

Chapter 22

Hakuin



Juhn Y. Ahn

HAKUIN Ekaku 白隱慧鶴 (1686–1769), born NAGASAWA Iwajirō 長沢岩次郎, also known as Kokurin 鶴林, Old Man Sendai 闍提老人, Zen Master SHINKI Dokumyō 神機独妙禪師, and National Teacher Shōjū 正宗國師, is a Japanese Zen master from a small village named Hara 原, a post station near Mount Fuji on the main eastern seaboard road or Tōkaidō 東海道, in Suruga 駿河 province (present-day Shizuoka prefecture). He played an active role in the broad reformation of Zen monastic training and *kōan* practice that took place during the early half of the Tokugawa period. Hakuin is, perhaps, best known for his popular writings and songs about Zen and other related themes composed in vernacular Japanese, as well as his distinctively bold brush-stroke paintings and calligraphy, but he is also credited with the creation of an equally, if not more, important *kōan*-system that has been in use for centuries (Miura and Sasaki 1966: xiv; Mohr 1999: 315, 2000; Hori 2003). Moreover, while serving as abbot of the temple Shōinji 松蔭寺 in his hometown Hara for over 50 years, Hakuin was able to attract and offer guidance on *kōan* practice to a large number of talented students whose spiritual descendants became so successful during the Meiji period (1868–1912) that virtually all Zen masters of the Rinzai Zen sect today trace their lineages back to him. For these and other reasons Hakuin is often touted as the reviver of Rinzai Zen.

There is no doubt that Hakuin's impact on the intellectual history of early modern, and perhaps even modern, Zen in Japan was profound, but the praise that he receives for “reviving” Rinzai Zen should be accompanied by a few caveats. Behind this praise, for instance, what is often at work is the misleading assumption, voiced by scholars such as TSUJI Zennnosuke 辻善之助 (1877–1955), that Buddhism had become degenerate and moribund during the Tokugawa. Although it is true that Hakuin himself frequently characterized the Zen teachings of his contemporaries as

J. Y. Ahn (✉)
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
e-mail: jahn@umich.edu

a Zen that had lost much of its authenticity and vitality and, thus, in need of reform, it must be borne in mind that such criticism was a reaction not so much to a tradition on the verge of certain death as to the serious challenge posed by, among other things, the arrival of émigré Chinese monks (hereafter “the Ōbaku” 黄檗), growing accessibility of new texts imported from China, changes in patronage patterns, and new social policies implemented by the Tokugawa *bakufu* 幕府 (Ahn 2008).

Indeed, the winds of reform, stirred by the arrival of the Ōbaku—with whom Rinzai monks like Hakuin shared the same spiritual ancestry—and the printing of imported Chinese Buddhist texts, had begun to blow well before Hakuin’s time (Baroni 2000; Jaffe 1991; Mohr 1994, 1999: 313–314). While some like UNGO Kiyō 雲居希膺 (1582–1659), EGOKU Dōmyō 慧極道明 (1632–1721), and KENGAN Zenetsu 賢巖禪悅 (1618–1697) enthusiastically embraced the teachings of the Ōbaku and their emphasis on keeping the precepts, others like GUDŌ Tōshoku 愚堂東寔 (1577–1661) and DAIGU Sōchiku 大愚宗築 (1584–1669) sternly opposed the uncritical acceptance of this new style of Zen from Ming dynasty China and hoped to restore the teachings of Japanese Zen master KANZAN Egen 關山慧玄 (1277–1361), the founder of their home monastery in Kyoto Myōshinji 妙心寺. This, however, does not mean that one side of this dispute sought reform while the other did not. Their differing opinions about the newly imported teachings from Ming China notwithstanding, both pro- and anti-Chinese factions of Rinzai Zen witnessed the rigorous form of communal monastic training carried out by their Chinese counterparts and felt it necessary to question the way this was being done, or not done, in Japan. They accordingly launched an ambitious campaign to revive the practice of “formal retreats” (J. *kessei* 結制), going on pilgrimage to “consult various Zen masters” (J. *hensan* 遍參), and participating in communal training in the “monks’ hall” (J. *sōdō* 僧堂) (Takenuki 1989: 197–204). Most monks’ halls in Japan, however, had fallen into disrepair during the Warring States period, and financial constraints made it less than feasible for most Zen temples to build and operate such a facility. Ambitious abbots like Hakuin thus chose to appropriate the new monastic layout from Ming China, which used a smaller “Zen hall” (J. *zendō* 禪堂) for training monks in seated meditation (Mohr 1999: 314; Foulk 2008: 47–53).

Hakuin’s “revival” of Rinzai Zen was indebted to the late Ming in other ways as well. The newly invigorated Buddhist scholasticism of the late Ming, for instance, also acted as an important catalyst for reforming *kōan* practice in Japan, where the custom of collecting or purchasing notebooks full of “old cases” (J. *kōans*) and “capping phrases” (J. *jaku* 著語) and carrying them around in special pouches or boxes known as *ankenbukuro* 行券袋 or *missanbako* 密參箱 was commonplace (Yanagida 1967: 253; Yanagida 1987: 252–253; Tamamura 1981: 981–1040). The growing accessibility of new Chinese Buddhist primers and commentaries in print and the arrival of the Ōbaku, who brought with them a form of *kōan* practice that more closely and uncannily resembled the practices recorded in the Song dynasty classics, generated great excitement in the Japanese Zen community. It even inspired some to abandon the old custom of collecting notebooks and participating in secret Zen initiation rituals, which had become the norm in *gozan* 五山 and *ringe* 林下

monasteries after the locus of monastic training shifted from the communal monks' hall to the more private "memorial temple" (J. *tatchū* 塔頭) (Tamamura 1981: 981–1040; Takenuki 1989: 158–159). EGOKU Dōmyō, BANKEI Yōtaku 盤珪永琢 (1622–1693), and many others who studied under the émigré Chinese monks, for instance, began to seriously reengage the various Zen classics and encouraged their own students to rely less on their notebooks and figure out the *kōans* for themselves. In addition, some like Hakuin and Bankei also opened the closed doors of Zen learning to an even more diverse community of readers and practitioners (for example, daimyo, samurai, merchants, artisans, physicians etc.) through the medium of print and through the well-attended "sermons" (J. *teishō* 提唱) delivered during formal retreats, which later contributed to the rise of popular religious movements such as the Sekimon Shingaku 石門心学 (Sawada 1993).

Most notable in this respect is, perhaps, KOGETSU Zenzai 古月禪材 (1667–1751) whom Hakuin had at one point in his career considered a potential teacher (Takenuki 1989: 265–266; Mohr 1999: 314; 2000: 254–256). With his firm grasp of the Zen classics, especially the work of Song dynasty Chan master DAHUI Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163), and his ability to produce original and insightful comments, verses, and capping phrases in classical Chinese, Kogetsu firmly emerged as a formidable force in the world of Tokugawa Zen. Although Hakuin did not necessarily agree with Kogetsu's understanding of the Zen classics and eventually gave up on the idea of becoming his student, both men dedicated their careers in remarkably similar ways to restoring communal monastic retreats, mastering the Zen classics, and gaining a personal and direct insight into the ancient *kōans*. Their efforts paid off: having established themselves as masters of authentic *kōan* Zen, both Kogetsu and Hakuin, like the émigré Chinese Chan masters, were able to attract a large following with their ability to offer formal recognition or "certification of awakening" (J. *inka* 印可) to those who were able to successfully complete their *kōan* training. So similar were these two Zen masters that a large number of talented students who had first trained under Kogetsu later turned to Hakuin for further guidance and formal recognition of their awakening (Akiyama 1983: 146–153; Mohr 1999: 314; Waddell 2009: xxiv–xxxiii).

Lastly, Hakuin's efforts to reform Zen must be set against the larger backdrop of the rise to prominence of the *ringe* monasteries Daitokuji 大徳寺 and Myōshinji after the Ōnin War (1467–1477). As many of his contemporaries sought formal transmission from an émigré Chinese master, Hakuin took great care to emphasize his own Myōshinji line of Zen, whose own roots traced back to Daitokuji and its founding abbot SHŪHŌ Myōchō 宗峰妙超 (National Master Daitō 大燈國師) (1282–1337). Speaking to an audience that had been exposed to the new style of Zen from Ming China, Hakuin argued that authentic Zen was actually introduced to Japan by Daitō and his teacher NANPO Jōmyō 南浦紹明 (National Master Daiō 大應國師) (1235–1309) in the thirteenth century; Hakuin, concomitantly, strove to restore Daiō, Daitō, and Kanzan's Zen, otherwise known as Ōtōkan 應燈關 Zen (Yampolsky 1971: 6; Mohr 1999: 308; Waddell 1994: xiv–xv). One of Hakuin's greatest accomplishments as a scholar of Zen was, in fact, the completion of a lengthy commentary on the recorded sayings of Daitō entitled *Sayings of the*

Country of Huaian (J. *Kaiankokugo* 槐安國語) in 1749. Perhaps even more important, at least for understanding Hakuin's growth as a Zen thinker, is his earlier work, the *General Sermons Delivered to Introduce the Record of Sokkō* (J. *Sokkōroku kaien fusetsu* 息耕録開筵普説), published in 1743, which is a record of the general sermons (J. *fusetsu* 普説) that he delivered three years earlier. As the title suggests, the general sermons were meant to serve as an introduction to his lectures on the recorded sayings of Daiō's Chinese teacher XUTANG Zhiyu 虛堂智愚 (1185–1269) or Old Man Sokkō, but they also happen to conveniently offer an overview of Hakuin's vision of Zen. I therefore believe any attempt to capture the contours of Hakuin's philosophy—the aim of this essay—must begin with these sermons, and so that is where we turn next.

1 Ming Buddhist Scholasticism

In the spring of 1740, Hakuin delivered some lectures on the *Recorded Sayings of Venerable Xutang* (C. *Xutang heshang yulu* 虛堂和尚語錄) ostensibly to a crowd of over 400 people at his temple Shōinji. According to the *Annalistic Biography of Old Venerable Hakuin, Imperially Recognized as Zen Master Shinki Dokumyō* (J. *Chokushi Shinki Dokumyō zenji Hakuin rōshō nenpu* 勅諭神機独妙禪師白隱老和尚年譜; hereafter annalistic biography), this momentous event established Hakuin's reputation as a great Zen master and put him firmly on the map of Tokugawa Zen (Katō 1985: 200–201; Waddell 2009: 205). At the time Hakuin was 54.

Before he delivered these formal lectures, Hakuin, as noted earlier, offered the assembly at Shōinji some general sermons wherein he addressed his deep concerns about the way monastic decorum and Buddhist practice had declined in Japan. As the Zen historian YANAGIDA Seizan points out, Hakuin's choice to deliver this critical message in the form of a general sermon is quite noteworthy in that this sermon form, which had fewer restrictions than other forms of Zen pedagogy, was traditionally used as a convenient way of getting straight to the point or truth and seldom, if ever, as a way of formally announcing oneself as a Zen master or abbot in Japan (Yanagida 1987: 237). Hakuin, in other words, used a rather unconventional way of formally carving out a new space for himself and his teachings in the world of Tokugawa Zen.

Making good use of the general sermons, Hakuin did get straight to the point. He alerted his audience to the crisis that Zen was facing at the time and urged them to meet this crisis with renewed faith in their ability to “see their own nature” (J. *kenshō* 見性) and attain “awakening” (J. *satori* 悟り). Lest the urgency of his message be lost, Hakuin immediately invoked the words of his teacher SHŌJU Rōnin 正受老人 (Dōkyō Etan 道鏡慧端; 1642–1721) who, if we are to trust Hakuin, frequently exclaimed before his students that the Zen school had begun to decline as early as the end of the Southern Song (1127–1279) and reached its nadir by the

Ming (1368–1644) (Gotō 1967: 2, 379; Waddell 1994: 15). However, Shōju also claimed that what little was left of the Zen school’s real poison unfortunately survived in his native Japan. Later in his sermon, Hakuin locates this poison in the lineage of transmission that Daiō received from Xutang and brought to Japan, more recently reaching Gudō, SHIDO Munan (1603–1676), Shōju, and, by implication, Hakuin himself. Shōju’s harsh assessment of the fate of the Zen school did more than just provide Hakuin with the convenient opportunity to speak of the teachings of his own lineage as the poison of authentic Zen. It also set the perfect stage for a fullscale assault on Ming Buddhist scholasticism, which was another major agenda of the general sermons (Yanagida 1987: 221 and 236).

The first to bear the brunt of Hakuin’s assault was Chan master YONGJUE Yuanxuan 永覺元賢 (1578–1657) and his work, the *Internal Collection of Chan and Other Matters* (C. *Chanyu neiji* 禪餘內集). Hakuin seems to have chosen to start with Yongjue for several reasons. As one of the more popular Chan texts imported from China, Yongjue’s work easily stood out from the rest. Yongjue also happened to comment on a *kōan*—Qianfeng’s three kinds of illness (XZJ 138.490b16-491a2)—that Hakuin considered particularly important. What bothered Hakuin was not that Yongjue had chosen to comment on the *kōan*. Rather, what was troubling about Yongjue’s comment was the fact that his reading was inconsistent with what Hakuin saw in Xutang’s verse comment on the same *kōan* (T 47.2000.1021b7-9). Simply put, whereas Xutang’s verse dexterously addressed both Qianfeng’s query (“What are the three illnesses and two lights of the dharma body?”) and his disciple Yunmen’s response (“Why doesn’t the fellow inside the hermitage know what’s going on outside?”), Yongjue’s comment, in Hakuin’s opinion, not only failed to do justice to the subtlety of the query but also made no attempt to address the response. To make matters worse, students of Zen in Japan tended to accept Yongjue’s overly straightforward interpretation as the final word on the *kōan*, copy it on a small slips of paper, and paste the whole thing into the margins of printed Zen classics such as the recorded sayings of Xutang. This practice seems to have disturbed Hakuin a great deal as it discouraged students from attempting to tackle the *kōan* directly and, consequently, from seeing their own nature.

Indeed, Hakuin seems to have been particularly worried about the tendency among Zen students to regard what Ming Buddhist scholasticism had to offer as a simpler, clearer, and thus attractive alternative to directly engaging the perplexing *kōans* of old. Repeatedly throughout his general sermons Hakuin lambasted the unnamed Zen teachers in Japan who either indiscriminately borrowed words from imported texts such as Yongjue’s *Internal Collection of Chan and Other Matters* in their own sermons or encouraged their students to put aside the tricky *kōans* and focus instead on simplified teachings about the inherent tranquility and emptiness of the mind or original nature. However, he was even more vehement in his critique of other alternatives to *kōan* meditation such as quiet sitting and the immensely popular practice of chanting the name of the buddha Amitābha, also referred to as the “*nenbutsu*” 念佛.

For Hakuin, what made both quiet sitting and *nenbutsu* problematic was their inability to lead the practitioner to *kenshō* and awakening. It should, however, be made clear that Hakuin did not simply rule out the possibility of experiencing *kenshō* with the help of these practices. According to his general sermons, practitioners of *nenbutsu* fail to see their own nature because they misunderstand the true meaning of *nenbutsu*. Relying on a passage from the *Scripture on Contemplating the Buddha of Immeasurable Life* (C. *Guan wuliangshou fo jing* 觀無量壽佛經)—“the height of the buddha’s body is six hundred trillion *nayutas* of *yojanas* as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges river” (T 12.365.343b17-18)—Hakuin identified one meaning of the term *nenbutsu*, namely, “being mindful of the buddha,” as its true aim and purpose and made sure his audience knew that being mindful of the buddha Amitābha and attaining rebirth in his pure land is no different from seeing one’s own nature (Gotō 1967, 2: 396–397; Waddell 1994: 41). If, as he explains, the size of the buddha’s body that one must contemplate is so unimaginably big, then this body must be the dharma body and, if so, the true purpose of *nenbutsu* and seeking rebirth in Amitābha’s pure land must be awakening. This, he concludes, must mean that the true aim and purpose of *nenbutsu* and Zen are identical.

Well after he gave his lectures on the recorded sayings of Xutang, Hakuin continued to exert a considerable amount of effort to more “accurately” define the relation between *nenbutsu* and Zen. Similar arguments were made, for instance, in his letters to the governor of Settsu 摂津 NABESHIMA Naotsune 鍋島直恒 (1701–1749) and the lord of Okayama 岡山 castle IKEDA Tsugumasa 池田継政 (1702–1776), and also in a relatively short didactic narrative that Hakuin wrote entitled *An Account of the Precious Mirror Cave* (J. *Hōkyōkutsu no ki* 寶鏡窟の記) (Yampolsky 1971: 125–179; Waddell 2009: 127–141). One reasonable explanation for Hakuin’s sustained concerns about *nenbutsu* may, again, be the arrival of the Ōbaku who not only studied *kōans* and practiced communal forms of seated meditation but also regularly chanted the name of the buddha Amitābha as part of their daily monastic practice (Yanagida 1987: 259; Baroni 2000: 106–121). Unlike Japan where Pure Land and Zen had developed into separate institutions with distinctive characteristics, Chinese Buddhism had not developed such institutions, and for centuries monks in China felt no conflict between their aspiration to attain rebirth in Amitābha’s pure land and their efforts to reach awakening with the help of *kōans* and seated meditation. In Japan, however, it had become important to clarify sectarian boundaries and identify the orthodox roots of one’s own sect under the new Tokugawa *bakufu* policies towards temples and shrines such as the head and branch temple system (J. *honmatsu seido* 本末制度), which may be one reason why Hakuin felt so uneasy about the combined practice of *nenbutsu* and seated meditation.

There is, in fact, some evidence to suggest that the Ōbaku was, indeed, what Hakuin had in mind when he criticized the trend to combine Pure Land and Zen (Yampolsky 1971: 171). However, he was more often inclined to explicitly single out the eminent Chinese monk YUNQI Zhuhong 雲棲株宏 (1535–1615) and the aforementioned Yongjue as the primary culprits behind this trend. Above all else, Hakuin seems to have taken issue with their belief that Pure Land and Zen are separate but equal paths that one can tread simultaneously. Hakuin was particularly

critical of Zhuhong's tendency to regard the pure land of Amitābha as a literal destination in the West that exists separate from the mind. Hakuin adamantly refused to believe that, in the age of the "final dharma" (*J. mappō* 末法), devotion to Amitābha and his pure land was an easier and more effective means of securing salvation than seated meditation and *kenshō*. If both paths led to salvation, then they could not, Hakuin contended, have separate goals.

Hakuin, as I noted earlier, never wavered in his belief that the key to salvation lay in the experience of *kenshō*. Rather than reject the devotion to Amitābha and his pure land outright, Hakuin applied an old exegetical spin to it and often claimed that visualizing the dharma body of the buddha and attaining rebirth in his pure land was none other than *kenshō* (Waddell 1994: 41; 2009: 137; Yampolsky 1971: 127, 136, and 161). He also made use of the same old exegetical move to defend the *Platform Sutra* against Zhuhong's criticism of its reference to the distance between the practitioners in China and pure land as 18,000 *li* 里 (Waddell 1994: 47–60; see T 48.2008.352a15–17). Hakuin insisted that this distance was used in the *Platform Sutra* figuratively to refer to the mind's distance from its original nature. This was, indeed, an old exegetical move. The strategy of reading Amitābha and his pure land as mind only (*C. weixin jingtu* 唯心淨土), as Robert Sharf has shown, was already used in Chan sources from medieval China and may well be as old as Mahāyāna itself (Sharf 2002: 313). So commonplace was this strategy that when the Ōbaku masters were pressed for an explanation, they too preferred to explain *nenbutsu* in these terms (Baskind 2008).

2 Post-Satori Training

The general sermons that Hakuin delivered before his lectures on the recorded sayings of Xutang, as we have seen, serve as a broad commentary on Ming Buddhist scholasticism with a clear emphasis on its main representatives, namely YONGJUE Yuanxuan and YUNQI Zhuhong. However, an equally large portion of the sermons were also devoted to the writings of famous Chan masters from the Song dynasty such as YUANWU Keqin 圓悟克勤 (1063–1135), DAHUI Zonggao, and JUEFAN Huihong 覺範慧洪 (1071–1128). Hakuin was fond of consulting the writings of these masters because they, too, had to deal with the problem of "silent illumination" (*J. mokushō* 默照), that is, with the perceived tendency among Zen practitioners to ignore awakening and *kenshō*. What Hakuin wanted the audience of his sermons to know, in other words, was that his stance toward Ming scholasticism was based on the firm foundation of authentic Song Chan. The general sermons thus functioned as a kind of manifesto. That is to say, the sermons, which he will tellingly revisit at the opening of his new temple Ryūtakuji 龍澤寺 in 1760, offered Hakuin an opportunity to publicly declare where he stood on the issue of awakening and *kenshō*. They also offered him an opportunity to lay out a basic blueprint of his own curriculum for Zen learning. To articulate this curriculum more efficiently,

Hakuin turned to a reliable authority on this subject and that authority was GAOFENG Yuanmiao 高峰原妙 (1238–1295).

Using Gaofeng’s three essentials—“great root of faith” (C. *daxingen* 大信根), “great determination” (C. *dafenzhi* 大憤志), and “great sensation of doubt” (C. *dayiqing* 大疑情)—as an outline, Hakuin put together a curriculum that seems to have consisted largely of two, or perhaps three, basic stages. First, the practitioner had to develop deep faith in her own ability to experience *kenshō*. With this conviction the practitioner must then, of course, see her own nature and undergo what Hakuin calls a “great death” (J. *daishi* 大死). However, to die the great death, the practitioner had to have great doubt, and to have great doubt, she could not settle with her initial *satori* or *kenshō*. She had to cultivate this doubt with the help of a rigorous regimen of “difficult-to-pass” (J. *nantō* 難透) *kōan* barriers, which requires great determination. Lastly, having successfully generated and resolved great doubt, she must not, Hakuin adds, rest content with this achievement or, worse still, become attached to it and become sick—more on this later—but rather come back to “life” from this “death” and teach Zen to others. This, too, requires great determination.

What is, perhaps, most striking about Hakuin’s curriculum is its understanding of great doubt. The arousal of great doubt was seen not as something that takes place in a moment but as part of a longer and, perhaps, indefinite process. According to Hakuin, awakening was not a singular event but something that had to be experienced again and again. The need for such “post-*satori* training” (J. *gogo no shugyō* 悟後の修行) is an important theme that Hakuin will revisit and underscore repeatedly at various points in his lengthy career, but the term post-*satori* training itself, as Norman Waddell points out, does not appear in Hakuin’s writings until his mid-seventies (Waddell 2009: 5). The use of difficult-to-pass *kōans* to deepen one’s initial awakening is, however, a point that Hakuin clearly raised as early as his mid-fifties, as we saw in the case of his *General Sermons Delivered to Introduce the Record of Sokkō*. Although Hakuin never really goes into the details of the mechanics of post-*satori* training in any of his writings, he does steadily continue to offer more elaborate pleas for such training in his *Orade Tea Kettle* (J. *Oradegama* 遠羅天釜) (1749), *Horse Thistle* (J. *Oniazami* 於仁安佐美) (1751), *Old Granny’s Tea Grinding Song* (J. *Obaba-dono no kohiki uta* お婆々どの粉引歌) (1760), *The Tale of How I Spurred My Young Self* (J. *Sakushin osana monogatari* 策進幼稚物語) (1761), *The Tale of Yūkichi of Takayama* (J. *Takayama Yūkichi monogatari* 高山勇吉物語) (1761), and *Wild Ivy* (J. *Isumadegusa* 壁生草) (1765–1766).

Again, these sources divulge close to nothing about the mechanics of post-*satori* training, but what we do find is a recurring list of difficult-to-pass *kōans*, which changes slightly from one source to the next. The *kōans* that appear more or less in virtually all of the above sources are: SUSHAN Kuangren’s 疎山匡人 (837–909) long-life *stūpa* (XZJ 138.484a10-b2); NANQUAN Puyuan’s 南泉普願 (748–835) death (XZJ 138.136a17-b7); Qianfeng’s three kinds of illness; and WUZU Fayān’s 五祖法演 (1024–1104) water buffalo (T 48.2005.297c12-20). There is no way of knowing for certain rationale for this list of *kōans*, but, if we are to trust Hakuin’s autobiography (that is, *Wild Ivy* and *The Tale of How I Spurred My Young Self*) and also his annalistic biography, these *kōans* had been assigned to him by Shōju

(Waddell 1999: 32; cf. 2009: 11, 31–33, 169–171; Rikugawa 1963: 49–50). If, however, we are to trust the introductory sermon to his lectures on the *Blue Cliff Record*, which he delivered in the spring of 1758 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Gudō's death, the four *kōans* cited above were Gudō's "cipher and secret command" (J. *angō mitsurei* 暗號密令) (Gotō 1967, 2: 348–349). Be it Gudō or Shōju, Hakuin wanted his readers to know that the tradition of using these difficult-to-pass *kōans* was something that he inherited rather than invented. What Hakuin does not ever tell us, however, is why these and other *kōans* were deemed so special or "difficult-to-pass." It does, however, appear to be the case that some of the *kōans* were used in post-*satori* training because there was a good precedent for doing so. Sushan's long-life *stūpa*, for instance, was used by none other than Xutang who mulled over this *kōan* for 4 years after his initial awakening (T 47.2000.1052b12 and 1063b16).

As we can see in Xutang's example, the idea of devoting oneself to post-*satori* training was not unknown before Hakuin. Similar examples of men who engaged in protracted, and often painful, attempts to wrestle with *kōans* after their initial awakening are also documented meticulously in Hakuin's writings on this subject (Waddell 1994: 72–73 and 101; 2009: 73–76; Yampolsky 1971: 65–66). Hakuin may have found the inspiration for his thoughts on post-*satori* training from these and other examples that often date back to the Song dynasty or to key figures of his own Ōtōkan lineage, but Hakuin's own work on post-*satori* training is unique in that no one had ever gone quite to the extent that he did to construct a systematic account of this important phase in the study of *kōan* Zen. Given the amount of time and energy that Hakuin dedicated to explicating this subject, it hardly seems an exaggeration to say that post-*satori* training was the hallmark of his philosophy.

Hakuin's thoughts on post-*satori* training, as we shall see, are extremely complex and closely intertwined with his interests in medicine and Mahāyāna or bodhisattva ethics. Before we move on to these topics, however, we need to take a brief look at the current "*kōan*-system" (J. *kōan taikai* 公案体系) used by the Rinzai sect, which was presumably built on the foundation laid by Hakuin (Akizuki 1987; Hori 2003; Kajitani 1968; Miura and Sasaki 1966; Mohr 1999: 315–319; and Shibayama 1943).

More often than not, the first *kōan* that most students receive in this system is Zhaozhou's "no" (J. *mu* 無). This also happens to be the first *kōan* that Shōju used to test Hakuin, and Hakuin himself seems to have preferred to assign this *kōan* to his beginning students as well. However, later in his career Hakuin began to assign beginners a new *kōan* that he had devised himself. This is the famous "sound of one hand" (J. *sekishu no onjō* 隻手の音聲) *kōan*, which is also often assigned to beginners in the Rinzai *kōan*-system. As Hakuin tells us in his letter to the lord of Okayama castle, he had begun to assign the sound of one hand *kōan* to his students only five or six years earlier, that is, around 1747 and 1748. He did so because, he tells us, his students had a much easier time raising the great doubt with this *kōan* (Yampolsky 1971: 163). There may be some truth to this claim. During Hakuin's time, the sound of one hand *kōan* may have seemed easier or at least more familiar because of its relationship to the following line from the famous *nō* play *The Mountain Crone* (J. Yamanba 山姥), "[CRONE] Calls from the valley, wholly empty,

scatter echoes from each twig, [CHORUS] till through sound the ear hears silence” (Tyler 1992: 325; cf. Yampolsky 1971: 164; Yoshizawa 2009: 77–81). But, according to *Old Granny’s Tea Grinding Song*, once the practitioner is done with this *kōan*, she had to undergo further post-*satori* training (Waddell 2009: 125). This is also true in the current *kōan*-system.

Not surprisingly, one step in the post-*satori* training section of the current *kōan*-system is called the eight difficult-to-pass *kōans*. There is some disagreement as to what these eight *kōans* are, but the four difficult-to-pass *kōans* cited earlier seem to be part of this list (Hori 2003: 22–23). There is also some disagreement about how many other categories there are in this *kōan*-system, but the general consensus is that there are five main categories and the eight difficult-to-pass *kōans* constitute the fourth (Hori 2003: 19–27). As discussed earlier, however, Hakuin’s curriculum seems to have consisted largely of two, or perhaps even three, stages and not five. In Hakuin’s annalistic biography, his chief disciple TŌREI Enji 東嶺円慈 (1721–1792), who compiled the biography, wrote the following comment, which seems to evince the tripartite classification of Hakuin’s curriculum:

In general, there are three periods in the master’s attainments. First, (from age 15 to 23) he gave rise to doubt in his mind for the first time and saw straight through to the root; second, (from age 23 to 27) he had a personal audience with Shōju and investigated the profound Principle; third, (from age 27 to this year [i.e., 41]) he further refined [his handling of] the contradiction between activity and quietude and the disparity between phenomena and Principle. (Rikugawa 1963: 498–499; Katō 1985: 175–177; cf. Waddell 2009: 198–199)

To be sure, the division of Hakuin’s career into these three stages may have little to do with an existing curriculum or even with the facts of Hakuin’s career, but what is certain is that there is no evidence to suggest that Hakuin had ever devised a rigid and elaborate *kōan*-system with “main cases” (J. *honsoku* 本則) accompanied by a set of “peripheral cases” (J. *sassho* 搦所), as in the case of the current system.

This, however, is not to say that the current *kōan*-system was made out of whole cloth (Mohr 2000: 264). It is not unreasonable to think that the current system may be an outcome of the development of Hakuin’s relatively simple curriculum or perhaps even an older custom of classifying *kōans* (Mohr 1999: 315). Some of the other technical terms used in the current system to classify *kōans* such as difficult-to-pass, “going beyond” (*kōjō* 向上), “five positions and ten major precepts” (J. *goi jūjūkin* 五位十重禁), and “last barrier” (J. *matsugo no rōkan* 末後の牢關), for instance, also received special attention in the writings of Hakuin and his disciples (Mohr 2000: 262–266; Gotō 1967: 2, 362–363 and 81–88; Waddell 2009: 171–172). However, it should be borne in mind that their interest in these terms had less, if anything, to do with a *kōan*-system than with the prominent place of these terms in Song dynasty Chan. As I have shown elsewhere, the practice of using the term “last barrier,” also known as the “last word” (J. *matsugo no ku* 末後句), to refer to secret words and formulas (e.g. the five positions) that are exchanged or transmitted at the final stage of one’s training is attested, at least, as early as the Song, but the use of last words as shibboleths came under heavy criticism, and the attempt was thus made to restore the “last word” and “going beyond” to what was presumed to be their original meaning during this period (Ahn 2013). As a great fan of this

revisionist literature from the Song, Hakuin's understanding of the "last word" as a way of "going beyond" awakening or the great death by "forgetting its ruts and footprints" (J. *sono tesseki o wasureru* 忘其轍跡) was, as one might expect, largely in keeping with the way these terms were reinterpreted in this literature (Gotō 1967, 2: 438; Waddell 1994: 97; 2009: 175).

As for the "five positions" (J. *goi*), Hakuin considered this old Zen formula to be the essence of the "Buddha's teachings in condensed form" (J. *butsudō taikō* 佛道大綱). He was, therefore, extremely critical of those who regarded the five positions as curios that old Zen masters hide in their sleeves and took their ignorance instead as "going beyond and pointing directly Zen" (J. *kōjō chokushi zen* 向上直指禪) (Gotō 1967, 2: 82; cf. Miura and Sasaki 1966: 63). On the contrary, it was, in Hakuin's opinion, the five positions that perfectly captured the Zen teaching of "going beyond."

According to Hakuin, the first position, "the provisional within the real" (J. *shōchūhen* 正中偏), stands for dying the great death and seeing the truth or Principle. This position, however, could become compromised (that is, "provisional") if the practitioner becomes stuck in this state of quiet, unconditioned emptiness and consequently ends up practicing "cesspool Zen" (J. *shisui zen* 死水裡禪) (Gotō 1967, 2: 85; cf. Miura and Sasaki 1966: 68).

To overcome the shortcomings of this position the bodhisattva must, Hakuin claims, move to the next position, "the real within the provisional" (J. *henchūshō* 偏中正), which stands for "regarding all things [literally, ten thousand dharmas] as one's own true and pure original face" (Gotō 1967, 2: 86; cf. Miura and Sasaki 1966: 69). The practitioner, however, could similarly become content with this state (J. *denchi* 田地) and turn into an inferior bodhisattva. This, Hakuin continues, is a consequence of not knowing the "proper deportment of a bodhisattva" (J. *bosatsu igi* 菩薩威儀). What Hakuin probably had in mind here is the radical antinomian position of certain varieties of subitism; for example, "the ordinary mind is the way" (C. *pinchingxin shi dao* 平常心是道) that tended to put the cart before the horse, if you will, and emphasizes the futility of seeking a truth outside of ordinary things and experiences with rituals and arduous practices of self-cultivation (seated meditation). However, what such a position conveniently overlooks is the fact that one can only come to such a realization *after* he or she performs the necessary rituals or practices self-cultivation.

The next position, "returning from the real" (J. *shōchūrai* 正中來), stands for the position of the superior bodhisattva who does not dwell on the fruits of what he or she has realized. Instead, with great compassion the bodhisattva carries out the four great vows (J. *shiguseigan* 四弘誓願) and "seeks *bodhi* above and saves living beings below" (Gotō 1967, 2: 87; cf. Miura and Sasaki 1966: 70 and 35–36). But to do so, he or she, we are told, must know how to distinguish "light from darkness." What we seem to have here is the traditional argument for bodhisattva ethics and for the ability to skillfully make use of expedient means. In other words, distinctions and dualities such as light and darkness can be made for the sake of saving living beings, but this does not necessarily mean that the bodhisattva is therefore attached to these distinctions and dualities.

This last point then takes us to the next position, “arriving at mutual integration” (J. *kenchūshi* 兼中至), which stands for “turning the wheel of the truth of the non-duality of light and darkness” (Gotō 1967, 2: 87). The bodhisattva must embrace duality without being engulfed by it like a lotus flower that blooms in the midst of flames (T 51.2076.461a; Ahn 2008: 179 n. 4) and a person who goes on the road without leaving home (T 47.1985.497a12-14) etc. But, as Hakuin reminds us, the bodhisattva must be cautious not to become complacent in this state of nonduality. This is why the bodhisattva must advance into the next position, namely “mutual integration attained” (J. *kenchūtō* 兼中到) (Gotō 1967, 2: 88). No further explanation is provided by Hakuin on this last position, but he does cite a verse composed by XUEDOU Chongxian 雪竇重顯 (980–1052) that, again, seems to extol the virtues of saving living beings with expedient means (Gotō 1967, 2: 88; Miura and Sasaki 1966: 72). It seems worth pointing out here, however, that YANAGIDA Seizan believes this verse may reflect an attempt—made not necessarily by Hakuin but his disciple Tōrei—to promote Xuedou’s word-savvy brand of Zen without abandoning the form of Dongshan Liangjie’s 洞山良价 (807–869) five positions, which Yanagida characterizes as a very passive style of Zen (Yanagida and Katō 1979: 96–98).

Again, what we do not find in Hakuin’s comments on the five positions formula are traces of a *kōan*-system, but that may not ultimately matter, at least, not from the perspective of Hakuin’s philosophy. Viewed from this perspective, both the *kōan*-system and Hakuin’s ever-elusive curriculum are consistent in that they are both concerned primarily with the task of guiding the practitioner to an initial experience of *kenshō* and then to an arduous path of post-*satori* training and ethical engagement in everyday life. If there is, in fact, a historical connection between the system and the curriculum, then the *kōan*-system seems to have managed to faithfully address and expand upon Hakuin’s concerns about post-*satori* training. Similar concerns, as I noted earlier, had also received much attention during the Song, and Hakuin was eager to acknowledge this fact, but the innovations that he introduced to the notion of carrying out “meditative work in the midst of activity” (J. *dōchū no kufū* 動中の工夫), as he preferred to call it, pushed this notion into new directions that the Song Chan masters may have never imagined possible. It is to these new directions that we turn next.

3 Idle Talk on a Night Boat

Hakuin was a prolific writer who left a large body of written material behind, but nothing he wrote has received more attention than his *Idle Talk on a Night Boat* (J. *Yasen kanna* 夜船閑話) (1757) (for example, Ahn 2008; Aoki 1943; Arai 1964, 2002; Izuyama 1983; Kamata 2001; Kasai 2003; Muraki 1985 and 2003; Naoki 2003; Rikugawa 1962; Shaw and Schiffer 1956). This complicated but entertaining text is essentially a story about Hakuin’s encounter with the hermit Hakuyū 白幽 and the cure that the hermit provided for Hakuin’s Zen illness or malady of meditation (J. *zenbyō* 禪病). It may be tempting to ask whether this encounter actually

took place or not, but the story does seem to provide a few allusions to its fictional nature. One could consider, for instance, the title's allusion to the famous idiom, "the nightboat of Shiraka" (J. *Shirakawa yōbune* 白川夜船), which refers to the pretense of knowing something that does not actually exist (Izuyama 1983: 114; Mohr 1999: 311; and Waddell 2009: 87); or one could consider Hakuin's claim that Hakuyū's age at the time of their encounter was somewhere between 180 (three sexagesimal cycles) and 240 old (four sexagesimal cycles). These hints notwithstanding, speculations about the identity of Hakuyū and his historicity have continued unabated since the eighteenth century (Waddell 2009: 85–87).

Few, I suspect, would deny that the aim of the story was not so much to document an encounter as to impart a lesson and, needless to say, this lesson has something to do with post-*satori* training. Hakuin is said to have offered the teachings contained in this story to students who began to appear at the doorsteps of his temple Shōinji shortly after he assumed the abbacy in his thirties, but it will take another decade or two for the story to get published (Rikugawa 1962: 184). After its first publication as part of *Sendai's Comments on Hanshan's Poems* (J. *Kanzanshi sendai kimon* 寒山詩闡提記聞; Gotō 1967, 4: 108–197) in 1746, however, the story continued to appear regularly in Hakuin's writings. Why did Hakuin decide to include this story in a commentary on Hanshan's poems? The story was used in this astonishing work of exegesis as an extended commentary on a poem that encouraged its reader to nurture her essence (C. *jing* 精), change her physical form, and thereby cheat death and become an immortal (Gotō 1967, 4: 107; cf. Iritani and Matsumura 1970: 115–116). As Hakuin clarifies in his comment on the poem, its true message is not to encourage the reader to ingest an elixir and become an immortal as the Daoist alchemists would do but to nourish life (J. *yōjō* 養生). Making good use of the teachings he received from the hermit Hakuyū, Hakuin tried to explain what he thought was the true meaning of the poem and the art of nourishing life with the help of the following passage in the Chinese medical classic, *Plain Questions* (C. *Suwen*) of the *Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor* (C. *Huangdi neijing*): "Tranquilly content in vacuous nothingness, [the sages] were accompanied by true vital energy; their essence and spirit being guarded from within, whence would illness come forth?" (Gotō 1967, 4: 108 and 116).

This idea that one can nourish life by guarding vital energy (J. *ki* 氣) and thus essence from within was the fundamental premise of Hakuin's *Idle Talk on a Night Boat*. To bolster this premise, Hakuin cites, in addition to the above passage from *Plain Questions*, an impressive array of sources that include Buddhist texts, medical treatises, and Chinese classics such as *Mencius* and *Zhuangzi*. Drawing snippets of relevant information from these various sources, Hakuyū, or shall I say Hakuin, weaves together a complex but coherent account of the etiology, diagnosis, and remedy for the malady of meditation. The *Idle Talk on a Night Boat* inevitably reads a bit like a dry theory-laden classical Chinese medical treatise, but Hakuin framed the hermit's teaching in a way that made it approachable even to the casual reader. Hakuin set Hakuyū's rather turgid and technical teaching about nourishing life, which takes up more than two-thirds of the entire story, against the background of his own personal experiences of self-cultivation, focusing particularly on days and

months that followed his initial awakening experience. This gave a palpable down-to-earth quality to the hermit's teachings, which other manuals of meditation and medicine generally lack.

The story begins with Hakuin's account of his initial awakening experience, which his annalistic biography records as having occurred in 1708. That same year, shortly after his awakening, Hakuin made his way to Shinano 信濃 province where he met Shōju and learned about post-*satori* training. Before he left Shōju's side, Hakuin had not been able to receive the true secrets (*J. shinketsu* 真訣) of the five positions in their entirety, but he was able to acquire the rest of these secrets from Sōkaku 宗覺 (1679–1730), a fellow disciple of Shōju, two years later in 1710. Curiously, there is a discrepancy in the way the two extant versions of Hakuin's annalistic biography—Tōrei's manuscript compiled in 1789 and his disciple TAIKAN Bunshu's 大觀文珠 (1766–1842) official version printed in 1821—remember the events that transpired after Hakuin left Shōju and before he began to devote himself to self-cultivation on Mount Iwataki 岩滝 in 1715. Whereas Tōrei's manuscript places Hakuin's encounter with the hermit Hakuyū and the end to the former's illness in 1715, Taikan's version relocates this event to the year 1710 (Rikugawa 1963: 474–477 and 485–488). Naturally, Taikan's version also relocates the onset of Hakuin's illness, which Tōrei remembers as having occurred in 1712, to the year 1709 (Rikugawa 1963: 471–473 and 478–480; cf. Katō 1985: 120–131).

Why Taikan felt it necessary to move the onset of Hakuin's illness and his encounter with the hermit Hakuyū closer to his year with Shōju and the completion of the transmission of the secrets of the five positions is difficult to say, but Taikan may have shifted the events around in this manner to address what appear to be inconsistencies in the biography. Tōrei, for instance, seems to have placed the encounter with Hakuyū in the entry for 1715 because it made more sense to associate the encounter with Hakuyū to Hakuin's post-*satori* training on Mount Iwataki. However, this seems to have made little sense to Taikan. If Hakuin had already cured his illness with the help of Hakuyū, then it seems fair to ask why it was necessary for Hakuin to engage in more rigorous post-*satori* training on Mount Iwataki. Even more perplexing, perhaps, is Hakuin's visit to EGOKU Dōmyō, a Zen master with strong ties to the Ōbaku, in 1713. Both Tōrei and Taikan concur that the visit took place in 1713, but Taikan altered Tōrei's text in a barely noticeable but significant way that is quite revealing. In Tōrei's manuscript Hakuin is said to have consulted Egoku because he continued to experience “in his daily functions a contradiction between activity and quietude and a disparity between phenomena and Principle,” which prevented him from “reaching the state of true great peaceful tranquility and great liberation” (Rikugawa 1963: 483). In other words, what Hakuin experienced was the malady of meditation and he wanted a remedy. Egoku's advice was to wither away together with the grass and trees in the mountains. This, in fact, is why Hakuin headed to Mount Iwataki. Taikan, however, seems to have rightly regarded the insertion of the encounter with Hakuyū between Egoku and Mount Iwataki as incongruous and redundant. To do away with this redundancy, Taikan moved the story of Hakuyū closer to Hakuin's studies under Shōju and erased the

short but important reference to the “contradiction between activity and quietude and disparity between phenomena and Principle” in Hakuin’s exchange with Egoku. Their exchange was, thus, no longer explicitly about the malady of meditation and its remedy. It had become a more general exchange about how to attain great liberation.

Taikan may have thus ironed out some of the more obvious inconsistencies in Hakuin’s biography, but it seems hard to deny that Hakuin’s encounter with Hakuyū seems to make little sense in the context of the other events that took place between 1710 and 1715. During this period, Hakuin spent most of his time making pilgrimages to consult Zen masters around the country and listening to their lectures. A closer look at the pilgrimages that he made also reveals a certain pattern. In 1713, for instance, Hakuin set out to visit the Zen masters JŌZAN Jakuji 定山寂而 (1676–1736), KOGETSU Zenzai, EGOKU Dōmyō, and TESSHIN Dōin 鐵心道印 (1593–1680). Hakuin’s decision to consult these masters is quite significant, for all of them happen to be closely affiliated with the Ōbaku. Jōzan and Kogetsu were both disciples of KENGAN Zen’etsu 賢巖禪悅 (1618–1697), who, like Teshshin and the aforementioned BANKEI Yōtaku, received certification of enlightenment from the Ōbaku monk DAOZHE Chaoyuan 道者超元 (J. Dosha Chōgen; 1602–1662). Similarly, Egoku had received certification from the Ōbaku monk YINYUAN Longqi 隱元隆琦 (J. Ingen Ryūki; 1592–1673). Hakuin was clearly interested in discovering more about the Ōbaku teachings, but this interest was not stirred overnight. There is good reason to believe that he may have had this interest as early as 1708 while he was still studying under Shōju. Hakuin is known to have wanted to receive the “full precepts” (J. *kusokukai* 俱足戒), which was a practice that the Ōbaku re-introduced to Japan, at the temple Ekōzenin 慧光禪院, but Shōju deterred the young Hakuin from doing so and offered him the “formless mind-ground precepts” (J. *musō shinchikai* 無相心地戒) instead (Katō 1985: 95–112; cf. Waddell 2009: 171–172).

In short, learning more about Zen and especially Ōbaku Zen seems to have been Hakuin’s primary agenda during the five years that followed his departure from Shōju. It is therefore difficult to imagine why Hakuin would suddenly want to consult an obscure hermit in the outskirts of Kyoto about the malady of meditation. Moreover, if Hakuin wanted to consult someone about his malady, it would have made more sense to consult Kogetsu and Egoku, who were well versed in Song dynasty teachings on this subject. This is, no doubt, why Tōrei’s original manuscript has Hakuin visiting Egoku to seek advice about this malady.

4 Inner Contemplation

If it is indeed the case that Hakuin’s encounter with the hermit Hakuyū was an interpolation, then why, we may ask, was this interpolation necessary? What made Hakuyū and his teachings so special? First, I think we need to understand that the hermit offered more than just a viable remedy for the malady of meditation. If we

are to trust the Song courses that Hakuin studied with great care, he could have cured his malady of meditation by consulting renowned teachers, reading and studying the old *kōans* carefully, “going beyond,” and knowing the truth or Way for himself (Ahn 2013). This, as I noted earlier, is exactly what he tried to do between the years 1710 and 1715. Why, then, was it necessary for Hakuin to claim that he had paid the hermit Hakuyū a visit? What Hakuin received from the hermit was an explanation of a technique called “inner contemplation” (*J. naikan* 内觀). This is an old term that can refer to a variety of different forms of meditation, but the hermit, or, shall I say, Hakuin, used this term to refer to the old practice of calming the mind by having it focus on something called the “cinnabar field” (*J. tanden* 丹田). As an expedient way of bringing the mind down to the cinnabar field, which is believed to be located near the abdomen, Hakuin recommends in his *Idle Talk on a Night Boat* and elsewhere something he calls the “soft butter pill” (*J. nansogan* 軟酥丸) method. Essentially, what this method entails is the practitioner imagining a ball of warm butter melting and flowing down from the top of the head into the vital organs and finally the lower parts of the body.

But how, we may ask, does this help someone battle the malady of meditation? In theory, the malady is caused by becoming fixed on false views of the unconditioned and ineffable Way such as silent illumination (which, I might add, is all too often mistaken for quietistic meditation). The problem, in other words, lies in the mind’s tendency to look for such views and reified ideas. Inner contemplation prevents the practitioner’s mind from being led astray this way by calming the mind and developing unwavering concentration. The technique is, therefore, equally effective in keeping the mind from becoming distracted by other impediments to awakening such as attachments and emotions. However, if this was all inner contemplation could do, few would have considered it novel and worthy of note. As a meditative technique for calming and concentrating the mind, inner contemplation, as anyone familiar with Buddhist meditation can readily identify, was another instance of *śamatha* or calming meditation, which was the basis of virtually all forms of seated meditation in Buddhism. There is, however, something quite novel about Hakuin’s own take on the significance and benefit of inner contemplation. Hakuin believed that inner contemplation not only fostered a sense of calm and concentration in the practitioner but also enabled her to bridge the gap between theory and practice, phenomena and Principle, and most importantly the quietude of meditation and the activity of everyday life.

The issue of how to bridge the gap between quietude and activity is actually a very old one that DAHUI Zonggao had also once tried to tackle, but the creative way in which Hakuin approached this issue is what sets him apart as a thinker. In lieu of relying solely on Buddhist sources to think through this issue, Hakuin turned to medical treatises from China, Korea, and Japan. These treatises, which had been the privy of those who belonged to a lineage of physicians for centuries, became far more accessible during the Tokugawa period thanks to the growth of the print industry and a literate community of readers who actively consumed such technical writing. Especially important for Hakuin were medical sources that were heavily influenced by the style of thought pioneered by literati physicians such as ZHU

Zhenheng 朱震亨 (1281–1358) who successfully combined traditional Chinese medical discourse and the moral philosophy of *daoxue* 道學 or Neo-Confucianism. Relying on these sources, Hakuin made claims such as the following:

An average or mediocre person invariably allows the *ki* in the heart to rise up unchecked so that it diffuses throughout the upper body. When the *ki* is allowed to rise unchecked, Fire [heart] on the left side damages the Metal [lungs] on the right side. This puts a strain on the five senses, diminishing their working, and causes harmful disturbances in the six roots. (Waddell 2009: 101–102)

This short but effective description of the workings of vital energy inside the body explains why the mind/heart (J. *kokoro* 心) tends to be led astray by the objects of the senses and thereby cause damage to the lungs. It also probably explains why Hakuin offered this uncanny description of the symptoms of his malady of meditation:

Before the month was out, my heart-fire began to rise against the natural course, parching my lungs of their essential fluid. My feet and legs were ice-cold; they felt as though they were immersed in tubs of snow. There was a continuous thrumming in my ears, as though I was walking beside a raging mountain torrent. I became abnormally weak and timid, shrinking and fearful in whatever I did. I felt totally drained, physically and mentally exhausted. Strange visions appeared to me during waking and sleeping hours alike. My armpits were always wet with perspiration. My eyes watered constantly. (Waddell 2009: 96–97)

Although we find lists of similar symptoms mentioned in earlier treatises on Buddhist meditation such as Tiantai Zhiyi's 天台智顛 (538–597) *Great Calming and Contemplation* (C. Mohe zhiguan 摩訶止觀) (T46.1911.108a22–b7), there is a crucial difference between these earlier accounts and Hakuin's own account of the malady of meditation. The key to grasping this difference resides in Hakuin's (or Hakyū's) understanding of the nature of the elements.

First, as Hakuin (or Hakyū) explains, “is by nature light and unsteady and always wants to mount upward, while Water is by nature heavy and settled and wants to flow downward” (Waddell 2009: 100). In other words, there is a *natural* tendency for the mind/heart, which corresponds to the element fire, to rise up and strain the senses. Fire tends to rise, we are also told, when it is depleted of *ki* and, needless to say, the proper way to nourish fire and thus the mind/heart is to therefore replenish its *ki* (Waddell 2009: 105). This can be done by bringing the mind down to the lower part of the body (that is, the kidneys and cinnabar field), which is likened to an “ocean of vital energy” (J. *kikai* 氣海).

As novel as this application of medical thought to Buddhist meditation may be, what is truly innovative about Hakuin's ideas about nourishing *ki* is the moral discourse that supports them. Hakuin, for instance, used the analogy of the relationship between a ruler (the mind/heart), his ministers (kidneys), and the people (cinnabar field) to speak of the practical benefits of nourishing *ki* by bringing “fire” down to the lower body:

Sustaining life is much like protecting a country. While a wise lord and sage ruler always thinks of the common people under him, a foolish lord and mediocre ruler concerns himself exclusively with the pastimes of the upper class. When a ruler becomes engrossed in his

own selfish interests, his nine ministers vaunt their power and authority, the officials under them seek special favors, and none of them gives a thought to the poverty and suffering of the people below them . . . On the other hand, when the ruler turns his attention below and focuses on the common people, his ministers and officials perform their duties simply and frugally, with the hardships and suffering of the common people always in their thoughts. As a result, farmers will have an abundance of grain, women will have an abundance of cloth. The good and the wise gather to the ruler to render him service, the provincial lords are respectful and submissive, the common people prosper, and the country grows strong. (Waddell 2009: 101)

The moral and political tone of Hakuin's (or Hakuyū's) message is unmistakable. The lord must focus on the people below; otherwise, the country will collapse. Similarly, the mind must focus on the cinnabar field below; otherwise, the body will collapse. The need to keep the mind focused on the cinnabar field was not, therefore, just a medical issue but also a moral imperative. It is, I would argue, this creative blending of meditation, medicine, morality, and politics that makes Hakuin's thoughts on the malady of meditation so different from the earlier discourses on the various illnesses or maladies of meditation.

5 Self-Regulated Labor

Hakuin made frequent use of the analogy of the “mind-as-lord” (J. *shushin* 主心) in his writings. He did so because the analogy, it seems, served several purposes. Using the analogy of the lord who cares for the people below, Hakuin, as we have seen, could argue that the mind must be made to focus on the lower part of the body. With the same analogy Hakuin could also argue that bringing the mind down into the lower part of the body will allow the practitioner to bridge the gap between quietude and activity. How so? Focusing one's mind on the cinnabar field will calm the mind and nourish *ki*, but the mind-as-lord will not therefore cease to do its duty to care for the people. In fact, the only way to do one's duty properly and behave appropriately in activity is, ironically, to nourish the mind in the tranquility and quietude of inner contemplation. Hakuin, however, was a meticulous thinker and philosopher who was clearly aware of the potential problems with this idea. As he asks in his *Idle Talk on a Night Boat*: “if I control the mind and [fix] it to a single place, would there not be stagnation of vital energy and blood? (Yoshizawa 1999–2002, 4: 126–127).

Anxieties about “stagnation” (J. *todokoori* 滞り), as SHIGEHISA Kuriyama has shown, transformed the way the body was seen and experienced during the Tokugawa (Kuriyama 1997). Among other things, the spread of this anxiety, Kuriyama argues, is related to the ethos of diligence that swept through the Tokugawa populace and, on a larger scale, to Japan's “industrious revolution” (J. *kinben kakumei* 勤勉革命) of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Elsewhere, I have also tried to show that this anxiety must also be understood against the larger backdrop of the subtle change that took place in the general attitude towards labor (J. *rō* 勞) during the Tokugawa (Ahn 2008). Simply put, it became increasingly

important to faithfully carry out one's duty or family trade, say, as a farmer, samurai, or daimyo and, more importantly, to do so in a voluntary manner. Activity and labor, as Hakuin and others from this period argued, had to be self-regulated. Failure to do so, they believed, would result in stagnation and eventually illness.

With these larger issues in mind, Hakuin quite perceptively and frankly noted that fixing the mind on the cinnabar field may lead to stagnation. However, Hakuyū reassured him that there was no need to be concerned. As an explanation, Hakuyū simply reminded Hakuin of the fact that fire tends to rise upward and must therefore be made to descend and intermingle with water (Waddell 2009: 104). He did, however, also add that fire has not one but two natures, namely the princely and the ministerial. Princely fire (J. *kunka* 君火), Hakuyū argued, is located in the mind/heart and governs quietude; ministerial fire (J. *shōka* 相火) is located in the kidneys and liver and governs activity (Yoshizawa 1999–2002, 4: 129; Waddell 2009: 104–105). Following an earlier argument made by the Chinese physician LI Zhongzi 李中粹 (1588–1655), Hakuyū also argued that when the mind/heart is depleted of *ki*, one can replenish it by making it intermingle with the kidneys, which also happens to correspond to the element water. Although it was left unexplained, what is being taken for granted here is the fact that the left kidney corresponds to water and the right one to ministerial fire (Despeux 2001: 151). When Hakuyū instructs Hakuin to have his mind/heart intermingle with the kidneys he is, in effect, instructing him to make fire intermingle with water.

Hakuyū's description of the workings of fire and water is largely drawn from earlier medical sources, which he cites by name, but his claim that princely fire governs quietude is rather novel. I have already argued elsewhere that this claim was an attempt to underscore the importance of the mind-as-lord's responsibility to regulate quietude (Ahn 2008: 199). This idea of the mind regulating quietude, however, went against the grain of more traditional theories of nourishing life, according to which life, conversely, could only be nourished if the mind/heart is governed and regulated with quietude. It is for this reason that I characterize Hakuyū or Hakuin's view of princely fire as novel.

For Hakuin, focusing the mind-as-lord on one's cinnabar field does not, therefore, entail the removal of oneself from the hustling and bustling world of everyday life. On the contrary, Hakuin believed that bringing the mind-as-lord down to the cinnabar field where it can rid itself of views and attachments in quietude is precisely how the mind could maintain a sense of mastery and control, that is, carry out its duty as the lord of the body. And cultivating this sense of self-mastery is how one can carry out the other necessary daily tasks most efficiently. This is why Hakuin could claim that one should not use the need to perform daily duties as an excuse to not practice Zen (Yampolsky 1971: 53). In fact, Hakuin will even argue that performing one's duties *is* the best way to nourish life. As he writes in his letter to the ailing Jōshōmei'in no miya 浄照明院宮 (Rishū nyo'ō 理秀女王) (1725–1764), abbess of the *monzeki* 門跡 temple Hōkyōji 寶鏡寺, and her younger sibling Jōmeishin'in no miya 浄明心院宮 (Sonjō nyo'ō 尊乘女王) (1730–1789), abbess of the *monzeki* temple Kōshōin 光照院:

Above all else, the practitioner should be weary of the malady of meditation. If even for a moment there arises the thought that the fascinating sensations [produced by] the clearing of the mind in quietude are enjoyable on account of this malady, then this is the practitioner's attachment to the taste of meditation and thus a great obstruction of the demonic realm and must therefore be abandoned. Everyday, little by little, doing the kind of work that will gradually release sweat is an exceptional form of nourishing life. It is also an expedient means of significantly enhancing the power of concentration and thereby making the mind and body strong and firm. In order to make a living, commoners everyday endure suffering and pain in their hands and feet. Among these folks there are none who possess illness such as headaches, intestinal bloating, exhaustion, and costiveness. (Yoshizawa 1999–2002, 2: 166–67)

There is no easy way of reconciling what Hakuin said here with what he said in other sources such as his *Idle Talk on a Night Boat*, but I would hazard to guess that Hakuin could make an argument for both inner contemplation and manual labor at the same time without contradicting himself because he did not regard the mind's mastery of itself and the mind's mastery of labor as separate tasks. Self-mastery—the art of nourishing life—can only be accomplished if there is no gap between activity and quietude and, conversely, the practitioner can only erase this gap if she attains self-mastery.

6 Hakuin's Political Philosophy

In addition to his writings on *kōan* Zen and the art of nourishing life, Hakuin also left behind a few writings where he articulated his views on proper governance (Matsubara 2004). His *Mutterings to the Wall* (J. *Kabezoshō* 壁訴訟), *Moxa* (J. *Sashimogusa* さし蕨草), and *Snake Strawberries* (J. *Hebūchigo* 辺鄙以知吾) are good examples for such writings. Although they were addressed to different people, the overall message of these politically charged pieces by Hakuin are very similar. In fact, certain parts of the texts are virtually identical. Here, I shall focus on *Snake Strawberries* for no other reason than the fact that it offers better clues as to how Hakuin's political message fits in with the other ideas discussed in this essay.

Snake Strawberries is the title of a relatively lengthy letter that Hakuin presented to the daimyo IKEDA Tsugumasa, the aforementioned lord of Okayama castle. The letter was first published in 1754. But, for mentioning the shogun TOKUGAWA Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1543–1616) and a book that was falsely attributed to him, the government banned the reprinting of the letter almost two decades later in 1771. The controversial letter, however, begins surprisingly with the benign and harmless praise of the miraculous benefits of reciting the *Ten Phrase Kannon Sutra for Prolonging Life* (J. *Ennmei jikku kannon gyō* 延命十句觀音經). This may seem a bit odd and out of place, but Hakuin seems to have believed that faith in compassion, which is an important theme of the scripture and the miracle stories that testify to its efficacy, was the key to good governance, self-mastery, and hence nourishing life.

Hakuin rather explicitly claims, for instance, that a good general, “[b]ecause it is his responsibility to protect the nation and bring ease to the common people, night and day without relaxing he polishes the martial arts and practices inner contemplation

and the power of faith” (Yampolsky 1971: 187). If, as he continues, one recites the *Ten Phrase Kannon Sutra for Prolonging Life* at the same time, “then by the strength of the natural overflow of the compassion of the gods and Buddhas, his military destiny will become strong, his life span long, his magnanimity broad, and his governing of the province will go as smoothly as if he were rowing a boat with the current” (Yampolsky 1971: 187). What Hakuin is trying to say here, I think, is that trying to establish a compassionate mind as master will allow one to more efficiently do one’s duty and practice inner contemplation. This, I think, is why Hakuin proceeds to describe the fate of incompetent generals in the following manner: “The clear character inherent in all is obscured and destroyed by base personal lusts and desires until the point is reached where the mind-as-master cannot be determined even for a moment” (Yampolsky 1971: 188). This also seems to be why he suggests the investigation of the word “death” (J. *shi* 死) to warriors. Only by investigating this word, Hakuin claims, will the warrior determine the mind-as-master (Yampolsky 1971: 219).

Hakuin’s political philosophy, I believe, was rooted firmly in this notion of cultivating the mind-as-master and achieving self-mastery (cf. Furuta 1991: 58–67). Only when self-mastery is achieved can the general and lord govern the people below in the proper manner. Hakuin also believed that self-mastery had to be accompanied by compassion and benevolence. These are the two virtues that he repeatedly encourages his reader(s) to cultivate in his *Snake Strawberries* and *Mutterings to the Wall*. In more practical terms, as a way of cultivating benevolence and self-mastery, Hakuin recommends frugality and moderation, above all else. This recommendation seems to have been an extension of his belief that the suffering of the people was mainly the result of the greed of tyrannical officials. A lord who keeps the company of such officials will, Hakuin contends, lose the hearts of the people and eventually bring the country to ruin. To better illustrate this point, Hakuin uses a familiar analogy. Citing an unnamed text on nourishing life, Hakuin claims that the people are like *ki*. When *ki* is depleted and exhausted, the body weakens and eventually the person dies. Similarly, when the people decline, the country falls (Yampolsky 1971: 201–202). The lord must thus be mindful of the people and the mind must be mindful of *ki*. For the lord, then, nourishing life and nourishing his country are one and the same thing.

Hakuin’s concerns about the greed of officials are not historically unfounded. In his *Snake Strawberries*, Hakuin poured scorn on the lavish spending of officials in womens’ quarters and the ostentatious Edo-bound processions of the daimyo, which were full of countless retainers, entertainers, spikes, horses, and flags (Matsubara 2004: 162). What may be at work here in these words of contempt is an even deeper contempt for the alternate residence (J. *sankin kōtai* 参勤交代) system. During the Tokugawa period, as a measure of control, daimyo were required to spend a significant portion of the year attending the shogun at Edo. The daimyo were also required to leave their wives and children behind at their permanent residences in Edo as de facto hostages. Their annual trips to Edo thus became a permanent and prominent fixture of Tokugawa life. An unintended, but perhaps inevitable, side effect of implementing the alternate residence system, however, was the tendency among daimyo to engage in a competition to display their wealth and influence in and on their way to Edo; and herein lies the source of Hakuin’s concern.

Despite Hakuin's scorn for the lavish expenditures of the daimyo, it is also true that the expenditures related to their service in Edo helped stimulate the economy (Vaporis 2008). But the economy was not what primarily motivated Hakuin to criticize daimyo spending habits. I suspect the Kyōhō famine of 1732 and the general economic conditions of peasant life, which was always at the brink of poverty, were the more important motivating factors behind his criticism of the lavish lifestyles of the daimyo. Also important was the parish system (*J. danka seido* 檀家制度) implemented by the bakufu. As FUNAOKA Makoto rightly points out, the parish system brought relative financial stability to a larger number of Buddhist temples, which only a handful of temples in Kyoto had been able to enjoy before the Tokugawa. The Buddhist temples had thus become quite dependent on their lay parishioners who, in place of the emperor and the aristocrats, had become their main source of support. Buddhist intellectuals soon turned their gaze towards the morality of everyday life that emphasized the importance of faithfully carrying out one's family trade (Funaoka 1979: 349–350). The attention that Hakuin pays to the wellbeing of peasants and commoners, as Funaoka cautiously suggests, may very well have something to do with this new socio-economic reality of Buddhism during the Tokugawa.

Needless to say, Hakuin's political philosophy, or any aspect of his philosophy for that matter, cannot be grasped with the brief analysis that I provide above. This essay, in fact, has barely scratched the surface of the large body of literature related to Hakuin. I have, for instance, not discussed the intellectual context of the "popular" tales of cause and effect composed by Hakuin, his life-long interest in and fear of hell, or his response to new bakufu policies in any detail (Funaoka 1979; Muneyama 1986; Yoshizawa 2009: 219–252). Nor have I discussed Hakuin's extensive musings on the *Lotus Sutra* or the ideas that he expressed in his art (Yanagida and Katō 1979; Tanahashi 1984; Yoshizawa 2009; Seo 2010). With respect to the study of Hakuin, there is still much that needs to be done. However, I hope what I have been able to cover in this essay was enough to encourage some readers to learn more about Hakuin and his philosophy.

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Juhn Y. Ahn is Associate Professor of Buddhist and Korean Studies at the University of Michigan. He received his PhD from the University of California, Berkeley. His research focuses on death, illness, and Buddhism in East Asia. His current research focuses on the relationship between Buddhist mortuary practices and elite identity formation in fourteenth century Korea. His most recent publication is *Buddhas and Ancestors: Religion and Wealth in Fourteenth-Century Korea* (2018).