* theme during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The earliest such *ōtsu-e* images revealed simple figures without inscriptions (fig. 5.1), but later images also included short phrases such as, “What use is it to scour his hide, when his heart remains black as ever?” Or the opposite, “Even an *oni* can become a Buddha if he washes his devil-heart clean.”⁸ Hakuin’s ability to borrow from these colorful and popular *ōtsu-e* images, and in this case add his own inscription, again reveals his awareness of popular culture and his ease in borrowing from it.

Culturally, the image is also significant because baths are such an important part of Japanese society. Many people still visit communal bathhouses in their neighborhoods, so it is amusing to imagine *oni* socializing in the hot tubs along with others. Of course, water and bathing are also important in Japanese purification rituals, opening other possibilities for *oni*. Case Number 78 in the *Hekiganroku* states, “In ancient times, there were sixteen Bodhisattvas. At the monks’ bath time, following the rule, they [the bodhisattvas] had baths. They suddenly experienced realization through the touch of water. You reverend Zen students, do you understand their words? ‘We experienced the subtle and clear touch, have attained Buddhahood, and still retain it.’ You will be able to attain this condition after seven times piercing and eight times breaking through.”⁹ Maybe the *oni*’s on to something.



FIGURE 5.1
Anonymous
Oni Bathing *Ōtsu-e*
(late seventeenth century)
Ink and color on paper, 62.8 x 22.8 cm.
Japan Folk Craft Museum



PLATE 5.7
God of Medicine
Ink and color on paper,
104 x 42.7 cm.
Manyoan Collection

SHINNŌ

Borrowing further from Chinese lore, Hakuin occasionally painted images of Shinnō (Ch.: Shen Nong), the god of agriculture and medicine (plate 5.7). This figure represents a legendary Chinese leader known as Yan Emperor (ca. 2737–ca. 2698 B.C.E.), who is credited with being the first to make herbal medicines from minerals and plants and to teach his people how to farm and cultivate crops. He is also credited as being the first to steep tea leaves. The inscription says,

Understanding grasses to use as medicine,
cutting trees in order to plow,
teaching how to cook using fire,
teaching the benefits of strange beasts,
a virtuous man of great scholarship and healing.

Shinnō is traditionally depicted as a half-man, half-goat or ox, with two small horns protruding from his head. He wears a cloak of leaves and leopard skin, and generally holds sprigs of greens and a wooden staff/hoe. Accordingly, Hakuin dresses the sage in a coat of lush foliage adorned with large leopard-skin sleeves. He appears wizened but lively, and reveals the wide eyes common in many of Hakuin's figures. This is an excellent example of Hakuin's more refined painting style, particularly evident in the fine lines of the figure's face with his chubby cheeks, warm smile, and bright eyes.

VIRTUE AND STABILITY

Shōki and Shinnō both reflect Chinese influence, but Hakuin was even more influenced by Confucian ideals that he also incorporated into his art and teaching. In one powerful example, Hakuin wrote his own version of the character *toku*, "Virtue" (plate 5.8), and above it inscribed,

Save up money for your descendents—
They'll just spend it.
Collect books for your sons and grandsons—
They won't read them.
The best thing to do for them—
Increase your own virtue.
Quietly, secretly
Impart this ideal to your descendents,
And it will endure through the generations.



PLATE 5.8

"Virtue"

Ink on paper, 117 x 55.2 cm.

Manyoan Collection

The first two characters of the inscription, “Save up money,” immediately catch the viewer’s attention; the inscription then continues, dancing above the large “Virtue” character, without any concern for maintaining even columns or uniformity of size. Numerous characters run into one another, some seem squeezed into their spaces, and in the second column, one even sits squarely on the top of the “Virtue” character. Hakuin has taken a formal Confucian teaching and enhanced it through the visual liveliness that captures the viewer’s attention. Visually, it appears as if Hakuin is purposefully contrasting the solid, stable “Virtue” with the unruly mass of other characters, representing the ungrateful descendents.

The text is from the Chinese Confucian scholar Ssu-ma Kuang (1018–86), but beyond the teaching, Hakuin also pondered the visual structure of the character “Virtue.” In 1749 he wrote,

Look at the ideogram for “Virtue.” It is compounded of two parts, one part means “straight” [直] and the other “heart” or “mind” [心]. The straight heart or mind is the truth of heaven and it is called integrity. Every man who is the vassal of a Lord must be particularly careful to be straight and correct without self-will. He must be wholeheartedly his Lord’s man, nor may he be one-sided in his loyalty. A man who is correct in these ways and observes the laws of the heavenly truth is a loyal man. . . . And look at the ideogram for “straight” too. It also is made of two parts. One part means “unity” and the other means “stop.” If you “stop” with “one” simple heart you will be an upright person, one with integrity. When the very roots of our hearts are whole or integrated, at one with their true nature, then they are “stopped” at “Unity.”¹⁰

Similarly, late in his life Hakuin wrote out the character *sei* (定) (stability) (plate 5.9). Through the rich strokes of ink we can trace the movement of the brush. The open tips and angular quality of the large character are carried through in the characters of the inscription that says,

Stability—
The ability to stop is the ultimate virtue.
Knowing how to stop results in stability.

In a last playful gesture, Hakuin draws the last stroke of the final character, also “Stability,” back under the inscription and over to the large “Stability” character, visually tying the two together and creating a contained quality that perhaps lends a bit of stability and security to the other characters by holding them up. However, in doing so, it risks tipping over itself. Hakuin further addressed the idea of stability in his comments in the *Hekiganroku*,

Secure, stable total reality refers to inner experience, or holding still, the realm where verbal explanation cannot reach. The state of secure stability is itself total reality, pure unalloyed gold.¹¹



PLATE 5.9

"Stability"

Ink on paper, 41.9 x 62.3 cm.

Manyoan Collection

KANZAN AND JITTOKU

The theme of stability continues, this time visually, in a large image of the eccentric poet Kanzan (Ch.: Han-shan) and his friend Jittoku (Ch.: Shih-te) with a banana leaf (plate 5.10). Kanzan and Jittoku are considered to be avatars, the incarnations of buddhas and bodhisattvas; Kanzan is an incarnation of Manjusri and Jittoku of Samantabhadra. Helmut Brinker explains that these “partly half-legendary ‘Saintly Figures’ of uncertain rank within the Zen genealogy were models for the Zen adept because of their unfettered spiritual freedom, their unconventional life and behaviour, as well as their eccentric statements.”¹²

In paintings, Kanzan is generally depicted holding a brush or scroll, and Jittoku is typically shown with his kitchen broom, although he sometimes carries a bamboo tube in which he has packed some food scraps for his friend.¹³ One or the other of them is often shown pointing at the moon or at the sky, reflecting a couplet in one of Kanzan’s poems, “By using a finger we see the moon; The moon is the hinge of the mind,” or his most famous line, “My heart is like the autumn moon.”

Early images of Kanzan and Jittoku have been attributed to Chinese painters of the thirteenth century, including Mu-chi (d. ca. 1269–74). The subject was introduced to Japan by the mid-fourteenth century, and Japanese monks began producing their own depictions of Kanzan and Jittoku at that time.¹⁴ Perhaps the most famous are those by Kaō (d. 1345), which reflect the classic Zen ink painting style of the Middle Ages, terse and spontaneous, but still possessing a certain Chinese refinement.

In contrast, Hakuin depicts the two figures curiously regarding a huge leaf inscribed with the poem,

When you understand how to stop, you are stable.
When you are stable, then your mind can be still.
Stillness is the one word necessary to know how to pass
through the barrier.
The ultimate difficulty is to penetrate this one teaching.¹⁵

Here the calligraphic inscription dominates the composition, stabilized by the leaf upon which it is written.¹⁶ However, the charm and importance of the figures, both compositionally and philosophically, cannot be overlooked. Although at first seeming a little odd, Kanzan’s awkward leaning position is crucial to the balance of the composition. As Jittoku tries to lift the huge leaf to give Kanzan a better view, Kanzan seems to lean away, leaving his foot to hold down the edge of the leaf, but he is at the same time drawn to the work. As a result, as viewers read the first line of the inscription, their eyes are drawn to Kanzan, and the tilt of the figure then leads them back to the calligraphy. While Kanzan’s mouth is open, apparently commenting on the phrase, Jittoku peers quietly over the edge of the leaf. The point is that Hakuin uses the charming

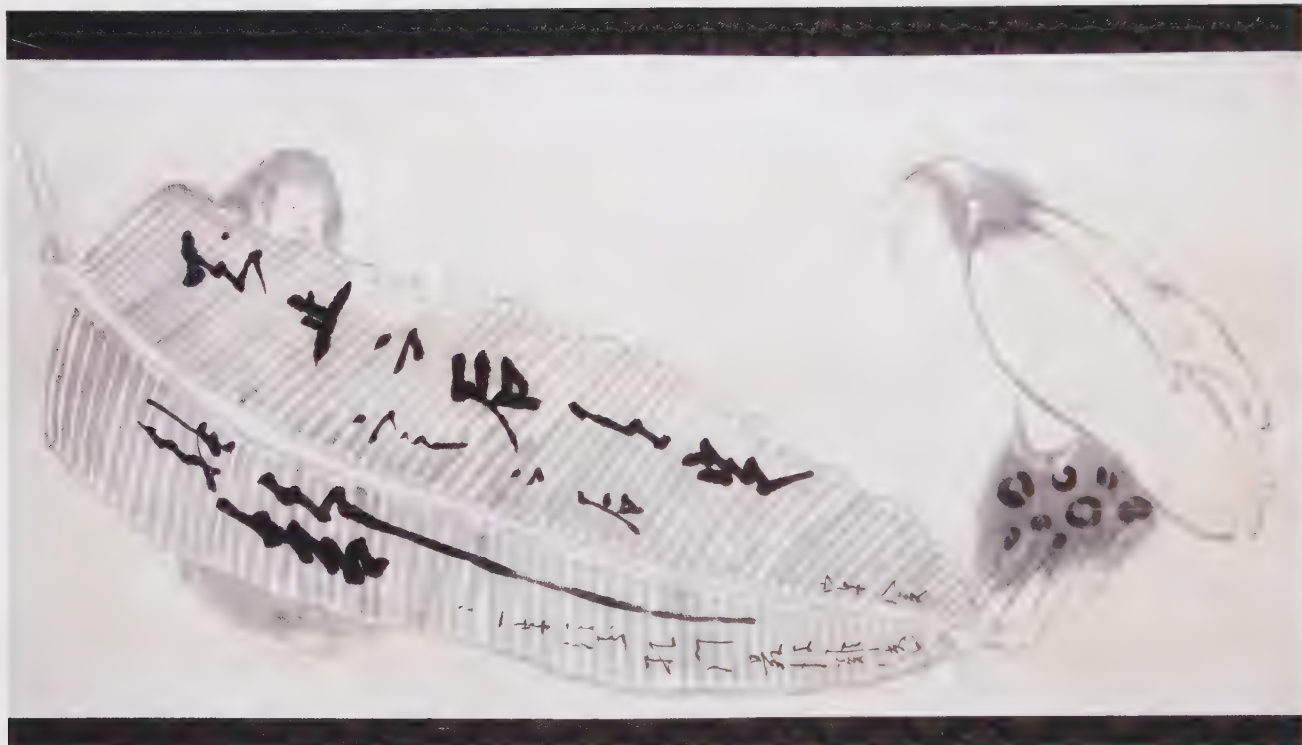


PLATE 5.10

Kanzan and Jittoku

Ink on paper, 58.2 x 115 cm.

Behr Collection

and familiar figures of Kanzan and Jittoku to engage and involve the viewer. We are not merely looking at the image in front of us, Kanzan and Jittoku with a banana leaf, but we are also invited to study the inscription on the leaf. Moreover, the presence of the two figures helps to put us at ease by sharing the experience with us and making it less intimidating. To a certain extent, Hakuin has enabled the viewer to become part of the visual work, stepping into the image rather than merely viewing it from outside. Visually, the shape of the banana leaf is echoed in Kanzan's large billowy sleeves, and the use of large oval shapes juxtaposed against the extreme angles of the calligraphy enhances the dramatic composition.

PAINTING-CALLIGRAPHY INTERPLAY

As well as the banana leaf, Hakuin was also fond of utilizing the image of hanging scrolls within his own artistic compositions. Words do not have to be sutras to be important as Zen teachings or spiritual guides, so by including hanging scrolls with texts within his own painted compositions, Hakuin provides the Zen meaning, and in fact enhances the prominence of the words with his playful placement. His teachings are now not only a part of the viewer's experience but also a part of the painted subject's experience, whether it be Kanzan and Jittoku or even a monkey.

YOSHIDA KENKŌ

We have seen in the previous chapter how Hakuin utilizes images of monkeys in his art and teaching. Although he was adept at figure paintings of various styles, Hakuin used monkeys to convey his more sarcastic visual messages, possibly in order to soften the criticism through the monkey's charm and humor.

Hakuin was highly suspicious and critical of the Edo-period admiration for Yoshida Kenkō (ca. 1283–ca. 1352), author of *Tsurezuregusa* (Essays in Idleness), who entered the priesthood in his thirties, but may never have achieved satori. Kenkō was from a long line of Shinto officials, and had a brother who was a high-ranking Buddhist priest. He himself served in the court of Emperor Gonijō until he became a priest in 1313 after Gonijō's death. In *Tsurezuregusa*, Kenkō writes of his past high social status with great fondness and appreciation, rather too much fondness for someone who is supposedly following the Buddhist path. Despite his having taken Buddhist vows, his commentaries suggest that he retains a rather strong worldly attachment, describing in great detail his adventures in and observations about the city, as well as commenting on and criticizing many aspects of daily life. It is this attitude with which Hakuin took umbrage.

Hakuin expressed his cynicism several times in images of monkeys in which he played on a pun between Kenkō's name and the word *enkō*. The

Japanese character meaning “monkey,” *saru*, can also be pronounced *en*. *Kō* is usually an honorific form added to words, but can also be used satirically in a derogatory reversal. So in this way Hakuin playfully compares Kenkō to a monkey, but his social commentary is hidden beneath the charming image.

In one humorous but highly critical example, Hakuin mocked Kenkō by depicting a monkey, brush in hand, actually writing out the first lines of Kenkō's own essay on a hanging scroll (plate 5.11). The inscription on the right says, “Yoshida the monkey [*enkō*] writing a passage from *Tsurezuregusa*.” The monkey, looking up at his handiwork, seems quite pleased, having written,

What a strange, demented feeling it gives me when I realize I have spent whole days before this inkstone, with nothing better to do, jotting down at random whatever nonsensical thoughts have entered my head.¹⁷

However, in contrast to the monkey's claim of writing with nothing better to do, it appears awkwardly positioned, trapped in the tight vertical space of the composition. The idea of writing random, nonsensical thoughts could not have impressed Hakuin. Of course, it is always difficult for a monkey to write, but Hakuin views it as contrived and labored because *Enkō*/*Kenkō* has not fully achieved spiritual enlightenment.



PLATE 5.11
Monkey Writing “*Tsurezuregusa*”
Ink on paper, 118 x 54 cm.
Kikuan Collection

KOTOBUKI

The character *kotobuki* (longevity) is extremely important and auspicious in Chinese and Japanese culture, denoting long life and prosperity. The character also seems to have lent itself well to Hakuin's imagination. In one large and stunning work, Hakuin has filled the composition with a single massive *kotobuki* (plate 5.12). Here we see the wondrous beauty of Hakuin's ink tones as each thick brushstroke reveals richly varied shadings, the mottled quality of which lends a dimensionality and depth to the already architectonic structure of the character.

The massive horizontal brushstrokes sit tightly on top of each other like logs, with barely any negative space between them. Hakuin enhances the massive quality by carefully rounding the tips of each stroke. The perfect balance and proportion of strokes opens up at the bottom with the square shape and the sweeping stroke that surrounds the final punctuation of the large round dot in the center.

Chinese characters are fascinating for the huge variety of scripts and styles with which artists can play and experiment. In another work (plate 5.13), we again see a large *kotobuki* character in the center, but now it is surrounded by one hundred versions of the same character written in different forms of ancient seal script. The work is dated age 83, and despite Hakuin's skill as a calligrapher, we see he was taking no chances and has written each character first with light sketch lines that are still visible beneath the final work. The idea of one hundred versions of *kotobuki* goes back to at least the thirteenth century in China, when in 1229, a provincial governor named Shih-yu is said to have written the character and had it and one hundred smaller versions carved into the side of a cliff where an immortal sage once lived.¹⁸

Visually, this scroll shows a continuous contrast of angular and curvilinear, squiggly and straight, light and dark lines. While we see a continuity within each character, we are at the same time fascinated by the striking differences and variety within the totality of the work. Amid all the *kotobuki* characters Hakuin has also included the following inscription:

Revere the 100 seal script characters for *kotobuki*. Each is a lotus pedestal of the great law, a source of immense power and a symbol of the radiant body of Buddha. Bow in respect, and they will provide protection against thunder and fires, safety from the seven disasters, and summon sevenfold good fortune.

—1767 seventh month, an auspicious day. The old monk under the Sala Tree, Hakuin, 83 years old, burns incense and prostrates nine times.

We have seen how the *kotobuki* character can be manipulated into many script forms, but Hakuin took another step by integrating the character into an



PLATE 5.12

"Kotobuki"

Ink on paper, 118 x 56.7 cm.

Gubutsu-an

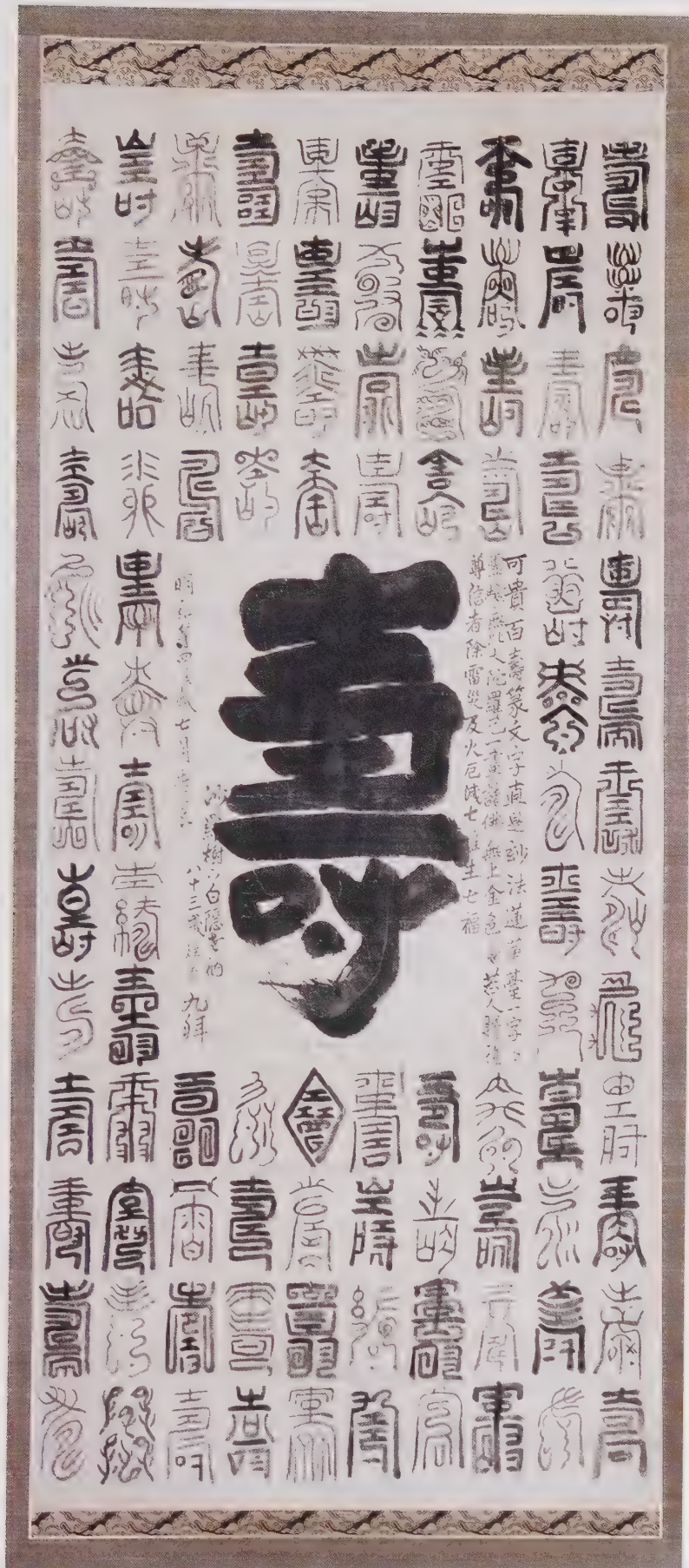


PLATE 5.13
 100 Kotobuki (age 83)
 Ink on paper, 127 x 54.8 cm.
 Manyoan Collection



PLATE 5.14

Treasure Boat

Ink on paper, 55.5 x 65.75 cm.

New Orleans Museum of Art

image by transforming it into a treasure boat. Known as a *takarabune* (treasure ship), it transports the Seven Gods of Good Fortune during New Year's celebrations to distribute gifts and well-wishings to worthy individuals. During the Muromachi period people placed a picture of a treasure boat under their pillows on the second day of the New Year in order to facilitate auspicious dreams. By the Edo period, these images were sold by street vendors as lucky charms.¹⁹ Here we see Fukurokuju guiding the *takarabune* with a long pole (plate 5.14). Although he alone sits in the boat, we see the familiar mallet, whisk, sedge hat, and bag of Daikoku and Hotei piled on the other side. The inscription reads,

If there are people loyal to their lord,
and filial to their family—
I'll give them my straw coat, hat, my mallet and my bag.

In other words, the luck and happiness of the gods goes to the devoted and loyal person.

As innovative as Hakuin was, he was not the first to playfully combine calligraphy and image. The artistic integration of word and painting in Japan goes back at least to the eleventh century, when court artists began transforming written characters into simple images. This transformation is known as *ashide-e*, "reed-hand painting," a reference to the fact that many of these word-pictures were included early on as part of riverbank settings, the characters incorporated into tall water reeds, marsh grasses, and rocks. Moreover, these earliest painting-calligraphy interactions were associated with Buddhism, the earliest known example of which is in the form of rough sketches located on the pedestal found inside the wooden statue of Amida Buddha (dated 1052) in the Byōdō-in. The most famous and elaborate examples of early *ashide-e* are the *Heike nōgyō* (Sutras Consecrated by the Heike [Taira] Family), commissioned by Taira Fujimori (1118–81), and dedicated in 1164. In these scrolls the *Lotus Sutra* is embellished with lush landscapes and celestial settings that themselves include numerous hidden poems.²⁰ More commonly, the practice is also referred to as *moji-e* (character pictures) going beyond their elegant courtly associations. It was common in the Edo period for schoolchildren to manipulate the shapes of Chinese characters into pictures in their notebooks. This practice served as a playful way for them to remember the often complicated glyphs.

TENJIN

Although there was already a tradition of creating simple *moji-e* portraits of the poets Tenjin and Hitomaro, Hakuin's use of Chinese and Japanese characters to construct images becomes very ambitious, combining several characters to create his portraits of the literary figures.²¹

As noted in his biography, from an early age Hakuin held great reverence for the court poet and scholar Sugawara Michizane. After being wrongly

accused of treason by the Japanese court, Michizane died in exile, but after a series of calamities befell the country, he was deified as Tenjin, the Shinto god of learning, and the Kitano Tenmangū Shrine was erected in northern Kyoto to appease his vengeful spirit. A whole genre of portrait paintings of Michizane in crisp black court robes and lacquer hat exists,²² but in Zen the most important and popular incarnation of the figure was Totō Tenjin (Tenjin Visiting China). Images of Totō Tenjin show him wearing a Taoist robe and a scholar's hat and carrying a branch of plum blossoms. Over his body he wears a cloth bag in which he carries a *kesa* (Buddhist monk's patchwork robe). Thus, Tenjin already reflects aspects of Taoism, Shinto, and Buddhism.²³

We have previously seen an image in which Hakuin implied the presence of Tenjin through the depiction of plum blossoms and a Shinto *torii* gate (plate 1.1). However, he also painted numerous images of Tenjin himself, emphasizing the Zen association by having Tenjin wear Buddhist robes and a *kesa* rather than keeping them hidden in his bag.²⁴ In this example Hakuin depicts the poet in full figural form, wearing the patchwork robe of a priest and a crown with the character *kotobuki* on it and carrying a branch of plum blossoms (fig. 5.2). Above this figure of the deity Hakuin inscribed the poem,



FIGURE 5.2
Formal Tenjin Portrait
Ink on paper, 108 x 29 cm.
Kikuan Collection

The deity of the Kitano Shrine
Wears an unwoven Chinese robe.
But you will know him
By the plum blossoms held in his sleeves.

This is the inscription Hakuin commonly places on his images of Tenjin; however, in this case he follows it up with the further identification:

Descended from heaven,
he is the guardian of plum blossoms
and ancestor of words and paper.
A priest of high-rank.

He went to a foreign country
and worked exhaustively.
He returned to his native land,
and freely delivered protection to countless temples.

More common are Tenjin images in which Hakuin creates the figure from Chinese characters (plate 5.15). Hakuin introduces the figure with the same inscription as above:

The deity of the Kitano Shrine
Wears an unwoven Chinese robe.²⁵
But you will know him
By the plum blossoms held in his sleeves.

But Hakuin continues with the invocation, “Praise to Tenjin of Tenman Shrine, Deity of Great Freedom” (*Na* 南 *Mu* 無 *Ten* 天 *Man* 萬 *Dai* 大 *Ji* 自 *Zai* 在 *Ten* 天 *Jin* 神), and these characters actually form the figure of Tenjin (diag. 5.1).

It seems significant that Hakuin’s choice of subject matter for this elaborate word-image/calligraphy-painting experiment was Tenjin, deity of scholarship, literature, and calligraphy. Perhaps Hakuin had found his own unique way to pay homage to this deity whom he had so long admired, and could reach out to the populace now that it, too, was also becoming increasingly literate and able to appreciate not only Hakuin’s words and teachings but also Tenjin’s. The sheer number of these Tenjin scrolls (at least ten are extant) attests to Hakuin’s desire to reach out to the public with this image.²⁶

HITOMARO

An even more elaborate painting-calligraphy/text-image interplay by Hakuin also involves a famous literary figure, the courtier-poet Kakinomoto Hitomaro (ca. 662–709). Images of Hitomaro had begun appearing in the Heian period



PLATE 5.15

Tenjin Moji-e

Ink on paper, 118.1 x 27.9 cm.

New Orleans Museum of Art

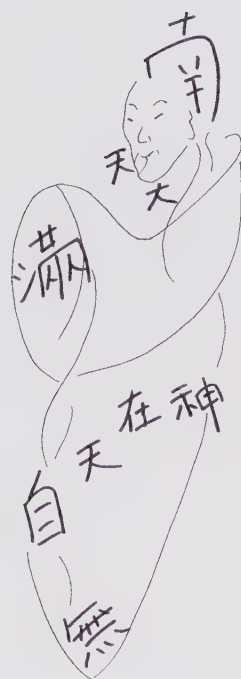


DIAGRAM 5.1
Tenjin Moji-e

(794–1185) as part of the general fascination with great Japanese poets; by 1050, it was customary to paint portraits of noted poets accompanied by examples of their best known verses. One of the earliest portraits of Hitomaro dates to 1118, and all known portraits are based on this early painting, now lost. He is generally easy to distinguish from among other poets by his rather casual, slightly slumped posture, court robes, and calligraphy brush. The poet's court hat usually tips forward, and his long beard accentuates his slightly bemused expression.²⁷

Here again, Hakuin seems to have created a unique type of literary portrait; the happy, seated poet with his writing brush is also composed of characters, this time twenty-seven characters from one of his most famous poems (plate 5.16).

<i>Honobono to</i>	ほのぼのと	Dim and distant
<i>Akashino ura no</i>	あかしの浦の	in the morning mists
		of Akashi Bay.
<i>asagiri ni</i>	朝ぎりに	a boat disappears
<i>shimagakureyuku</i>	島がくれゆく	behind an island
<i>fune wo shi zo omou.</i>	舟をしぞ思ふ	and my thoughts
		with it.

The composition of this figure is much more complex than that of Tenjin, utilizing almost three times as many characters in a much more complicated arrangement (diag. 5.2). Moreover, whereas in the Tenjin figure the characters were all *kanji* (Chinese characters), here the poem includes *kana* (Japanese syllabary), the flexible and variable nature of which allows Hakuin even more



PLATE 5.16

Hitomaro Moji-e

Ink on paper, 52.9 x 43.6 cm.

Private Collection

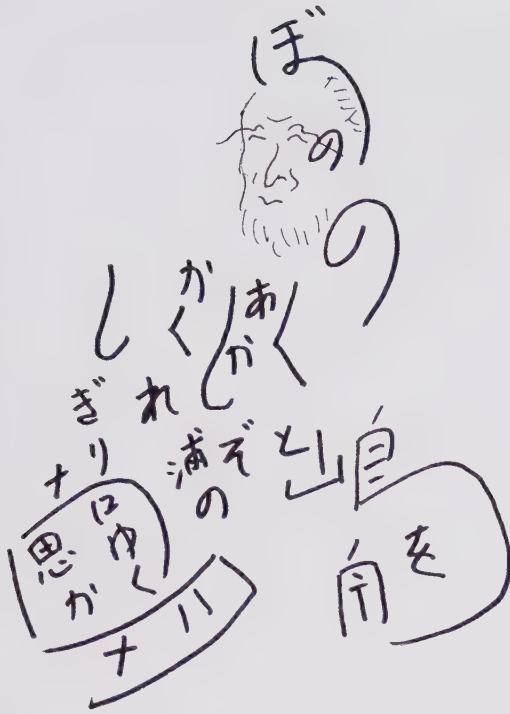


DIAGRAM 5.2
Hitomaro Moji-e

compositional possibilities. As a result of the manipulation and greater simplification of *kana* characters, this figure is much more difficult to “read” than the Tenjin.

The inscription to the side of the figure says,

<i>Shō bō wa</i>	The destructive fire
<i>kaki no moto made</i>	reached
<i>kitare domo</i>	Kakinomoto—
<i>Akashi to ieba</i>	but when we called out “Akashi”
<i>koko ni hi tomaru</i>	it stopped here.

The words *hi tomaru* mean “fire stop,” creating a pun on the poet’s name, therefore this image served as an *ofuda*, an amulet or folk charm for fire protection—very important considering the wood and paper construction of Edo-period buildings. The nature of the theme is a folk amulet, not Zen nor Buddhist, but Hakuin seizes the opportunity to reach his audience and provide them some peace of mind, amusement, and scholarship all at once.²⁸

Like the Tenjin images, there are numerous versions of Hitomaro, so Hakuin must have felt that the subject reached people, but in what capacity—as a mere talisman protecting against fire? Or, by imbuing the image of Hitomaro with the magic power to prevent fire, was Hakuin trying to convey to his lay audience the deeper “magic” and “power” of words and images? Buddhist paintings had long been believed to possess magical healing properties (sutras, for instance), and perhaps Hakuin was trying to bring this idea to a renewed level of everyday Zen.



PLATE 5.17

"Nin" Moji-e

Ink on paper, 90 x 23 cm.

Ginshu Collection

GU/NIN/IN SEATED FIGURES

Hakuin also brushed numerous examples of three different abstracted figures, apparently seated in meditation, which he formed from single Chinese characters. These simplified images were created from only a few strokes of his brush, and appear in numerous versions. The three forms resemble one another, but upon closer examination, reveal themselves to be three distinct shapes based on different Chinese characters—simplified and abstracted into the shape of a body, and reaffirmed by the accompanying inscription.

The most common of the abstracted figures usually appears with the following inscription: “This is the wall-facing Great Master Bodhidharma.” But this one says:

Become the master of your own heart,
And do not let it master you.

This appears to be a back view of Daruma seated in meditation (plate 5.17). The figure is most likely derived from the character *nin* (忍) (patience, perseverance) (diag. 5.3). Not only does the shape of this character relate well to the shape of the abstracted body, but the meaning, “patience,” is appropriate to the image of Daruma, who meditated in front of a wall for nine years. This figure reveals particularly beautiful ink tones and speckles, as well as a strong stability to the body.

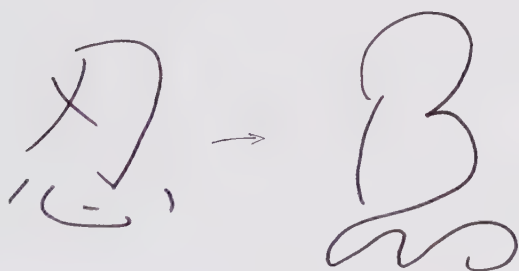


DIAGRAM 5.3
“Nin” Character

In general, almost all of these *nin* meditating figures sit alone in the composition with no other setting or descriptive devices. In a more elaborate composition, however, Hakuin has placed this abstracted figure on a cliff overlooking water and surrounded by trees and mountain shapes (plate 5.18). The inscription on this image reads,

Below the mountain,
the water flows without rest;
The Zen mind is just like this.
Look into your own nature
and it will slowly grow.²⁹



PLATE 5.18

"Nin" in Landscape Moji-e
Ink on paper, 33.8 x 55.8 cm.

Eisei Bunko Foundation

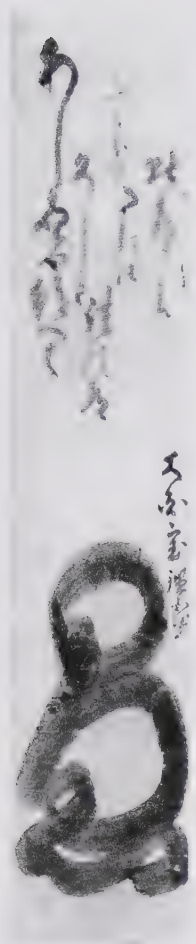


FIGURE 5.3
 “Gu” Moji-e
 Ink on paper, 97.6 x 18.5 cm.
 Gezan-ji

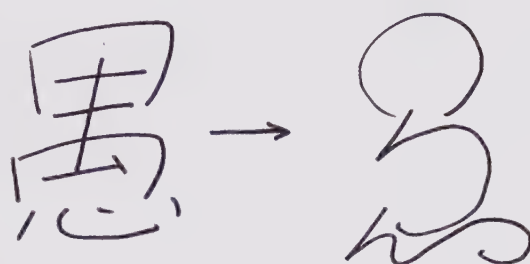


DIAGRAM 5.4
 “Gu” Character

Here, within the basic Zen teaching of looking into one’s self for the enlightened Buddha nature, the figure seated on the cliff illustrates not only the role of meditation for finding one’s Buddha nature, but through the additional use of the character *nin*, the determination and dedication that it requires. By turning the character *nin* into a figure or visual illustration, Hakuin has again provided a visual example of perseverance in Zen practice, reiterating that patience and perseverance can lead to enlightenment. If a lay practitioner can cultivate personal patience, he can become like Daruma. Through Hakuin’s image, enlightenment through meditation is no longer a vague, ambiguous idea, but an actual practice with human and spiritual connotations and results. This painting also closely resembles Hakuin’s self-portrait as a young monk (fig. 1.6) given to Sōrei, the child he was falsely accused of fathering. Both works contain the same poem.

We have already seen Hakuin’s portraits of his spiritual ancestors Shōju Rōjin, Daiō Kokushi, Daitō Kokushi, and Kanzan Egen. In this same tradition Hakuin also depicted Gudō Tōshoku, the teacher of Shōju Rōjin’s master, Shidō Bunan. Besides a formal portrait of Gudō (fig. 1.5), Hakuin created an abstracted seated figure from the character *gu* (愚) (fig. 5.3). The image closely resembles the *nin* figure except that its shape reveals two distinct and closed circles for head and body, snowmanlike (diag. 5.4) rather than the looser, open shape of the *nin*. This Gudō figure, like most of the *nin* figures, is shown seated alone, filling the composition with only an inscription above, first identifying him,

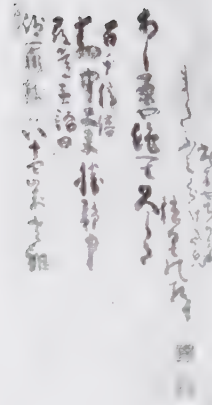


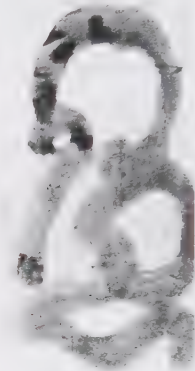
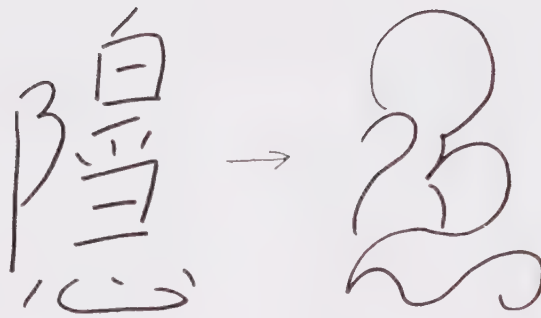
FIGURE 5.4

"In" Moji-e

Ink on paper, 123.3 x 28.2 cm.

Konji-in

DIAGRAM 5.5
"In" Character



The founder of ten temples,
Daien Hōkan Kokushi
Gudō Shoku Oshō Daizenshi.

And then followed by a poem,

This field of weeds (evil)
overgrown for a long time—
The path of Buddhist Law is trod open again
by this venerable old man.³⁰

Like the Tenjin and Hitomaro *moji-e*, the idea of a *gu* figure *moji-e* also seems to have preceded Hakuin's examples. Emperor Go-Mizunoo (1596–1680), a highly cultivated and learned figure, studied Zen under Gudō and presented his teacher with a *waka* poem:

A rush-choked field—
Ever more impassable,
man's original nature
Can only be attainable
If there is a path.³¹

Go-Mizunoo supposedly created his own *moji-e* portrait of his Zen teacher by manipulating the character *gu* and asked Gudō to add a verse to his image. Hakuin then borrowed the words written by Gudō and inscribed them on his own *moji-e* portrait of Gudō. In doing so, Hakuin reaffirms both his and Gudō's belief that Zen was in a state of decline and needed revitalization. Ironically, Hakuin also wrote the verse, minus the identification of Gudō, on an image of Hotei meditating.³² If Hotei represents, on the one hand, Hakuin himself and, on the other hand, Everyman, then Hakuin is in effect stating that not only is he, like Gudō, trying to revitalize Zen with his teaching, but that he believes that the future of Zen also rests with the Everyman, the lay practitioner (see chapter 6).

In a third “figure” Hakuin seems to represent himself by manipulating the Chinese character *in* (隱) from his own name (fig. 5.4). This *in* figure is slightly more complicated, due to the more complex nature of the original character, and it is most easily distinguished by the inclusion of the hook shape to the left of the figure (diag. 5.5). This glyph literally means “hidden” or “concealed,” which adds irony to the fact that Hakuin's inscription promotes meditation within activity, one of his most important ideas.

The 84 year-old monk under the sala tree [Hakuin]
constantly teaches that concentration amid activity is
100,000 times better than concentration amid silence.

Hakuin then includes the same poem as on the Gudō figure. Now in his final year, Hakuin is fully acknowledging his place in the continuation of the lineage, and his role in the propagation of Zen.

Regarding these “one stroke” images, there had already been a long tradition of *menpeki* (wall-facing)³³ Daruma paintings, and it became an artistic tradition to depict these seated figures using only a few strokes or even a single stroke of the brush.³⁴ Hakuin painted many of these simplified figures in his seventies, revealing his continued curiosity and playfulness in his later career.

The fact that he did three similar but different abstracted subjects is curious, suggesting he liked the idea of a meditating figure within the visual power of simplicity. Moreover, the use of different Chinese characters served to enrich and transform their meanings. In a sense he is summing up his legacy as a Zen teacher in these three figures, representing his lineage in *gu*, himself in *in*, and everyone in *nin* (the word for “people” is also pronounced *nin* in Japanese).

But again, Hakuin tried to do more than merely create his own versions of the subjects. He sought to use them as a richer teaching tool by imbuing them with new levels of meaning, approachability, and personal associations for the viewer. More than just implied figural shapes, they are also texts. In Zen, anyone meditating may become a buddha or Daruma, so it is important that the three images are similar; Hakuin wrote, “What is this true meditation? It is to make everything: coughing, swallowing, waving the arms, motion, stillness, words, action, the evil and the good, prosperity and shame, gain and loss, right and wrong, into one single *kōan*.”³⁵

—AUDREY YOSHIKO SEO



Handwritten text in the upper right corner, possibly a signature or a note, written in a cursive style.

HOTEI AS EVERYMAN

What was Hakuin's favorite painting subject? His many portrayals of Daruma are certainly his most powerful works, and his multiple depictions of Kannon are both engaging and compassionate, but it could be argued that the subject he did most often and with the greatest variety is Hotei, the happy-go-lucky wandering monk who became one of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune.

The name Hotei (Ch.: Pu-tai), literally meaning "cloth bag," was originally the nickname of a Chinese monk named Ch'i-tzu from Chekiang.¹ He has sometimes also been identified with a monk named Angida (Calico Bag), who lived at the time of the historical Buddha. This worthy follower of Shakyamuni caught venomous snakes in order to take out their fangs and then release them, but his connection with Hotei is less secure than the identification with the Chinese monk of the early tenth century.

Although he lived for a time at Yueh-lin Temple, Hotei was better known for walking through the countryside begging with his staff and a huge bag. He was reputed to be always good-humored, to mumble to himself, and to have a narrow forehead and a fat belly. In one anecdote from the tenth century, he was found standing still on a large bridge. Asked what he was doing, he replied that he was looking for a true person. Another story relates, "When asked about the Truth, Hotei simply put the bag on the ground. When asked why he was called Hotei, he also put down his bag. When asked what, after the bag, was important, he picked up the bag and walked away."²

After his death, Hotei was reportedly seen wandering through the area, predicting the weather, sleeping out in the snow without being covered with snowflakes, drinking wine and eating meat (usually forbidden to monks), preferring the company of children to adults, and gazing at the moon. Two poems that have been attributed to him express values that he embodied, some of which stem from Taoism:

In a single bowl I eat rice from a thousand families,
Alone, I wander ten thousand miles.
Those I find favor with are few,
I simply search for truth among the white clouds.

FACING PAGE
Hotei Watching Mice Sum
See page 215.

How do we distinguish the ten thousand Dharmas or understand the mind?
What use is it to search for meanings in religious texts?
Original mind cuts through all forms of knowledge,
Only the sage understands nonlearning.

Over a period of time, Hotei became identified with Maitreya, the buddha of the future; there is a couplet associated with Hotei that says, “Maitreya, truly Maitreya, but recognized by none.”³ As is often the case, further legends grew up over the centuries about Hotei, such as that at the time of his death he seated himself in *zazen* on a large rock and composed the following poem, clearly an extension of the earlier couplet:

Maitreya, the true Maitreya,
Embodied in myriad selves,
Time and again reveals himself,
Yet no one at the time knows.⁴

In part because of this identification with the future buddha, and in part because of his fully human traits (as Richard Edwards wrote, “the gods are close to us because they are like us”⁵), Hotei has often been depicted in art. Beginning not long after his death, his portrayal in paintings and sculptures increased during the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368), when Buddhism was strongly influenced by Tibetan sources. Perhaps the popularity of a deity associated with a Chinese monk helped to bridge the gap between foreign (Mongol) rulers and the Chinese populace.

Among Chinese depictions of Hotei, the earliest may be an image by Ts’ui Po (act. 1068–77) that was later carved into a stele, from which rubbings still remain (fig. 6.1). Since it bears an inscription by the literatus Su Shih, who notes



FIGURE 6.1
Hotei after Ts’ui-Po (act. 1068–77)
Rubbing from stone carving

that he saw the painting during the Hsi-ning era (1068–78), it can be dated to approximately 1070. The rubbing displays an early style of Chinese figure painting, with its abundance of thin and gracefully flowing lines, but Hotei's round head and bag, his angular staff, and his rounded belly are all attributes that continued in later depictions. To this day, in Chinese Zen temples a sculpture of a rotund Hotei can often be seen in the entrance hall, and eventually he became popularly known as "the Laughing Buddha." Even today, people wish for good luck by rubbing his belly.

With the arrival of Zen in Japan, Hotei soon became even more beloved than he had been in China. The earliest extant Japanese image may be an ink painting preserved in the Kyoto temple Daitoku-ji, dated 1290, which shows Hotei resting on his bag.⁶ Along with Hotei walking and Hotei pointing to the moon (or to the void), this was to become a standard pose for portraying the wandering monk during the next few centuries. Like so many other themes, however, Hakuin expanded the range of depictions almost to the point of reinventing the subject.

HOTEI MEDITATING

Why did Hakuin paint this figure so often and with such variety? In Hotei's face we can see Hakuin's self-portrait, and yet Hotei is not only Hakuin but Everyman—a monk and a layperson, a sage and a fool, an avatar of the future buddha and a jolly fellow who enjoys playing with children. He carries a large cloth bag full of—what? Worldly possessions? Toys for children? Goods for merchants? Emptiness? Depending upon the point of view, he can represent all these things.

Some of Hakuin's paintings of Hotei are specifically Zen, such as a large-scale depiction of a monk sitting on his bag in *zazen* (plate 6.1). While this powerful image could represent any monastic in meditation, the large bag as well as the depiction of the face and half-clothed body strongly suggest Hotei; another version of this painting by Hakuin is inscribed "Hotei is doing *zazen* now." Here the inscription is both more humorous and more universal:

"Well, monk, what a surprise—have you come to do *zazen* today?"

"Yup!"

The implication that this monk is considered lazy, or perhaps that he only shows up from time to time, is a touch of humor that well befits Hotei, who preferred wandering through the countryside to temple life. It also reminds us that although Hakuin knew that people might not feel like meditating every day, it is still the most fundamental Zen practice, and Hakuin here paints it with great conviction. The size of the image; the way Hotei fills the frame; the repeated semicircles of his head, shoulder, belly, and bag; the appealing face; the strong contrast between the tonally varied dark robe and the lighter brushwork; the



PLATE 6.1

Hotei Meditating

Ink on paper, 123.7 x 50.3 cm.

Ginshu Collection

way the calligraphy nestles over the figure—all these make it one of Hakuin’s most compelling paintings, and with its combination of subtleties and power, it serves as an eloquent expression of Hakuin’s Zen.

HOTEI IN DAILY LIFE

When portrayed as a representation of Everyman, however, Hotei did not only practice meditation; in Hakuin’s view, he also led a full life of natural enjoyment. For example, Hakuin sometimes painted the monk embarking upon a favorite Japanese activity: “Hotei rides a boat to go out moon-viewing” (plate 6.2).

The seeming simplicity of this work belies its unassuming artistic skill. As is often the case, Hakuin has painted Hotei in a three-quarter profile to the left. Reeds, water, and the boat itself are minimally depicted, and the calligraphy forms a triangular shape, made up of two diagonals down to the left, that contrasts with Hotei’s body and face leaning up to the left. This contrast gives the painting a sense of movement, as does the fact that the boat is not shown completely but enters the composition from reeds on the right. The largest two characters of the inscription are the opening word “Hotei,” and the calligraphy is then divided visually into five further columns that can be literally rendered:

HOTEI	HOTEI
<i>fune ni</i>	in a boat
<i>nori</i>	riding
<i>tsukimi to</i>	for moon-viewing
<i>dekaketa</i>	has gone out
<i>tokoro</i>	this place/time

As in the previous scroll, rounded shapes predominate. Hotei’s large bag forms a circle that his face bursts through as he peers out at the moon, while his head, shoulder, chest, and stomach, as well as two echoing swirls in the water below, continue the curving brushwork. In contrast, the broad horizontal line that defines the boat establishes a base upon which Hotei sits. Once again the dark, thick brushwork for Hotei’s robe creates a strong black accent, here repeated in the calligraphy, which sets off the gray ink tones of the rest of the painting. The result is certainly charming—who could resist Hotei’s gently smiling face?—but we may wonder, where is the Buddhist message? Although the moon can represent enlightenment, Hakuin was wise enough not to insist upon doctrine; living fully in the moment, Hotei can simply enjoy the beauty of the moon on an autumn night.

Another figural subject that Hakuin depicted several times, not always as Hotei, is a man running with the huge mallet used for pounding rice or grain. The inscription says,



PLATE 6.2

Hotei on a Boat

Ink on paper, 33.5 x 52.2 cm.

Manyoan Collection

<i>Omoi kine to wa</i>	Such a heavy mallet—
<i>shine to no koto ka?</i>	won't it kill me?

In this version the figure is clearly Hotei, and his burden does not stop him from running with a smile (plate 6.3). There are two areas of heavy and tonally varied ink, the robe and the mallet, and they infuse the painting with a sense of energy that is abetted by the running legs of Hotei and the diagonal thrust of the entire painting, including the inscription. Notable in the calligraphy are several rounded swirls of the brush that have their counterpart in Hotei's head and the circular top of the mallet. These are balanced by the strong diagonal of the mallet's handle, parallel with Hotei's left leg, and the penultimate character of the inscription (meaning "thing" or "it"), rendered as a long vertical bisected by eight short, curving horizontals. In standard script, this character is written 事; Hakuin has given it a playful and creative transformation.

There are several possible puns in Hakuin's inscription. "*Omoi*" can mean not only "heavy" but also "thought" or "emotion." Therefore we might translate the inscription as:

<i>Omoi kine to wa</i>	The mallet of thought/emotion—
<i>shine to no koto ka?</i>	won't it kill me?

In addition, while *omoi kine* means "heavy mallet," *omoi-kiru* is the verb for "re-signing oneself to fate." What might Hakuin be implying? That we create our own burdens? That too much resignation to fate is deadening?

In previous publications, this painting has brought forth several explanations. According to one scholar, "Hakuin comments that the mallet is heavy in the same way that status, fortune and fame are burdensome. He admonishes us to throw them away and start living anew."⁷ Another scholar writes, "Put the mallet down," Hakuin seems to be saying, "and you will feel so much lighter."⁸

These readings are certainly reasonable, but we must take into account not only the text but also the painting itself. In this case, the smiling face of Hotei might indicate that instead of laying them down, we can carry our burdens with joy; after all, they probably won't kill us.

HOTEI AND HUMOR

In addition to the stated or implied Buddhist meanings in his depictions of Hotei, Hakuin clearly enjoyed various forms of playful humor. On some of his paintings of this subject, for example, he inscribed an old Japanese song:

<i>Fuki to iu kusa no na</i>	Butterbur is the name of a plant,
<i>Myōga to iu mo kusa no na</i>	Ginger is also the name of a plant;



PLATE 6.3

Hotei with a Mallet

Ink on paper, 40.9 x 52.4 cm.

Manyoan Collection

Fukki jizai toku arite

May you have wealth, honor,
and virtue,

Myōga araseta tamae ya

Divine protection as well!

Here Hakuin is enjoying the puns between *fuki* (butterbur) and *fukki* (wealth and honor), as well as *myōga* (ginger) and *myōga* (divine protection). The implication is that the things we seek outside ourselves may actually be part of our natural world; this song was so well known that on occasion all Hakuin had to write was the first line and people would know the rest for themselves.

A most unusual form of Hotei, which Hakuin seems to have invented, shows the wandering monk as a kite (plate 6.4). The composition is dramatic, with the powerful diagonal of the kite string reaching up to a series of circular forms anchored by a horizontal frame. Within the immense kite, Hotei leans forward, this time toward the right, his head breaking the circle as it did in the boating painting. Hotei's black robe again forms a visual accent, now in the center of the kite, while his round bag floats behind him. To add to the charm and humor, this scroll has an inscription in the form of a *senryū*; the words are also placed in a diagonal, now from left to right, with several of the characters having long kite tails as if they are also floating:

<i>Unu ga mama ni</i>	You can't just do
<i>yananu ga ika no</i>	anything you want—
<i>inochi kana</i>	it's a squid's life

In English slang we would choose a different comparison, but the complaint is the same—"it's a dog's life." In one more implied pun, a kite is called *tako* in Japan, but *tako* can also mean an octopus.

Is there a Buddhist meaning here? Compared to our earth-bound existence, the freedom of a kite is represented by Hotei, the embodiment of the future buddha, but in fact a kite is not completely free since it depends to some extent both on people and on the wind. Certainly, the sense of flowing with and through nature is a form of liberation to which humans often aspire, but questions remain. Are the people flying this kite as a spiritual activity, or are they just having fun, or both? Is it a coincidence that closest to Hotei is the small figure of a child, or is this actually an adult drawn smaller to indicate a greater distance from the viewer? More broadly, is the kite really Hotei, or just a picture of the wandering monk? For that matter, isn't the painting itself nothing more than ink on paper? Lest we get bogged down in such questions, the humor of the image remains resonant.

Another unique vision comes in Hakuin's painting of Hotei watching mice engaged in sumo wrestling (plate 6.5). This sport has at least a two-thousand-year history in Japan, originally having been performed to entertain the gods of Shinto during religious festivals. It still retains many Shinto ceremonial aspects, such as intense purification, although sumo became a fully professional activity

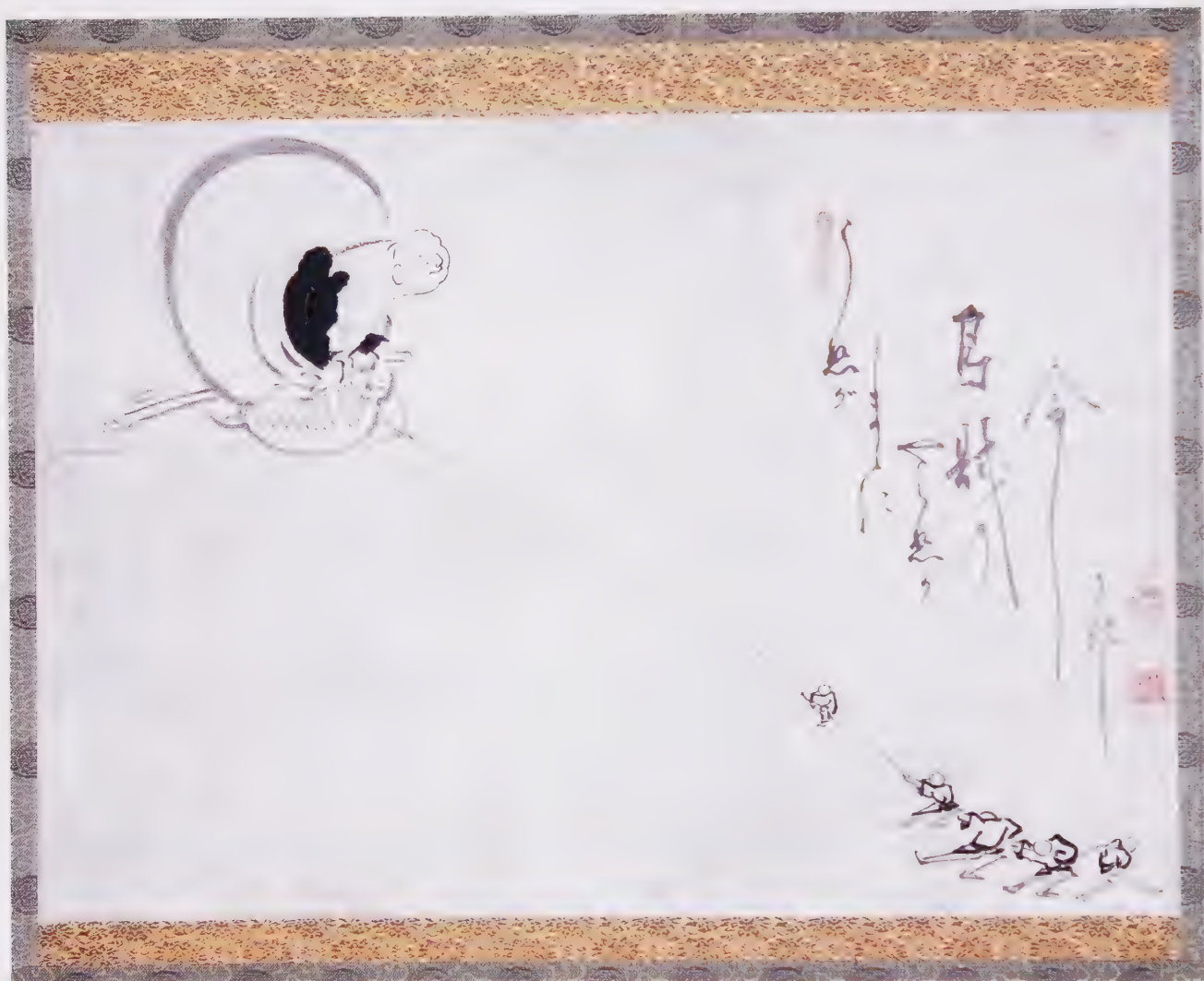


PLATE 6.4

Hotei as a Kite

Ink on paper, 38.3 x 54.5 cm.

Hosei-an



PLATE 6.5

Hotei Watching Mice Sumo

Ink on paper, 37.2 x 52.4 cm.

Ginshu Collection

a century before Hakuin created this image. The objective is for one wrestler to push the other out of the ring or to force him to touch the ground with anything but the soles of his feet; one common move is to lift the opponent (who may weigh well over three hundred pounds) and carry him out of the ring.

Here the composition is divided into two parts. On the left, a gray mouse grabs and lifts a white mouse by his belt while the referee mouse, in a spotted robe, holds out his fan; they are depicted in *toba-e* style with long sticklike legs and lively poses. On the right, the round head of Hotei peeps out from a round gap in his round bag with a delighted smile on his face. Hakuin's inscription, nestled in the top right, couldn't be more straightforward:

Nezumi sumō wo tokoro This is where mice do sumo

At one level this image is a parody of humans by depicting them in the form of animals, a Japanese artistic tradition that goes back all the way to the celebrated "Frolicking Animals" scroll of the twelfth century. We can easily join Hotei enjoying the sight of the mice doing their best to throw each other down, but in fact the figure of Hotei in his bag is given the most space in the painting. Therefore at another level we are watching Hotei watch the mice. Is Hotei partially hiding himself so the mice won't notice him? We are the only ones able to view the entire scene, both the mice and Hotei, and in this way Hakuin draws us into his imaginative world.

In several other paintings of this subject Hakuin adds a much longer inscription suggesting that the mice are engaged in a battle of good versus evil, but here Hotei clearly seems to be appreciating the match without worrying about who is winning and losing. It's up to us to choose whether to take this

delightful painting as pure entertainment, as a moral battle, or as a way of viewing life without conceptualizing it into hard and fast categories. Although we may never discover such a place beyond logic and rationality for ourselves, this is where mice do sumo.

For Hakuin, Hotei not only enjoys entertainment, but also provides it for others. He painted Hotei several times as a juggler, referring to a late sixteenth-century beggar named Mamezō who was famous for street performances in Osaka. Mamezō amused passersby with body contortions, humorous badinage, and feats of magic as well as juggling, and eventually all such street entertainers came to be called Mamezō.⁹ Hakuin usually shows the juggler doing various tricks, including spinning plates, but the inscriptions vary. On one such painting, Hakuin wrote, “As long as I don’t spill the water in the dishes, I’m always Mamezō.” On another painting of the same subject, he inscribed, “Before the Kamakura Palace, a seven-year-old girl is serving *sake*.” In the version here (plate 6.6), the calligraphy refers to the spinning plate:

Don’t let it drop—
Nagamatsu, nagamatsu!

Nagamatsu, which can be a person’s name, literally means “long pine.” Since this evergreen tree is a symbol of longevity, here it indicates the wish for a long life. Furthermore, Hotei stands on his bag and spins a large plate high over his head while juggling four balls, on one of which is inscribed the character *kotobuki* (long life). Is the implication that we have to juggle our own lives skillfully to achieve longevity?

As in many Hotei paintings by Hakuin, there are a number of circular forms that are contrasted with straight lines, such as the vertical of the long stick that holds up the spinning plate. This brushstroke is reinforced by the vertically organized calligraphy, while everything else is comfortably curved and rounded. The dark ink of Hotei’s robe creates a contrasting accent to strengthen the total composition of the work.

The theme of juggling also occurs in Hakuin’s writings, but usually to show human inconstancy. In one of his sermons to parishioners he states,

How changeable are our minds—like the skill of a juggler, the ball passing so quickly from one hand to the other, from right to left. How quickly does the glance of our eyes alter! The polite and courteous look when we are in the presence of a high-ranking person changes to hypocritical looks when in the presence of our own lord or parents.¹⁰

Despite this criticism, when showing Hotei juggling, Hakuin presents a positive image, suggesting that transience and change can be accepted, managed, and celebrated, and that the enlightened mind may be unified with the everyday mind in enjoying the pleasures of life.



PLATE 6.6

Hotei Juggling

Ink on paper, 118 x 27.5 cm.

Manyoan Collection



PLATE 6.7

Diptych: Hotei Playing Kickball

Ink on paper,
each 107.6 x 25.7 cm.

Kikuan Collection

HOTEI AND GAMES

Another amusement of Hotei, according to a pair of Hakuin's paintings, is playing kickball (*kemari*) (plate 6.7). This is a traditional game in which four, six, or eight players form a circle within a ten-foot-square area and kick a deerskin ball, which is a little less than ten inches in diameter, to prevent it from falling to the ground. Although *kemari* may have originally come from China, it is known to have been played at the Japanese Imperial Court as early as the mid-seventh century. This sport was originally popular with the aristocracy, but in later centuries it was enjoyed by warriors, and eventually also by everyday people.

Here Hotei must have given the ball a mighty kick. On the right scroll he looks upward, while the left scroll shows only the kickball at the top and three characters at the bottom. The inscription over Hotei announces,

Hotei really enjoys playing kickball

While the larger three characters on the left warn,

DO NOT BLUNDER!

In this depiction Hotei is wearing a more formal robe than usual—although, as so often, it is slipping from his shoulders. The character for “long life” is repeated eight times in the garment, which may suggest that longevity can be attained more easily if people enjoy themselves, but we are also warned against making mistakes.

Hakuin must have liked this subject since he painted it several times, sometimes with Hotei being joined in the game by Fukurokuju, the god of longevity, and once with the large three characters simply asking, “What is this?” Once again Hakuin is utilizing popular imagery to show that Hotei and other gods of good fortune are like the rest of us in being able to appreciate the here and now. As he wrote about enlightenment, “When suddenly it starts you will find yourself laughing,”¹¹ and “you will experience a great joy.”¹²

OTHER VERSIONS OF HOTEI

Hotei was one of the subjects that Hakuin painted by simply showing his attributes, in effect Hotei without Hotei (plate 6.8). In this case, we see Hotei's bag in a rounded form close to that of the Zen circle *ensō*; behind it are his fan, staff, and the edge of his robe to suggest that Hotei may be resting just out of our view. The varied ink tones creating the circle of the bag are especially vibrant, reminiscent of a comment the singer Bono made about the singer-poet Leonard Cohen, “He finds shades in the blackness that feel like color.”¹³ Here the most



PLATE 6.8

Bag of Hotei

Ink on paper, 51.5 x 42 cm.

Chikusei Collection

dramatic moment comes where the broader stroke of the bag touches the dark black of Hotei's robe, creating a merging and fuzzing effect that is full of tonal energy. The asymmetrical placement of the dark robe and staff also provides the work with compositional vitality.

The diagonally angled inscription once again is in the form of a haiku, perhaps because this poetic form appealed to so many people in Hakuin's day:

<i>Neta uchi wa</i>	While sleeping,
<i>kami ka hotoku ka</i>	a Shinto god? A Buddha?
<i>nonobukuro</i>	—just a cloth bag

Because the name Hotei literally means “cloth bag,” this image is both literal and figurative, but there are other elements of humor in this poem as well.¹⁴ The first line, *Neta uchi wa* (while sleeping) could also mean *neta uchiwa* (a leaning round fan), giving us a completely different way of seeing the image as a (Chinese-style) fan leaning on its side. In addition, “Mr. Nono” (*nono-sama*) is Japanese baby talk for a god or buddha.

And of course Hotei is both a god, one of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune, and a buddha, the enlightened being sometimes called “the Laughing Buddha.” But Hakuin implies that all this is at best a temporary truth, implying through his use of humor that we need not worship some being outside our own Buddha nature. Yet the meanings, ironies, and humor do not end there. Hakuin may also be suggesting that Hotei is hiding behind his bag in order to have a good nap. Could this be because he is tired of constantly being painted and examined by curious viewers? If so, Hakuin is himself the worst culprit, since he depicted Hotei so often in such a variety of activities, even while continuing to identify with him personally.

Many of Hakuin's writings were published during his lifetime; as noted earlier, a group of his paintings was also carved into woodblocks and printed in book form. Issued in Kyoto as *Hakuin Oshō shigasanshō* (A Collection of the Monk Hakuin's Paintings and Inscriptions), it includes a colophon datable to 1759, a decade before his death. This volume reproduces fifty-one works of which no less than ten depict Hotei, each time in a different pose. In addition to three aspects of Hotei already seen, the images include *Hotei Picking His Ear* (fig. 6.2), *Hotei Sleeping on His Bag* (fig. 6.3), *Hotei Sitting in Front of His Bag* (fig. 6.4), *Hotei Resting His Hands on the Bag* (fig. 6.5), *Hotei Holding His Bag Open with His Mouth* (fig. 6.6), *Hotei Producing Otafuku* (fig. 6.7), and *Hotei Playing with a Horse Puppet* (fig. 6.8).

As if these weren't enough, Hakuin at one time or another also painted Hotei with wind chimes, releasing acrobats from a gourd, holding hands and walking with a child, sitting with Fukurokuju, pointing upward, pointing at a bird, running seminaked, offering a gift, carrying his bag, carrying a child piggyback, carrying a lamp and a bell, and making tea.¹⁵ In total, Hakuin painted at least thirty different aspects of Hotei, demonstrating his extraordinarily creative imagination as well as his fondness for this Everyman subject.



FIGURES 6.2 TO 6.8
Hotei images from woodblock book,
Hakuin Oshō shigasanshō (1759)
Ink on paper, each 22.5 x 15.5 cm.
Private collection



THE SOUND OF ONE HAND

In his final years, Hakuin painted several more versions of the Single-Hand Hotei, now with more complex compositions; Hotei himself looks a little bit older. One of these scrolls can serve to sum up several of Hakuin's major final themes (plate 6.9). Behind the seated Hotei, a sprig of plum blossoms in a bamboo vase suggests both Tenjin and the renewal of spring,¹⁶ while two horizontal calligraphic scrolls above him transmit ethical and Zen texts. On the right is the large character for "parents" with a poem in Japanese:

When they have filial piety,
children and grandchildren succeed
to their parents' prosperity
in this floating world.

The left scroll has a Zen poem in Chinese, with the second line derived from the commentary to the seventh koan in the *Blue Cliff Record*:

Three worlds, only one mind,
Outside the mind, no other law;
Mind-Buddha extends to all mankind
Throughout the world without differentiation.

Hotei's robe, contoured with gray lines for emphasis, is slipping off his shoulders as he sits calmly on his bag. The resonant black of this robe is repeated only in his eyes and the character for "parents" behind him. With a gentle smile, Hotei states Hakuin's most personal and also most universal message:

Young shop-clerks, no matter what you say,
if you don't hear the sound of one hand, it's all rubbish!¹⁷

Ultimately, what does this mean? Although it's up to each person to discover the sound of one hand, the introduction to the eighty-ninth koan in the *Blue Cliff Record* includes the line "Even if your whole body were ears, you still couldn't hear it." Hakuin responded, "Mountains, rivers and earth are all my ears. What fills the ears is originally not sound; you hear an earful without hearing. . . . having no eyes and having no ears is true seeing and hearing."¹⁸

We still may ask, if the "sound of one hand" was so significant to Hakuin, why did he include so much else in this painting? Isn't the single hand enough? As Ludwig Wittgenstein began one of his final writings, "If you know that *here is one hand*, we'll grant you all the rest."¹⁹ Yet comparing this late scroll with Hakuin's early versions of the same subject (see plate 1.3) is revealing. As before, he presents the "one hand" koan to his monastic and lay pupils, but



PLATE 6.9

Hotei's Sound of One

Hand (late)

Ink on paper, 42.6 x 57.6 cm.

Gubutsu-an

now he not only prods them toward their own enlightenment but also stresses the need for compassion in returning to the world and fulfilling daily tasks and responsibilities. By combining this depiction of Hotei with a springtime plum-blossom image, an informal Japanese text about filial piety, a more complex Chinese poem on Zen Mind and his “one hand” koan, Hakuin reaches out to people in multiple ways.

CONCLUSION

Hotei has still one more significance. Hakuin’s most important message to his monk followers was that they must go return to the world after their training is complete. The same message appears in the traditional *Ten Oxherding Pictures*, which provide a Zen metaphor for the search for, and the path beyond, enlightenment. The ten stages are seeking the ox, finding its traces, seeing the ox, catching the ox, taming the ox, riding the ox home, forgetting the ox, transcending the ox, returning to the source, and entering the marketplace. Some sets of paintings and poems end with the eighth stage of transcendence, represented by the empty circle of the *ensō*. But this is not enough; most versions conclude with the image of the herdsman—now represented as Hotei—compassionately returning to daily life.²⁰ It is this vision of Hotei as a benign presence in everyday human existence that Hakuin represented in his manifold paintings. In view of all these examples, we can return to our original question: why did Hakuin paint Hotei so often, and with such variety? He certainly identified with this semilegendary monk, as the resemblance to several Hakuin self-portraits suggests. But it went further—why did some of the faces Hakuin painted for other deities and lay figures also resemble his versions of Hotei? There can be no certain answers, but the ways in which Hakuin depicted this subject may give us some insights.

First and foremost, Hotei is portrayed as a monk, yet he is intensely human. Not needing the formalities of temple life, he wanders through the countryside—Hakuin quotes Vimalakirti that “the bodhisattva without establishing a place for meditation, practices amidst the activities of daily life.”²¹

Hotei is a figure that his viewers would all know as a happy-go-lucky god of good fortune, and yet he is a subject with multiple facets. Playing games, entertaining and being entertained, flying as a kite or running with a mallet, Hotei is indeed Everyman. As a result, when he sits in meditation or invokes the sound of one hand, it becomes all the more meaningful. Hakuin’s Hotei paintings demonstrate that Zen is not an unfathomable discipline restricted to a few determined monastics, but a lively force available to everyone in every daily activity: “All people have it. No one’s excepted. It’s faultlessly perfect in each one of us.”²² This is the theme of Hakuin’s most famous writing, his “Song of Meditation.”²³

All living beings are originally Buddhas, just like water
and ice:
Without water there is no ice, and outside living beings
there is no Buddha.
Not knowing how near it is, people seek it outside
themselves—what a pity!
Like someone in the middle of water crying out in thirst,
Or the child of a rich man wandering around like a beggar,
We are bound to the six worlds because we are lost in the
darkness of ignorance;
Following dark path after dark path, when shall we escape
birth and death?

The Zen meditation of Mahayana Buddhism is beyond all
words of praise;
The virtues of charity, morality, invoking the Buddha,
repentance, training,
And all other worthy actions have their source in
meditation.
Even those who sit in *zazen* only once will destroy evil
karma,
How then can there be false paths? The Pure Land is now
very close.
Listen with reverence to this teaching, praise it, embrace it,
and you will find merit;
Better yet, look within and find the self-nature beyond the
self
And you will transcend words and explanations.

When you open the gate of cause-and-effect,
You will discover a path beyond duality or multiplicity;
When you abide in the form which is no-form,
Whether going or returning, you will always be at home;
When you take thought as non-thought,
You will sing and dance to the music of Buddhist truth.
Boundless as the sky, radiant as the moon is the four-fold
wisdom,
At this moment, what do you lack? Nirvana is right in front
of you,
This very place is the Lotus Land, this body is the body of
Buddha.

And since Buddha-nature is within all beings, Hakuin also writes, “Don’t just
stand there watching; get going!”²⁴

—STEPHEN ADDISS



HAKUIN'S FOLLOWERS

*I eagerly await the appearance of just one dimwit of a monk (or even half such a monk), richly endowed with a natural stock of spiritual power and kindled within by a raging religious fire, who will fling himself unhesitatingly into the midst of this poison and instantly perish into the Great Death. Rising from that Death, he will arm himself with a calabash of gigantic size and roam the great earth seeking out true and genuine monks. Wherever he encounters one, he will spit in his fist, flex his muscles, fill his calabash with deadly poison, and fling a dipperful over the monk. Drenched from head to foot, that monk too will be forced to surrender his life. What a splendid sight to behold!*¹

—HAKUIN

Hakuin's influence as Zen master, teacher, and artist was vast; his impact and influence on the continuation and dissemination of Zen, both monastically and within the lay population, was unlike any previous Zen master, as we have already seen. But it was the propagation of his monastic teaching lineage that most significantly affected the history of Japanese Zen, and to a certain extent the spread and popularity of Zen beyond Asia. Hakuin transmitted his Zen teachings to an impressive group of disciples who, in turn, continued to propagate Hakuin Zen in the next generations, to the extent that today almost all Japanese Rinzai Zen monks trace their lineage back to Hakuin. In addition, some of Hakuin's most noted Dharma heirs continued not only his teaching lineage but also his artistic expression.²

TŌREI ENJI (1721–92)

Hakuin's most noted disciple was Tōrei Enji. His father, Nakamura Zen'uemon, was a dealer of medicinal plants, and his mother, Tsuyu, was the daughter of a government clerk-official in the Osaka area whose family served the Shinto

FACING PAGE
Suiō Genrō (1717–89)
Portrait of Rinzai
See page 245.

shrine at the temple Enshō-ji in Nara. Tōrei wrote, “My father had a strict disposition, rarely bending to people, but my mother was a kind Buddhist, following a woman’s path.”³

According to numerous stories, Tōrei’s own behavior reflected his mother’s compassionate nature and deep faith from an early age. When he was seven years old, Tōrei was playing with a friend; the little boy plucked a louse from his own hair and killed it. Tōrei, feeling sorry for the creature, asked his friend to give him the next louse he was about to kill. Tōrei took the creature, placed it on his own head, and allowed it to live there.⁴

Even earlier, when Tōrei was five years old, the leading Rinzai Zen master Kogetsu Zenzai (1667–1751) stayed with the family while traveling on his way from Kyushu to Edo. Young Tōrei was allowed to serve a meal to the auspicious guest and, deeply moved by the encounter, decided to enter the life of a Zen monk. As the family’s only son, Tōrei had certain responsibilities, but despite his family’s objections, he was determined to pursue a life of Zen practice. As a result, the family adopted another son, thus freeing Tōrei from family obligations. At the age of nine, Tōrei entered the local temple, Daikō-ji in Notogawa, beginning his training under Ryōzan (n.d.), a strict teacher who guided Tōrei in the study of both Zen texts and Confucian classics.

In 1737, Tōrei traveled to Kyushu to train under Kogetsu, who introduced Tōrei to the Daijokyō, a repository of Shinto teachings, which piqued Tōrei’s curiosity due to his mother’s family background. Upon Kogetsu’s death, Tōrei continued his training under Kogetsu’s successor, Suigan Jushin (1683–1772).

During this period of training Tōrei became dissatisfied with his progress. Suigan told him, “The Buddha endured six years of hardship, Daruma nine years. But after two or three years, you want your karma to mature already. Fortunately, I hear there is a splendid teacher at Suruga. I think it would be good for you to visit him.”⁵ Tōrei set out on an *angya*, a journey on foot taken by Zen monks who have completed their initial training in search of a true Zen master who will become their main teacher. During the journey, which often entails visiting several Zen masters throughout the country, Tōrei’s energy and spirit dropped, and he did not reach Suruga, where Hakuin resided. However, he did sojourn in Kyoto, and while there studied under two major Zen masters residing in the city: Keijū Dōrin (1714–94) at Tenryū-ji and Daidō Bunka (1680–1752) at Hōjō-ji. But Tōrei was still not satisfied, and as a result, he went to a secluded hill near the temple Myōraku-ji, close to his family’s home. There he built a small hut, living in seclusion except for occasional trips down the mountain for a modest meal at Myōraku-ji. He wrote of this time, “For the purpose of *zazen*, I endured 150 days of hardship, not shaving or bathing, closing the gate and eating sparingly.”⁶ He further wrote,

In the autumn of the first year of Kampō [1741], I holed up in the hills of Rengedani in eastern Ōmi and devoted myself to *zazen* for days on end. I became so exhausted I could hardly keep my body from toppling over and I told myself, “The higher one goes in the Way, the stronger and more nu-

merous the evil demons; I'll never be able to seek the Way in this lifetime." I was about to throw myself backward onto the ground, when suddenly I broke through and saw that the hills and streams and great earth itself were all manifesting the body of the Dharma King!⁷

Tōrei, however, was still not completely satisfied with his achievements, and when he heard again about the teachings of Hakuin in 1743, he went to meet him, carrying a package of Konpeitō cookies as a gift for the sweets-loving master, who supposedly remarked, "You really should have come sooner. I've been hearing about you for some time now."⁸ In the spring of that year, Tōrei was allowed to enter Shōin-ji as one of Hakuin's disciples, and was soon appointed as a special unassigned attendant to the master. After about five years, Tōrei became extremely ill (probably from tuberculosis). Believing his sickness to be fatal, Tōrei set about composing a record of his Zen practice in order to make his contribution to Zen. His record outlines the various stages a student must pass through, from superficial to profound realizations, and the psychological transitions that accompany them. Tōrei presented his work to Hakuin saying, "If there is any value to this book, I will leave it for the future. If not, please throw it in the fire."⁹ Hakuin was deeply impressed by the work and recommended that Tōrei publish it. It was eventually printed in 1748 as *Sōmon mujin tōron* (Discourse on the Inexhaustable Lamp of the Zen School).¹⁰

While recovering from his illness, Tōrei, now twenty-six years old, lived in Shirakawa-mura in Kyoto. During this time, he came to a realization that life and death were ultimately the same thing. In the spring of 1746, when Tōrei reported his understanding to Hakuin by letter, his master was very pleased and responded with the following verse:

A golden carp tailing through the weeds of Ōmī's vast
waters,
Surmounting countless perils, has broken past the Dragon's
Gate;
Free at last to sport in the poison waves of the Buddha
Ocean
He now performs the true charity—by not giving a drop to
others.¹¹

The carp refers to Tōrei, who had reached enlightenment. However, Tōrei cannot give drops of the Buddha's ocean to others; everyone must find their own way.

Hakuin then asked Tōrei to return to Shōin-ji. Hakuin's sanction of Tōrei was initially met with opposition from several other senior disciples, whereupon Hakuin responded by stating, "If you can't bring yourself to believe in the man from reading his writing, how are you going to understand what is written in the books about the ancient Zen Masters?"¹² This is significant because it reveals Hakuin's respect for words and texts as a means of conveying Zen.

Tōrei returned to the temple in the eleventh month of 1749. The next month Hakuin presented him with his clerical robe saying, “I wore this gold brocade robe four times when I gave lectures on the *Hekiganroku*; I now give it to you. You should never let it [the teaching of the *Hekiganroku*] perish.”¹³ After a ceremonial meal, Tōrei left for the Ummon-an in Iwatsuki, Musashi Province, accompanied by Gekkyū Muin (n.d.), later abbot of Keirin-ji in Kai. Hakuin remarked, “I have more than 100 pupils, but none is superior to Tōrei.”¹⁴

Tōrei shared Hakuin’s concern for the preservation of Rinzai Zen, and therefore began to study the *Goi* (Five Ranks)¹⁵ and the *Jiyū-kinkai* texts concerning the principles and regulations of Rinzai Zen practice. His precise understanding and interpretation of these texts led fellow monks to use the name “Bisai Tōrei” (Meticulous Tōrei).¹⁶ As he grew older, Tōrei’s training methods are said to have become increasingly strict.

In the spring of 1758, Hakuin embarked on a lecture tour, marking the hundredth anniversary of Gudō’s death by giving a series of lectures on the *Hekiganroku*. The lecture tour began at Rurikō-ji in Mino, where Tōrei shared Hakuin’s lecture seat and also delivered lectures. Hakuin wanted to see Tōrei step out and become a Zen teacher in his own right, but Tōrei was stubborn. At one point, Hakuin suggested that Tōrei become the head priest of Muryō-ji, the small, impoverished and unregistered temple in Hina village.¹⁷ At first Tōrei rejected the idea, but eventually acquiesced, believing it was his duty to save the dilapidated temple. A few years later, Hakuin attempted to convince Tōrei to succeed him at Shōin-ji, but Tōrei declined. Tōrei left for Kyoto, but Hakuin came up with a new plan.¹⁸

Upon Hakuin’s return to Shōin-ji in the winter of 1758, he was informed that a group of lay followers and priests (all former disciples) had raised funds to purchase and renovate the nearby Ryūtaku-ji, which had fallen into disrepair, and they wished to install Hakuin as its founder. After some discussion, it was decided that Tōrei would be appointed abbot of the renovated temple.

Tōrei returned to Shōin-ji from Kyoto in the fourth month of 1760 and was immediately installed as abbot of Ryūtaku-ji. In the fall, Tōrei arranged for Ryūtaku-ji to be moved to a new site. At this time, many of Hakuin’s formal disciples and lay followers began arriving from surrounding provinces to begin preparing the land for the temple’s foundation. According to the *Hakuin Oshō nenpu*, everyone brought their own food and supplies so as not to deplete the temple’s resources.¹⁹

In the ninth month, Hakuin was invited to lecture at Ryūtaku-ji. When he ascended to the lecture seat, Tōrei stepped forward, bowed, and read the following verse:

Shariputra established the first temple in the grove of Gion;
His descendents, working together, erected the house of Zen.
Our own revered teacher now stands as the Shakyamuni of
his age.
May his Dharma-thunder startle the blind and ignorant of
today.²⁰

Hakuin's lecture was attended by over one hundred monks and laypeople, all of whom contributed congratulatory verses. Hakuin himself provided the following verse:

To the north Prince Bishamon protects the Dharma,
At the other three quarters I daten stands guard;
For this old and feeble monk there's nothing left to do,
Just push the two wheels forward, and keep an eye on you.²¹

In 1765, Tōrei went to Edo where he began renovation of the Shidō-an, the temple where Shidō Bunan had lived.²² In the sixth month, Tōrei went to Shōin-ji to escort Hakuin to visit the new Shidō-an, but his plans were blocked by Shōin-ji monks, who felt the master was too weak to travel. Tōrei sent a letter chastising the monks' behavior, but this only served to strengthen their resolve.

After the New Year of 1766, when eighty-two-year-old Hakuin hung a notice stating he would no longer accept students for instruction, Tōrei sent his disciple Bunkyo Koboku (n.d.) to escort Hakuin to Shidō-an. After another confrontation with Hakuin's disciples, they were allowed to continue on their journey. On the eleventh day of the second month, Hakuin arrived at Shidō-an and was pleased with the renovations. He stayed there, teaching daily for six months with Tōrei's assistance.

In 1768, Tōrei lectured on the Sung Dynasty text *Jinten ganmoku* at Tōji-in in Kyoto, in place of Hakuin, who was too ill to make the trip. During the lecture session, Tōrei was informed of his master's death, and returned to Shōin-ji, where he performed the funeral service along with Hakuin's disciple Suiō Genrō (1717–89), who would succeed Hakuin as head of Shōin-ji.

After Hakuin's death in 1768, Ryūtaku-ji burned down while Tōrei was away in Edo with his disciples at Shidō-an. Suiō then gathered his disciples at Shōin-ji and instructed them to work to rebuild the temple in time for the ceremony commemorating the third anniversary of Hakuin's death. Suiō took the monks to Ryūtaku-ji personally and supervised as they restored the burned structures. When local parishioners heard of Suiō's endeavors, they came to assist the monks. Tōrei thereupon returned from Shidō-an, conducted a memorial service for Hakuin, and lectured on the *Engo-bukka zenji-goroku*,²³ more than two hundred people were in attendance. As Ryūtaku-ji began to prosper again, people said it was due to Suiō's kindness and generosity.²⁴

In 1792, Tōrei went to live at Reisen-ji in his home village in Ōmi (currently Shiga Prefecture), where he continued to lecture daily. He gave his final sermon on the nineteenth day of the second month, shortly before he died at the age of seventy-two. He was given the posthumous name Butsugan Shinshō Zenji.

Noted for his literary abilities, Tōrei wrote more than ten books, including the *Kaisan Shidō Bunan anju zenji anroku* (a monograph on the life of Shidō Bunan), *Shojū Dōkyō Etan anju anroku* (a monograph on the life of Shōju Rōjin), and the *Goke sanshō yōro mon* (a study of the fundamental principles of the Five Houses of Zen).²⁵ His most famous works are the *Sōmon mujin tōron* and the

Hakuin Oshō nenpu (Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin). In his epilogue to the *Hakuin Oshō nenpu*,²⁶ Tōrei states,

My teacher Hakuin was an imposing man. He combined the gaze of a tiger with the walk and movements of an ox. The extreme sharpness of his Zen activity made it difficult to approach him. Virtually tireless, he brought the same degree of care and compassion to whatever he did. In settling troubles, in rectifying wrongs, he worked with silent persuasion, private discipline. His actions—whether moving, standing, or sitting or lying—were not to be fathomed by demons or non Buddhists.²⁷

Upon completion of the manuscript, Tōrei entrusted it to his disciple Taikan Bunshū (1766–1842) with instructions to have it published. In his own postscript, which follows Tōrei's epilogue, Taikan states, "Before I was able to discharge my duty, Master Tōrei passed away; I let matters rest after that, doing nothing about it until the 50th anniversary of Hakuin's death, which fell in the 14th year of the Bunka era [1817]."²⁸ During a commemorative ceremony on this occasion, Taikan was urged by those in attendance to publish the work. After a period of editing and revision, the biography was published by Ryūtaku-ji, Tōrei's temple, in 1820.

While Tōrei's personality reveals a serious, determined figure, his calligraphy and painting reflect a spontaneous sense of wild abandon. Of all of Hakuin's disciples, Tōrei's brushwork is the most untrammelled, the least self-conscious, and often blurs the lines between calligraphy and painting and between skillful and gestural.

TŌREI'S PAINTINGS

Known for his bold and unrestrained brushwork, Tōrei in fact does not seem to make any stylistic distinction between the two types of brushwork. This lack of distinction between painting and calligraphy is demonstrated quite well in his image of a *tetsubō* (plate 7.1). Beginning with a perfect ring, Tōrei's brush then moves down the composition with an energized yet well-manuevered zigzag, ending in a slightly oval point. Alongside the image, the inscription saying,

Those who fear this shall be rewarded

dances wildly from right to left, shifting back and forth with no set rhythm, much like the body of the rod itself. At times the calligraphy nestles up to the side of the rod, sometimes just touching its surface, and at other times it moves freely away. In the lower left, Tōrei ends the inscription with his clam-shaped cipher signature tucked against the image. The energy of the brushwork is further enhanced by the remarkable ink tones, which also serve visually to link

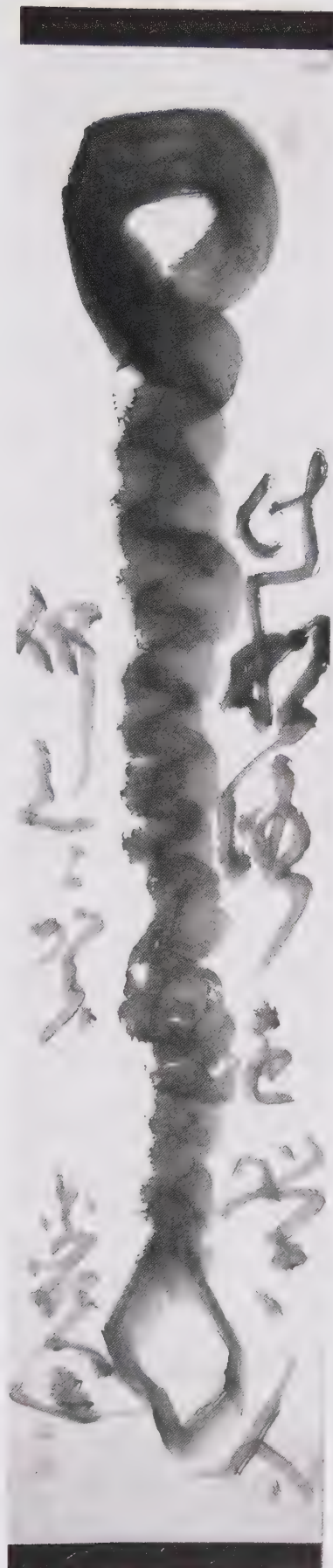


PLATE 7.1

Tōrei Enji (1721–92)

Iron Rod

Ink on paper, 134 x 28.5 cm.

Private Collection

the calligraphy and the images. Beyond visual similarities, any sense of spatial or compositional distinction between calligraphy and image is also blurred. For Tōrei, they are both pure gestures, equal in spirit, aesthetic, and meaning. The dynamic directness reveals an in-your-face quality sure to strike fear in his viewers.

Comparing Tōrei's *tetsubō* with that of Hakuin (plate 5.5), one feels a different energy between the two; Hakuin begins with an almost perfect circle and pulls the brush down evenly, ending in a thick, twisted lower half, enhanced by mottled ink. Its power is quiet and latent. In contrast, Tōrei's iron rod is visibly agitated, vibrating, and angular throughout.

While Hakuin painted images of the Sixth Patriarch's mill a few times, it was not one of his favorite subjects. In contrast, Tōrei seems to have had a great affinity for the Sixth Patriarch and became well known for his rice mill images, which he imbued with his own unique spirit and brush style (plate 7.2). Because Tōrei's images are rarely dated except for a few early works, it is difficult if not impossible to establish any developmental order in terms of style. But in Tōrei's case, it probably isn't that significant or meaningful. It seems likely that Tōrei brushed his images and calligraphy with the same constant sense of energy, dynamism, and abandon throughout his life as a Zen master. Tōrei's style and artistic spirit are uniquely his; he shows no self-consciousness or apprehension in his works, not even when borrowing a traditional image also done by Hakuin.

Tōrei's mills almost always dominate and fill the composition. The inscription then dances playfully in, out, and around the remaining space. His inscriptions are generally variations on Hui-neng's poem,

Satori is not a tree,
The mirror has no stand,
Originally, there was not one thing.
So where would the dust settle?

In this example Tōrei writes,

Originally, there was not one thing
So where would the dust settle?

Emphasizing the Sixth Patriarch's Buddha nature, the first line is also the same phrase Hakuin wrote in his single-line calligraphy (plate 3.5).

The scroll here reveals all of Tōrei's artistic traits. The mill reveals not only rich ink tones but also streaks of flying white, and uniquely it has a splash of ink where Tōrei initially placed his brush at the front of the mill, adding even more energy to the work. At some points the lines of the mill are dark, rich, and blurry, at others radiant with tonal ink variations, and sometimes they vibrate frenetically from rough strokes of flying white.

This painting is a large, commanding example of the subject that shows

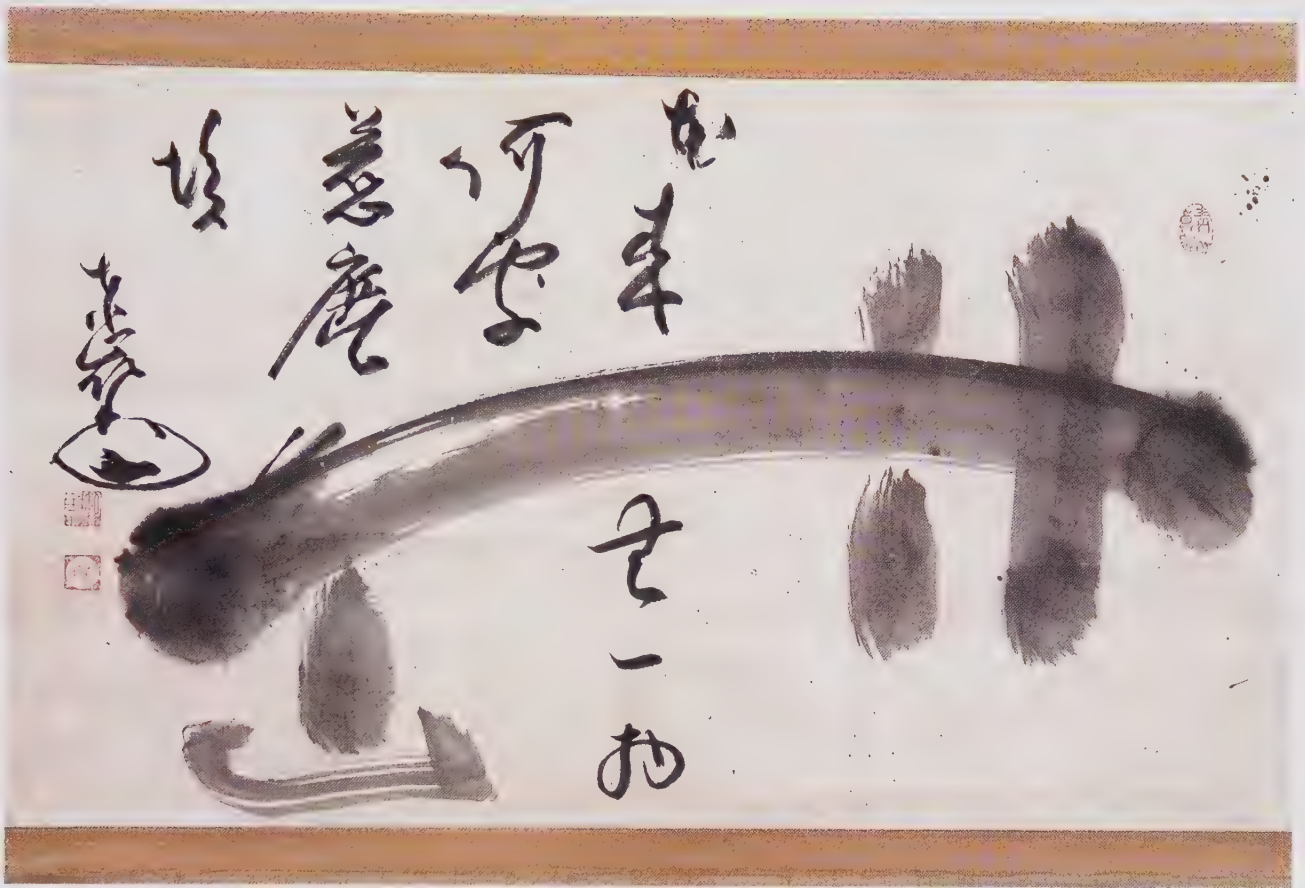


PLATE 7.2
 Tōrei Enji (1721–92)
 Sixth Patriarch's Rice Mill
 Ink on paper, 36.8 x 63.5 cm.
 Ginshu Collection



PLATE 7.3

Tōrei Enji (1721–92)

Shujinkō Moji-e

Ink on paper, 123 x 53.1 cm.

Manyōan Collection

great presence. Tōrei's bold, untrammled style is clearly evident, enhanced by the dark, dancing calligraphy surrounding the image, which also contrasts nicely with the gray ink of the mill. In Tōrei's powerful strokes the viewer can feel the arm of the mill as it comes down to strike the grain. Again we have the opportunity to compare Tōrei's approach to that of Hakuin's (plate 3.4); how do the two rice mills compare visually? Viewers are invited to make their own response.

In the work of Japanese Zen masters of the Edo period, the Sixth Patriarch is clearly associated with the rice mill more than with chopping wood, crossing the river with the Fifth Patriarch, or any other incidents from his life. Within this development, Tōrei was probably the artist who most fully adopted the subject, using his own dynamic Zen mind in expressing the powerful presence and significance of the Patriarch's work.

Like Hakuin, Tōrei created numerous figures from calligraphic characters. However, the one for which he is most famous is the figure *shujinkō* (master) (plate 7.3). The figure is a reference to Case Number 12 in the *Mumonkan*, "Zuigan Calls 'Master.'" In this koan the Zen master Zuigan Shigen (Ch.: Ruiyan Shiyan) (658–736) would call out to himself, "Oh, master!" and would answer himself, "Yes?" "Are you awake?" "Yes, I am." He continued this exchange with himself, "Never be deceived by others, any day, any time." "No, I will not."²⁹

Here Tōrei creates his seated figure from the characters *shu* (主) *jin* (人) *kō* (公) (diag. 7.1), and above writes the rather cryptic inscription,

If you draw a sword to your head,
refine pills of immortality with your feet,
dispel past, present, and future, and see in the ten
directions,
are you more likely to be mastered or master?
Don't be deceived by the body, mind, world,
or Buddhist teachings.³⁰



DIAGRAM 7.1
"Shujinkō"

While the idea of forming figures from characters was not new to Tōrei, he has not merely borrowed from Hakuin's images or subjects, but has created his own. Moreover, the unification between Tōrei's calligraphic and painterly brushwork is even more developed than that of Hakuin. While we saw clear similarities of brushwork in Hakuin's images, slight aesthetic differences and spatial separations could still be detected. Tōrei moves even closer to breaking down these compositional barriers. The three characters composing the figure are less immediately distinguishable from one another than those in many of Hakuin's examples.

SUIŌ GENRŌ (1717–89)

Little is known about the background of Hakuin's other most noted student, Suiō, except that he was from the area of Yashū (now in Toguchi Prefecture), north of Edo. The lack of information has given rise to unsubstantiated stories that Suiō was the illegitimate child of a local feudal lord.³¹ Suiō himself revealed little about his background.

Known by the name Eboku, Suiō became a student of Hakuin in 1747 when he was thirty years old, beginning a twenty-year association with the master. From the beginning, Hakuin realized he was no ordinary student. Eventually, Suiō and Tōrei came to be known as the "two divine pupils" of Hakuin. However, Suiō refused to reside at Shōin-ji while he was training under Hakuin. Instead, he chose to live a secluded life in Nishi-aoshima of Anbara, about seventy-five miles from the temple. Hakuin once reprimanded Suiō, saying, "The noise around here bothered you so you ran off into the mountains and spent your time with the rocks and trees. You said you needed peace and quiet. Where did it get you?"³² In fact, Suiō appeared at the temple only if there was a meeting to attend, and he always left immediately after the meeting ended. According to one story, Hakuin once sent a servant running after Suiō, asking him to return to the temple. Suiō replied that even if the master was calling him, he would not go back, explaining, "He [Hakuin] may have summoned me, but I didn't summon him."³³ Such was Suiō's untrammelled nature.

Suiō sat in *zazen* and studied sutras in his own manner. He was also fond of drinking *sake* and playing the board game *go*.³⁴ In the second month of 1764, in honor of Hakuin's eightieth birthday, the disciple Ryūshō organized a meeting on the *Daiō roku*, and Suiō assisted in the preparations; over seven hundred people attended the meeting. After this success, Tōrei suggested to Hakuin that Suiō be appointed Hakuin's successor at Shōin-ji. Hakuin agreed, and Suiō accepted the appointment.

The following month, Suiō went to Kyoto to receive the rank of First Monk (*daiichiza*) from Myōshin-ji.³⁵ At this time he changed his name from Eboku to Genrō, and adopted the studio name Suiō. According to one anecdote, a monk asked Suiō about the origin of his name. Suiō replied, "I like *sake*." The monk said, "It is not a proper name for a Zen monk, so why not change the charac-

ter *sui* 粹 [drunk] to the character *sui* 遂 [accomplishment]." Suiō agreed.³⁶ He returned to Shōin-ji in the seventh month, but in the spring of 1765 he and Hakuin had a disagreement of some sort, and Suiō left Shōin-ji for Kannon-ji. According to the *Hakuin Oshō nenpu*, this turn of events troubled Hakuin.³⁷

Despite his willfulness, Suiō faithfully served at his master's side when Hakuin's health began to decline, and he made the master's funeral arrangements. Although Suiō did succeed Hakuin as abbot of Shōin-ji, when monks came to train under him, he often sent them to Tōrei, saying, "I am ignorant. If you wish to study Zen, it would be better to practice *zazen* at Ryūtaku-ji with Tōrei."³⁸ Suiō, despite his status as a distinguished disciple of Hakuin, did not wish to conduct the formal training of monks.

However, there is a story of Suiō guiding a monk from Ryūkyū (Okinawa) who visited him. Suiō gave the koan "The Sound of One Hand" to the monk, who stayed with Suiō for three years. When it was time for him to return home, he met with Suiō and said, "I came from Ryūkyū over the waves to study Zen, but I regret I have not reached enlightenment; I also regret I will return home having to show my same old face." Suiō encouraged him by saying, "You need not feel regret; leave me now and do *zazen* for seven days." The monk followed these instructions and returned after seven days saying, "I have still not achieved satori. What shall I do?" Suiō told the monk to leave and do *zazen* for seven more days. The monk complied, but returned again seven days later in failure. Suiō told the monk that some Zen masters of the past had reached satori in twenty-one days, and that he should do *zazen* for another seven days. The monk left, tried again, and came back. Suiō asked, "How was your *zazen*?" The monk replied, "Quite the same, no satori." Suiō then instructed him, "If you cannot reach satori in three more days, you must die." The monk meditated as if he was going to die. On the third day he achieved satori meditating on the "One Hand" koan, and eagerly reported his experience to Suiō, who recognized his enlightenment.³⁹

On the seventh anniversary of Hakuin's death, Suiō held a commemorative meeting that more than two hundred people attended. Ten years later, he held another meeting to commemorate Hakuin's death, this time centering on the *Shōgen roku* (Record of Shōgen).⁴⁰ Eight hundred people attended this meeting, during which Suiō wrote a poem and then said to those in attendance, "I thank Kaigan greatly for attending this meeting. He has been my close friend for a long time, so please ask him to lecture tonight." Kaigan rose from his seat and asked, "What should I lecture about? Suiō teaches you very well, so I have nothing to contribute. However, since I am already in this seat, I will talk about the first time I encountered Hakuin with Daikyū."⁴¹

Suiō continued Hakuin's practice of traveling around the countryside propagating Zen and Buddhism among the general public, lecturing at numerous temples on the *Hekiganroku* and the *Gosō roku* (Record of the Fifth Patriarch). Although he did not leave any Zen records or commentaries of his own, Suiō's lecture notes have been preserved at Shōin-ji and reveal a simple, colloquial style, described as reflecting his true nature as a monk.⁴² These lecture notes were later collected under the title *Hōsō manzō shi*, and are included in volume eight of the *Hakuin Oshō zenshū*.

In the sixth month of 1789, despite an illness, Suiō attended a meeting on the *Hekiganroku* organized by Hakuin's disciple Gasan Jitō at Kishō-in in Edo. Suffering from the extreme heat, his condition worsened and he was bedridden from that time on. In the twelfth month of that year he was in critical condition, and his followers asked for his last calligraphy. Suiō scolded them but, after another request, finally picked up a brush and wrote,

For seventy-three years
I deceived the Buddha.
In the end, there is
What? What?
*Katsu!*⁴³

When he finished writing, Suiō closed his eyes and passed away.

SUIŌ'S PAINTINGS

It is believed that much of Suiō's painting technique was influenced by his association with the Nanga painter Ike Taiga, and that in return, it was Suiō who introduced the esteemed painter to Zen art. Suiō did produce some paintings in the Nanga style with some similarity to Taiga's work, particularly apparent in the literati-style brushwork of Suiō's landscapes and foliage and in the simple, slightly humorous depiction of some figures.

In general, Suiō's work, compared with that of Hakuin and Tōrei, reflects a more painterly quality. However, the influence of Hakuin can also be seen in Suiō's work, particularly in his images of Zen subjects. Suiō's style seems to have been most strongly influenced by Hakuin's early paintings, and rarely reflects the spiritual depth or visual intensity that Hakuin achieved in his final years.

Suiō's approach to Zenga is much more traditional compositionally than that of either Hakuin or Tōrei; the majority of his works consist of an image, most typically of a single or several figures of Buddhist origin, accompanied by an inscription consistently placed above or to the side of the image, carefully and clearly delineated by an imaginary box. Not only is the inscription confined to this "space cell," but it is also generally organized in clear, even columns of script. Thus, despite the often charming, playful figures reminiscent of Hakuin's early scrolls, the totality of the composition is based on traditional Zen paintings in which painting and calligraphy were kept spatially distinct.

Of Hakuin's followers, Suiō seemed to have the greatest affinity for Kanzan and Jittoku. Where Hakuin painted several variations on the theme, playfully incorporating the figures into various scenarios, Suiō seems almost obsessed with it. He utilized the pair of figures in triptychs, diptychs, and single scroll formats. Moreover, Suiō continued to change and transform the appearance of

his figures. In many examples, Suiō seems to want to emphasize the eccentric reputation of Kanzan in particular. He is often shown with a wild look on his face as he joyfully unrolls a scroll. Jittoku, in contrast, is usually depicted in a more contained manner, waiting patiently with his hands tucked in his sleeves, or pointing delightedly up at the moon.

In one example, the two friends stand together, Jittoku holding his kitchen broom and Kanzan pointing up toward the calligraphic inscription (plate 7.4), leading the viewer's eye to Suiō's message,

Hey! Hey! Hey!
You're just going around in circles!

Beyond the circle of the moon, is he referring to the endless cycle of rebirth that Buddhists seek to escape? Or is he hinting at something further? Perhaps he is in fact less concerned with philosophical or worldly matters, and is merely pointing to the beautiful moon, a visual reference to his own famous poem:

My heart is like the autumn moon,
Pure as a blue-green pool.
No, this comparison sucks.
How can I explain?

No moon is visible, but the shape of the two figures, with Kanzan's arm raised, is reminiscent of a crescent moon. In either case, whatever Kanzan is pointing to seems to be far away indeed, and we are much more engaged by the two figures themselves, charmed by the little dots Suiō uses to create Kanzan's eyes and nose, and by the beautiful drape of Jittoku's sleeve as it visually balances Kanzan's raised arm. The slightly dreamy quality of the figures is anchored by the rough treatment of the broom, which itself is echoed in the brushy hem of Jittoku's skirt. The image also suggests the paradox of metaphorical Zen (the moon) versus the everyday Zen (the broom).

In a particularly strong image, Suiō depicts the Chinese master Rinzai holding a hoe and glancing over his shoulder with a fierce stare (plate 7.5). Because there is no inscription, it is difficult to know exactly to which figure Suiō is referring.⁴⁴ However, there are several stories associated with Rinzai and his hoe. In Case Number 49 of the *Rinzai roku*, Rinzai is out planting pine trees when his master Huang-po (Jp.: Ōbaku) asks, "Why are you planting tree so far in the mountains?" Rinzai replies, "To make the temple grounds more beautiful, and to mark the road for future people." Rinzai then takes his hoe and hacks at the ground three times. Huang-po exclaims, "That might be so, but you have already felt the thirty whacks of my stick!" Rinzai again uses his hoe to hack at the ground three times, exhaling loudly. Huang-po then says, "When my teaching lineage passes to you, it will flourish throughout the world."

Similarly, in part 4 of the *Rinzai roku*, Rinzai is out hoeing the fields with



PLATE 7.4
Suiō Genrō (1717–89)
Kanzan and Jittoku
Ink on paper, 118 x 27.3 cm.
Gubutsu-an

his fellow monks. Seeing Huang-po coming, Rinzai stops his work, and using his hoe as a staff, stands leaning on it. Huang-po says, “Tired, isn’t he?” Rinzai replies, “How can I be tired? I haven’t lifted my hoe.” Huang-po strikes him, so Rinzai grabs Huang-po’s staff and knocks his master to the ground. Huang-po calls to the *wei-na* (official in charge of temple affairs) for help. The *wei-na* comes and asks why Huang-po put up with such insolent behavior. Huang-po rises to his feet and strikes the *wei-na*. Rinzai says, “At other places they are cremated, here we bury them all alive!”

Later Wei-shan asked Yang-shan, “Why did Huang-po strike the *wei-na*?” Yang-shan explained, “When a thief runs away, the person in pursuit gets whacked.”

Suiō here keeps the composition simple and uses only a few beautifully composed strokes of ink to outline Rinzai’s figure and robe. There is no inscription, but Rinzai’s face speaks volumes, and is reminiscent of Hakuin’s portrait of the master (plate 3.6). Although known for charming, lighthearted images, Suiō could occasionally also produce more powerful, direct ones, and in this case the evocative use of negative space in the robe serves to balance the power of the face.

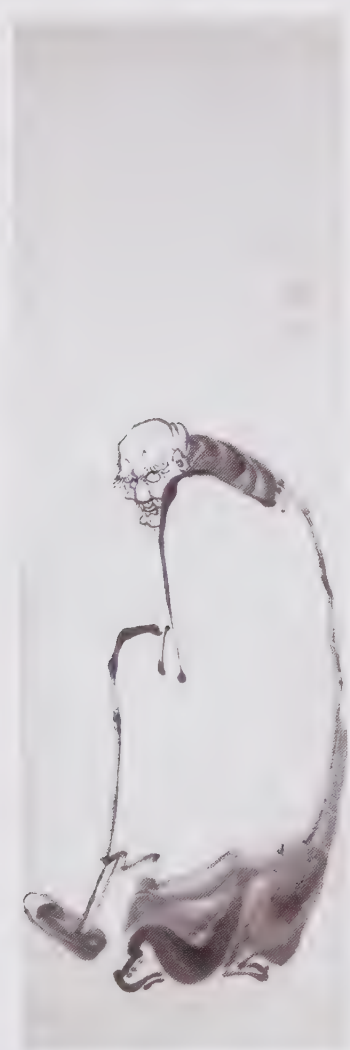


PLATE 7.5
Suiō Genrō (1717–89)
Portrait of Rinzai
Ink on paper, 89.5 x 29.2 cm.
New Orleans Museum of Art

TAKUJŪ KOSEN (1760–1833)

Tōrei and Suiō were probably Hakuin's two most noted and accomplished Dharma heirs, and certainly the ones who most strongly carried on Hakuin's painting tradition, but historically within the Hakuin lineage, Takujū and Inzan, both Dharma heirs of Hakuin's disciple Gasan Jitō, were also of great importance.

Takujū was born in Tsushima, a village outside present-day Nagoya City, to a family named Suzuki. He became a monk at the age of fifteen under Shōhō Zenzui (n.d.) at Sōken-ji in Nagoya. At the age of nineteen, he began studying under a series of Zen masters including Kaigan (n.d.) of Fun'yō-ji in Taniguchi, Mino and Reigen Etō at Rokuō-in in Kyoto, until finally becoming a pupil of Gasan at Tōki-an in Nagata. Like most monks in the Rinzai tradition, Takujū was given Jōshū's "*Mu*" as his first koan. Takujū meditated diligently on the koan, but determined that his temple duties were hindering his progress. He asked for permission to use a special room in which he could sit in meditation continuously with little sleep or food. He practiced this way for ninety days, at which time he broke through the koan and returned to his regular monastic duties.

After fourteen years with Gasan, Takujū received his Dharma transmission. He eventually returned to Nagoya to serve as abbot of Sōken-ji, and in 1813 he was appointed head priest of Myōshin-ji and began attracting many disciples. Takujū also traveled widely to teach and give Zen lectures at temples around the country. In 1832, at the age of seventy-three, he returned to Tōrin-ji, a small temple within Sōken-ji, where he died the following year.

Takujū's paintings are somewhat rare, since he was much less prolific with the brush than Hakuin, Tōrei, or Suiō. Here Takujū paints a humble tea bowl (plate 7.6). The relationship between tea and Zen is deep and complex, both philosophically and aesthetically. The tea master Jakuan Sōtaku (n.d.) wrote, "The spirit of tea is the spirit of Zen. . . . If you do not know the taste of Zen, you do not know the taste of tea."⁴⁵ At its heart *chanoyu* (tea ceremony) is simply to "just heat water, prepare tea, and drink," so despite the meticulous details and rigid choreography, it has a fundamental directness, simplicity, and everyday immediacy like that in Zen. Yet, beneath this seeming simplicity of process lie years of training and practice, guided by a master, before the underlying principles are fully understood.⁴⁶ Moreover, Sen Sōtan (1578–1658), grandson of the great tea master Sen Rikyū (1522–91) wrote,

Chanoyu
is conveyed through the mind,
through eye
and ear—
without a single stroke of the brush.⁴⁷



PLATE 7.6

Takujū Kosen (1760–1833)

Teabowl

Ink on paper, 37 x 48 cm.

Gubutsu-an

This same ideal is central to Zen—that is, applying all of one's senses to create an intuitive awareness and reaction that can't be transmitted or learned intellectually.

Takujū's teabowl sits quietly, unassuming in appearance, almost austere. Yet this austerity suggests a story in which the great tea master Kobori Enshū (1579–1647) was complimented by his disciples on his taste in tea wares. "Said they, 'Each piece is such that no one could help admiring. It shows that you had better taste than had Rikyū, for his collection could only be appreciated by one beholder in a thousand.' Sorrowfully Enshū replied: 'This only proved how commonplace I am. The great Rikyū dared to love only objects which personally appealed to him, whereas I unconsciously cater to the taste of the majority. Rikyū was one in a thousand among tea masters.'"⁴⁸

Next to the bowl Takujū wrote,

In ten thousand valleys,
the pine wind
offers one sip.

The phrase is a reference to the idea that in the making of tea the sound of the boiling water in the kettle resembles that of the wind through the pines. Sen Sōtan composed the following poem:

If asked
the nature of *chanoyu*,
say it's the sound
of windblown pines
in a painting.⁴⁹

The connection between tea and Zen brushwork is complex but significant. In the *Nanpō roku*, a compilation of Rikyū's ideas on tea recorded by his disciple and Zen monk Nanpō Sōkei (n.d.), it is noted that:

No utensil ranks with the scroll in significance. Contemplating it, both guest and host attain wholeness of mind and realization of awakening in *chanoyu-samādhi*. Calligraphy of Zen monks are foremost among scrolls. With veneration for what is written, one savors the virtue of the calligrapher, of practitioners of the way, of the masters.⁵⁰

Takujū's calligraphy is beautifully lucid, with a great deal of fluidity and variation within the characters. The gestural freedom of the calligraphy stands in contrast to the rather austere quality of the teabowl, reflecting two aspects of Zen itself: quiet steadiness and active awareness. To this extent, the *Yamanoue Sōji-ki* (Record of Yamanoue Sōji) states, "Concerning tea manner, in training, depend solely on that which is old. In personal inventiveness, all should be new. One should study style under an accomplished master. Consider how one can accord with one's own times."⁵¹

Is this not exactly what Hakuin himself espoused: fully understanding the teachings and experiences of past masters, but living and learning also within one's own time and surroundings?

INZAN IEN (1754–1817)

Inzan was born in Echizen to the Sugimoto family and entered the priesthood at the age of nine under Rōzan Bengu (d. 1781), whom he attended for eight years at Kōtoku-ji in Mino (present-day Gifu City). Inzan then began three years of Zen study under Bankoku (n.d.), who was spreading the “unborn” teaching of Bankei Yōtaku (1622–93). At the age of twenty, Inzan began a seven-year period studying with Gessen Zenne (1701–81), a strict teacher, at Tōki-an in present-day Yokohama. After leaving Gessen, Inzan went on pilgrimage to visit teachers in Edo and Kyoto, eventually returning to his first teacher, Rōzan, who was now living at Baisen-ji in Horadō, Mino. After spending ten years at Baisen-ji, Inzan began hearing that Gasan Jitō⁵² was now propagating the Zen of Hakuin at Tōki-an, and went to study with him. Inzan practiced earnestly, and received the Dharma transmission from Gasan at the age of thirty-nine, also receiving his certification to teach. Inzan then traveled from temple to temple in the Gifu area propagating Hakuin Zen among monks and lay practitioners. In 1808 he returned to Zuiryō-ji and supervised construction of a large monks' hall (*sōdō*); in 1808 he assumed the position of abbot of Myōshin-ji and oversaw ceremonies marking the 450th anniversary of the death of Myōshin-ji's founder, Kanzan Egen.

As with Takujū, brushwork by Inzan is not abundant. However, the existing works reveal Inzan's fondness of *ensō*. Despite their seemingly limited shape, *ensō* have provided Zen masters with an unending variety of visual expression through their fundamentally simple yet endlessly complex shape. Circular symbolism represented the ideal of the Void, related to the Zen ideal of emptiness and formlessness. The Third Patriarch of Zen, Chien-chih Seng Ts'an (d. 606), wrote the poem *Hsin-hsin ming* (Precepts of the True Heart), in which he stated, “Round and perfect like vast space, nothing lacking, nothing in excess.”

The ideal of form and no form had penetrated Zen fully by the eighth century, but there seem to be no extant early Chinese circle paintings despite numerous references in Zen texts to masters tracing circles in the air with their fingers, or drawing circles in the dirt with their staffs, and at least one reference to a painted circle. In Japanese *ensō*, while some Zen masters have likened the circle to the Void, others have referred to the moon or a simple rice cake. In other examples, Zen masters have simply asked, “What is this?”⁵³ Ironically, despite his huge repertoire of images, Hakuin rarely painted *ensō*; in fact there are only four known, although there are many by Tōrei. Here, Inzan's circle floats in the composition, wonderfully robust with its deep, rich ink. It is not perfectly round, but perhaps perfectly Zen (plate 7.7). The inscription is the first line from Kanzan's famous poem,

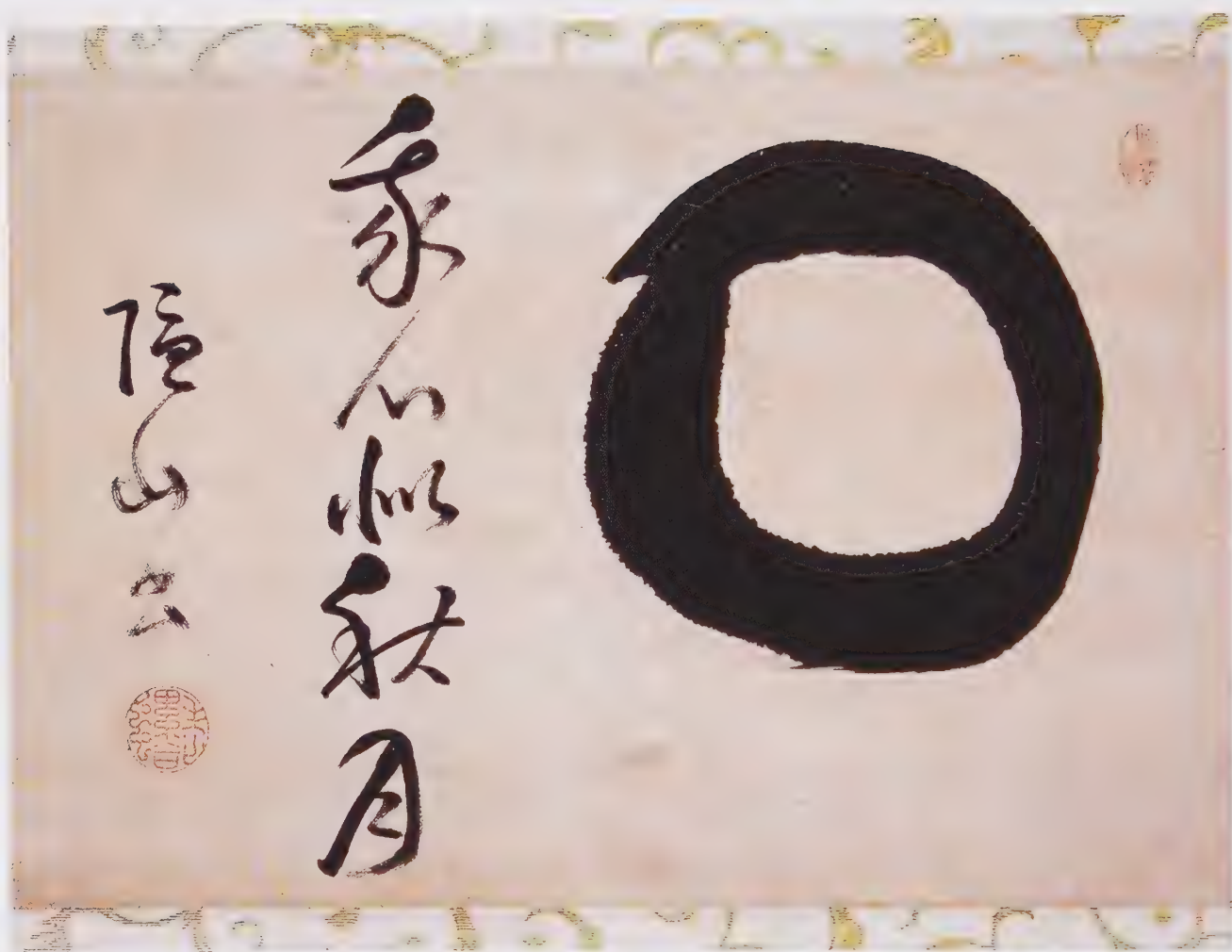


PLATE 7.7

Inzan Ien (1754–1817)

Ensō

Ink on paper, 33.1 x 44.4 cm.

The Bradley R. Addison Collection

My heart is like the autumn moon.

The final character, “moon,” tilts slightly and takes on the shape of a crescent moon. Moreover, the curved tip at the top of this character echoes the stroke beginning the *ensō*, visually linking the two aspects of the composition.

SHUNSŌ SHŌJŪ (1751–1839)

Another notable Zen master from the second generation of Hakuin’s students is Shunsō, who became a monk at Jizō-ji in his hometown of Saganoseki, Bungo, at the age of eleven. When he was eighteen, he went on pilgrimage, visiting the Zen masters Ranzan Shoryū (1713–92), Tengei Egen (1723–94), Daikyū Ebō, and Reigen Etō, but eventually settled into training under Suiō, receiving his certification and becoming his Dharma heir. At the age of thirty-five, Shunsō became the ninth abbot of Jikō-ji in Awa, but then took up the vacant position of head of the training at Enpuku-ji in Yamato. Shunsō was considered to be generous, but with a very strict teaching style. He died in 1839 at the age of eighty-nine.

Although Shunsō painted numerous subjects, he was most proficient at figures, and in his images of Daitō Kokushi and Kanzan Egen (plate 7.8), Shunsō continues the tradition of paying homage to his own lineage. Shunsō was aware of Hakuin’s images and must have seen at least a few examples, including portraits of Daitō. Although Shunsō may have based Daitō’s body posture on Hakuin’s rendition, his treatment of the raincoat and sedge is distinctly his own, in particular creating a three-tiered coat and flooding it with gradations of ink wash for a very deep, rich result. While Daitō does not have the wild, almost maniacal expression of Hakuin’s figure, he shows an intense, deeply penetrating expression. Shunsō frames Daitō’s face beneath his large sedge hat, contrasting the washy lines of the hat with the strong dark lines creating his nose, chin, lips, cheek, eye, and, in particular, the three expressive lines that converge at the inner corner of his eye to create an intense stare. Because Shunsō was a master of ink tones, he could layer strokes of wash with great control and beauty. This is most apparent in Daitō’s beard, which combines dry dark lines with wetter gray wash and again serves to frame the figure’s face under the brim of his hat. Hakuin’s images tended to be more linear, thus focusing on detailed hands and feet, while Shunsō’s image emphasizes ink tones and layered brushstrokes.

Most significantly, Shunsō depicts the master holding a melon, thereby making clear reference to a specific Daitō story (see page 120). This individualizes the figure in the painting, and to a great extent distinguishes Shunsō from Hakuin. Because of the inclusion of the melon, suggesting the spring, Daitō paintings are prized as some of the few Zen paintings with seasonal imagery. The inscription reads,



PLATE 7.8

Shunsō Shōju (1751–1839)
Diptych: Daitō and Kanzan

Ink on paper,
each 130 x 54 cm.

Ginshu Collection

No man is recorded who could feed on the wind and sleep on dew,
So he stood at Gojō Bridge for twenty years.

Although Shunsō was noted for his images of Daitō, of which this is a fine example, it is all the more significant because it is paired with a portrait of Kanzan Egen. In contrast to Daitō, the figure of Kanzan seems more subdued and introspective. The pair serve as a study in contrasts; the dynamic, well-known, yet slightly mysterious Daitō, bold and in-your-face, compared with the more austere, frugal, and simple-natured Kanzan, who stands quietly with his walking staff, his sedge hat held in front of his body. In contrast to the significant use of ink-tone variation on Daitō's figure, Kanzan has much less. In fact, the only ink contrasts are between the darker lines used to outline his robe and body and the generally uniform gray wash that fills in the robe and hat. The pale gray of the wash allows a few other brushstrokes to shine forth, in particular the line of the walking staff, the hem of his robe, and the line of the sleeve. This contrast between dark lines and uniform gray wash is carried through in the treatment of the face. Again, in contrast to the rich textures of Daitō's face, Kanzan's is a simple study in black outlines and minimal gray wash. The images provide a study in contrasts and juxtapositions of the personality and expression of the two Japanese Zen masters, and of Shunsō's ability to distinguish them with the brush. Furthermore, there is something fundamentally Zen about showing these two great and distinguished masters begging like simple monks.

The inscription on the image of Kanzan says, "The oak tree is a thief's stratagem." This rather cryptic phrase was used by Kanzan paradoxically praising Jōshū's famous oak tree koan (Case 37 in the *Mumonkan*). In this koan, a monk asks Jōshū, "What is the meaning of Bodhidharma's coming to China?" Jōshū replies, "The oak tree in the front garden."

As a pair of paintings, rather unusual in Zen, the two figures interact well; Kanzan looks directly at Daitō, and Daitō looks upward and out to the side, but not directly at the viewer. The treatment of their attributes is compositionally important as well. Daitō's staff vertically frames the far right side, then the slope of his hat points down and draws the viewer's eyes toward Kanzan, as does the slight tilt of the melon. From the other side, Kanzan's sedge hat points directly at Daitō, and his staff angles in a way as to suggest movement in the direction of Daitō, as well as closing the general frame started by Daitō's staff.

Shunsō also had a humorous side, as seen in his image of a mischievous *oni* meditating (plate 7.9). Having escaped momentarily from Shōkī's sight, and perhaps finished with his bath, the *oni* sits quietly, legs folded in the lotus position and hands clasped in front of him, next to a pot with a stick of incense burning to mark the meditation period. His determined expression also reveals some distraction as he glances out the sides of his eyes, perhaps looking out for Shōkī, or wondering why we viewers seem so intrigued with him. Although this painting has no inscription, another example of the same subject includes these ominous words:



PLATE 7.9

Shunsō Shōju (1751–1839)

Oni Zazen

Ink on paper, 33 x 46.7 cm.

Hosei-an

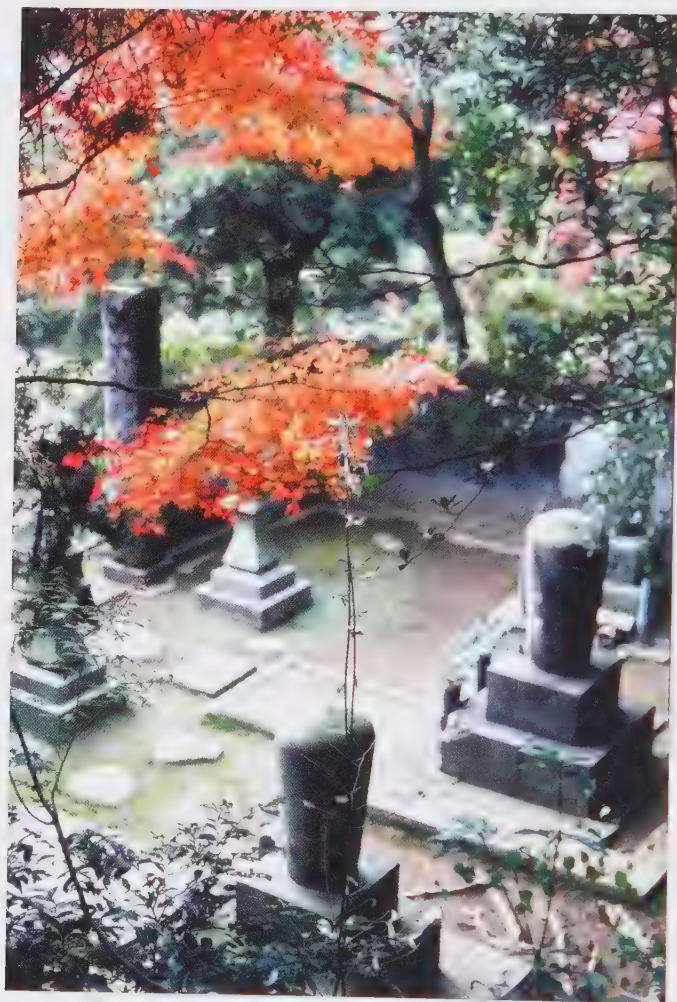
This is the ultimate test of the meritorious two words
(*za zen*).

Resolving right or wrong, in a tiger skin,
and breaking the horns of a corrupt demon.

Although this *oni* seems to be earnestly attempting to meditate, his expression suggests a bit of skepticism.

Ultimately, however, the *oni* engages us, even if we have distracted him. This is the purpose of Zenga: to engage the viewer and to introduce the world of Zen and its teachings to a wider audience. Who wouldn't be charmed and intrigued by a little *oni* attempting to meditate, and ponder the possibilities of meditation for oneself? Shunsō understood this and used it to its full advantage. While a certain amount of calligraphy and painting was done for the monastic population, the majority of Hakuin's works and those of his followers were for lay practitioners, and their subjects reflect this. Hakuin opened Zen to the broader world, and opened the broader world to Zen. The visual exchange is astonishing, and changed Zen and Zen imagery forever.

—AUDREY YOSHIKO SEO



EPILOGUE

There are memorial stones (stupa) dedicated to Hakuin and Tōrei at Ryūtaku-ji (fig. E.1), and in the autumn of 1937, Nakagawa Sōen (1907–84), abbot of Ryūtaku-ji, prophetically wrote,

<i>Hakuintō no</i>	May this maple leaf
<i>momiji hitohira</i>	from Hakuin's stupa
<i>umi koe te.</i>	cross the ocean. ¹

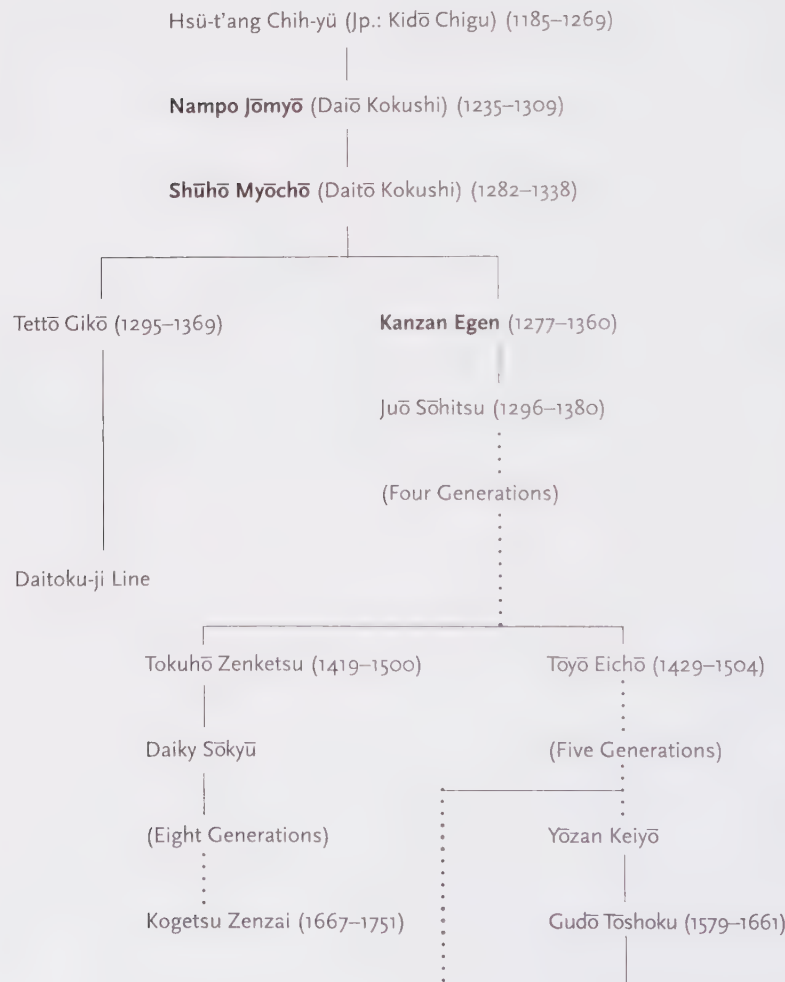
Indeed, the power, significance, and universality of Hakuin's teachings, never lost on his disciples or later Zen masters in Japan, are now beginning to flourish in the west.

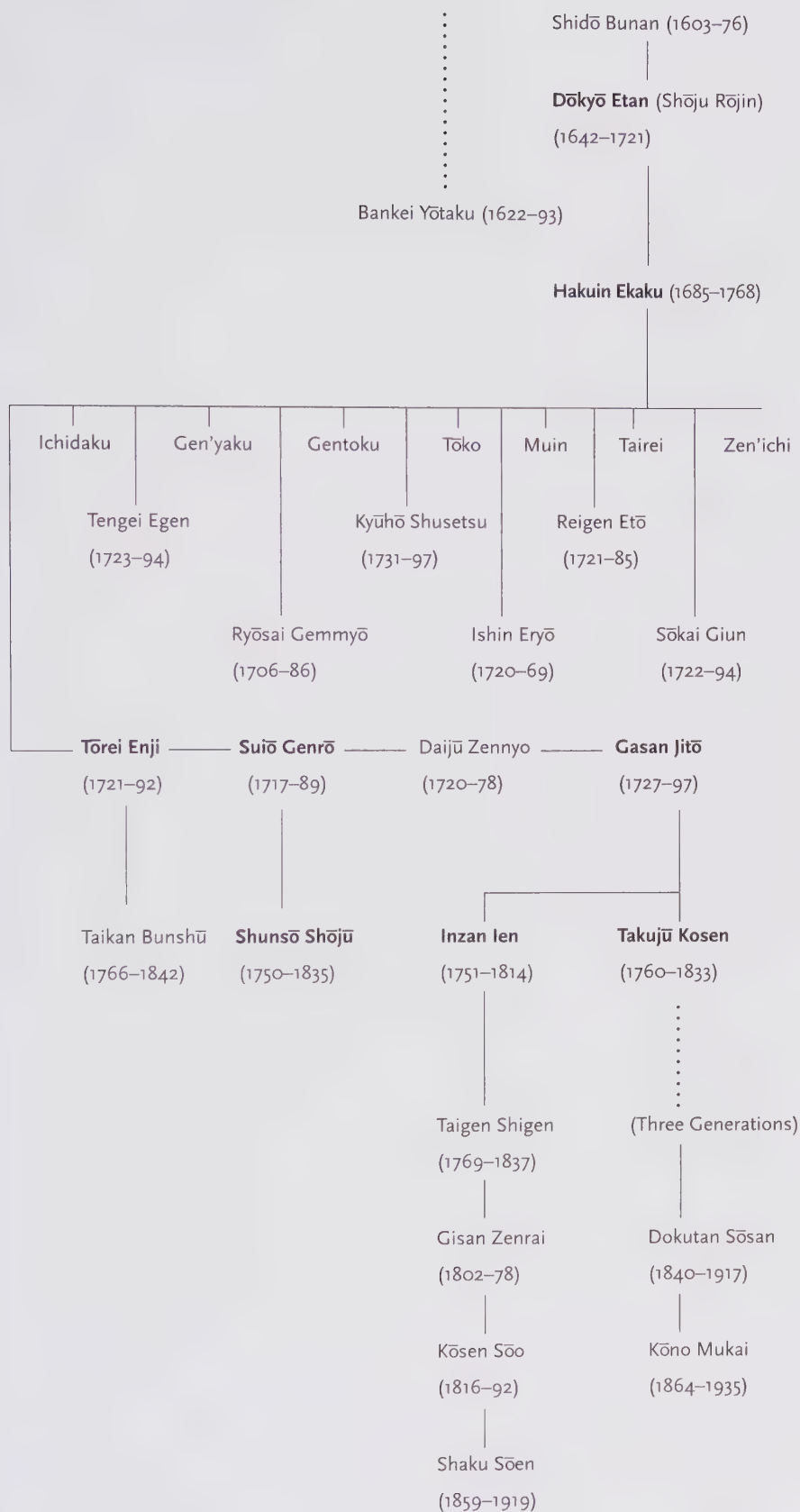
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FIGURE E.1
Stone Monuments to
Hakuin and Tōrei
Ryūtaku-ji

APPENDIX: LINEAGE CHART

HAKUIN'S LINEAGE

The boldface denotes masters and monks prominently discussed in the text.







NOTES

INTRODUCTION. HAKUIN IN JAPANESE ZEN HISTORY

1. *The Embossed Tea Kettle: Orate Gama and Other Stories*, trans. R. D. M. Shaw (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1963), 14. Passage from *Bukkyo kakushu koyo* (Synopsis of All the Buddhist Texts), Zen volume, originally published in 1896.
2. See chapter 3 for information on and a portrait of Daiō. There is some discrepancy as to whether Daiō actually received a written sanction from Hsü-t'ang. See Michel Mohr, "Emerging from Nonduality: Kōan Practice in the Rinzai Tradition Since Hakuin," in *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, ed. Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 252.
3. *The Essential Teachings of Zen Master Hakuin: A Translation of the Sokkō-roku kaien-fusetsu*, trans. and ed. Norman Waddell (Boston: Shambhala, 1994), xiv–xv.
4. See chapter 3 for information on and a portrait of Daitō.
5. See chapter 3 for information on and a portrait of Kanzan.
6. See chapters 1 and 5 for information on Gudō.
7. Victor Sōgen Hori cautions that koans should not merely be viewed as tools used to expedite a means; they should instead be understood as being "possessed of a meaningful content of [their] own." Hori explains, "The practitioner does not solve the *kōan* by grasping intellectually the meaning of 'the sound of one hand.' . . . One experiences the *kōan* not as an object standing before the mind that investigates it, but as the seeking mind itself. As long as consciousness and *kōan* oppose each other as subject and object, there are still two hands clapping. . . . But when the *kōan* has overwhelmed the mind so that it is no longer the object but the seeking subject itself, subject and object are no longer two. . . . By making real, i.e. by actually *becoming* an example of, the nonduality of subject and object, the practitioner also realizes, i.e. *cognitively understands*, the *kōan*. The realization of understanding depends on the realization of making actual." Victor Sōgen Hori, *Zen Sand: The Book of Capping Phrases for Kōan Practice* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 8–9.
8. Isshu Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, *Zen Dust: The History of Kōans and Kōan Study in Rinzai (Lin-chi) Zen* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1966), 5–6. From the *Chung-feng ho-shang kuang-lu* (Record of Chung-feng).
9. When the monk Myōan Eisai (1141–1215) went to China in 1189, he studied with the Zen master Ejō, who emphasized *sanzen* (koan study that included private

interviews between master and student). Eisai is credited with introducing Zen to Japan. In contrast, when the monk Dōgen Kigen (1200–1253) went to train in China, he studied with the master Ten-dō Nyojō, who emphasized seated meditation. However, Dōgen himself never abandoned the use of koan in his own teaching.

10. In medieval Japan the Sōtō School used koans largely within the context of sermons for the public, or for exchanges between master and disciple; they were not generally used as a part of seated meditation or as “contemplative phrases.” See T. Griffith Foulk, “The Form and Function of Kōan Literature: A Historical Overview,” in *The Kōan*, ed. Heine and Wright, 25.
11. Few specifics are known about the subsequent use and transmission of these koans, although they are now firmly entrenched in Japanese Rinzai Zen training. However, it has been speculated that the practice of *sanzen*, the private interview between master and student to assist the disciple in his koan study, may have developed from the Japanese monks going to China. Although most Japanese monks could read Chinese, few could speak it, so the system of exchanging written questions and answers emerged as a practical solution. In Japan there was no language barrier, but the practice of private interviews with the master was continued. See Miura and Sasaki, *Zen Dust*, 21–22.
12. Victor Sōgen Hori, “The Steps of Kōan Practice,” in *Sitting with Kōans*, ed. John Daido Loori (Boston: Wisdom Publishing, 2006), 136–44.
13. For further description of these categories, see *ibid.*
14. Mohr, “Emerging from Nonduality,” 264–65.
15. *Ibid.*, 265.
16. Waddell, *Essential Teachings*, 62.
17. Tōrei Enji, *Shūmon mujin tōron*, in *The Discourse on the Inexhaustible Lamp of the Zen School*, trans. Yoko Okuda (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle, 1996), 431.
18. *The Zen Master Hakuin: Selected Writings*, trans. Philip B. Yampolsky (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 163–64.
19. See chapter 1 for information about the “Mu” koan and Hakuin’s experience with it.
20. Hori, *Zen Sand*, 17.
21. Sokkō is another of the names of Hsü-t’ang Chih-yü.
22. Waddell, *Essential Teachings*, xi–xiii.
23. *Ibid.*, xii.
24. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 51. From the letter *Oradegama I*, dated 1748.
25. *Ibid.*, 15–16.
26. *Ibid.*, 33–34.
27. Mohr, “Emerging from Nonduality,” 251.
28. *Ibid.*, 257. This passage is from the *Rōhatsu jishu* teaching by Hakuin, written by his student Tōrei Enji. According to Mohr’s note, this text is recited every year in monasteries at the December *sesshin*, and can be considered the Tokugawa Rinzai reformulation of the rules for *zazen*.
29. *Ibid.*, 258.
30. *Hakuin’s Precious Mirror Cave: A Zen Miscellany*, trans. and ed. Norman Waddell (Berkeley, Calif.: Counterpoint), 62.
31. *Ibid.*, 4–5.
32. See *ibid.* for translations of these texts and a discussion of Hakuin’s postenlightenment training. See also chapter 5 of this book for a discussion of these works and how they relate to Hakuin’s art.
33. From *The Tale of Yūkichi Takayama* in *ibid.*, 53.
34. Kakushū was the first Japanese abbot of Manpuku-ji.
35. Mohr, “Emerging from Nonduality,” 255–56.
36. *Ibid.*, 253.

37. Miura and Sasaki, *Zen Dust*, 27–28.
38. Hori, “The Steps of Kōan Practice,” 133.
39. See Hori, *Zen Sand*, for comprehensive discussion of capping phrases.
40. Mohr, “Emerging from Nonduality,” 252.
41. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 36. From the letter *Oradegama I*, addressed to Lord Nabeshima and dated 1748.
42. The Zen master Bankei Yōtaku (1622–93) was also a proponent of popularizing Zen. Bankei preached that rigorous Zen training would lead to a state of the “unborn” (*fushō*), in which the mind/heart remains in its purely unadulterated form. Bankei held public meetings in an attempt to spread Zen teaching to the numerous followers coming to him for instruction. In one of his sermons Bankei explained that although at first he had tried to utilize Chinese expressions, it was more suitable for his Japanese audience to ask their questions in Japanese, so he encouraged his lay followers to express themselves with the freedom of “ordinary language.” However, while Bankei sought to bring Zen teachings to the masses, he did so primarily through his sermons and teaching sessions. His calligraphies are written in Chinese, contrary to his preference for “ordinary [Japanese] language” in Zen questions.
43. Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, viii–xix. This text is from the *Keisō dokuzui*.
44. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 148. From Hakuin's *Tsuji dangi* (A Wayside Sermon).
45. For an example of this subject see Kazuaki Tanahashi, *Penetrating Laughter: Hakuin's Zen and Art* (New York: Overlook Press, 1984), 43.
46. For instance, in 1753 while Hakuin was visiting the temple Tōkō-ji, a celebration was held to mark the thirty-third anniversary of Shōju Rōjin's death. In honor of the occasion, Hakuin painted a portrait of his former teacher.
47. Hakuin Ekaku, *Hakuin Oshō nenpu*, ed. Shōshun Katō (Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1985), 92. This scholarly edition of the *Nenpu* provides the text in both the original *kambun* and in Japanese translation. Henceforth it is cited as *Nenpu*.
48. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 220. From the letter *Hebi ichigo II* addressed to a close retainer of Ikeda Munemasa (1725–64), governor of Iyo. The letter is dated 1754.
49. Tōrei Enji, *Shūmon mujin tōron*, 491.

CHAPTER 1. LIFE IN ART, ART IN LIFE

1. Katō, *Nenpu*, 40.
2. The *Mo-ho chih-kuan* (Jp.: *Maka shikan*) is a text by the sixth-century T'ien-t'ai teacher Chih-i.
3. *Wild Ivy: The Spiritual Autobiography of Zen Master Hakuin*, trans. Norman Waddell (Boston: Shambhala, 1999), 9.
4. Katō, *Nenpu*, 53–54.
5. Ibid. Tenjin is the deification of the courtier, poet, and scholar Sugawara Michizane (845–903), who was exiled from Kyoto to Kyushu due to the political jealousies of the Fujiwara clan. Michizane died in exile, and when a series of natural disasters and calamities befell the capital soon after, it was believed that his wrongly accused spirit was to blame. In an attempt to appease his angry spirit, he was deified at Tenmangū Shrine in the Kitano District of Kyoto. Appropriately, Tenjin is the Shinto deity of literature, scholarship, and calligraphy.
6. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 14.
7. Ibid., 15.
8. Hakuin is said to have carved an image of Kannon on a cliff here, perhaps his first work of art? See Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, 154.

9. Ibid., 17.
10. According to the supplemental text of *Oradegama III*, Hakuin states that he read the story of master Yen-t'ou in the [*Wu-chia*] *cheng-tsung tsan*, a collection of seventy-four biographies of famous monks completed in 1254, when he was nineteen, and does not mention a lecture. In *Itsudemagusa*, Hakuin states that this trip to Zensō-ji occurred just after he had turned eighteen, and that a brief mention of master Yen-t'ou in a lecture prompted him to read further about the monk in the book *In Praise of the Five Houses of the True School*.
11. Katō, *Nenpu*, 70–71.
12. Yamada Mumon *Lectures on the T'en Oxherding Pictures*, trans. Victor Sōgen Hori, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 76–77.
13. Katō, *Nenpu*, 71.
14. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 19. Prince Sōn-en (1298–1356) was a famous calligrapher of the Kamakura Period (1185–1333) noted for founding the Shōren-in School of calligraphy and the *oie* script style that became a standard model of calligraphy for courtiers and officials by the early Edo period. Terai Yōsetsu (1640–1711) was a leading contemporary Chinese-style calligrapher in Kyoto who published an annotated calligraphy manual, based on a Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) model, which influenced many Nanga artists and Confucian calligraphers of the day.
15. According to *Itsumadegusa*, a group of five monks from Shōjū-ji were invited for tea.
16. According to Hakuin's account in *Yaemugura* (Goose Grass) (1759), the calligraphy was by the Myōshin-ji master Ungō Kiyō (1582–1659). Stylistically, the calligraphic work of Ungō and Daigu are very similar; both reveal a simple, unpretentious quality that would inspire Hakuin's reaction.
17. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 23.
18. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 118. From the Supplement to the "Oradegama III," a letter to a nun of the Nichren sect dated December, 1747.
19. Ibid.
20. Shōju was a student of Shidō Bunan (1603–76) and a grandson in Dharma of Gudō Tōshoku (1579–1661).
21. Katō, *Nenpu*, 94.
22. Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, 33.
23. Ibid., 37.
24. Although Hakuin is considered to be one of Shōju's Dharma heirs, there is no confirmation of this except for an inscription erected at Shōju's temple by Tōrei. Hakuin never returned to study with Shōju, and did not write about his relationship with Shōju until after the latter's death.
25. Katō, *Nenpu*, 96.
26. Stephen Addiss, *The Art of Zen* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989), 104.
27. Katō, *Nenpu*, 96.
28. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, xxiv.
29. Katō, *Nenpu*, 243. This portrait is preserved at Ryūtaku-ji.
30. Norman Waddell, "A Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin, Part 1," *The Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 27, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 132.
31. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 33.
32. There is still much debate as to whether or not Hakuin actually met Hakuyū, and Hakuin himself suggests that the story may be at least partly fictitious. See Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, 87–88 for a discussion of this question.
33. Shaw, 36. Introspective meditation (*naikan*) is based on concentrating attention and breathing on a point below the navel. This was one of the principles of meditation that Hakuin emphasized to his students.
34. A lengthy description of Hakuin's time with Hakuyū is included in Waddell, *Wild*

- Ivy, and Hakuin collected his own principles of introspective mediation in his *Yasen kannna* (Evening Chats on a Boat), first published in 1757.
35. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 108–109.
 36. Egoku was a monk of the Ōbaku sect.
 37. A revised version of the *Nunotsuzumi*, retitled *Seiben nunotsuzumi*, is contained in the *Hakuin Oshō zenshū*, vol. 4.
 38. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 63–65.
 39. *Kanrin ihō* is found in the *Hakuin Oshō zenshū*, vol. 4.
 40. Waddell, *The Essential Teachings of Zen Master Hakuin*, xvii. This is again a reference to the wind.
 41. Ibid.
 42. The *Zenmon hōkun*, a twelfth-century collection of anecdotes from the lives of Zen masters.
 43. The *Hason ron* is included in Bodhidharma's *Shōshitsu rokumon* (Six Gates).
 44. Katō, *Nenpu*, 157.
 45. Also known as Datsu, Datsu Jōzan, and Datsu Shuso.
 46. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 84.
 47. There is a reference to wind chimes in the chapter on Jayashata, the Nineteenth Patriarch of Buddhism, in the *Denkoroku of Master Keizan*. Upon hearing a wind chime, the Eighteenth Patriarch, Sanghanandi, asked Jayashata if the chimes were ringing or if it was the wind ringing. Jayashata replied that it was neither the chimes nor the wind ringing, but his mind ringing. This story is similar to one about the Sixth Chinese Patriarch, who stated that the flags and the wind were not moving, but that instead it was one's mind that was moving. It also refers to Shōju's words about the age-old winds of Zen beginning to blow again.
 48. Katō, *Nenpu*, 169. Even at this point in Hakuin's forties, there are numerous references to his interactions with lay followers at Shōin-ji, including teaching a fifteen-year-old girl named Satsu.
 49. Ibid., 216.
 50. Kanzan (Ch: Han-shan) and Jittoku (Ch: Shih-te) were T'ang dynasty poets thought to be incarnations of Monju and Fugen. They were considered to be models for Zen adepts due to their unfettered spiritual freedom, unconventional lifestyles (rejecting worldliness), and eccentric behavior and words. Jittoku worked in the kitchen of Kuoching Monastery where Kanzan often came to visit the master, Bukan (Ch: Feng-kan), who was often accompanied by his pet tiger.
 51. Hori, *Yamada Mumon Lectures on the Ten Oxherding Pictures*, 74–75.
 52. Similarly, Matthew Welch, in his dissertation on the Zen master Nantenbō, states that the number of requests for Nantenbō's calligraphies increased as his fame as a Zen master increased. See "The Painting and Calligraphy of the Japanese Zen Priest Tōjū Zenchū, Alias Nantenbō (1839–1925)" (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1995).
 53. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 163–64. Norman Waddell notes that Hakuin may have developed this koan from a comment in Case 18 of the *Hekiganroku* by Hsüeh-tou: "A single hand does not clap in vain." Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 139 n. 74.
 54. According to Melinda Takeuchi's book, *Taiga's True Views* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1992), 175 n. 44. Tōrei recorded that Taiga had actually attended one of Hakuin's lectures.
 55. Ibid., 21.
 56. Translation by Jonathan Chaves.
 57. Takeuchi, *Taiga's True Views*, 175 n. 44.
 58. Norman Waddell, "A Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin, Part 2," *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 27, no. 2 (Autumn 1994): 105–106. An account of her life is included in Ban Kokei's *Kinsei kijin den* (*Legends of Eccentrics of Recent Times*, 1790). She is

- also included in the catalog *Japanese Women Artists: 1600–1900* by Patricia Fister, which includes an example of her poetry and calligraphy done while still a courtesan.
59. Otafuku is considered to be a reincarnation of the Shinto deity Uzume Mikoto, who helped to lure the sun goddess, Amaterasu, out of a cave during a dramatic eclipse sequence, as revealed in the *Nihongi*. In Tokyo, people carried pictures of Otafuku around on bamboo rakes during the festival of Tori no Machi at the three shrines called O Tori Jinja during the days of the Cock in the eleventh month. During the festival, people bought ornamental rakes and used Shinto symbols to attract good luck for the coming year. On these days the back gate of the Yoshiwara pleasure district would be thrown open.
 60. Addiss, *The Art of Zen*, 112.
 61. Chōzō Yamanouchi, *Hakuin sho to e no kokoro* (Tokyo: Gurafuikkusha, 1978), 144.
 62. There may also be several puns here. *Dango* can also mean “snub nose,” and *kushi* can also refer to a person who can be ordered around, so it is possible that Hakuin is suggesting that Otafuku, a snub-nosed servant, patiently waits at night, but the closed minded old man can’t even appreciate her charms. The phrase, “*dango kushi saite*” can mean “to skewer,” but it can also mean to put combs in one’s hair, as Otafuku has clearly done; thus again there is some implied relationship between Otafuku and the *dango* skewers. The old man can’t swallow and enjoy the *dango*, and the closed-minded person can’t appreciate Buddha’s teachings, here compassionately represented by Otafuku.
 63. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 29. The letter is dated June 20, 1748, and is known as *Oradegama I*.
 64. The Korean acrobats traveled to Japan in 1748, contributing to the Japanese interest in things “foreign.” See Ronald P. Toby, “Carnival of the Aliens: Korean Embassies in Edo-period Art and Popular Culture,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 41, no. 4 (Winter, 1986): 415–56.
 65. In other versions of this subject Hakuin painted five acrobats on horseback, and in a version at Shōin-ji, Hakuin painted Hotei holding the gourd from which three acrobats emerge.
 66. There is a Japanese phrase, “*Hyōtan kara, koma ga deru*” (Horses emerge from the gourd).
 67. Katō, *Nenpu*, 239.
 68. *Ibid.*, 255.
 69. *Ibid.*
 70. See chapter 7.
 71. Addiss, *The Art of Zen*, 128.
 72. Included in *Hakuin Oshō zenshū*, vol. 1. For the English translation of this text, see Waddell, *Wild Ivy*.
 73. There are two versions of this painting, one in Ryūshō-ji, and one in the Osaka City Museum that includes an inscription by Tōrei.
 74. Waddell, “A Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin, Part 2,” 122.
 75. Katō, *Nenpu*, 283.
 76. Hakuin discusses this at length in *Oradegama I*. See Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 34–35.
 77. *Ibid.*, 34. From the letter *Oradegama I*, addressed to Lord Nabeshima, governor of Settsu Province, dated the 26th day of the fifth month of the fifth year of Enkyō (June 20, 1748).
 78. Katō, *Nenpu*, 287.
 79. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 85–86.
 80. Fukushima Keidō Rōshi of Tōfuku-ji has explained in conversation that the biographies of Zen masters were often embellished for the purpose of emphasizing Zen teachings.

CHAPTER 2. BUDDHIST, SHINTO, AND FOLK DEITIES

1. For further information on these themes, see John M. Rosenfield, "The Unity of the Three Creeds," *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, ed. John W. Hall and Toyoda Takeshi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 205–25.
2. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, xviii.
3. Yampolsky *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 92. Here Hakuin is comparing Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto, but the principle is the same.
4. *Ibid.*, 44.
5. Lao-tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, trans. Stephen Addiss and Stanley Lombardo (Indianapolis and Cambridge, Mass.: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993), section 60. Hakuin also quotes Chuang-tzu frequently, which is not surprising considering the general belief that East Asian Zen from the beginning incorporated a number of Taoist elements that, combined with Indian Buddhism, gave Zen its special nature.
6. See for example three paintings of Shakyamuni in the catalog *Awakenings: Zen Figure Painting in Medieval Japan* by Gregory Levine, Yukio Lippit, and Yoshiaki Shimizu (New York: Japan Society and Yale University Press, 2007).
7. Translations by Norman Waddell from Tōrei's "Biography of the Zen master Shidō Bunan," *Eastern Buddhist* 3, no. 1 (1970): 135.
8. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 137. Yet is this totally negative? In another text, Hakuin wrote, "bare skin and bones are fine as they are." *Zen Words for the Heart*, trans. Norman Waddell (Boston: Shambhala, 1996), 61.
9. This pattern derives ultimately from Greco-Roman influences upon Gandharan art.
10. From Hakuin's comments on the introduction to koan 70 from *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record: Zen Comments by Hakuin and Tenkei*, trans. Thomas Cleary (Boston: Shambhala, 2000), 237.
11. In some paintings of Shakyamuni, Hakuin wrote out only the first line.
12. Takeuchi, *Hakuin* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shoten, 1964), supplementary booklet, 11.
13. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 165–68.
14. Of course the "bad star" here is Hakuin's use of opposites, to be discussed later.
15. Waddell, *The Essential Teachings of Zen Master Hakuin*, 36. Hakuin then goes on to discuss a succession of Zen masters, again using musical images such as a no-hole flute, a group of twenty-eight stringed instruments, and a celestial drum, to describe their teachings. Hakuin also used musical metaphors in his responses to several koans from the *Hekiganroku*. Regarding koan 37, he wrote, "Those ponds where the water is cool are the secret melody of no things in the world." Later, he noted for koan 92 that a connoisseur "knows what melody is to be played the moment the performer begins tuning." He also commented on koan 99: "The subtle call of the transmundane design of Zen for helping people is like the harmony of musical instruments complementing one another." See Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, 320, 322, 346. It is no surprise, then, that Hakuin was to invent and utilize his own koan, "What is the sound of one hand?"
16. *The Lotus Sutra*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 39.
17. Another story about this mountain, which is situated near the capital city Rajagriha of the early Asoka dynasty (273–232 B.C.E.), is that the evil Mara assumed the form of a vulture on it to interrupt the meditation of Shakyamuni's disciple Ananda; it is also possible that this mountain was named for the vultures that abound there. In Buddhist lore it is variously named Vulture Peak, Vulture Mountain, Vulture-Head Peak, and (in Japan) Eagle-Head Mountain. Jonathan Chaves points out that the tradition of naming places in East Asia after the original prototype appears to have

- been initiated by an Indian monk visiting West Lake in China in the year 326. Seeing a resemblance between one of the mountains with a dramatic vertical slab at the top and the original Vulture Peak in India, he claimed that it not only looked like Vulture Peak, it was actually a part of the peak that had flown to China. He therefore named it Flew-Here Peak and founded a temple that he named Sacred Vulture Temple.
18. See the opening section of the *Vimalakirti Nirdeśa Sutra* as translated by Robert A. F. Thurman, available on the web at <http://kaladarshan.arts.ohio.state.edu/study/pages/internal/sutras/06%20Lotus%20and%20Vimalakirti/Vimalakirti%20Nirdeśa%20Sutra.pdf>, and Charles Luk, *Ordinary Enlightenment: A Translation of the Vimalakirti Sutra* (Boston: Shambhala, 1992).
 19. Waddell, *Zen Words for the Heart*, 55.
 20. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 164.
 21. Hakuin also considered that Manjusri was an avatar of the Chinese poet Han-shan (Jp.: Kanzan), whose most famous poetic line is “My heart is like the autumn moon;” see the following chapter.
 22. Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, koan 35, 113.
 23. Hori, *Zen Sand*, 446.
 24. *Ibid.*, 586.
 25. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 147.
 26. Thomas Cleary, *Kensho: The Heart of Zen* (Boston: Shambhala, 1997), 46.
 27. For example, Hakuin wrote, “The *Vimalakirti Sutra* says that one whose mind still resides in the world of birth-and-death must not preach the Dharma.” See Waddell, *Hakuin’s Precious Mirror Cave*, 80. Showing great respect, at one time in his middle years Hakuin declined to lecture on the *Vimalakirti Sutra* (although he did so later), claiming, “On scrutinizing my heart from corner to corner, I have been unable to come up with a single utterance worthy of communicating to your audience, much less attempt to lecture on the *Vimalakirti Sutra*’s marvelous teaching of nonduality.” *Ibid.*, xvii.
 28. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 24–25.
 29. The deity’s residence was identified in an early Buddhist text as the island of Potalaka, later considered to be a setting in China (P’u-t’o-lo) near the coast of Ning-po.
 30. Watson, *The Lotus Sutra*, 302.
 31. This story is told in W. J. R. Dreesmann, “A Study of the Zen Master Hakuin (1686–1769) as a Painter,” (PhD diss., Leiden University, 1988), 136, from the *Wu-ten hui-yu-an* of 1253. It is also recounted in Waddell, *Hakuin’s Precious Mirror Cave*, 273–4, where Waddell also notes that Hakuin may have been the first to paint this manifestation of Kannon.
 32. Hakuin occasionally painted only the willow branch in a vase to represent Kannon.
 33. Translation based upon Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 152.
 34. Scroll mountings, usually made of silk, are generally changed every fifty to one hundred years, so probably none of the mountings in this exhibition are original to Hakuin’s day.
 35. Cleary, *Kensho*, 73–74.
 36. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 126.
 37. *Ibid.*, 140–41.
 38. From a letter dated the eighth day of the twelfth month, *Hōreki* 2 (January 11, 1753), referred to as *Yabukōji*, in which he responds to an unidentified court woman in attendance on the lord of Okayama Castle, *ibid.*, 171, 176. The hundred years to which Hakuin refers mark the arrival of Ingen Rikyū (1592–1673) from China to Japan. Ingen founded the Ōbaku sect of Zen in 1654, which incorporated aspects of Pure Land belief into its practices in Japan.
 39. *Ibid.*, 127.

40. Ibid., 171.
41. Zeami, *The Flowering Spirit: Classic Teachings on the Art of Nō*, trans. William Scott Wilson (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2006), 177.
42. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 161.
43. Waddell, *Essential Teachings*, 40.
44. See Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, 25.
45. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 152–53.
46. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 39.
47. For a thorough study of the use of Sanskrit in East Asian Buddhism, see Robert H. van Gulik, *Siddham* (New Delhi: Jayyed Press, 1980). Information on how to write this script is given in John Stevens, *Sacred Calligraphy of the East* (Boston: Shambhala, 1995).
48. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 178.
49. *Rōhatsu Exhortations*, trans. Edo Shimano (Livingston Manor, N.Y.: Zen Studies Press, 2006), 5.
50. Kazuaki Tanahashi, *Penetrating Laughter*, 71.
51. Translation of the inscription and information on Sanjakubō, *ibid.*, 72.
52. This scroll is reproduced in its entirety in Addiss, *The Art of Zen*, 114.
53. Hori, *Zen Sand*, 252.
54. Translation by Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, 189.
55. Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, koan 77, 264.

CHAPTER 3. OLD DRAGONS, NEW DRAGONS

1. See Sylvan Barnet and William Burto, *Zen Ink Paintings* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1982), 30–33.
2. See Helmut Brinker and Hiroshi Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings* (Zurich: Artibus Asiae, 1996), trans. Andreas Leisinger, for examples of early Chinese Daruma images.
3. From a lecture by Yoshizawa Katsuhiko on Hakuin at the Asia Society, New York, March 13, 2009.
4. Ibid. According to Norman Waddell, Hakuin apparently had a favorite tricolor pet cat at the temple. See Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, xviii.
5. This passage is found in the *Hsueh-mo lun*, a work attributed to Daruma but actually of later origin.
6. The translation of the Chinese character meaning “reed” is complicated; it is possible the text actually refers to a reed boat. This story is not found in the early 11th century biography of Daruma, but is included in a 13th century source.
7. These include a painting attributed to Li Yaofu (act. ca. 1300) with an inscription by I-shan I-ning in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and another anonymous Japanese work also inscribed by I-shan I-ning in Jōdō-ji, Shizuoka Prefecture. See Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen, Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings*, 214–15.
8. Ibid., 154.
9. Ibid., 155, and Levine and Lippit, *Awakenings*, 16.
10. Philip B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 60.
11. Thomas Cleary, trans., *Transmission of Light: Zen in the Art of Enlightenment by Zen Master Keizan* (Boston: Shambhala, 2002), 123.
12. These scrolls were in the collection of the Sung Emperor Hui-tsung (1082–1135) until the beginning of the twelfth century.
13. See Jan Fontein and Money Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1970), 2–5.

14. See “Sixth Patriarch with an Ax,” by Chih-weng (d. 1263) in Yasuichi Awakawa, *Zen Painting* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1970), 62, and also “The First Six Patriarchs” by Kichizan Minchō (1351–1431) in Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen, Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings*, 156.
15. Examples include a set of screens at the Daisen-in at Daitoku-ji painted ca. 1513–20 and attributed to Kanō Motonobu (1476–1559). There is also a screen of the subject by Kanō Kōi (ca. 1569–1636) at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, folding screens by Kanō Naizen (1570–1616) at Josei-ji in Kyoto, and a pair of screens dated 1613 by Kaihō Yūshō (1533–1615) in a private collection.
16. See Awakawa, *Zen Painting*, 99.
17. See Katsuhiko Yoshizawa et al., *Hakuin: Zen Paintings and Calligraphy from the Ryūunji Collection* (Kyoto: Hanazono Historical Museum, Hanazono University, 2004), 29.
18. See Yoshizawa and Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin* (Berkeley, Calif.: Counterpoint Press, 2009), 140–44, for a discussion on this inscription.
19. John Stevens, *Zen Mind Zen Brush: Japanese Ink Paintings from the Gitter-Yelen Collection* (Sydney, Australia: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2006), 63. This refers to a similar work by Suiō Genro with the same inscription.
20. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, 131.
21. Note, in the Tun-huang version of this sutra this crucial line is different. It translates, “Buddha nature is always clean and pure.” See Philip Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*.
22. According to Fukushima Keidō Rōshi, the line “Originally, (there was) not one thing” is Hui-neng’s comment on “Mu” and is the key to the poem.
23. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, 131–33.
24. *Rinzai roku*, part 3, no. 76.
25. *Ibid.*, part 1, no. 5.
26. *Ibid.*, part 2, no. 46.
27. *Ibid.*, part 2, no. 65.
28. See Tanahashi, *Penetrating Laughter*, 87.
29. See Yoshizawa et al., *Hakuin: Zen Paintings and Calligraphy from the Ryūunji Collection*, 31.
30. Ryūtaku-ji was established by Hakuin’s disciple Tōrei Enji, but Hakuin is considered the temple’s founder.
31. Miura and Sasaki, *Zen Dust*, 206.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*, 232. This document transmitting the Dharma from Daiō to Daitō is kept at Daitoku-ji.
34. *Ibid.*, 325. This document, Kanzan’s *inka* (acknowledgment of enlightenment) is kept at Myōshin-ji.
35. Waddell, *Wild Ivy*, 25.
36. The poem is also sometimes given as, “Mimi de mite, me de kiku, utagawaji, onozukara naru, noki no tamamizu.”
37. From Daitō’s “Oxherding Poems for Leisurely Humming.” Our thanks to John Carpenter for his suggestions on translation.
38. From Suzuki’s 1963 talk, “Waga Shinshu-kan.” See www.shindharmanet.com for full text. Suzuki translates the poem, “See with your ear and listen with your eye, letting not a shred of doubt arise. The world transformed by the song of the rain through the trees.”
39. Miura and Sasaki, *Zen Dust*, 234.
40. Translation by Thomas Kirchner in Yoshizawa et al., *Hakuin: Zen Paintings and Calligraphy from the Ryūunji Collection*, viii.
41. Mumon’s comment and verse from *Two Zen Classics: Mumonkan and Hekiganroku*,

translated by Katsuki Sekida (New York: Weatherhill, 1977), 112. According to Sekida's notes, the process of the ox passing by the window is likened to the practice of *zazen*, and the experience of the Great Death (the process of the consciousness dying away in absolute samadhi). Each part of the ox's body represents part of the experience toward samadhi. The ox's head goes past (observation of ego); his horns go past (reflection on ego); his hooves go past (integration of ego). But the ox's tail cannot pass because samadhi never passes. Instead, self-mastery is found within samadhi.

42. Shibayama Zenkei, *Zen Comments on the Mumonkan* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1974), 270.
43. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 219–20. From *Hebiichigo II*.
44. If this is an accurate account, Hakuin must have awarded a rather large number of these certificates during his numerous training stops throughout Japan.
45. Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, 8. Hakuin did not provide the list of students.
46. *Ibid.*, 59.
47. *Ibid.*, 42.
48. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 166. From *Yabukōji*, dated January 11, 1753.
49. Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, 205.

CHAPTER 4. DAILY LIFE AND LIVING CREATURES

1. See Edward Conze, trans., *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: Penguin Books, 1959), 86.
2. Waddell, *Zen Words for the Heart*, 9.
3. See Takeuchi, *Hakuin*, supplementary booklet, 26.
4. The theme of crossing a bridge is, of course, not limited to strictly Buddhist meanings, but seems to maintain a spiritual force even in more secular poetry. For example, the poet Yang Wan-li (1127–1204) wrote the following opening to a poem on “Crossing a Bridge,” as translated by Jonathan Chaves, that might represent the inner thoughts of one of Hakuin's blind men:

CROSSING A BRIDGE

I stop halfway across the flimsy bridge;
The deep water frightens me.
I think of returning—but I'm halfway already.
I think of advancing—but I'm too dizzy to move.

5. Translation by Jonathan Chaves, who adds that the *gatha* is, strictly speaking, prose. Although the first three lines could be seen as having rhyme-words, the last line does *not* rhyme: rrrx. This does not correspond to any recognized rhyme scheme. However the regularity of the line-lengths is probably intended to conjure up the feeling of a poem. Regarding the content, the Chinese Zen master Fa-ssu is quoted as reciting a poem that says, “When fully enlightened, you don't open up a shop for fresh herbal medicines; Instead, all you sell is dead cats' heads, one after another.”

Furthermore, Chaves reports that in Tseng Min-hsing's (d. 1175), *Miscellaneous Records of the One Who Alone is Sober*, chapter 7 records that “in the Hsiang-fu period [1008–1016] there was a man of the Ting-chou region, Wang Chieh, who . . . was able to make people physically see each and every thing they called up in imagination, and for this reason people were suspicious of him. In general, his were the ‘Southern Techniques.’ He would take wild fox spittle and feed it to someone, with the results as described. The way he would achieve this was: he would place

a piece of meat in a jar with a narrow mouth, burying this out in the wilds, mouth level with the surface. A fox would see it, and wish to eat the meat, but his snout would not fit through the opening of the jar, so his saliva, flowing with the hunger, would drip into the jar, and would soak into the meat. Wang would then take the meat, dry it into jerky, and mix it in with the dish he was serving the person in question.

It is also said that he would mix fox spittle with water used for washing someone's face, and if that person then looked at his reflected image, he would see his own features grotesquely transformed into some other shape! The vegetarian servitors of demons in today's Chiang-lin also frequently use this technique. There was a certain man who went to try it out, and they had him wash his face with such water. But the man only washed half his face. When he gazed into the mirror, the portion that he had washed was indeed transformed, but the unwashed portion looked just the same as before. Thus he realized that there was real potency in the water."

6. Hakuin frequently makes use of such opposites, as when he insults the famous statement in the *Heart Sutra*, "form is emptiness, emptiness is form," by calling it, "Rubbish! A useless collection of junk;" see Waddell, *Zen Words for the Heart*, 31. Strangely enough, in Zen this is great praise.
7. Waddell, *The Essential Teachings of Zen Master Hakuin*, 93.
8. Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, 169.
9. John Cage, "Lecture on Nothing" in *Silence* (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 124.
10. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 149.
11. Yamamoto Gempō, from Preface to *Hakuin Zenshi: minshū no kyōka to shoga no shashinshū* (Tokyo: Ryūginsha, 1957).
12. Translation by Norman Waddell from Yoshizawa, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 151.
13. Hakuin also wrote in one of his verse commentaries on Kanzan (Han-shan) poems,

Transmigratory suffering, a truly terrifying state,
Being tossed hither and yon like a mote of dust,
Like an ant plodding endlessly along the edge of a mill.
Submerged in the hopeless confusion of the six paths . . .

From Yoshizawa, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 36.

Translation by Waddell.

14. Miura and Sasaki, *Zen Dust*, 63.
15. Cleary, *Kensho*, 68–69.
16. *Ibid.*, 70.
17. *Ibid.*, 72–73.
18. *Ibid.*, 73–74.
19. *Ibid.*, 75.
20. Miura and Sasaki, *Zen Dust*, 71–72.
21. Kazuaki Tanahashi, *Penetrating Laughter*, 130. Another translation is given in Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 172.
22. Cleary, *Kensho*, 82.
23. Translation based upon that of D. T. Suzuki, *Living by Zen* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1950), 14.

CHAPTER 5. CONFUCIAN THEMES AND PAINTING-CALLIGRAPHY INTERACTIONS

1. Yoshito S. Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 145.
2. Addiss, *The Art of Zen*, 11. From *Oradegama*.
3. Mary H. Fong, "A Probable Second 'Chung K'uei' by Emperor Shun-shih of the Ch'ing Dynasty," *Oriental Art* 23 (1977): 427.
4. See Matthew Welch, "Shōki the Demon Queller," in *Japanese Ghosts and Demons*, ed. Stephen Addiss (New York: George Braziller, 1985), 81–89, for more information and images of Shōki.
5. Miso is fermented bean paste.
6. This image was re-created in the form of a woodblock print in the *Hakuin Oshō shigasanshō* (1759), in which there are three *oni* in the mortar, while an assistant holds it steady. In another painted version, much smaller and enhanced with color, a small figure holds the mortar containing four *oni*, two with bright red faces, and Shōki wears a brightly colored floral printed robe. The inscription on this painting says, "You've got to be totally ruthless when you make demon miso. Grinding them into a pulp is such hard work." A second inscription by the small figure identifies him as "Lord Shōki's son," with his reply, "Oh, Daddy, I'd love to have a little taste of that!" See Yoshizawa and Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 169–74, for discussion of this subject.
7. The Tendai monk Genshin (942–1017) was one of the greatest proponents of Pure Land (Jodo) Buddhism. With his great devotion to the *Lotus Sutra*, Genshin became convinced that trust in Amida Buddha provided a means of obtaining salvation open to all. Genshin also believed in the basic tenets of Tendai Buddhism, that there are ten realms of existence, with the world of Buddha at one end, hell at the other, and the human world in between. Human beings are thus in a constant struggle between the disgust for hell and the desire for the Pure Land. In his *Ōjō yōshū* (Essentials of Salvation) (985), he vividly and graphically described the torments of hell and contrasted them with the pleasures of the Pure Land, seeking to create in readers an aversion to the constant cycle of rebirth and a longing for the Pure Land of Amida.
8. Victor Hauge, *Folk Traditions in Japanese Art* (New York: International Exhibitions Foundation in cooperation with the Japan Foundation, 1978–79), 228. *Ōtsu-e* images are folk paintings, often of traditional Buddhist or Shinto subjects, but also of secular themes produced in the farming villages of Oiwake and Ōtani near Ōtsu.
9. Sekida, *Two Zen Classics*, 351.
10. Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 154–55.
11. Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, 182.
12. Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings*, 132.
13. The earliest mention of Kanzan and Jittoku seems to be in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (Record of the Transmission of the Flame from the Jingde) compiled in 1004 by the monk Daoyuan. The text contains the biographies of 1,701 Indian and Chinese monks, including Kanzan and Jittoku. The figures are accepted to be largely legendary, but still based on some shred of fact, originating from a T'ang Dynasty poetry anthology that contains three hundred "Poems of Cold Mountain" (*Hanshan shi*). Scholars, however, argue that these poems come from multiple hands, which would explain the many literary and historical inconsistencies. Therefore, the exact identity of Kanzan may never be determined. For details of the Kanzan controversy, see the introduction

- in Robert G. Henrick, *Poetry of Han-shan: A Complete, Annotated Translation of Cold Mountain*, (New York: SUNY Press, 1990).
14. The *Butsunichi-an komotsu mokuroku*, a record of Chinese paintings imported to Japan in the fourteenth century, lists a painting of Kanzan and Jittoku with an inscription by the monk Hsu-t'ang Chih-yü (Jp.: Kidō Chigu). There are also numerous inscriptions for paintings recorded in the writing of many Japanese Zen masters of the day.
 15. The first two lines of this phrase are from the Confucian *The Great Learning* (*Ta-hsueh*).
 16. There is a long tradition of images with Kanzan and Jittoku writing on odd surfaces such as leaves or cliff faces. Greg Levine notes that the Daitoku-ji master Kōgetsu examined what he determined to be a Chinese painting of Kanzan and Jittoku writing on a banana leaf in 1613. Gregory Levine, *Daitokuji: The Visual Cultures of a Zen Monastery* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 188. See also Yoshizawa and Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 186–89, for more information.
 17. Yoshida Kenkō, *Tsurezuregusa*, trans. Donald Keene (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 3.
 18. Yoshizawa and Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 190–92.
 19. *Ibid.*, 184–85.
 20. See Julia Meech-Pekarik, “Disguised Scripts and Hidden Poems in an Illustrated Heian Sutra: Ashide and Uta-e in the Heike Nōgyō,” *Artibus Asiae* 31 (1977–78): 53–78.
 21. The courtier Konoe Nobutada (1565–1614) produced numerous images of Tenjin from the characters “Ten” and “Jin,” while the Zen master Daishin Gitō (1656–1730) created portraits of Hitomaro using the characters *hito* (person) and *maru* (round).
 22. See *Kankō Gyōsan Chūsei tōgoku no Tenjin zo* (Kamakura, Japan: Kokuhō kan, 1993), for numerous examples of Tenjin portraits.
 23. According to a legend that emerged in the fourteenth century, Tenjin received the *kesa* from Wu-chun Shi-fan (Jp.: Shibun Bujun) (1177–1249), the great Chinese Zen master. This would have been impossible in actuality since Wu-chun predated Michizane by over three hundred years, but the story developed at Kōmyō-ji by monks under Tetsugyū Enshin (1254–1326), a disciple of Enni Ben'en (1202–80), who was in turn the Dharma heir of Wu-chun. The monks devised the story to solidify the lineage of Enni Ben'en, who supposedly directed Tenjin to Wu-chun during a period of great religious rivalry among the Zen monasteries. According to the story, Tenjin eventually left his *kesa* with Enshin for safekeeping. There are actually many stories in Japan of Shinto deities traveling to China to invite Chinese masters to Japan. This spiritual tie between Chinese Zen and native Japanese deities only served to strengthen the position of Japanese Zen in its early years. For more information on Tenjin and examples of fifteenth-century Tenjin portraits, see Levine and Lippit, *Awakenings*, 46–51, 160–63.
 24. There is at least one early example of Tenjin wearing the *kesa*, *ibid.*, 162.
 25. “Unwoven” is used to suggest an otherworldly quality.
 26. See Yoshizawa and Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 194–95, 200–207, for a discussion of this subject.
 27. The earliest extant dated Hitomaro image in Japan is a painting by Takuma Eisa inscribed by Shokai Reiken (1315–96), dated 1395, *ibid.*, 44, fig. 5.6. See also Yoshizawa and Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 194–99, for a discussion of Hitomaro *moji-e*.
 28. It is possible that this poem can be read another way, reflecting a more Buddhist tone, referring to the fires of hell, which can be subdued by going to the source and stating one's innocence (*akashi*).
 29. According to the *Hakuin Oshō nenpu*, this verse was written in 1707 when Hakuin was twenty-three years old, while he and some other monks were traveling in Harima Province. The sight of a mountain stream inspired the poem.

30. This is a reference to the low state of Zen in Japan before Gudō revived it. Theoretically, the phrase can also apply to Hakuin.
31. See Yoshizawa and Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 85. Translation by Waddell.
32. Ibid.
33. *Menpeki* literally means “wall-facing,” and refers to the nine years during which Daruma spent meditating in front of a wall at Shaolin Monastery in China. The term first appeared during the Sung Dynasty in the *Ch’an yuan ch’ing kuei* (Regulations of the Zen Monastery), and depictions first appeared in Japan as early as the fifteenth century.
34. See Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings*, 48–49, 153.
35. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 58. From *Oradegama I*, a letter to Lord Nabeshima, dated 1748.

CHAPTER 6. HOTEI AS EVERYMAN

1. For further discussion, see Richard Edwards, “Pu-tai Maitreya and a Reintroduction to Hangchou’s Fei-lai-feng,” *Ars Orientalis* 14 (1984): 5–50.
2. Ibid., 12.
3. Ibid.
4. Hori, *Yamada Mumon Lectures on the T’ên Oxherding Pictures*, 96.
5. Edwards, “Pu-tai Maitreya,” 15.
6. See Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen, Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings*, 140.
7. Yamanouchi, *Hakuin, sho to e no kokoro*, 134.
8. Stevens, *Zen Mind Zen Brush*, 41.
9. See Yoshizawa and Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen Master Hakuin*, 99–100.
10. Translation based on Shaw, *The Embossed Tea Kettle*, 161.
11. Ibid., 41.
12. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 37.
13. From the film *I’m Your Man*, directed by Lian Lunson (Santa Monica, Calif.: Lions Gate, 2006).
14. I am grateful to Joshua Mostow for his helpful comments on this inscription.
15. Most of these Hotei painting subjects are reproduced in Takeuchi, *Hakuin*.
16. This painting may have been done on New Year’s Day.
17. Hakuin might have been amused that this koan has become so well known in the West that it is now a verbal image that has moved far from Zen. For example, an editorial discussing governmental educational programs began “Oddly, you heard the sound of one hand clapping last week as the Education Department released national data. . . .” (*USA Today*, July 20, 2005).
18. Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, 308–309.
19. “Wenn du weisst, dass hier eine Hand ist, so geben wir dir alles Ubrige zu.” See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and F. H. von Wright (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 2.
20. For a contemporary example of how the Oxherding Pictures continue to have resonance, see Stephen Addiss and Ray Kass, eds., *John Cage: Zen Ox-Herding Pictures* (Richmond, Va., and New York: University of Richmond Museums and George Braziller, 2009).
21. Yampolsky, *The Zen Master Hakuin*, 37.
22. Waddell, *Zen Words for the Heart*, 8.
23. Translation by Stephen Addiss from Stephen Addiss et al., *Zen Sourcebook* (Cambridge, Mass.: Hackett, 2008), 250–51.
24. Cleary, *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record*, 27.

CHAPTER 7. HAKUIN'S FOLLOWERS

1. Waddell, *The Essential Teachings of Zen Master Hakuin*, 26.
2. See Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, pp. xxiv–xxxiii, for information on Hakuin's pupils.
3. *Tōrei zenshi ten* (Mishima, Japan: Insatsujō, 1986), 78.
4. Nangaku Nishimura, “*Tōrei no zen sho*” (*Tōrei's Zen Calligraphy*), *Bokubi 100* (Tokyo: Bokubisha, 1960), 37.
5. *Tōrei zenshi ten*, 79.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Addiss, *The Art of Zen*, 132.
8. Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, xxix.
9. Taikyū Mori, *Kinko zenrin sōdan* (Tokyo: Zōkei Shoin, 1919), 421–22.
10. See the translation of this text in *The Discourse on the Inexhaustible Lamp of the Zen School by Zen Master Tōrei Enji with Commentary by Master Daibi of Unkan*, trans. Yoko Okuda (Boston: Tuttle, 1996).
11. Waddell, “A Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin, Part 2,” *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 27, no. 2 (Spring 1994): 95. “Ōmi's vast waters” refers to Lake Biwa in Ōmi Province.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Mori, *Kinko zenrin sōdan*, 422.
14. *Tōrei zenshi ten*, 81.
15. See chapter 4, pages 155–159.
16. Shun'ō Fukushima and Shōshun Katō, *Zenga no sekai* (Kyoto and Tokyo: Tankōsha, 1978), 73.
17. At this time, Tōrei didn't acquire the rank of *daiichiza* from the temple's headquarters, Myōshin-ji. This rank is the minimum requirement for a priest to serve as abbot of a temple. The fact that Muryō-ji was unregistered eliminated this problem.
18. Waddell, *Hakuin's Precious Mirror Cave*, xxx–xxxi.
19. Waddell, “A Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin, Part 2,” 115.
20. *Ibid.* Shariputra, along with Ananda, was one of Shakyamuni's great disciples.
21. *Ibid.*, 116. “Bishamon” refers to Bishamonten, one of the Celestial Guardians of the Four Directions. Bishamon protects the north and is considered to be the god of war and warriors. Idate is often referred to as “the Kitchen God,” and is considered the protector of monasteries and monks.
22. Also known as Shidō Munan.
23. “The Analects of Yuan-wu Fo-kuo,” compiled by Hu-kiu Shao-ling (Jp.: Kokyū Jōryū), (1077–1136), Dharma successor of Yuan-wu K'o-chin (Jp.: Engo Kokugon) (1063–1135). Hakuin traced his Rinzai Zen lineage back to Yuan-wu K'o-chin.
24. Mori, *Kinko zenrin sōdan*, 425.
25. Published in 1827, this work was done at the request of fellow monks Gasan Jitō and Tairei (d. 1804). It was completed in 1788, but not published until 1827 by Taikan Bunshū. The work is a study of the five distinct schools of Zen teaching—Linchi (Rinzai), Yün-mên (Unmon), Ts'ao-tung (Sōtō), Kuei-yang (Igyō), and Fa-yen (Hōgen)—discussing each school's founders and their individual methods of teaching that were then passed down within the school.
26. The full title is *Ryūtakū-ji kaiso Shinkī Dokumyō zenji nenpu* (The Chronological Biography of Zen Master Shinkī Dokumyō, Founder of Ryūtakū-ji Temple).
27. Waddell, “A Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin, Part 2,” 125.
28. *Ibid.*, 127.
29. Shibayama, *Zen Comments on the Mumonkan*, 91–98.

30. Miyeko Murase et al., *The Written Image: Japanese Calligraphy and Painting from the Sylvan Barnet and William Burto Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum, 2002), 162.
31. Nangaku Nishimura, “*Suiō no zenga*,” notes that Hakuin’s teacher, Shōju Rōjin, was also an illegitimate child of a feudal lord, and that their painted portraits reveal a similar air about them. Nishimura points out that in Japan it is often said that people take after their grandfathers, and thus Suiō resembles Shōju Rōjin, his Dharma grandfather, more than Hakuin. See *Bokubi* 100 (1960): 2–3.
32. Waddell, *Hakuin’s Precious Mirror Cave*, 217. Hakuin is, of course, not so subtly reminding his pupil that Zen is meant to be practiced within the noise and activity of the everyday world, not in seclusion.
33. Waddell, *Hakuin’s Precious Mirror Cave*, xxvii.
34. Fukushima and Katō, *Zenga no sekai*, 73–74.
35. In order to become the head of a temple, monks of the Myōshin-ji line had to first be appointed as *daiichiza* at the head temple Myōshin-ji before being allowed to serve as abbot of a branch temple. Hakuin did this in 1718.
36. Mori, *Kinko zenrin sōdan*, 415.
37. Waddell, “A Chronological Biography of Zen Priest Hakuin, Part 2,” 119. It is possible that the disagreement stemmed from the fact that Suiō wanted to follow his own path rather than concentrate on the training of monks.
38. Nishimura, “*Suiō no zenga*,” *Bokubi* 100 (1960): 3.
39. Mori, *Kinko zenrin sōdan*, 417.
40. Shōgen Sōgaku (Ch. Sung-yuan Ch’ung-yueh) (1139–1209).
41. Mori, *Kinko zenrin sōdan*, 417. Daikyū Ebō (1715–74) was a disciple and attendant to Hakuin. This anecdote reflects Suiō’s generosity in allowing less well-known monks to participate in important meetings. Suiō himself is supposed to have remarked that, “Among Hakuin’s disciples, the only one who understood all of his teachings was Tōrei. The disciple who reached the origins of Hakuin’s spirit was Daikyū,” *ibid.*, 420.
42. Fukushima and Katō, *Zenga no sekai*, 74.
43. Nishimura, *Bokubi* 100 (1960): 3.
44. The figure could also be identified as the Fifth Patriarch, who planted pine trees. But the scowling face makes it more likely to be Rinzai.
45. Dennis Hirota, *Wind in the Pines: Classic Writings of the Way of Tea as a Buddhist Path* (Freemont, Calif.: Asian Humanities Press, 1995), 269. From the *Zencha roku* (Zen Tea Record), published in 1828.
46. *Ibid.*, 22.
47. *Ibid.*, 95–96.
48. Kakuzo Okakura, *The Book of Tea* (New York: Dover Pub., 1964), 47.
49. Hirota, *Wind in the Pines*, 25–26.
50. *Ibid.*, 226–27.
51. *Ibid.*, 206. The *Yamanoue Sōji-ki* includes the *Chanoyu sha kakugo jittei* (Ten Points of Attention for the Practitioner of Tea) and the *Matta jittei* (Further Points of Attention). This passage is from point 13 in the *Matta jittei*. Yamanoue Sōji (1544–90) was a student of Rikyū.
52. Gasan became a monk under Gessen Zenne (1702–81) at Kōken-in in Miharū (present-day Miyagi Prefecture). At the age of sixteen Gasan left Gessen and began traveling around Japan, visiting some thirty different Zen masters. At the age of thirty, Gasan returned to Gessen and Tōki-an in Nagata near Edo. Eventually Gasan went to hear Hakuin lecture in Edo, and, upon hearing the master, went to Shōin-ji to become a disciple. After four years he was acknowledged as one of Hakuin’s Dharma heirs. After Hakuin’s death, Gasan returned to Gessen at the Tōki-an, then moved to Rinshō-in

in Edo, where he oversaw five hundred disciples. Upon Gessen's death in 1781, Gasan returned to the Tōki-an, but continued lecturing at Rinshō-in periodically.

53. See Audrey Yoshiko Seo, *Ensō: Zen Circles of Enlightenment* (Boston: Weatherhill, 2007).

EPILOGUE

1. Kazuaki Tanahashi and Roko Sherry Chayat, *Endless Vow: The Zen Path of Sōen Nakagawa* (Boston: Shambhala, 1996), 70. Sōen was the Dharma heir of Yamamoto Gempō (1866–1961) and served as abbot of Ryūtaku-ji from 1951 to 1973. Twelve years after composing this poem, Sōen crossed the ocean. During this trip he met Nyōgen Senzaki (1876–1958), who had been teaching in the United States since 1905, continuing the work of his own master, Shaku Sōen (1859–1919). Nakagawa Sōen traveled to the United States thirteen times between 1949 and 1982. He and Senzaki are considered crucial to the development of Rinzai Zen practice in the United States.

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