1973

Ikkyū Sōjun: A Zen Monk and his Poetry

Sonja Arntzen

Ikkyū

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IKKYŪ SŌJUN:
A Zen Monk and his Poetry

SONJA ARNTZEN

Occasional Paper No. 4
Program in East Asian Studies
Western Washington State College
To

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Through the halo appears the whole man,
The true face of Hsu-t'ang emerges from the painting.
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Before the flowers, one song, 10,000 years of spring.

The postscript to this poem indicates that Ikkyū gave this portrait to one of his disciples named Soshin Shōetsu. Above Lady Shin's portrait, a waka in her own hand reads:

A sleep of longing,
Floating and sinking
On a transient bed,
But for tears,
There is no consolation.
PREFACE

Some eight years ago when I had just started my first course in Japanese, I heard Professor Kato Shūichi give a lecture about Ikkyū in a general survey course. Even though no translations of Ikkyū's poetry existed at that time, Professor Kato was eager to introduce his students to this unusual figure in Japanese literature, a "Japanese John Donne," as Kato described him then. I was fascinated by the lecture and approached Professor Kato afterwards with all the naive enthusiasm of a novice student in East Asian languages to inquire if I, with one year of Japanese, might be able to read Ikkyū's poems for myself. Professor Kato laughingly shook his head and told me I would have to wait before attempting such an ambitious project. Several years and a period of stay in Japan later, when I was casting about for a suitable topic for my Master's thesis, Kato reminded me of Ikkyū. The translation of Ikkyū's kambun poems has been an absorbing project for me ever since and has resulted in the present work.

The following rules have been followed with regard to technical matters. Characters are furnished for all proper names and titles at first occurrence except for those appearing in the bibliography. Personal names appear in East Asian style, i.e. surname first. Names of Chinese monks and other figures are given in Wade-Giles modern Chinese romanization. I have provided those names prominent in Japanese Buddhism with the Japanese reading in parentheses the first time they appear, after which they are referred to by the Chinese reading only. The exception to the last rule is the monk Lin-chi (Rinzai) whose name is far more famous in Japan than in China; he is referred to as Rinzai throughout the work so that the connection between the Chinese master Lin-chi and
the Rinzai sect that flourishes to this day in Japan will be clear
to the reader. Names of buddhas and bodhisattvas are given in
Japanese romanization; other Indian figures are given in Sanskrit
romanization. Buddhist terms are given in their Japanese romaniza-
tion except for Sanskrit terms that have been adopted into English.
The Japanese readings for the prose passages have been omitted for
the sake of brevity. Although I have roughly divided the trans-
lated poems into the categories of Zen, protest, and love, in many
instances these themes overlap. I have tried to place poems ac-
cording to which theme predominates.

As a basic text, I have used the Yamato Bunka Kan edition of
the Kyōunshū which consists of 1,060 poems. It is the most recent
and, to my knowledge, the only edition based on a thorough compari-
son of all existing manuscripts. I have translated fifty-six of
these poems, and readers wishing to locate them in the Yamato edi-
tion should consult the index in back of this book.

Finally I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Katō
Shuichi who first inspired me in this work and Professor Iida
Shotarō who has been my constant guide and goad throughout. I
would also like to express my appreciation to Professor Ichikawa
Hakugen of Hanazonō Daigaku in Kyoto who was kind enough to look
over and criticize my translations and whose recent book on Ikkyū
helped me immeasurably in revising the introductory section of this
work. I wish also to give my thanks to Dick Van Nostrand whose
photographical skills provided the illustrations, to my husband
for his help and encouragement and to my mother who has regularly
and uncomplainingly looked after my babe so that I might have time
to do the revisions necessary for the publication of this work.
Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

This volume presents the poet Ikkyū Sōjun (1394-1481), a Zen monk of the Rinzai school in Japan. The main body of the work consists of translations from the Kyōunshū 狂雲集 "Crazy Cloud Anthology," a collection of Ikkyū's Chinese poems. These poems touch upon many subjects, such as the whole of Zen literature, the Mahāyanā canonical texts, Japanese literature, particularly the Nō plays of Ikkyū's own time, and the classics of Chinese poetry and history. There is fairly ample biographical information about Ikkyū but very little textual criticism and commentary. This relative lack is basically due to the very subjective nature of the poetry itself. Ikkyū's originality tends to make for obscurity, and elucidation becomes a thorny problem indeed. Thus it is no wonder that even in Japan few scholars have attempted to write commentaries for these poems. To my knowledge, this is the first attempt at translating into English and commenting on a sizeable number of poems from the Kyōunshū. My translations, however, have suffered both from the inherent difficulty of the poetry and the lack of textual commentary to rely on. Consequently, my translations of many poems must be regarded as only tentative.

Ikkyū's poetry is of special interest because it is so unusual within the context of traditional Japanese poetry. Japanese poetry has been conventionally associated with a contemplative appreciation of nature, delicate and restrained emotions, suggestion rather than statement, and a subtle sense of nuance, qualities which are rather constant throughout the development of the uta 詩歌, renga 连歌 and haiku 俳句. It is thus with some interest
that one greets a poet like Ikkyū in whose poetry very different qualities are present. Ikkyū's poems seldom seem to be the product of quiet reflection; his poems have the quality of being written in the heat of the moment; he boldly expresses strong emotions, defiance, anger, passion, remorse, love. Ikkyū often surprises us with expressions that go against the poetic conventions of his time. The "wind in the pines" has always been considered to be "musical" in traditional Japanese poetry, but Ikkyū says it "grates upon my ears." Again, in traditional Japanese poetry, almost all love poems deal either with the expectant aspect of love, waiting for a lover, longing for a lover, the sad aspect of love, enforced parting, or rejection. By contrast, many of Ikkyū's poems exalt consummated and fulfilled love. Because of his erudition, Ikkyū's poetry also tends to be quite intellectual; many poems would lean toward the extremely abstract, were it not for his strong personal voice which is ever-present. In short, Ikkyū's poetry is very individualistic in a culture which has never set a high store on individuality. Thus Ikkyū adds a new dimension to our conception of Japanese poetry.

Ikkyū is well known as a colorful figure in Japanese history. Legends that grew up around "Ikkyū san" in the Tokugawa period have been passed on to succeeding generations for entertainment's sake so that even today almost everyone knows at least one amusing anecdote about this eccentric monk. Very few people, however, know about Ikkyū's poetry.

There are two main reasons for Ikkyū's obscurity as a poet. The first reason is that due to the high number of poems about love-making, brothels and sake shops, the Kyōunshū, in particular, was kept as a restricted manuscript until very recent times. The second reason is that he wrote his most important work in kambun, that is Chinese. It may seem odd that a Japanese writer should choose to write in Chinese rather than his native tongue but historical explanations will make this appear less so.
Japan had no system of writing before contact with China, thus it was only natural that people should learn to write in Chinese, indeed, at the time of the first contact, the ability to read and write Chinese constituted the only literate education possible. Even after a phonetic system of writing had evolved from the use of Chinese characters, still a greater part of any person's education consisted of learning to read and write Chinese. This was true right up to the Tokugawa period. Thus, a great number of Japan's gifted and intelligent men wrote in Chinese. This was particularly true in the Buddhist community. It will be remembered that the first contacts between China and Japan were through the medium of Buddhist missionaries and for many centuries Buddhism remained the vehicle for bringing Chinese learning to Japan. In the Tokugawa period, however, a movement against Chinese language and learning gathered momentum with the great scholar Motoori Norinaga. He was the first scholar in Japan to apply himself to things purely Japanese, his great work being the elucidation of the earliest Japanese history, the Kojiki, on the basis of which he drew conclusions about Japanese language and Japanese sensibility. He too was the first to claim the uta or waka and its related forms as the only true Japanese poetry, all the poetry written in Chinese being only imitations. He also criticized Buddhism for being a Chinese religion and thus unsuitable for the Japanese soul which found its true fulfillment in Shinto. These ideas caught on and spread quickly, especially when Japanese identity was newly threatened by confrontation with the West. Thus, by the time Western scholars became interested in Japanese literature, it was a firmly entrenched idea that the only true Japanese literature was that written in Japanese. In poetry, this meant the uta, renga and haiku. So it is that the overwhelming number of translations of Japanese poetry into Western languages has been of these forms. This, coupled with the decline among Japanese people of the ability to read Chinese after the
opening to the West and the necessary rush to acquire Western learning, has removed the enormous store of Japanese literature written in Chinese farther and farther away from the reach of most people in Japan as well as in the West. Western interest in Zen and other forms of Buddhism has, however, initiated some work in the rediscovery of kambun literature. Such is the case with the present work, for it was my own interest in Zen and Buddhism in general that led me to choose Ikkyū's poems as a subject for translation.

It should be noted here that Ikkyū did not write all his work in Chinese. There is much material in Japanese attributed to him, and while some of it may be spurious, much of it is probably Ikkyū's. Among the kana (written in Japanese syllabic script) works attributed to Ikkyū in the Bussho Kaisetsu Daijiten are Gaikotsu 骸骨, Mizu Kagami 水鏡, Futari Hibikuni 二人比丘尼, Ikkyū Kana Hōgo 一体假名法語, and Ikkyū Dōka 一体道歌. The subject of all these works is, of course, Zen. Ichikawa Hakugen says that "although kana works on Zen were not few before Ikkyū, he must be recognized as the master of the popularization of Zen [through kana works]." As the elucidation of Ikkyū's kana writings is a whole subject in itself, I have limited myself to these brief remarks. The reader may refer to the section in Ichikawa's book Ikkyū that deals with Ikkyū's idea of Zen as revealed in his kana works.
Ikkyū was born in 1394, two years after the final settlement of the dispute between the Northern and Southern courts, and he died in 1481, shortly after the end of the Ōnin War (1467-1477). He lived during one of Japan's most turbulent periods that saw disorder in the Eastern provinces, the assassination of the shogun Yoshinori, the various agrarian and other uprisings, the natural disasters of the years 1459-1462, and finally the Ōnin War which reduced nearly all of Kyoto to ashes. The Japanese have traditionally regarded the Muromachi period, during the latter half of which Ikkyū lived, as a lamentable time in their history. The Ashikaga shoguns were never able to establish as strong a regime as the Kamakura bakufu that preceded them. The first half of their era was dogged by disputes about succession to the imperial throne; the second half was plagued by succession disputes within the great warrior clans. The succession disputes within the clans led to the Ōnin War which put an end to the effective power of the Ashikaga.

The Ashikaga bakufu was from the beginning in a weak financial position. Its landholdings were irregular and scattered and the income from them was never sufficient to meet government expenses. To compensate for this deficit, the bakufu began from the time of shogun Yoshimitsu (1358-1408) to rely heavily on taxes derived from the flourishing commercial enterprises of sake brewing and pawnbroking. The taxes collected from these sources were substantial, but they could never provide the solid security that extensive consolidated landholdings would have. Furthermore, the
shōguns began to levy taxes on these commercial concerns in an arbitrary and predatory way. Yoshimasa (1435-1490) increased the rate of paying "emergency taxes" on breweries and pawn-brokers from several times a year to several times a month. These actions tended to wreak havoc in the commercial community and thus seriously impeded the very business upon which the government depended. Paul Varley in his book on the Ōnin War suggests that one reason why the Ashikaga clan was able to maintain power so long in spite of military and financial weakness was the charismatic power it derived from bringing itself into intimate association with the imperial household, a policy initiated by the politically astute Yoshimitsu.

In contrast to the Kamakura shōguns who remained aloof from the imperial court and avoided its effete influence, the Ashikaga shōguns, especially Yoshimitsu and Yoshimasa, were eager to accept high court appointments and enthusiastically cultivated the arts of the court. They became typical of a kind of aesthetic warrior, well versed in and actively patronizing poetry and the arts. Indeed, Yoshimasa, aesthete and dilettante par excellence, relinquished the warrior role entirely. Hand in hand with these refined tendencies went a taste for extravagance. Both Yoshimitsu and Yoshimasa were renowned for their immoderate building projects. Two of their creations, the Kinkakuji (Golden Pavilion) and the Ginkakuji (Silver Pavilion) built by Yoshimitsu and Yoshimasa respectively, are famous to this day. Their wastefulness strained the already weak financial base of the regime and set an example for ostentatious behavior among their retainers. The retainers, in order to raise the cash to live up to the fashion of the day, mercilessly exploited the peasants in their domains. Thus the age was characterized by gross extravagance on the part of the ruling classes and abject misery among the lower classes.
A contemporary diary of the time, the Hekizan Nichiroku vividly recounts an example of the contrast between rich and poor.

When the sun went down I set out for home, and as I passed through Rokujo I saw an old woman cradling a child in her arms. After calling the child's name over and over, she finally ceased and began to wail. I looked closely and saw that the child was already dead. The woman fell over onto the ground in lamentation and passers-by inquired of her origins.

"I am a homeless wanderer from Kawachi," she replied. "The drought there has lasted three years and the young rice plants no longer sprout. Officials perpetrate excesses and taxes are collected, but not a penny is lent out. If I had not left I would have met my death. Therefore I had no choice but to go to another province to seek food from others and to beg. As it is, I have not been able to provide for this child and now it has come to this."

She began to wail again with great sobs. I took out the spare alms money I had and gave it to her, saying, "Take this money and hire someone to bury the child. I will return now and conduct a service to provide him with a Buddhist name and to pray for his salvation in the next world." The mother was very pleased with my words.

While still in a mood of sorrow over this experience, I came across a group of lords out viewing flowers. They numbered more than a thousand on horse and a myriad others in carriages. One could not cope with a force of that size. They looked down haughtily on pedestrians and railed at the soldiers in front of their horses. They were in a frolicsome mood, stealing flowers, and some had drawn their swords and were singing drinking songs. Others, who had vomited and were unable to walk further, were lying on the road. There were many such incidents occurring. Those who were witness to these happenings shuddered, while others coming upon the scene withdrew in surprise. They feared the powerful.
This entry was made in the year 1460, the same year when 80,000 people died in Kyoto. The years from 1459 to 1462 were plagued by droughts in early spring, deluges bringing pestilence in their wakes in late springs and summers, and typhoons with more flooding in autumns. Almost no measures were taken during this time by the shōgun Yoshimasa to alleviate the distress of the peasants beyond asking the temples to pray for better weather and conduct services for the souls of the dead. Most large temples turned a blind eye to the suffering as well. Meanwhile, Yoshimasa continued his lavish refurbishing of the shōgunal palace Hana no gosho 花の御所, and began building a new palace for his mother.

The peasants, however, were not always willing to submit quietly to such mistreatment. When strain became unbearable, many peasants banded together in uprisings, their most frequent demand being for 德政 (Act of Grace), which meant the cancellation of debts. In this demand, they were often joined by samurai of the lower ranks and many townspeople who also suffered at the hands of the usurers. Yoshimasa often appeased these uprisings with the declaration of 德政, at first because he was interested in having his own debts with the usurers cancelled and later because a complicated system of percentage 德政 had been worked out that actually increased the bakufu's income. These wholesale cancellations resulted in financial chaos among the brokers who, in order to make up for their losses, responded with still higher interest rates and stiffer loan standards. Consequently, 德政 had the unfortunate effect of making the poor still poorer.

Ikkyū wrote a perceptive poem about 德政:

Robbers never strike poor houses.
One man's wealth is not wealth for the whole country.
I believe calamity has its origin in good fortune.
You lose your soul over 100,000 pieces of copper.
Ikkyū addressed the wealthy brokers who must have felt robbed everytime the mob demanded *tokusei* and got it. Ikkyū reminded them that the cause of their misfortune was none other than their own opulence; they had too much while others had too little. He warned them about losing their souls out of greed. No doubt few brokers had receptive ears for such admonitions.

Judging from this description of the Muromachi period, the reader might well concur with the traditional opinion that it was a regrettable period. Yet, when one looks to its art and literature, the Muromachi period was anything but regrettable. So many of the artistic masterpieces for which Japan is justly famous—the ink paintings of Sesshū 雪舟 and Sesson 雪村, the stone and sand gardens of Ryōanji 龍安寺 and Daisenin 大仙院, superb edifices such as those in the Tofuku 東福 temple compound—were created during this time. The *No*能 and the *Kyōgen*狂言 were outstanding new developments in theater. Innovative linked verse and the Chinese poetry of the Gozan school were important literary contributions of the time. Traditional historians did not ignore these cultural achievements, indeed they seized upon them as the only redeeming feature of the age. However, as the modern Japanese historian Nagahara Keiji has aptly pointed out, these two facets of the period, political degeneracy and brilliant cultural achievements, cannot be regarded as separate entities. They must be recognized as interwoven parts of one unit.

The traditionally pejorative view of the period is based on the Confucian ideal of political order which sees a wise and virtuous ruler at the top inspiring all below to obedient devotion and benevolently directing constructive activity. Ideally, this pattern is to be duplicated in every family throughout the land with the father as ruler. One of the main reasons why the Muromachi period was regarded as a time of utter lawlessness and degeneracy is because it was a time of *gekokujo* 下剋上 "those below overthrowing those above," the worst a country could come to. Nagahara opposes the traditional view. He suggests that initiative
for change coming from the people is a good thing; that the Muromachi period was in fact a great "people's age" and hence a period of cultural brilliance. While this may be a slightly exaggerated viewpoint, there is no doubt that disorder and weakness on the part of a military dictatorship, which the bakufu unquestionably was, does make for more individual freedom, since robust military dictatorships tend to be very repressive. And individual freedom appears to be related to advances in the arts.

At any rate, progress was not restricted to the arts. Commercial development, centered in the cities of Kyoto and Sakai, and the beginning of a transition to a money economy must be regarded as positive elements of the time. They resulted in greater variety and wider distribution of goods and provided more opportunities for upward mobility among the lower classes. This economic development had its roots in the overall increase of agricultural production during the period. The peasants, hard pressed by the necessity to meet ever-increasing taxes responded with amazing ingenuity. Double and triple cropping, reservoirs and irrigation systems, fertilizing with nightsoil and ashes, were some of their innovations.

Even the peasant uprisings can be regarded as a positive development. They represented a confidence in the power of independent united action against corrupt authority. Many of them, like the Yamashiro 山城 uprising, were well organized and their results went beyond the cancellation of debts. Some communities achieved a surprising degree of autonomy; the village of Suganoura 萩の浦, for example, controlled its own affairs for over a century.

As I mentioned earlier, Ikkyu was a monk of the Rinzai sect. Most of his poems deal with Rinzai Zen as a religion or philosophy, but quite a few poems describe the decadence of the Rinzai sect as a religious institution. We shall, therefore, offer a brief sketch of the Rinzai school's religious decline during the Muromachi period.
Rinzai Zen was introduced to Japan during the Kamakura period and rose quickly to great prominence. The Muromachi period was the zenith of the Rinzai sect's wealth, political power and social influence in Japan. It was also the nadir of its ethical purity and philosophical discipline. The old axiom that power and wealth inevitably corrupt seems to be proven true again in this instance.

The great wealth of the Rinzai sect came from several sources. Like all the other well-established sects of Buddhism, it had extensive landholdings which the bakufu had granted. Another source was donations from its followers. Still another, and for the Western reader a somewhat surprising, source of income was interests the sect held in sake brewing and pawnbroking concerns. The precedent, however, for temple involvement in pawnbrokerages had been set in China. The original ideal had been a pawnbrokerage acting as a kind of credit union by using the surplus from offerings of the faithful for helping the needy. Unfortunately, the original motivation was quickly forgotten in China as well as Japan, and profits were sent after more profits and eventually back into the coffers of the temple where they were used for the aggrandizement of the institution. Still another source of income for the Rinzai sect was a share of the lucrative profits from trade with Ming China, a venture in which Rinzai prelates became involved through their contacts with "base" temples in China. We may assume that more monks went to China at this time to engage in shrewd business deals than to keep alive the lines of transmission of Zen.

Wealth and political influence went hand in hand. It appears that the Rinzai sect was intimately involved in the financial affairs of the bakufu. Nagahara remarks, for example, that in 1447 many Zen monks were members of a select group directing bakufu revenue policy. The political power of some individual Zen monks was astounding. Shinzui, a monk of the Shokokuji, stood out as a monk with overwhelming political influence. He was the personal confidant of the shōgun Yoshimasa and meddled in nearly every affair of the day. The Chronicle of
Onin singles him out as a prime recipient of bribes in the government. As can be imagined, when temple offices meant so much in terms of wealth and power, it was not long before those offices themselves became objects for barter. It appears that by the end of the Muromachi period, temple offices were sold openly. Unscrupulous monks, capitalizing on the increasing interest in Zen at all levels of society, indulged in lucrative practices such as selling "seals of enlightenment" and "secret answers to kōan." Without a doubt, the worst aspect of the degeneration of the Rinzai sect was this commercialization which transformed Zen into a saleable commodity, the motivation being simple greed and lust for power. Out of greed, the Rinzai temples exploited the peasants on their domains as unmercifully as anyone else and then, as backers in the shadow of usurers, squeezed still more profit from the people. Thus, they must also be held partly responsible for the peasant and tokusei uprisings.

All this was disastrous to the moral fiber of the sect whose ethics, like those of all other Buddhist sects, were based on voluntary poverty and compassion toward all sentient beings. The overt symptoms of this moral degeneration were extravagant debauches within the monasteries, the secret keeping of concubines, and open pederasty. It was under such deplorable conditions that Ikkyū Sōjun lived.

There are three main sources for Ikkyū's biography. The first and, of course, the most reliable is his own writing, particularly his two collections of Chinese poetry, the Kyōunshū and the Jikaishū 自戒集. The poems in these collections contain information about Ikkyū's life, and many of the poems are accompanied by diary-like descriptions of the circumstances surrounding their composition.

The second source is two biographies written not long after Ikkyū's death, the Ikkyū oshō gyōjitsu (Deeds of Ikkyū) and the
Ikkyū oshō nempu (A Year-to-Year Record of Ikkyū). The former appears to be an abbreviated version of the latter; their information about the same events is virtually identical. They comprise the traditional biography of Ikkyū, that is, the biographical information about him which has been "handed down." Both are written in a cumbersome formal style of kambun which makes for laborious reading. It is impossible to estimate their accuracy although the closeness of their time of composition to Ikkyū himself inclines one to a positive opinion of their accuracy. Also, when it is a case of an event described both by Ikkyū and the Nempu, there are no glaring discrepancies. Errors of omission are a key to the bias of the traditional biography. For example, no mention is made in the Nempu or the Gyōjitsu of Ikkyū going to sake shops and brothels or of his affair with the blind woman Shin, two topics that often appear in his poems. We may assume that the main concern of the compilers of the traditional biography was to transmit for posterity the story of a famous and revered monk and so they emphasized episodes of Ikkyū's life that were conventionally acceptable.

The third source of biographical information is the many "tales of Ikkyū" (Ikkyū banashi 話, Ikkyū monogatari 物語) that were so energetically created by Tokugawa 徳川 writers. These popular stories, range from the highly literary and informative to the banal. The writers of these tales generally portray Ikkyū as a sharp-witted and free-spirited rascal, always ready to make fun of empty ceremony and haughty charlatans. Favorite themes for these stories are Ikkyū as a witty child getting the best of all the adults around him, Ikkyū in the brothels, Ikkyū traveling footloose and fancy-free. Most of these tales tell us little about Ikkyū and rather more about the Tokugawa authors themselves, but they should not be entirely ignored. They express the iconoclastic spirit of Ikkyū as it was passed on to succeeding generations. Also, I know of several instances where a tale has been woven around a poem from the Kyōunshō, indicating a high degree of
familiarity with primary material on the part of some of these authors. While the best of these tales may be pure fabrication from the point of view of historical fact, they nevertheless manage to convey the essence of some aspects of Ikkyū's personality. The task, however, of separating the wheat from the chaff in these tales of Ikkyū is not an easy one. I have decided, therefore, for simplicity's sake, to draw only on material from the first two sources, that is, Ikkyū's own writings and the traditional biography.

The traditional biography relates that Ikkyū was born on the first day of the first month of the first year of Ōei (1394). He is said to have been the secret child of the emperor Go Komatsu. Ikkyū's mother, a member of the Fujiwara clan, was favored by the emperor. The jealous empress, however, slandered her by accusing her of sympathizing with the southern court and had her banished to a lower class dwelling in Kyoto where Ikkyū was born. At the age of six, Ikkyū was sent to the Ankokuji in Kyoto. When he was thirteen, he began to study the composition of Chinese poems, writing one poem every day. He became so good at it that at the age of fifteen he composed a poem that was widely known and recited. When Ikkyū was sixteen, he was supposedly in the company of some young monks who were avidly arguing the merits of their various family backgrounds. Ikkyū covered his ears and left the hall. He wrote two poems about the episode to show to his master. One of the poems said:

While explaining the Dharma and discussing Zen, they raise up their family names; A shameful word, I listen aghast. In discussion, if you don't know what's really up and down, Arguing about who's better than who just increases ignorance.
We can see from this episode that Ikkyū had from his youth a very low opinion of monks who were fond of status. Another characteristic of Ikkyū's revealed here is a disposition to frank criticism of anything he thought was wrong. At the age of seventeen, he took his first real master, Kenō, with whom he lived and studied for four years until the latter's death. Kenō had no "seal of transmission" or proof of his enlightenment, and so did not give one to Ikkyū, although he is reputed to have said that he had no more to teach him. It is interesting that Kenō had no "seal of transmission" at a time when "seals of transmission" were easily bought and sold. This virtually proves that Kenō was an unorthodox master. The Nempu remarks that Kenō was renowned for his extreme modesty, whence the meaning of his name, "Modest Old Man." When Kenō died, there was not even money for a proper funeral. This was in sharp contrast to the ostentatious prosperity of most Zen monks.

Ikkyū was very grieved by the loss of such a fine master. He went to pray at the Ishiyama 石山 temple but, finding no consolation, resolved to drown himself in Lake Biwa. As he was making his way to the lake, however, a servant from his mother's household caught up with him to tell him that his mother was very ill, so he returned to the capital to visit her.

Diverted from committing suicide, Ikkyū set out for the hermitage of the master Kasō Sōdon 華翁宗曄 (d. 1428), who was renowned for his severity. Here again, we find Ikkyū choosing an unusual teacher. Kasō was a master of a line of teaching within the Rinzai sect that came down from the Chinese master Sung-yūan Ch'ung-yo 松源崇岳 (Matsugen Sōgaku, d. 1209) through Hsü-t'ang Chih-yu 虚堂智愚 (Kidō Chīgu, 1184-1269) to the Japanese master Daitō Myōchō 大燈妙超 (1281-1337), founder of the Daitokuji temple. This school encouraged rigorous discipline and maintained its vigor while other schools languished. It is the
same school to which the famous Tokugawa Zen master Hakuin (1686-1769) claimed himself heir and revivifier hundreds of years later. And since most modern Zen masters trace their lineage to Hakuin, it is really the only remaining school of Rinzai Zen. The Daitokuji itself has a special place in the Rinzai sect for it was the only temple to resist absorption, for some time at least, into the gozanjussatsu temple system (a system of ranking temples that had been borrowed from Sung China) which particularly during the Muromachi period served to bring the interests of temple and state still closer together. Kasō was heir to the teachings of the Daitokuji masters, but he did not reside at Daitokuji. He preferred a smaller temple in Katada, a tough, prosperous mercantile town on the shores of Lake Biwa. There he led his disciples in the ways of strict discipline and pure poverty at variance with the current trends.

The story of Ikkyū's acceptance by Kasō demonstrates the harsh nature of his new master. Ikkyū arrived at Katada and waited outside Kasō's gate for five days while Kasō ignored his presence. Finally, one day, while on his way to a ceremony in the village, he looked at Ikkyū and said to his attendants, "Is that monk still here? Throw some water on his head and chase him away." This was carried out, but when Kasō returned, Ikkyū was still there. So Kasō relented and agreed to take him as a disciple.

Kasō's rigorous discipline kept Ikkyū busy day and night. Ikkyū was so poor that he had to go down to the capital from time to time to get spare work making incense sachets in order to get money for food and warm clothes.

When he was twenty-five, Ikkyū, upon hearing someone singing a song from the Heike monogatari, suddenly grasped a famous koan. At this point, Kasō gave Ikkyū his name who until then had been known as Shūken. At the age of twenty-seven and after ten years of
conscientiously seeking enlightenment, Ikkyū was meditating one night in May in a boat on the lake when he heard a crow call out and was immediately enlightened. He hurried to Kasō to have him witness his enlightenment, but Kasō said, "This is just the enlightenment of an arhat, you are not a real master yet." Ikkyū said, "Then I am happy to be an arhat, I just detest masters." "Now you are a real master," said Kasō. Ikkyū allegedly wrote this poem to commemorate the event:

For ten years, a mind beclouded with egotism,
Raging and angry, the time is now!
The crow laughs, I leave the dust and end up an arhat.
Brilliant sun, in the shadow a jeweled face sings.

After his enlightenment Ikkyū stayed close to Katada to attend to Kasō's illness. Kasō was afflicted in his later years by paralysis of the lower limbs and had to be carried from place to place. In 1423, Ikkyū accompanied Kasō to an anniversary ceremony at Daitokuji. Everyone at Daitokuji was dressed to suit the pomp and splendor of the occasion except Ikkyū who was wearing his usual black habit and worn-out straw sandals. Kasō turned to him and said, "Why aren't you more dignified?" Ikkyū replied, "I am the only one who makes the crowd colorful." Also around this time, someone came to ask Kasō, "Who will maintain the dharma a hundred years after you?" Kasō said, "Although you say he's crazy, it will be Ikkyū." Ikkyū often referred to himself as crazy, in fact, he gave himself the nickname Kyōun "Crazy Cloud," whence the Kyōunshū. This, however, is the only recorded instance of other people calling him crazy. Kasō died when Ikkyū was thirty-five. After the funeral ceremony, Kasō's disciples scattered; Ikkyū returned to Kyoto.

Thus released from filial duties to his master, Ikkyū began a round of traveling that lasted most of his life. This is not to say he was moving every day for he had semi-permanent dwellings at
several places in the Kansai region, but he never settled in one place for any length of time. The traditional record does not give a detailed account of where he went and how long he stayed but mentions only some events. At the age of forty-two, for example, Ikkyū is reported to have been walking the streets of Sakai, the present-day Osaka, with a wooden sword strapped to his side. People stopped and asked him, "Swords are for killing people. What's a sword like that for?" Ikkyū replied, "When this sword is in the sheath, it resembles a real sword, but when I draw it, it is only a piece of wood, no good for killing anything. Nowadays, monks are just like that. They look knowledgeable, but when you draw them out in conversation, you find that they know nothing. They have no knowledge to help a person die, let alone to help him live."37

It must have been during this period, his early and late middle age, that Ikkyū habituated the sake shops and brothels mentioned so often in the Kyōunshū. He did not, however, spend all his time in the city. He had an isolated hermitage in the mountains at Jōō to which he often retreated. One of Ikkyū's poems begins, "In the morning the mountains, in the evening the city," expressing his peripatetic relationship with town and country. He also had a hermitage in the Muromachi section of Kyoto called Katsuroan (Blind Donkey Hermitage). Sometimes he also lived within the precincts of Daitokuji.

He disliked, however, long periods at the Daitokuji because of the presence of a monk named Yōsō Sōi (1376-1459), another disciple of Kasō's, who was twenty years Ikkyū's senior. Yōsō inherited the headship of Daitokuji because he was Kasō's senior heir. Despite the close relationship they had as fellow disciples of the same master, the two men seemed to have nothing but animosity for each other. For Ikkyū, Yōsō epitomized the false and deceitful monk who sold the dharma for fame and fortune. Ikkyū called Yōsō and his successor Shunbo Sōki...
poisonous snakes, robbers and fakes. A long passage in the *Jikaishu* vividly describes Yōsō dying of leprosy. As far as we know Yōsō did not die of leprosy; this is merely a death Ikkyū wished on him. Reading only Ikkyū's side of the story, we do not know how justified his opinion of Yōsō was. Perhaps Yōsō was simply a worldly monk who thought it natural to have great ambitions for his temple and who regarded Ikkyū as an eccentric puritan.

An incident recorded in the *Nempu* typifies the enmity between them. The occasion was their master Kasō's thirteenth death anniversary in 1441. Upon the request of temple elders, Ikkyū had taken up residence at Nyoian in Daitokuji a week earlier. Yōsō, being head of the temple, had arranged the ceremony and had especially invited certain wealthy merchants from Sakai with the hope of receiving a large donation for the temple. Ikkyū was disgusted by their noisy and obnoxious behavior. Two days later Ikkyū stuck this poem up on the temple wall:

> Everyday things put in the cottage,  
> A wooden ladle and bamboo basket hanging on  
> the east wall.  
> I do not even need utensils like that.  
> I have spent many years traveling all over the  
> world with straw raincoat and hat.

He left another poem addressed to Yōsō declaring officially that he was leaving the temple.

> After dwelling ten days in the temple, my mind  
> is spinning.  
> Under my feet the red thread of passion is  
> very long.  
> If you come tomorrow and ask for me,  
> I will be in a fish or sake shop or else a  
> brothel.

With that Ikkyū gathered up his raincoat and hat and left. It is interesting that the second of these poems is not given in the *Nempu* although the first one is. It may have been omitted because of its mentioning sake shops and brothels.
Ikkyū's sorrowful indignation about the degeneracy of the Rinzai Zen sect is expressed in an episode concerning the final destruction of his own "seal of enlightenment." Ikkyū, it will be remembered, was enlightened in his twenty-seventh year. At that time Kasō wrote him a seal or document witnessing that fact. The document read "If Rinzai's Zen should fall to the ground, you will go forth into the world and raise it up again. You are my only child. Remember it, think of it." It is recorded that he tried to give it to Ikkyū not long after his enlightenment, but Ikkyū "threw it on the ground, wiped his sleeves [a gesture indicating he would have nothing further to do with it] and left." Kasō then entrusted it to a woman of the Tachibana family, telling her, "His confidence is immeasurable. Wait until he is somewhat humbled and the time is ripe, then give it to him." She, in turn, passed it on to a minister of the imperial court for safekeeping. When Ikkyū was forty-four, he stayed with this minister for a short time. One day he is said to have been feeling low. He described what was troubling him, saying, "Nowadays, the Buddha's Dharma is muddy and confused, there is no one endowed with a clear eye. No one distinguishes between the dragons and the snakes [i.e., superior and inferior people]. True and false are mixed up. When disciples get hold of a piece of paper, they all say, 'Oh, I am the heir to so-and-so's Dharma.' They are all tangled up like rope. Should not someone caution against the errors of these false disciples." He then ordered the minister to bring him his "piece of paper." He tore it to pieces and burned it.

Ikkyū's relationship with the imperial court was always very close. The emperors Go Komatsu and Hanazono often invited Ikkyū to discuss Zen. In 1448, when Ikkyū was fifty-four, an affair at Daitokuji made him resolve to fast to death. This event is described in Chapter IV. Suffice it to say here that it involved slanderous accusations and temple intrigue. Ikkyū fled in a fit
of despair to Mount Jōō and planned to fast to death. An imperial edict was issued to dissuade him from this endeavor. The edict said, "If the revered monk does this, Buddha's way, the king's way will perish. How can the master cast us aside like this! How can the master forget his country like this!" This edict clearly shows the high esteem in which the emperor held Ikkyū and the close personal connection between Ikkyū and the court.

In his later years, Ikkyū witnessed the natural disasters and mass starvation of the Chōroku years (1457-1460). Although he himself passed unscathed through these difficult times, several poems he wrote about the famine that indicated how deeply he was moved by it. When the Ōnin war broke out, Ikkyū, now seventy, was at Katsuroan in Kyōtō. He left the city to take refuge at the Shūonan of Takigi, a small temple that he had been frequenting for a few years. Not long after his departure from Kyōtō, Katsuroan was burned in the military action. Takigi remained quiet for two years but eventually soldiers swept into that area as well. Ikkyū was forced to flee again and he continued to move around for the next few years.

In 1471, when Ikkyū was seventy-seven, we notice the first dated reference to the blind woman Shin. It is not clear whether he had met her before. Except for Ikkyū's poems and one portrait of her and Ikkyū together, almost nothing is known about Shin, but it is fairly certain that she was some kind of attendant to the Shūonan temple. In 1471, the country was still in the midst of disorder; so the years they had together must have been spent running from the war. Information in two of Ikkyū's poems seems to indicate that Shin died before Ikkyū. The reader may turn to the translations of the poems Ikkyū wrote about his love for Shin for a description of their relationship. There is something quite touching and at the same time droll about a man of Ikkyū's age and a Zen monk at that, falling in love.
At the age of eighty-two, Ikkyū was called upon to assume the headship of Daitokuji. The poem he wrote on the day he assumed his post eloquently describes his feelings about receiving this honor:

Daitō's school destroyed his remaining light,
Difficult to explain singing in the heart, one
night's eternity.
For fifty years a fellow of straw rain hat and coat
Shameful today, a purple-robed monk.

Having been a renegade for most of his life, Ikkyū must have felt odd taking up such a dignified and lofty position in an institution he had criticized for so many years. But Daitokuji was in great difficulty, its buildings burned to the ground during the war; thus Ikkyū gained not only an eminent position but also an opportunity to be of great help. In the next few years he is supposed to have exhausted himself with helping in the reconstruction, ironically enough by gathering donations.

Even after he was made head, Ikkyū never lived for long periods at Daitokuji. His beloved Shūonan at Takigi was his home during his last years. He finally died there in 1482 at the age of eighty-eight. This is one of his best known departing poems:

South of Mount Sumeru,
Who meets my Zen?
Even if Hsü-t'ang comes,
He's not worth half a penny.

Hsü-t'ang was one of the patriarchs of the line of Rinzai teaching that Ikkyū subscribed to. Ikkyū often signed himself as Hsü-t'ang's seventh generation. He also wrote many poems praising Hsü-t'ang. Zen masters about to die characteristically assumed a stance of utter confidence like a warrior going off to war. Ikkyū's poem is typical of this kind of bravado. A copy of this poem, written in Ikkyū's own bold calligraphy, remains at the Shinjūan in Daitokuji.
Chapter III

POEMS ABOUT ZEN

Most of Ikkyū's poems are about Zen. Zen is a religion that eschews iconography and written doctrine. It bases itself on "wordless transmission" of the truth or "silent pointing." Yet, despite this rejection of the written word, it managed to accumulate a vast literature. The goroku or "words" of the old masters with the commentaries of later masters make up a substantial part of the literature. The collections of kōan (Zen meditation problems) with their commentaries are another part. The Zen masters never gave up studying the sūtras either, so those of fundamental importance to Zen, like the Lankāvatāra Sūtra, must also be included in the literature of the sect.

The old masters, committed to the wordless truth yet forever trapped into using words, often resorted to using words in a completely illogical way so that words, in effect, cancelled one another out. At that point, the inquirer was left with "the great ball of doubt" or sudden illumination of the truth beyond words or a realization of the buddha nature in all things. An example of this is the famous kōan about Chao-chou (Jōshū, d. 897) saying no. Someone asked Chao-chou, "Does a dog have buddha nature?" Orthodox doctrine called for an affirmative answer, but Chao-chou said no. The old masters also liked to avoid words by answering questions with a gesture, sometimes a shout, often a blow. Lin-chi (Rinzai, d. 866), the patriarch of the Rinzai sect, was sent by his master Huang-po (Obaku, d. 850) to another master, a mountain recluse, for instruction. Rinzai went twice to see him, but each time the master chased him away with a stick. Each time he returned to Huang-po who said, "Oh, he is being very kind to
you, you owe him a great favor." When Rinzai went back a third time, the master came to greet him with the stick but before he could strike a blow, Rinzai grabbed the stick out of his hand and gave him a few whacks. The master nodded his head and said, "I have been living on this mountain all alone and I wondered if I could live my whole life without falling to the stick. Now, today, you did it." Rinzai was enlightened by this event. Many of Ikkyū's poems revolve around these anecdotes of the patriarchs, others are based on their verbal teachings, still others present his own original thought.

Lin-chí I-hsüan (Rinzai Gigen) was one of the great Zen masters of the T'ang dynasty and founder of the Rinzai sect of Zen which is still flourishing. The Zen sect became wealthier and more powerful later under the Sung, but it never recaptured the spiritual vigor it possessed during the T'ang period. Their following may have been relatively small but never before or after were there so many robust and forthright masters. Among these, Rinzai stands out as one of the most vital and original. He is best known for shouting in order to catch his students at the right moment and push them to new realms of consciousness. His verbal teachings and records of encounters with inquiring monks are preserved in the Lin-chí lu (Rinzai Roku) which has only recently been translated into a Western language. It is written, like most of the other Zen literature of the T'ang, in the colloquial language of the day. Rinzai speaks in a lively manner, sometimes delightfully vulgar.

Going up in the hall, Rinzai said, "In your assemblage of red flesh, there is a true man without situation (i.e., a man who fits into no category, another metaphor for the Buddha nature) who is constantly entering and leaving by the doors of your face. Come on, let's see some of you who have not yet given proof (of enlightenment)." A monk came out and asked, "What is he like, this true man without situation?" The master came down from his meditation
bench, grabbed the monk and held him still.
"Tell me yourself, tell me!" he said. The monk hesitated. The master let him go and said, "The true man without situation is I don't know what piece of ass-wipe." And he returned to his room.  

The first four poems of Ikkyū in this presentation are based on the "Four Categories of Rinzai." This teaching consists of four relationships between subject and object which correspond to four different states of consciousness. Subject is designated by the character 人 "man." Object is designated by the character 境 "territory" or "environment." The four categories are presented within the framework of an Indian formula of logic called catuṣkoṭika (to be - not to be - to be and not to be - neither to be nor not to be). The categories have defied a definitive explanation to this day. Suzuki Daisetsu is of the opinion that everyone must construe them for himself. Rinzai himself, when asked to expound further on them, added a short unrhymed verse to each category. The categories are the titles to Ikkyū's four poems. For the sake of comparison, I have added Rinzai's comment after each of Ikkyū's four poems.
臨濟四料簡

奪人不奪境

百丈為山名未休
野狐身与水牯牛
前朝古寺無僧住
黄葉秋風共一楼

rinzai shiryōken

datsu nin fudatsu kyō

hyakujō isan na imada kyū sezu
yako no mi to suikogyū to
zenchō no koji sō no jū suru nashi
kōgō shūfū tomo ni ichirō
Rinzai's Four Categories

Take Away the Subject
Don't Take Away the Object

Po-chang, Wei-shan, names not yet still;
Wild fox body and water buffalo bull.
No monks dwell in the former dynasty's old temples;
Yellow leaves and autumn wind share the pavilion.

Rinzai's comment: "The sun gives birth to a brocade of flowers spread over the earth; On the child hangs hair as white as silk thread."

Po-chang Huai-hai 百丈懐海 (Hyakujō Ekai, 720-814) studied Zen with Ma-tsu Tao-i 馬祖道一 (Baso Dōitsu, d. 788). His fame rests with drawing up a set of rules for the organization of Zen communities, the most basic rule being "a day of no work is a day of no eating."

Wei-shan Ling-yu 濱山靈祐 (Isan Reiyū, d. 813) was a student of Po-chang and co-founder of the Wei-yang sect of Zen in China.

Wild fox body: An allusion to the following story about Po-chang.

There was an old man who listened everyday to Po-chang expounding the Dharma and afterwards left with the crowd. One day he stayed behind. Po-chang asked him who he was. The old man replied saying, "Once upon a time there was a teacher named Mister So-and-so living on this mountain. A student of his asked him, 'Can a man of great training fall into the chain of karma?' The teacher said, 'No, he does not fall into the chains of karma.' Then, after the teacher died, he was reincarnated five hundred times as a fox. Now, I ask you for the sake of that teacher, say the word of enlightenment that he may be liberated from his fox body." Po-chang said, "The man of great training does not ignore karma." At this, the old man was immediately enlightened and revered Po-chang."
Water buffalo refers to a kōan of Wei-shan's in which he confronts his students with the problem:

Suppose, a hundred years after I die, a water buffalo comes to the parochial houses with an inscription on his left flank reading Monk Wei-shan. Then if you say, "This is Wei-shan," it is still a water buffalo; if you say, "It is a water buffalo," then it is still Monk Wei-shan. If you say, "What kind of a thing is this?," then you understand.

The first category denotes a state in which the object is affirmed and the subject is negated, that is the substance or reality of the object is affirmed as opposed to the non-substance and unreality of the subject. The subject is the "I" or ego-self, while the object is the world at large, the objective universe. Thus, in Rinzai's comment, the field brocaded with flowers represents the objective world or nature which with its endless cycles is full of substance and reality while the image of the child with white hair denotes the "I," the ego-self which dies and has no real substance. The surrealistic quality of the image, a grey-haired child, emphasizes the unreality of the subject. In Ikkyū's poem, Po-chang and Wei-shan represent two "I"s who have certainly passed away, and it is certain that no monks are dwelling in the temples where they used to live. There are only yellow leaves and autumn wind, Ikkyū's images for the objective world of nature and complements to Rinzai's spring field of flowers.
奪境不奪人
臨濟見孫誰的傳
宗風滅却眩駭边
芒鞋竹杖風流友
曲榛木床名利禅

datsu-kyō fudatsu nin
rinzai no jison tare ka tekiden
shūfū mekkyaku su katsuro hen
bōai chikujō fūryū no tomo
kyokuroku bokujo myōri no zen
Take Away the Object, Don't Take Away the Subject

Who among Rinzai's descendants received the true transmission?

"My teaching will be lost in the hands of a blind donkey!"

Straw sandals, bamboo walking stick, I will be a friend of the ancient ways;

Ornamented chairs, wooden floors, you can have your Zen of fame and profit.

Rinzai's comment: "The king's commands already carried out over the whole country. Outside the army's frontier posts, there is no smoke or dust."

"My teaching..." is a quote from the Rinzai roku. At the time of this remark, Rinzai was sick and close to death. He had called his favorite disciple and asked him what he would say, after Rinzai was dead, to someone who came and asked, "What is Rinzai's teaching?" The disciple shouted, whereupon Rinzai said, "You see my teaching will be lost in the hands of a blind donkey." This is one of the paradoxes of Rinzai Zen, for according to tradition, Rinzai's Zen was transmitted to that pupil, yet the story seems to indicate otherwise.

Ornamented chairs, wooden floors appears frequently in Ikkyū's poetry as a metaphor for the Zen of fame and profit, that is, false Zen. Ornamented chairs refers to the pomp and ostentation of high-ranking monks. Wooden floors were apparently considered luxurious as compared to austere stone floors.

Fame and profit is a classic expression which denotes desire after personal aggrandizement and wealth. The word 賀り or "profit" has had a decidedly pejorative connotation ever since Mencius in the opening passage of his book so soundly berated the King of Wei for even mentioning it. It certainly has that sense here.
The second category affirms the subject and negates the object; in this state of consciousness, the subject seems real and the objective universe unreal. It is the position of absolute idealism, the view "that the entire world is merely a reflection of one's own consciousness."9

Demiéville, explaining Rinzai's comment, says that "the suppression of the exterior world in the state of introverted meditation procures a peace similar to that of a world where the orders of the king are obeyed to the frontiers and the generals at the border are troubled neither by the smoke of signal torches by night nor the dust of armies on the march by day."10 The subject, like the king in control of his realm, is in control of his perceptions of the exterior world.

Ikkyū, in his poem about this category takes the opportunity to brandish his own "self" or "subject" by asserting, as he does so often, that with his simple habits he had inherited the true transmission while other monks, bewitched by the fame and gain of the objective world, are on their way to perdition.
三十年来肩重
人物推松源禅
前住大德林寺
頼相自謙謙譲
書
人境俱奪

雉醫亀焦身遁
井汾絕信話頭丹
夜朱滅却詩人興
桂折秋風白露前

ninkyō gudatsu

chiei kishō mi chunten
heifun shin o zetsu-shite watō madokanari
yarai mekkyakusu shijin no kyō
kei wa oru shūfū hakuro no mae
Take Away Both Subject and Object

The pheasant takes cover, the tortoise is scorched, one is obstructed.

Pin and Fen are cut off from news, the kōan is complete.

Night comes and the poet's inspiration dies away.

Before white frost, the cinnamon tree lies broken, autumn wind.

Rinzai's comment: "Pin and Fen are cut off from news. They are isolated, each in its corner."

The pheasant takes cover refers to a story about a forest fire in which a pheasant plays a heroic but desperate part. It is a metaphor for a distressing situation.

The tortoise is scorched refers to the ancient custom of obtaining oracles by putting a hot iron to a tortoise shell and then interpreting the cracks thereby produced.

Pin and Fen are cut off from news is a direct quote from Rinzai's comment (supra). A commentary to the Rinzai roku says that Pin and Fen were two provinces of T'ang who revolted against the dynasty.

The third category presents the situation where both subject and object are negated. In the language of the Lankāvatāra Sūtra, this state is known as pudgaladharmanairatmya (here hō法 has the same meaning as kyō境) "the egolessness of both the individual soul and external objects." In other words, there is "no self-substance in anything." This is regarded as a state of true enlightenment because duality is finally transcended and all things are realized to be void. This is the point of view which has popularly gained Buddhism a reputation for nihilism even though the negative statement of the non-dual truth of universe presupposes that the opposite positive statement is also true.
Rinzai's comment to this category, according to Demiéville, means that in this state of consciousness, a man is isolated, cut off from all sense of self or other, like the far provinces of Pin and Fen who during revolts were cut off from the rest of the world. \(^{15}\)

Ikkyū dwells on the negativism inherent in this category. Images of distress and obstruction set a gloomy tone. One feels isolated like Pin and Fen; the kōan is complete; there are no more doubts, no more fertile ground for the poet's inspiration. Autumn brings destruction and cold. All this seems to indicate that Ikkyū associated this kind of consciousness with a profound pessimism.
人境倶不奪
莫道再來錢半文
嫁坊酒肆有功勲
祇緣人話相如渴
腸斷琴白日暮雲

ninkyo gufudatsu
iu-nakare sairai sen hanmon to
inbō shushi ni kōkun arī
tada hito no sōjo ga katsu o wasu ni yotte
chōdan su kindai nippo no kumo
Take Away Neither Subject Nor Object

Don't say I can't come again with so little money!
There is merit in brothels and sake shops.
That's why people talk of Hsiang-ju's thirst;
Breathtaking music from the koto, clouds at sunset.

Rinzai's comment: "The king ascends to his jeweled palace; In the fields the old men sing."

Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju: A famous character of the Han dynasty. He was a man of high rank and served as an official from time to time, but due to a fondness for reading books and drinking wine, he never kept a position for long and so was always poor. One day he fell in love with a lord's daughter named Wen-chun. He won her love by playing to her night after night on his koto, hence the reference to the koto in the fourth line. Because he was too poor to support his newly-won bride, he sold his carriage, one of his few remaining possessions and bought a wine shop. The wine shop was a financial success and, content with his wife and his koto, Hsiang-ju never wanted for wine again.

The fourth category presents the positive expression of the non-dual truth; subject and object are both affirmed as real. As mentioned before, the negative expression presupposes that the positive expression is also true. When duality is transcended, unreal and real are the same. This is the final goal of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The Chinese accorded this "return" to normal worldly activities a special importance. Rinzai's comment implies that everything is as should be; the king in his palace and the old man singing in the fields are images of normality. Ikkyū's poem is as optimistic as the previous one was pessimistic. The allusion to the happy story of Hsiang-ju sets the tone. Ikkyū emphasizes that from this enlightened point of view, there is merit in brothels and sake shops too. In this state of consciousness, the events of ordinary reality take on a sublime aspect.
贊 虚 堂 和 尚
育 王 住 院 世 皆 乖
放 下 法 衣 如 破 草
臨 済 正 伝 無 一 点
一 天 風 月 滿 吟 懷

kidō oshō o san su
ikuō no jūin yo mina somuku
hōe o hōge shite haai no gotoshi
rinzai no shōden itten nashi
itten no fūgetsu gin-kai ni mitsu
**Praising Monk Hsu-t'ang**

The world turned its back on the master of Yu-wang.

He could abandon his habit as though it were a broken sandal,

For Rinzai's correct transmission, not a single care,

Not a cloud in the sky, wind, moon, a heart full of song.

Monk Hsu-t'ang Chih-yu (Kidō Chigu, 1184-1269) was a prelate of some consequence, but he was noted for being a wanderer. His departing poem was

Eighty-five years
Knowing nothing even about the Patriarchs,
Rowing with my elbow, serving, going,
Erasing my tracks in the Great Void.17

Yu-wang: One of many mountain temples where Hsu-t'ang served after 1258.18

Ikkyū often found encouragement in studying the teachings of the great T'ang and Sung masters. He felt particularly close to Hsu-t'ang and mentioned him in his death poem (see Chapter V). In this poem, Ikkyū praises him for being despised by others and for being detached from his status as a monk. Hsu-t'ang was not concerned with the fine points of the correct transmission of Rinzai, something which was probably debated at great length in the temples which Ikkyū frequented. Ikkyū finishes by suggesting that Hsu-t'ang's mind was as free of points of dogma as the sky was clear of clouds.
いかなるかここれりんざいかのじ、
ごそおにわく"ごよくかいらいおきく"と。

きせんのいくつつてつしかくずる
ごよくかんらいのそおにあり
とりしょうふせいのゆべ
はんせいはんすいしゅうじゅうものごちし
What is it Like, the Rinzai Sect? The Fifth Patriarch Lecturing Said, "The Five Sins, And One Hears Thunder."

Just at the threshold, one shout and the iron cage crumbles.

The five sins are in monks since the beginning.
Peach and plum, spring wind, a beautiful feast at evening;
Half sober, half drunk, sake is like a rope.

The Fifth Patriarch: Hung-jen (Gunin, 601-674).

The five sins are said to send one to hell. In order of ascending seriousness, they are killing one's father, killing one's mother, killing an arhat, drawing blood from a buddha, and causing dissen­sion within the order. Here, however, the five sins are to be taken merely as a metaphor for man's propensity to do evil.

To hear thunder is to be shocked into an awareness of the nature of sin. Rinzai was famous for shouting at the right time to push his students to sudden enlightenment. At the breaking point, all distinctions between good and evil, sin and virtue, are dispelled, and the iron cage that such dualistic thinking produces collapses. All monks are chained by the notion of sin. Above all, the special characteristic of Rinzai's Zen is complete liberation, yet paradoxically, enlightenment is not the end of desire. Although Ikkyū is enlightened, sake still makes him drunk.
いかなるかこそれは雲門宗演日紅旗閃爍
華旗風暖動春台
八十余員師席開
一字閑兮三句射
幾人眼裏着紅埃

いかなるかこそれは雲門宗演日紅旗閃爍
華旗風暖動春台
八十余員師席開
一字閑兮三句射
幾人眼裏着紅埃

ika naru ka kore unmon shū,
en iwaku "kōki senjakusu" to.
kaki kaze atataka ni shite shundai ni ugoku
hachijū yō in shi seki hiraku
ichiji kan, sankutai
ikubaku hito ka ganrī ni kōai o tsuku
What is it Like, Yūn-men's Sect? He Lecturing
   Said, "The Red Flag Sparkles and Flashes."

A fine flag moves in the warm wind above the
spring dais,
Eighty people or more, the master begins his
lecture.
One word barrier, three phrase body of knowl-
edge.
How many people have red specks in their eyes?

Yūn-men Wen-yen (Unmon Bunen, d. 949) was a monk of
the late T'ang dynasty and a disciple of Hsüeh-feng I-ts'Un
雪審義存 (Seppō Gizon). Hsüeh-feng broke Yūn-men's leg by
closing a door on it, and the resulting pain enlightened him. 20
Yūn-men's sect was never brought to Japan.

The red flag sparkles and flashes: One of Yūn-men's kōan about
the nature of enlightenment. 21

One word barrier refers to this story about Yūn-men:

At the end of the summer, Ts'ui-yen said to a
gathering, "For one summer now I have been ex-
plaining the dharma to you students. Look, do
I still have eyebrows?" [People who falsify
the dharma are supposed to get leprosy, one of
the first signs of which is the loss of eye-
brows.] Pao-fu said, "Robbers have false
hearts." Ch'ang-ch'ing said, "Your eyebrows
are growing." Yūn-men said, "Kuan 'barrier'!" 22

Three phrase body of knowledge refers to the three famous kōan of
Yūn-men's: first, kangai kenkon 包蓋乾坤 box and lid, heaven
and earth; second, setsudan shūryū 設斷衆流 cutting off, every-
thing flows; and third, suiha chikuro 隨波逐浪 following waves, chas-
ing waves. A clear explanation of these kōan is extremely dif-
ficult. I have decided to accept Dumoulin's interpretation of the
commentary on these three kōan by Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in 圆悟克勤
(Engo Kokugon). Accordingly, the first kōan means that "true
reality, true emptiness is the marvelous existence in each perception and each cognition, completely evident and unequivocal." The second kōan means that "true reality defies understanding or expression in words; when all appearances suddenly come to a rest, the passions are destroyed." The third kōan means that "the knowledge of reality gained through outside objects is said to be like the characterizing and knowing of the earth from its germs or a man from his words."  

Many of Ikkyū's poems seem to be composed like collages; the lines are not connected in any logical or rational manner. One line simply evokes the next by complement, contrast, or random association. This is such a poem. The title "What is it like, Yūn-men's sect?" unifies the poem, while the content is made up of bits and pieces of what Ikkyū knows about Yūn-men. The red flag calls to Ikkyū's mind a spring meeting of monks under banners and Yūn-men trying to enlighten them with his characteristically laconic teaching. In the last line, however, Ikkyū intimates that too many monks received Yūn-men's teaching but remained unenlightened.
いかなるか、これ元書。
演日断碑横古路

恵寂寂辺靈祐牛
披毛作仏也風流
古碑路断長瀬客
万世姓名黃葉秋

ika naru ka kore igyō shū,
en iwaku "danbi koro ni yokotau" to.
ejaku wa shaka reiyū wa ushi
himō sabutsu mata furyū
kohi michi tayu chōkei no kaku
bansei no seimei kōyō no aki
Hui-ch'i became a monk, Ling-yu became a cow;
A buddha covered with hair, how delightful.
An old stone marker, the road stops, man of the long valley.
10,000 generations of names, autumn's yellow leaves.

What is it Like, this Wei-yang Sect? He Said, "A Knocked Down Stone Marker Lying on its Side on an Old Road."

Hui-ch'i became a monk, Ling-yu became a cow;
A buddha covered with hair, how delightful.
An old stone marker, the road stops, man of the long valley.
10,000 generations of names, autumn's yellow leaves.

Wei-yang sect: One of the Five Houses of the southern branch of Zen in T'ang China. Co-founded by Wei-shan Ling-yu (supra) and Yang-shan Hui-ch'i (Ryôzan Ejaku, 814-890) between 806 and 880. The sect merged with the Rinzai sect. 24

Hui-ch'i: At the age of fifteen, he wanted to become a monk, but his parents opposed his plan until, two years later, when Hui-ch'i cut off two fingers to show his determination to become a monk. 25

Ling-yu: Wei-shan's personal name.

Man of the long valley: In the Tsu-t'ing shih-yuan 祖庭事苑, Wei-shan is described as having been "born in the long valley of Fu-chou." 26

The Wei-yang sect was already long extinct by Ikkyû's time, and "old stone marker" bemoans this fact. In the last line, Ikkyû conjures up autumn leaves to point to the relentless passing away of generations, the classic Buddhist theme of impermanence.
如何是法眼宗
演曰巡人犯夜
一滴曹源一滴深
巡人闇闇夜沈沈
青山滿目是何法
家醜猶如学捧心

ika naru ka kore hōgen-shū,
en iwaku "junnin yo o okasu" to
itteki no sōgen, itteki fukashi
junnin nyōnyō yo chinchin
seizan menmoku kore nan no hō zo
kashū nao hōshin o manabu ga gotoshi
What is it Like, This Fa-yen Sect? He Lecturing
Said, "The Watchman Breaks into the Night."

One drop at the source of the Ts'ao, one drop deep.
The watchman raises a row but the night is silent.
Green mountains fill everyone's eyes, what kind of law is this?
It is like the ugly woman studying the beauty's frown.

Fa-yen sect: Founded in late T'ang by Fa-yen Wen-i (Högen Buneki, 885-958) who brought Zen closer to a form of sutra Buddhism, i.e. Buddhism based on written doctrine, than any other T'ang Zen master.

One drop at the source of the Ts'ao: A quotation from this story in the Shih shih t'ung-chien: Shao-kuo asked Fa-yen, "What is it like, one drop of water from the Ts'ao river?" Fa-yen said, "It is one drop of water from the Ts'ao river." Shao-kuo was immediately enlightened.

The meaning of Fa-yen's words is similar to Blake's "To see the world in a grain of sand" or to the passage from the Lankāvātāra Sūtra which says that knowing one dharma is to know the 10,000 dharmas, i.e. that by thoroughly penetrating one thing, one can understand all things.

Another interpretation of this phrase is found in the Ch'üan t'eng lu: "In 502, a monk named Chih-yao sailed to Yin-chou and the waters of the Ts'ao river. He had heard of the excellent taste of this water and that at the upper reaches of this river there was good land. Accordingly, he built a temple there and called it Pao-lin. Many years later, the Sixth Patriarch Huineng (Enō, 638-713) taught there. Thus, water from the Ts'ao river is also a metaphor for the Zen teachings of the Sixth Patriarch."
The watchman represents the unenlightened person. The second line contrasts the noisy watchman to the silent night which would appear so to the watchman if only he could keep quiet for a moment. One is reminded of Te-shan Hsuan-chien (Tokusan Senkan, 780-865) who attained sudden enlightenment when his master blew out a candle and he experienced the deepness of the night.¹

Ugly woman: A reference to a story about an ugly woman who copied the frown of a famous beauty only to make herself more ugly. ¹κ-κυũ implies that Fa-yen mimicked true Zen but only made himself more ridiculous.
題 大燈国師行狀末

挑起 大燈輝 一天 驚 興 競 誉 法堂 前 風 飏 水 宿 無 人 記
第五 橋 辺 二 十 年

daitō kokushi gyōjō no sue ni daisu
daitō o kakage okoshite itten ni kagayaku
ranyo homare o kisou hōdō no mae
fūsan suishuku hito no kisuru nashi
daigo kyōhen nijū-nen
On the Topic of Daitō Kokushi's Conduct

Raise high the Great Lamp, let it light the whole sky,
The phoenix carriages compete in praise before the Dharma Hall.
Wind-eating, water-dwelling, no one records that;
Twenty years he spent around Gojō Bridge.

Daitō Myōchō Kokushi 大燈妙超國師 was the founder of Daitokuji.
The Great Lamp is the literal translation of Daitō's name.
Phoenix carriages means "important" people.
Wind-eating, water-dwelling is a conventional phrase for describing the life of a beggar.

Gojō Bridge spans the Kamo river in Kyoto. Daitō lived in a temple close by named Unkoji and begged at the bridge.

People often forget the time that many famous people spent in obscurity. In Ikkyū's time, Daitokuji was a large and wealthy temple, the celebrations for its founder were lavish and attracted many of the powerful people in the country. However, few of these people bothered to remember that Daitō's greatness was partly due to spending twenty years begging along with the lowest and most wretched of humanity around Gojō bridge.
Prose introduction to four poems on the nature of karma:

"Good and evil have never been confused. In this world, those who do good are all friends of Shun and those who do evil are all friends of Chieh. The pheasant is always attacked by the hawk, the rat is always bitten by the cat, this is innate in them and predetermined. The way in which all living beings take refuge in Buddha's virtue is also like this. Therefore, I have made poems and instructed a gathering with them."

Shun was one of a triumvirate of model rulers in China. Chieh, the last ruler of the Hsia Dynasty, was as infamous for evil as Shun was famous for good.

In this prose passage and the following four poems, Ikkyū reflects on the nature of karma, the Buddhist concept of cause and effect. In the beginning, it seems quite simple. Good acts bring good effects, bad acts bring bad effects, and certain things are set, e.g. the hawk always attacks the pheasant, and the cat always bites the rat.

Nothing leads one to reflect on the laws of karma so much as examples of people in lofty positions falling from grace at a single blow. In the first poem Ikkyū thinks of Yang Kuei-fei. So great was her success that the mothers and fathers of China began to wish for girls instead of boys. However, no sooner had she reached her peak than she was cut down by fate during the An Lu-shan rebellion. Her lover, the emperor Hsüan-tsung was in the same position. Having found a woman who pleased him more than anything in the world, he was forced to kill her the next moment. The second poem brings the resolution to this seemingly untenable situation; everything is as it should be, only false thinking makes it seem otherwise and there is always Te-shan's stick and Rinzai's shout to cure that. The third and
fourth poems present a positive and negative attitude towards the world and more particularly the situation of Hsüan-tsung and Yang Kuei-fei. They correspond roughly to the last two of Rinzai's four categories, the positive and negative ways of stating the truth of the universe.

The third poem presents the positive attitude. It delights in Yang Kuei-fei's beauty and predicts that this great beauty will be reincarnated time and time again into the world. The poem ends on the hopeful note that Yang Kuei-fei may be reincarnated in Japan next time. This attitude sees the whole world as a stage and players forever playing out dramas that, if not real, are beautiful. The fourth poem presents a negative attitude to the same situation. All the world is a dream, and nobody can escape suffering unless they escape the dream altogether. In essence, the universe is void and colorless, and there you will find the spirit of Ma-wei.
鷹雏鼠猫元自然威音劫来旧因縁照看華清残月曉
明皇亀鑑馬嵬前

よち somyō moto jinen
iongō-rai kyū innen
terashi miru kasei zangetsu no akatsuki
meikō no kikan bakai no mae
Hawk and pheasant, rat and cat, are originally so of themselves.

Since time immemorial the ancient law of karma.

To see the waning moon at dawn at Hua-ch'ing,

Was Hsuan-tsung's reminder of what happened at Ma-wei.

Hua-ch'ing: A palace built by the T'ang emperor Hsuan-tsung for his favorite concubine Yang Kuei-fei.

Hsuan-tsung's reminder: Hsuan-tsung was so infatuated with his concubine Yang Kuei-fei that he shamefully neglected the affairs of state. Because of his negligence and the lavish amounts of money he squandered on building palaces and gardens for his favorite, the country was on the brink of financial ruin. An army officer, An Lu-shan, seeing his opportunity, started a revolt and overran the capital. The emperor and his court were forced to flee with the remnants of the imperial army. At Ma-wei, the army refused to defend the emperor until he killed Yang Kuei-fei whom they considered responsible for the decline of the country. To save the dynasty, Hsuan-tsung was forced to kill her himself. This pacified the troops and was a turning point in his fortunes, for the imperial army soon made steady gains and finally restored him to the capital. Hsuan-tsung never forgot Yang Kuei-fei, however, and lived out the rest of his life grieving over his loss.
過現未誰人了達
悪人沈淪善者脱
風流可愛公案月
徳山棒今臨済唱

kagenmi tarebito ka ryōdatsusu
akunin wa chinrin-shi zensha wa datsusu
fūryū aisubeshi kōan madokanari
takusan no bō rinzai no katsu
Past, present, and future, who comprehends it?
Bad people sink, good people are released;
Beauty must be loved, the kōan is complete:
Te-shan's stick, Rinzai's shout.

Te-shan's stick: Te-shan was noted for using the rod in Zen teaching. He is recorded as saying to a group of followers, "Whether a person can explain or not, he receives thirty blows with the stick."

Rinzai's shout: Rinzai was equally famous for shouting.
風流脂粉又紅粧
等妙如來東斷腸
知是馬嵬泉下魄
離魂倩女誅扶桑

fūryū no shifun mata kōshō
tōmyō no nyorai danchō o ikansen
shinu kore bakai senka no haku
rikon no senjo fusō ni takuseraru
The elegance of powder and rouge;
Even a supremely enlightened buddha, how could he not be moved?
Knowing this is the soul of Ma-wei Spring:
The beauty's departed soul was perhaps banished to Japan.
身心不定仮兼真
欲界衆生沈苦辛
愁夢三生六十劫
劫空無色馬嵬神

shinjin sadamārazu ke to shin to
yokkai no shūjō kushin ni shizumu
shūmu sanshō rokujū gō
gōkū mushiki bakai no kami
Body and mind cannot be separated into illusory or real.
In the world of desire, everyone sinks into suffering.
Bittersweet dream, past, present and future, sixty kalpas.
The kalpas are void and formless, the spirit of Ma-wei.

Kalpa: A Buddhist measurement of time, defined in such poetic ways as "the period required for a celestial woman to wear away a ten-mile cubic stone if she touched it with her garments once every three years."35
牛

異類行中是我曾
能依境也境依能
出生忘却来時路
不識当年誰氏僧

ushi

iruikōchū kore waga sō
nō wa kyō ni yori mata kyō wa nō ni yoru
shushō bōkyakusu raiji no michi
shirazu tōnen ta ga uji no sō
The Cow

Come among the beasts to teach, this is what I have done.

What you can do depends on where you are, where you are depends on what you can do.

We are born and forget the path by which we came;

No one knows in those times what monk's name I had.

Come among the beasts to teach: A specific Buddhist term for a teacher being born as an animal in order to explicate the dharma.

In this poem, Ikkyū again embellishes the theme of Wei-shan's koan about coming back as a cow. He seems to have found it endlessly amusing. In this poem the cow speaks in the first person, and the circumstances surrounding the quatrain's composition explain why. The story goes that one day Ikkyū visited the house of a temple lay supporter. In an enclosure he noticed an old cow and wrote this poem which he then hung on the cow's horn just as though it was a poem the cow might say. The next day the cow died. When the owner saw Ikkyū, he teased him, saying "Your poem killed my cow." Ikkyū laughed.
岩頭船居図
会昌以後毁僧形
一段風流何似生
舞棹未晩為人手
杜鵑叫月夜三更

gantō senkyō no zu
eshō igo sōgyō o yaburu
ichidan no fūryū kajisei
tō o mawashite imada inin no te o futokoro ni sezu
token tsuki ni sakende yo san kō
After Hui-ch'ang, monks were abolished;  
A little more graceful, how about it?  
Yen-t'ou sculled the oar so skillfully,  
you would not think it was by human hand.  
A cuckoo cries at the moon - midnight.

Yen-t'ou Ch'uan-huo (Gantō Zenkatsu, 827-887): Another T'ang Zen master, he was eighteen when the emperor Wu-tsung launched a brief but severe persecution of Buddhism. Yen-t'ou went into hiding as a ferryman.

Hui-ch'ang: The reign title of the time when the persecution was started.

The cuckoo calling through the moonlit night is reminiscent of the conditions surrounding Ikkyō's own enlightenment.

One would expect a Buddhist monk to find any persecution of Buddhism unfortunate, but this was not the case with Ikkyō. He regarded most pompous monks just as odious as the T'ang emperor did. And what could be a more delightful and appropriate occupation for a Buddhist monk than that of a ferryman! After all, Buddha's law is often likened to a ferryboat crossing to the shore of enlightenment.
聖法然上人

法然伝聞法如来
安坐蓮華上品台
教智者如尼入道
一枚起請最奇哉

hōnen shōnin o sansu
hōnen tsutaekiku katsu nyorai
anzasu renge jōbon dai
chisha o shite ni-nyūdō no gotoku narashimu
ichimai no kishō mottomo ki naru kana
Praising Saint Hōnen

Honen, I have heard, was a living buddha,
Peacefully sitting on the highest rank of the
lotus dais,
Teaching learned men as though they were nuns
and lay followers.
Hōnen's One Sheet Document, how marvelous!

Hōnen (1133-1212): Founder of the Jōdoshū or Pure Land Sect, which
focused its attention on the most compassionate of all buddhas, Amida.

As though they were nuns and lay followers: As though they were
illiterate.

Honen's One Sheet Document contains the essence of his doctrine:
The method of final salvation that I have pro­
pounded is neither a sort of meditation such as
has been practised by many scholars in China and
Japan, nor is it a repetition of the Buddha's
name by those who have studied and understood
the deep meaning of it. It is nothing but the
mere repetition of the "Namu Amida Butsu" with­
out a doubt in his mercy, whereby one may be
born into the Land of Perfect Bliss....Those
who believe this, though they clearly understood
all the teachings Shakya taught throughout his
whole life, should behave themselves like sim­
ple-minded folk, who know not a single letter,
or like ignorant nuns or monks whose faith is
implicitly simple. Thus without pedantic airs,
they should fervently practise the repetition of
the name of Amida, and that alone.39

Although considered to be doctrinally opposed to each other,
the Pure Land Sect and Zen both reject the scholastic or intellectual
approach to Buddhism. Zen is always emphasizing the inadequacy of
words to convey the truth, while the Pure Land Sect considers intel­
lectual knowledge a hindrance to salvation. Ikkyū, however, is not
praising Hōnen's doctrine here so much as his overwhelming genuin­
ness as compared with some of the insincere Zen monks with whom
Ikkyū was acquainted.
贊二祖
大唐今古没禅師
断臂虛伝人不知
只許南山道宣筆
恰如痛所下針箒

niso o sansu
taitō konko zenshi nashi
dambi no kyoden hito shirazu
tada yurusu nanzan dōsen ga fude
atakamo tsūsho ni shinsui o orosu ga gotoshi
Praising the Second Patriarch

There have been no great Zen masters since the time of T'ang.

No one knows the legend of Dambi anymore;

Only Nan-shan Tao-hsuan's pen is allowed

As if the real story were a needle applied to a painful spot.

The Second Patriarch Hui-k'ō 慧可 (Niso Eka, 487-593) received his transmission at the age of thirty-two from the First Patriarch Bodhidharma. (See following stories)

Dambi: A nickname for the Second Patriarch, meaning "severed arm."

Here is one version of how he lost his arm:

Daruma sat staring at the wall; Hui-k'ō stood in the snow and...cut off his arm, saying, "My mind is not yet pacified. Please, master, pacify my mind." Daruma said, "Then bring out your mind and show it to me." Hui-k'ō said, "But whenever I look for my mind, I cannot find it.""There," said Daruma, "I have pacified your mind."^1

Nan-shan Tao-hsuan 南山道宣 (Nanzan Dōsen, 596-667): Founder of the Nan-shan Lu-tsung 南山律宗 in China. His story of how the Second Patriarch lost his arm was apparently quite current in Japan at Ikkyū's time.

The great Patriarch Hui-k'ō met robbers and had his arm cut off. Controlling his mind with Buddha's dharma, he did not feel any pain; he burned the wound and bound it up with cloth. As though he had been on his way begging, he did not tell anyone. Later, a monk named Lin also met robbers and had his arm cut off, and he shouted through the night. Hui-k'ō came and tended his wounds and begged food for him. Lin got angry with Hui-k'ō's clumsiness. Hui-k'ō said, "You have rice cakes in front of you, why don't you wrap them up?" Lin said, "I have lost an arm, don't you see?" Hui-k'ō said, "I don't have an arm either, what is there to get angry about?"^2
Ikkyū obviously preferred the traditional version of the story which was used as a kōan, not because it was historically more accurate but because it was closer to the truth of Zen. People generally abhorred the idea of a monk cutting off his arm for the sake of a few words of enlightenment and they preferred Nan-shan Tao-hsuan's version, so typical of the glowing accounts of famous monks' endurance of pain. It is an edifying story but not conducive to pushing the mind beyond its conventional limits.
己眼未明底因甚
将虚空作布著

画餅冷腸飢未盈
娘生已眼見如盲
寒螫一夜思衣意
羅綺千重暗現我

kogan imada akiraka narazaru tei,
nani ni yotte-ka kokū o motte
fuko to nashite tsuku

gabyō reichō ue imada mitazu
nyōjō no kogan mite mō no gotoshi
kandō ichi ya koromo o omou i
raki senjū an ni genjō
One's Own Eyes Not Yet Clear, How With Empty Space Make Cotton Breeches to Wear?

Painted rice cakes, cold stomach, hungry, never full.

Born of woman with eyes of flesh seeing as though blind.

In the cold hall, one night, think of clothes,

Figured gauze, a thousand folds, appears in the darkness.

_Painted rice cakes:_ A metaphor for unreal things which bring no satisfaction.

_Appears:_ The sudden appearance of myriad things as they are.

This poem and the next two comprise a group entitled "Hsü-t'ang's three sayings of enlightenment." Such sayings were composed for many great Zen monks. Ikkyū wrote poems for the _sandengo_ of the masters Chao-chou, Daitō, Seng-yüan, and Hsü-t'ang. I found the poems about Hsü-t'ang the most interesting. Hsü-tang's sayings provide the titles for the three poems.
地為牢底因
透者簡不過

何事春遊未窮
人心尤是客盈弓
天堂成就地獄減
日永落花飛絮中

chi ni kakushite, rō to nasu tei,
nani ni yotte ka shako o
tōri sugizaru

nanigoto zo shunyū kyō imada kiwamarazu
jinshin wa mottomo kore kakuhai no kyū
tendō jōjushi, jigoku metsusu
hi wa nagashi rakka hijo no uchi
Divide the Earth, Make a Cage,
How is it That You Penetrate But
Do Not Pass Through?

Why is my enthusiasm for spring revelry never
exhausted?

People's minds are just like the bow in the
guest's cup.

Heaven attained, hell is destroyed.

All day long amid falling flowers and flying
willow fluff.

The bow in the guest's cup: A metaphor about the illusions that
man's mind is prey to. It is based upon a story about a man who
went to visit a friend and accepted a cup of wine. In the cup, he
saw a snake but said nothing and finished drinking. When he left,
he felt very ill and attributed it to the snake. He did not visit
that friend for a long time. Finally, he had occasion to go again.
His friend asked him why he had stayed away so long. He told him
about the snake and how he had become ill. The friend gave him
another cup of wine; the latter sat in the same place and saw
another snake in his cup. He told his friend who pointed to a bow
on the wall that was decorated with a snake design and was reflected
in his cup. The snake was not real and yet the man had become ill.
入海算沙底因
甚針鋒頭上翱足

撒土算沙深立功
針鋒翱腳現神通

山僧者裏無能漢
東海見孫天沢風

kai ni irite isago o kazouru tei,
nani ni yotte ka shinbō tōjō ni
ashi o tsumadatsu
do o satsushi isago o kazoe te fukaku kō o tatsu
shinbō ni ashi o tsumadatete jinzū o genzu
sanzō ga shari munō no kan
tōkai no jison tentaku no kaze
Go to the Sea and Count the Sands,
How do you Stand Tiptoe on the
Head of a Needle?

Scatter the earth and count the sands, it builds up great merit.

Stand tiptoe on the point of a needle and superhuman powers appear.

Among the mountain monks, there is no one of ability;
The son of the Eastern Sea is of Tien-che's style.

The son of the Eastern Sea: Ikkyū.

Tien-che: Another name for Hsü-t'ang.
Chapter IV

POEMS OF CRITICISM AND PROTEST

The objects of Ikkyū's critical verses are mostly other monks and decadent trends within the Rinzai Sect. He criticizes his fellow monks for their narrow concerns, petty quarrels, and especially their propagation of the "name" of Zen - its power and influence in secular affairs - and the "profit" of Zen. Despair over the spiritual degeneration of the Rinzai sect was a lifetime preoccupation for Ikkyū. In opposition to this corruption, Ikkyū defiantly asserts himself as the only champion of true Zen. Eccentricity is the trademark of his Zen. He calls himself crazy, but his self-confidence is overwhelming.
自賛

風狂狂客起狂風
来往婬坊酒肆中
具眼衲僧誰一揆
画南画北画西東

jisian

ふきょうのよくやくきょうふおおくそ
らいそしんぽうししのうち
ぐがんのそうそたれかいっさつ
みなみおかくし，きたおかくし，にし，
ひがしおかくす。
Self-praise

Crazy madman stirring up a crazy style,
Coming and going amid brothels and wineshops.
Which of you patch-cloth monks can trip me up?
I delineate the South, I delineate the North, I delineate the West and East.

Trip me up: When meeting, Zen monks always tried to measure the enlightenment of one another by posing oblique questions or making a challenging gesture of some kind. Hesitation over what to say or do next in these encounters equaled defeat. It is this to which Ikkyū is referring.
蛙

慣釣鯨鰤咲一場
泥沙礫歩太忙忙
可憐井底稱尊大
天下衲僧皆子陽

a
keigei o tsuru ni narete warai ichijō
deisha ni ho o kishirite hanahada bōbō
awaremubeshi seitei ni sonda to shōsu
tenka no nōsō mina shiyō
Accustomed to fishing for whales, I had to laugh
At the frogs, thrashing through the mud so busily.
They are pitiable, those at the bottom of wells,
calling themselves great;
All the patch-cloth monks under heaven are just like Tzu-yang.

Frogs: The frog at the bottom of the well is well-known in
China and Japan as a metaphor for narrow-minded people who consider themselves important simply because they are blind to the rest of the world.

Tzu-yang: Duke Sun-shu 公孫述 of the Han Dynasty. He became the king of Szechwan and called himself "Son of Heaven." He squandered money by building palaces so his reign was cut short by assassination. Ma-yüan 馬援 in the History of the Later Han Dynasty says of him, "Tzu-yang was just a frog at the bottom of the well.

Ikkyū always kept his mind on the great truth, here likened to a whale, while all the other monks occupied themselves with the superficial aspects of the doctrine, busy like frogs thrashing through the mud. One is reminded of the Toba Sōjō 烏羽僧正 animal scroll, which parodies monks by painting them in the forms of frogs, rabbits, and monkeys.
shakuhachi

isshi no shakuhachi urami tae gatashi
fuite koka saijō no gin ni iru
jōjigaitō ta-ga uji no kyoku zo
shōrin monka chiin mare nari
Shakuhachi

Music from the shakuhachi, sorrow difficult to bear,
Blowing into the barbarian flute, a song at the frontier;
At the crossroads, whose piece does he play?
Among the students of Zen, I have few friends.

Shakuhachi: A bamboo flute with a very shrill sound. Wandering mendicant monks called komuso played the shakuhachi as they went about begging.

Barbarian flute: A flute made of a reed with no holes for finger­
ing. It was used among the barbarians on the borders of China and was renowned for its sad sound.

This is a description of Ikkyū's loneliness. He hears an unfamiliar song played on a shakuhachi at the crossroads and imagines that he is at some frontier post in China hearing the strange music of the barbarians. The poem as a whole is reminiscent of many T'ang poems on the subject of lonely duties at frontier outposts. Ikkyū himself was known to have played the shakuhachi in the streets.
嫌抹香

作家手段孰商量
説道談禅舌更長
純老天然惡殊勝
暗擊鼻孔佛前香

makkō o kirau
satsuke no shudan tare ka shōryō
dō o toki zen o danjite shita sara ni nagashi
junrō tennen shushō o nikumu
an ni biku o shikamu butsuzen no kō
I Hate Incense

Who can measure a master's means?
Explaining the Way, discussing Zen, their
tongues just grow longer.
I have always disliked piety.
In the darkness, my nose wrinkles, incense
before the Buddha.
Ikkyū's prose introduction to poems about a disturbance at Daitoku-ji:

"In the autumn of the year 1447, there was a monk at the Daitoku temple who for no reason committed suicide. Scandal-loving monks made slanderous reports to the officials. So, in connection with this calamity five or seven of my fellow monks were imprisoned. This was sufficient to cause great trouble within my school. At that time, people were noisily spreading rumors about it. I listened to them and then, the last day of the month, disappeared into the mountains. The reason for my leaving was that I simply could not bear it. It chanced that a scholar came by here, himself just from Kyoto. He informed me of the various things going on at the temple which are all the more unendurable and lamentable. As this happened to occur on the ninth day of the ninth month, I have made nine poems."

This prose introduction and the following two poems which I have selected out of Ikkyū's nine record the incident over which Ikkyū is supposed to have resolved to starve himself to death. As can be seen, Ikkyū himself makes no direct reference to the idea of suicide. It is obvious, however, from these poems that it was a deeply depressing situation for him. The poems graphically express his feeling of helplessness before such manifestations of evil within the temple. In the first poem, he uses the image of a devil a hundred feet tall to express the magnitude of the evil he sees. In the second poem, a storm in nature symbolizes the political storm at Daitoku-ji.

Ryōzen: An abbreviation for Ryōjusen "Holy Eagle Mountain" which is a translation of the Sanskrit name for the mountain Grūḍhra-kūṭa. This mountain is located in modern Bihar. It gets its name from its resemblance to an eagle. Shakyamuni is said to have preached there.
and hence its connection with the "true doctrine."  

The King of Demons: Something like the devil in Christianity, but since Buddhism is essentially a non-dualistic philosophy, that is, one which emphasizes a transcendent truth encompassing both good and evil, the King of Demons is not in absolute opposition to good as is the Christian devil. He is described as "the kind of devil who is the lord of the six heavens in the world of desire. Together with his followers, he hinders people from adhering to the Buddhist religion."  

Cloudy sake: Unrefined sake, of poor quality and perhaps even homemade.
慟我声名猶未韜
参禅学道長塵勞
霊山正法掃地滅
不意魔王十丈高

風外松梢亂入雲
諸才動衆又驚群
人境機閏吾不會
濁醲一盞醉醺醺

hazu ware seimei nao imada tsutsumazu
sanzen gakudō jinrō o chōzu
ryōzen no shōbō chi o haratte metsusu
omowazariki maō no jūjō takakaran to wa

fūgai no shōsan midarete kumo ni iru
shōhō wa shū o ugokashi mata gun o odorokasu
ninkyō kikan ware e sezu
dakurō issan yotte kunkun
I am ashamed my name and fame are not yet obscured;
Practicing Zen, studying the Way, dustry troubles grow:
The true doctrine of Ryōzen is swept from the earth and destroyed:
Unexpectedly, the King of Demons has grown a hundred feet high.

The wind outside, pines and cedars in confusion enter clouds.
Everywhere, the multitudes are moved, the masses astonished.
The workings of humanity I do not understand;
One cup of cloudy sake and I am drunk.
自賛
華叟子孫不知禅
狂雲面前誰説禅
三十年来肩上重
一人荷擔松源禅

jisān
kaso no jison zen o shirazu
kyōun menzen tare ka zen o toku
sanjū nenrai kenjō omoshi
innin katasu shōgen no zen
Self-praise

Kasō's descendant does not know Zen.
In front of Crazy-Cloud, who would explain Zen?
For thirty years, heavy on my shoulders
I have carried the burden of Sung-yūan's Zen.

Kasō: Ikkyū's master.

Sung-yūan: One of the important transmitters of the line of Rinzai teaching that Ikkyū, by way of Kasō, was heir to. The descendant of Kasō who does not know Zen and does not shoulder his share of the burden of transmitting the teaching can be none other than Yōsō.
示会裏徒三百首
楽中有苦一休門
箇箇蛙爭井底尊
昼夜在心无字脚
是非人我一生喧

eri no to ni shimesu san shu
rakuchū ku ari ikkyū no mon
koko a arasou seitei no son
chūya kokoro ni oku genjikyaku
zehi ninga isshō kamabisushi
In the midst of happiness there is trouble in Ikkyū's school.
Each frog fighting for respect at the bottom of the well;
Day and night busy thinking about the details of the scriptures;
Right and wrong, self and other, fussing away a whole life.
公案参来明歴歴
胸襟勘破暗昏昏
怨憎到死難忘却
道伴忠言逆耳根

kōan sanji kitatte mei rekireki
kyōkin kanpa sureba an konkon
onzō shi shi ni itaru made bōkyakushi gatashi
dōban no chūgen ji kon ni sakarau
Involved in the kōan, it comes distinct and clear.

Breaking into the heart, blackness is dark, dark.

There are resentments that until death are difficult to forget.

The sincere reproofs of fellow monks grate on the ears.
徒学得祖師言句
識情刀山牙劍樹
看看頻頻舉他非
銜血噴人其口污

itazura ni soshi no gonku o gakutokushite
shikijō wa tōzan, ge wa kenju
miyo, miyo, himbin ta no hi o kosuru o
chi o fukunde hito ni haku sono kuchi kegaru
In vain do you learn the words and phrases of the old masters.
Knowledge is like the razor sharp tusks of Tōzan.
See them, following one upon another, bringing up the faults of others.
Whoever holds blood in his mouth to spit out at others, his mouth is polluted.

Words and phrases of the old masters: Most of the teachings of the T'ang and Sung Zen masters are recorded in laconic sayings and anecdotes, the key words and phrases of which serve as touchstones for a certain kind of consciousness but which is not meant to be intellectually rationalized.

Tusks of Tōzan: Tōzan is a mythical mountain in hell with sharp edges.

These three poems are interesting examples of the kind of lessons Ikkyū gave to his followers. All three verses are quite severe in tone. The first quatrain is simple enough; it admonishes preoccupation with the letter of the scriptures which only leads to disputes. The second poem is a description of the faulty understanding of a kōan. Intellectually it may appear clear, but deep in the heart resentments that are difficult to root out remain. The strong imagery in the third poem emphasizes the dangers of purely verbal knowledge which is turned as a sword against others. Akizuki Ryūmin thinks that these criticisms were aimed at Yōsō's handling of kōan instruction within Daitokuji. Apparently Yōsō allowed students to get by with a mere intellectual understanding of the kōan.
題養叟大用菴

山林富貴五山衰
唯有邪師無正師
欲把一竿作漁客
江湖近代逆風吹

yōsō no daiyōan ni daisu
sanrin wa fūki gozan wa otorou
tada jashi nomi arite, shōshi nashi
ikkan o totte gyokaku to naran to hossureba
kōko kindai gyaku fū fuku
Inscription for Yōsō's Hermitage

The temples are wealthy but the Five Mountains are declining;
There are only false masters, there are no true masters.
I would like to take a fishing rod and go fishing;
But these days, in the world, a contrary wind blows.

The Five Mountains: The five primary temples of the Rinzai Sect. Here they represent the sect in general.

This poem is very similar to the two poems directed against Yōsō that were cited in Chapter II. In front of Yōsō, Ikkyū always emphasizes simple things—straw sandals, bamboo walking stick, a life of plain pleasures—as compared to the life of wealth and ostentation that Yōsō pursued in the temple. Here the fishing rod and going fishing symbolize the simple life, while the contrary wind represents the tide of the times toward degeneration which Yōsō and the other monks are swept up in.
資大用花養叟和尚
賜宗惠大照禪師号
紫衣師号束家貫
綾紙青銅三百縴
大用現前藤長老
看来真箇普州人

daiyōan yōsō oshō sōe daishō zenji no gō o
tamau o gasu
shie shigō ie no hin o ikansen
ryōshi seidō sanbyaku min
daiyū genzen gan chōrō
mi-kitareba shinkō fushō no hito
Congratulating Daiyōan's Monk Yōsō Upon Receiving the Honorary Title Zen Master Soe Daishō

Purple robes, honorary titles, how can the house be poor? The Imperial Edict alone cost three hundred strings of copper coins. The appearance of great Zen activity, the old charlatan, If you just look at him, you can tell he is really a man from P'u-chou.

Honorary title: A title usually bestowed on an outstanding monk after his death. To receive one while alive was a mark of exceptional recognition.

The Imperial Edict alone cost...: Honorary titles were granted by the Imperial court. Ikkyū implies here that Yōsō bribed the court to obtain a title.

Man from P'u-chou: In China, P'u-chou was traditionally considered the province of thieves and robbers.

The appearance of great Zen activity: A Zen term denoting energetic service to the sect.
人具畜生牛馬愚
詩文元地獄工夫
我慢邪慢情識苦
可嘆波旬親得途

bunshō o azakeru
hito wa sonau chikushō gyūba no gu
shibun wa moto jigoku no kufū
gaman jaman jōshiki no ku
tanzubeshi hajun shitashiku to o uru koto o
Ridiculing Literature

Men are endowed with the stupidity of horses and cows.

Poetry was originally a work of Hell.

Self-pride, false pride, suffering from the passions;

We must sigh for those taking this path to intimacy with demons.

This condemnation of poetry was probably directed at the Gozan Bungaku "Five Mountain Literature" school which, for all intents and purposes, had given poetry priority over Zen. Yet Ikkyū himself was so absorbed in poetry; one can also detect a note of jocular self-reproach.
The poems about love are divided into two sections, those about brothels and those about Ikkyū's affair with Shin.

The poems about love in the brothels often contain Zen themes. One gets the impression that going to brothels was a kind of religious experience for Ikkyū which is not as contradictory a concept as it might seem at first. The nature of Zen enlightenment does not necessarily exclude sensual experiences. Zen as a branch of Mahāyāna Buddhism insists on the essential unity of nirvāṇa (enlightenment) and samsāra (the sphere of birth and death). Suzuki, in his book on Mahāyāna Buddhism, presents the formula which is at the core of Mahāyāna Buddhism, "Yas kleśas so bodhi, yas samāras tat nirvāṇam." "What is Sin or Passion, that is Intelligence, what is birth and death, that is Nirvāṇa." In other words, there is no nirvāṇa to be sought outside this worldly life. Or, as this passage from the Vimalakirti-nirdeśa Sūtra expresses it:

Just as the lotus flowers do not grow in the dry land, but in the dark colored watery mire, 0 son of good family, it is even so (with Intelligence (prajna or bodhi)). In non-activity and eternal annihilation which are cherished by the Ārāmavāśas and Pratyekabuddhas there is no opportunity for the seeds and sprouts of Buddhahood to grow. Intelligence can grow only in the mire and dirt of passion and sin. It is by virtue of passion and sin that the seeds and sprouts of Buddhahood are able to grow.

Suzuki himself is very eloquent in the elucidation of this subtle point:

Nirvāṇa is not to be sought in the heavens nor after a departure from this earthly life nor in the annihilation of human passions and
aspirations. On the contrary, it must be sought in the midst of worldliness, as life with all its thrills of pain and pleasure is no more than Nirvana itself.\(^3\)

Inherent in this conception, characteristic of Mahāyāna Buddhism, is a more positive attitude toward the phenomenal world which contrasts strikingly with the more austere and world-disdaining tendencies of Hinayāna Buddhism.

The conception of the essential unity and voidness of the universe led to a great proliferation in the ways and means of attaining enlightenment or salvation. One of the most astounding, at least from a traditional Western religious viewpoint, was the form of Tantric Buddhism which saw the bliss of physical union as the profound experience of the non-dual nature of the universe and celebrated it as such. This is not to suggest that Ikkyū was influenced by this form of Buddhism, for he certainly was not, but to make clear that Ikkyū's fascination with the act of love was not contradictory to the basic principles of Mahāyāna Buddhism.
姓地頌以辱得法知識

話頭古則長欺謾
日用折腰空対官
栄銜世上善知識
姓坊兒女着金袍

inbō no ju, motte tokuhō no
chishiki o hazukashimu

watō kosoku giman o chōzu
nichiyō koshi o otte munashiku kan ni taisu
eigen sejō no zen-chishiki
inbō no jijo kinran o tsuku
Kōan, old examples, deception grows;
Everyday breaking one's back meeting the officials,
Idly boasting of the virtuous knowledge that transcends the world.
The young girl in the brothel wears golden vestments.

Golden vestments were worn by monks of very high rank on ceremonial occasions. Ikkyū conveys his belief that the brothel girl was more fit to wear the vestments of high office than the monk officials themselves.
山居二首

嫌妨十載興難窮
強住空山幽谷中
好境雲遮三万里
長松逆耳屋頭風

sankyo nishu
inbō jissai kyō kiwame-gatashi
shiiite kūzan yūkoku no uchi ni jōsu
kōkyō kumo saegiru sanman ri
chō shō mimi ni sakarau okutō no kaze
Two Poems About Living in Retreat
in the Mountains

Ten years spent in brothels, elation difficult to exhaust.

Now, forced to live amid empty mountains and gloomy valleys,

30,000 miles of clouds spread between here and those delightful places;

The wind in the tall pines around the house grates upon my ears.
狂雲真是大燈孫
鬼窪黒山何稱尊
憶昔簫歌雲雨夕
風流年少倒金樽

kyōun wa shin ni kore daitō no son
kikutsu kokuzan nanzen son to shōzen
omou mukashi shōka un-u no yūbe
fūryū no nenshō kinson o tōseshi koto o
Crazy Cloud is truly the descendant of Daitō.
Demon caves and black mountains, what is there to revere?
I remember old songs on the panpipes, evenings of cloud-rain,
Beautiful youths, draining the golden cask.

Cloud-rain: One of Ikkyū's most frequent metaphors for lovemaking which comes from a Chinese story about the king of Ch'ū. The king, while traveling in Kao T'ang, dreamed that he met and made love to the spirit of Wushan, "Sorceress Mountain." He pleaded with her to stay with him, but she insisted on leaving saying that in the morning she became a cloud on the south side of the mountain and in the evening she became the rain. The king built a shrine for her there. Thereafter in China, phrases like the dream of Wushan, the cloud of Wushan, the rain of Wushan, and cloud-rain became metaphors for sexual intercourse.

Ikkyū was forced by unknown circumstances to go to a mountain retreat. He disliked these "gloomy valleys" and "black mountains"; they aroused in him an acute longing for the warm company of the brothels. One might think such shameless longing to be unworthy of a Zen monk, but Ikkyū not only denies this but claims to be the true inheritor of Daitō's Zen.
老婆心為賊過梯
清浄沙門与女妻
今夜美人若約我
拓揚春老更生梯

rōbashin zoku no tame ni kakehashi o kasu
shōjō no shamon ni nyosai o atau
kōnya bijin moshi ware ni yakuseba
kōyō haru oite sara ni hikobae o shōzen
The old woman intended to make a ladder for that rascal;
So, to the celibate monk she gave a girl as a wife.
Tonight, if a beautiful woman were to make love to me,
Spring's withered old willow would put forth new shoots.

**Ladder:** A metaphor for the girl that the old woman wanted to give the monk. The implication is that the girl represented a way by which the monk might rise to new realms of awareness.

**Ikkyū's prose introduction:** "Once upon a time there was an old woman who for twenty years had supported the head of a hermitage. She always sent a sixteen-year old girl to bring meals and serve him. One day she told the girl to embrace him and ask, 'Right at this moment, what is it like?' She did so and the monk said, 'I feel like an old withered tree leaning against cold stones during the three months of winter when there is no warm weather.' The girl returned and described what had happened. The old woman said, 'For twenty years I have been supporting a charlatan.' Then she chased him out and burned the hermitage down."

The issue here is the authenticity of the monk's purity. Ikkyū obviously concurs with the old woman that the monk was probably seething inside with erotic interest in the young girl but because of slavery to lifeless conventions, he denied his true feelings and gave the conventional response. Since clinging to anything, even the laws of conventional morality, is contrary to Zen practice, the monk was a charlatan and a scoundrel.
題姓地
美人雲雨愛河深
樓子老禅楼上吟
我有抱持嘰吻興
竟無火聚捨身心

inbō ni daisu
bijin un-u ai no kawa fukashi
rōshi rōzen rōjō no gin
ware hōji sōfun kyō wa arī
tsui nika kajū-shashin ni kokoro nashi
Inscription for a Brothel

À beautiful woman's cloud-rain, love's deep river.

Up in the pavilion, the pavilion girl and the old monk sing.

I find inspiration in embraces and kisses;
I do not think at all of abandoning my body as though it were a heap of fire.

Heap of fire: A phrase taken from the Nirvāṇa Sūtra: "Regarding one's body as though it were a heap of fire, this is called self-righteousness." The phrase represents the orthodox pejorative view of sex in Buddhism which also holds that a man striving for spiritual development must harness all his energies toward that end. It is not that sex is evil or sinful but that the vital energy which is the essence of sex, once expended in physical union, is then lost to spiritual development. According to Conze, "meditation and sexual intercourse have in common the goal and the force that they use. For the simple reason that one cannot use the same force twice, complete suppression of sexual behavior is indispensable to success in meditation." This point of view is the most prevalent in Hinayāna Buddhism where it is part of a general disdain for experiences of the phenomenal world. The Mahāyāna doctrine, however, based on the equation of nirvāṇa and samsara which has already been discussed, has a more affirmative attitude not only toward sex but toward all phenomena. In this particular poem, Ikkyū defends sensual love not on philosophical grounds but because of the quality of the experience itself. He was exhilarated rather than exhausted and so could not see the sense of the old point of view.
大燈 忌 宿 忌人
以前 対 美人
宿 忌之 開 山 諷 經
経 咒 逆 耳 聖僧 声
雲 雨 風 流 事 終 後
夢 間 私 話 笑 慈 明

daitō ki shukki izen bijin ni taisu
shukki no kaizan fūgin
kyōju mimi ni sakarau shūsō no koe
un-u fūryū ji owatte ato
mujun no shigo jimyō o warau
Meeting With a Beautiful Woman the Night Before Daitō's Commemoration Ceremony

They are intoning the sutras on the eve of the commemoration;

The Sanskrit of the sutras grates on my ears, the voices of many monks.

After making love in a graceful way,

Mujun in intimate conversation laughs at Tzu-ming.

Mujun: Another name for Ikkyū. See Ichikawa, 146.

Tzu-ming: Another name for Shih-shuang Ch'ü-yüan 石霜楚圓 (Shisō Sōen) who is supposed to have jabbed a gimlet in his thigh to keep himself awake at night for meditation. Ikkyū laughs at him because he has found a better way to stay awake at night.
羅漢道婆坊因
出塵羅漢遠仙地
一入婆坊梵大智
深咲文殊唱楞嚴
失却少年風流事

rakan inbō ni asobu nozu
shutsujin no rakan butsujī ni tōzakaru
hitotabi inbō ni itte daichi o hassu
fukaku warau monju ryōgon o tonauru o
shitsukyakusu shōnen fūryū no ji
Emerging from the dust, the arhat is still far from Buddha.

Enter a brothel once and great wisdom happens.

I laugh deeply at Manjusri reciting the Suramgama Sutra,

Lost and gone are the pleasures of his youth.

**Dust:** A common Buddhist metaphor for the mundane world.

**Manjusri:** The bodhisattva most closely associated with wisdom.

In this poem Ikkyū's equation of the act of love with some kind of transcendental experience generating wisdom is made more explicit. Ignorant of such experiences, the world-disdaining arhat still has a long way to go before he attains a complete realization of the ultimate truth.
詩曰

姫風家国喪亡愁
君看雎鸠在彼洲
隨別宮娥主恩夕
玉盃夜夜幾春秋

しに iwaku

inpū kakkoku sōbō no urei
kimi miyo shokyū ka nosu ni ari
rie ni shitagatte kyūga shuon no yūbe
gyokuhai yaya iku shijū zo
The Book of Songs Says

Lascivious ways, the sorrow of losing house and country.

The lord sees the fishhawk on the other bank of the river.

Following precedent, the court lady on the evenings of her lord's favor,

A jeweled cup, night after night, how many springs and autumns?

This poem alludes to the first poem in the Book of Songs, "Kuan cries the Fish Hawk." This love song tells of a lord's infatuation with a young girl. The image of the girl haunts him night and day and he is not satisfied until he has her. Ikkyū's poem superimposes upon this original theme another one common in Chinese love stories, namely of a ruler neglecting and losing his country for the excessive love of a woman. Perhaps the best known story of this kind is the legend of the love between the emperor Hsüan-tsung and his concubine Yang Kuei-fei (supra). Ikkyū while reading the first poem of the Book of Songs was reminded of the folly of overly ardent love among people in responsible positions. Yet the predominant tone of the poem is not a moralistic one. Rather it evokes a mood of philosophical reflection on the sadness inherent in the transience of all worldly things. This fleeting quality gives excessive love its special charm.
俗人姓坊門前吟詩帰

樓子無心彼有心
姓詩詩客包何姓
宿雨西晴小歌暮
多情可愛倚門吟

zokujin inbō monzen nishi o eijite kaeru
rōshi mushin kare ushin
shi ni insu shikaku iro nanzo insu
shuku-u nishi ni haru shōka no kure
tajō aisubeshi mon ni yotte ginzu
A Layman Reciting a Poem Before the Gate of a Brothel and then Returning

The girl in the pavilion has no mind but he has a mind.

A poet overflowing with poems, does his desire overflow too?

After the long rain, clear in the west, a little song at sunset;

So much feeling, lovable, the man leaning on the gate and singing.

A girl in the pavilion has no mind but he has a mind: On the one hand, the courtesan is mindless in the sense that she has no thought or does not care about the man singing at the gate, while he has a mind in the sense that he has the courtesan and his own unfulfilled desires in mind. On the other hand, "no mind" describes in Zen writings the enlightened person so often that it is hard to ignore that sense of the expression. Take, for example, Te-shan's statement, "Only when you have nothing in your mind and no mind in things are you vacant and spiritual, empty and marvelous." Ikkyū may be saying then that the courtesan, by virtue of the mindless performance of her role, is enlightened while the man at the gate still had his mind muddled by words and ideas which pour ceaselessly forth in poems. However, I think this should be taken as playful irony on the part of Ikkyū.
吸美人嫁水
臨済児孫不識禅
正伝真箇瞎駝辺
雲雨三生六十劫
秋風一夜百千年

bijin no insui o suu
rinzai jison zen o shirazu
shǒden shin ko katsuro hen
un-u sanshō rokujū gō
shūfū ichiya hyakusen nen
Sipping a Beautiful Woman's Lascivious Fluids

Rinzai's descendants do not know Zen.
Correct transmission of the truth, this is with blind donkeys.
Cloud-rain, past, present and future, sixty kalpas,
Autumn wind, one night a 100,000 years.

Rinzai's descendants do not know Zen, the true teaching is with blind donkeys, but Ikkyū is the blind donkey so he has the true teaching. This assertion is reiterated again and again throughout the Kyōunshū. The second half of the poem shifts the subject to love's ability to make time relative. While making love, past, present and future, sixty kalpas of time might seem only an instant, yet one night spent thus might seem an eternity.
美人陰有水仙花香

楚宮望更応攀
半夜玉床愁夢顏
花綻一茎梅樹下
凌波仙子遠腰間

bijn no in suisenka no ka ari
sodai masa ni nozomubeshi sara ni masa ni yozubeshi
hanya gyokushō shūmu no kao
hana wa hokorobu ikkei baiju no moto
ryōha no senshi yōkan o meguru
A Beautiful Woman's Dark Place has
the Fragrance of a Narcissus

The King of Ch'u's pavilion, one must regard from
afar and moreover climb.
The middle of the night, on the jeweled bed, a
bittersweet dream's face,
The flower opens under a branch of the plum
tree,
Delicately the narcissus revolves between thighs.

Dark place: The Chinese character here is simply yin of yin-yang,
the two principles, female and male, of the universe. Extended
from this cosmic meaning, the character is also used to denote the
vagina.
優遊且喜薬師堂
毒気便便是我腸
愧慚不管雪霜髪
吟尽厳寒秋点長

yūyū katsu yorokobu yakushidō
dokki bemben kore waga harawata
gizan kansezu sessō no bin
ginji tsukusu genkan shūten no nagaki o
I traveled leisurely to Yakushidō and rejoiced there;
Still, a poisonous spirit lingers in my guts;
Ashamed I am, not to be concerned with my hoary hair;
Singing till exhausted, severe cold, the melancholy note rings long.

This is the first of ten poems in this collection that mentions, in one way or another, Ikkyū's lover and attendant Shin. It was probably Ikkyū's first encounter with Shin because he said in the introduction to this poem that "on the fourteenth day of the eleventh month of the second year of Bunmei [1470], I traveled to Yakushidō and heard the blind girl sing love songs." Ikkyū was apparently a bit reticent at first to act on his inclination; he was a little ashamed to feel the rising of desires that make a mockery of the wisdom and dignity which should accompany his white hair.
憶昔新園居住時
王孫美善聴相思
多年旧約即忘却
更愛玉帯新月姿

omou mukashi shin-en kyojū no toki
ōson no biyo kiite aiomou
tanen kyūyaku sunawachi bōjite nochi
nao aisu gyokukai shingetsu no sugata
I recall the old times living at Takigi,
You heard of the renown of the king's descendant
and loved him.
But after some years, old promises were forgot-
ten.
Still all the more I love the form of the new
moon on the jeweled stairs.

The king's descendant: A reference to Ikkyū's royal birth.
New moon on the jeweled stairs: An allusion to Li Po's poem "The
ejeweled stairs repine" in which the autumn moon stands for a woman's
face. In Ikkyū's poem the new moon refers to Shin.
Ikkyū's prose introduction: "I lodged for some years in a small
dwelling in Takigi. The attendant Shin, having heard of my appear-
ance and manner, already held feelings of affection toward me. I,
too, knew of it but remained undecided until now, the spring of
Shimbo [1471], when I met her by chance in Sumiyoshi and asked her
about her feelings. She replied in the affirmative."

This poem seems to indicate that there were relations between
Shin and Ikkyū before this time. The prose passage is not explicit
as to the exact nature of these relations, mentioning only that they
knew of one another and that Ikkyū was indecisive in his actions.
森公乘興

鸞興盲女屛春遊
鬱鬱胸襟好慰愁
遮莫衆生之輕賤
愛者森也美風流

shinkō koshi ni noru
ranyo no mōjo shibashiba shunyūsu
utsuutsu taru kyōkin yoshi urei o isuru ni
samo araba-are shujō no kyōsen suru koto o
aishi miru shin ya ga bi furyū
Lady Shin Rides in a Cart

In the phoenix cart, the blind girl often goes on spring outings.

When my heart is oppressed, she likes to comfort my melancholy.

Even so most people make fun of her.

I love to see Shin, so fair a beauty is she.

Perhaps Shin was called on in the spring to entertain at some wealthy people's hana mi 花見 "flower-viewing" and so was brought there in a cart. Ikkyū embellishes the scene and makes it an imperial phoenix cart. There is perhaps also an indication in this poem that people laughed at the relationship between Ikkyū and Shin, but if this was so, it is also obvious that he was not perturbed.
謝森公深恩之願書

木綿葉落更回春
長緑生花舊約新
森也深恩若忘却
無量億劫畜生身

sha shinkō shinon no gansho
ki shibomi ha ochite sara ni haru o kaesu
ryoku o chōji hana o shōjite kyūyaku arata nari
shin ya shinon moshi bōkyakuseba
muryō oku go chikushō no mi
Wishing to Thank Shin for My Deep Debt to Her

The tree budded leaves that fell but once more round comes spring;
Green grows, flowers bloom, old trysts are renewed.
Shin, if I ever forget my deep bond to you,
Hundreds of thousands of kalpas without measure,
may I be born as a beast.

The love poems to and about the blind girl Shin are quite surprising. It is strange enough that it should be a Zen monk writing these poems, but that it should be a Zen monk over seventy years of age and well experienced in debauchery is all the more incredible. The poems display a youthful ardor, unexpectedly fresh and naive.

There is no biographical information about Shin besides that in Ikkyū's poems. He calls her Lady Shin in places but this almost certainly does not correspond to any real rank. She was most likely simply an attendant attached to the temple of Shūonan in Takigi. She seems to have sung professionally, not an uncommon profession for blind people in Japan. There is one portrait of her at the Shūonan. The painting is primarily a portrait of Ikkyū, but she appears in the lower half kneeling on a mat with a small hand drum.
弥勒下生
盲森夜夜伴吟身
被底鸳鸯私语新
新約慈尊三會曉
本居古仙万般春

miroku asan o yakusu
mō shin yaya ginshin ni tomonau
hitoe no enō shigo arata nari
arata ni yakusu jison sane no akatsuki
honkyo kobutsu bampan no haru
Promise to be Born in the Time of Miroku

Blind Shin every night accompanies me singing;
Under the covers, mandarin ducks, intimate chattering always new;
Promise anew to meet in the dawn of Miroku's three meetings.
Here at the home of the old buddha all things are in spring.

Miroku: The buddha of the future who is supposed to appear 5,670,000,000 years after Shakyamuni's death.

Mandarin ducks: A common symbol for fidelity in China and Japan because they take only one mate for life.

Intimate chattering: An allusion to the "intimate chattering" of Hsuan-tsung and Yang Kuei-fei, "in the middle of the night when no one was around, they talked of rebirth, if in the air, then as birds, if on land, then as two branches of a tree." The dawn of Miroku's three meetings refers to the time of Miroku's future enlightenment when he will speak three times to countless numbers.
waga te o yonde shin shu to nasu
waga te shin no te ni izure zo
mizukara shinzu kō wa furyū no shu
hatsubyō gyoku kei no hō o jusu
katsu yorokobu waga eri no shu
Calling my Hand Shin's Hand

My hand, how it resembles Shin's hand.
I believe the lady is the master of loveplay;
If I get ill she can cure the jeweled stem.
And then they rejoice, the monks at my meeting.

The jeweled stem: A Chinese metaphor for the penis.
良宵風月乱心頭
何柔相思身上秋
秋霧朝雲独蕭洒
野僧紙袖也風流

ryōshō no fūgetsu shintō o midaru
ikan sen sōshi shin jō no aki
shūmu chōun hitori shōsha tari
yasō ga shishū mata fūryū
Fine evening, wind and moon, in my heart confusion.

How will our life fare as autumn overcomes us?

Autumn mist, morning cloud, alone so delicate and fair;

In the paper sleeves of a country monk, charming.

Ikkyū's prose introduction: "On the first day of the ninth month, my attendant Shin borrowed a paper cloak from a village monk to protect herself from the cold. How fresh, pretty and lovable!"

It may have been the vicissitudes of war that placed them in such poor circumstances that Shin had to borrow a paper cloak from a country monk in order to ward off the approaching cold. Paper cloaks were the cheapest and coarsest form of outer garment at the time; thus Ikkyū's praise of Shin's beauty in this humble garb is equivalent to someone today praising the beauty of a girl in blue-jeans.
百丈銅頭信施消
飯錢閣老不曾饒
盲女艱歌喚樓子
楚台暮雨滴蕭蕭

hyakujō jotō shinse shōsu
hansen enrō katsute yurusazu
mōjo ga enka rōshi o warau
sōdai no bou teki shōshō tari
Po-chang's hoe, my charitable donations are all spent.

Now, the old man of hell will not allow me rice money.

The blind girl's love songs, laughed at by the pavilion girls.

Ch'u's tower, sunset, rain dripping lonesomely.

Ikkyū's prose introduction: "The blind girl who serves me has strong feelings of love. She is about to die from not eating."

Ch'u's tower: Possibly a reference to the shrine that the king of Ch'u built for the sorceress of Wushan and, therefore, having an erotic connotation.
みょみょね hendō に の 眠
せき ん 酒 あき よ かく と へん
夜 よ た よ ろ れ 画 げ び の 底
閣 かく た め ま ら ぎ 前 ま え 金
Look, look, the Zen in sickness.
Long ago there was Po-chang and his hoe.
Night's intoxicated revelry beneath painted screens.
Facing the old man of hell, how about some rice money?

The exact situation surrounding the last two poems is unknown. It is clear, however, from the prose passage that Shin's nearness to death was caused by lack of food. The phrase used here means to fast rather than starve to death, and thus it suggests that Shin refused to eat lest Ikkyü should starve. The poems are very explicit about a lack of money to buy food.

In his anguish, Ikkyü reflects on Po-chang's rule of "a day of no work is a day of no eating" for Zen communities. Po-chang himself was supposed to have refused to eat when he got too old to do a day's work. This rule had long been abandoned by Rinzai temples in Japan. Ikkyü longs for the days when it was that simple, that you worked and then you ate. He is even remorseful about the years of pleasure and plenty spent in the brothels. The third lines of both poems conjure up brothel scenes. In the first poem he imagines how the brothel harlots would laugh at the naive songs of the blind girl, and in the second poem he remembers drunken evenings in gaudy surroundings.
白髪残僧八十年
吟望夜夜碧雲天
多情鶴被債前債
弾指三生約後縁

haku hatsu zen sō hachi jū nen
ginji nozomu yoyo hekiun no ten
tajō no en zensai o tsugunawaseraru
danshisu sanshō kōen o yakusu
I remain, white-haired old monk of eighty years,
Singing, looking up every night to blue sky and clouds.
Sad mandarin duck, redeeming former debts,
Snap fingers at past, present and future, the promise to love again.

Ikkyū's prose introduction: "It is late autumn, the season of giving winter clothes. For this reason I had some new clothes cut and had them offered for my late blind attendant Shin."

There is no record of what happened to Shin, but it must be concluded from this poem that she died before Ikkyū. We do not know under what circumstances or from what causes she died, but it is possible that the situation described in the preceding two poems actually led to her death. In this poem, Ikkyū is eighty, Shin is dead, and he is donating an offering of winter clothes to a temple in her honor as a token of his unforgotten ties to her.
辞 世 诗

十年花下理芳盟
一段风流无限情
惜别枕頭児女膝
夜深雲雨約三生

jisei no shi
jūnen hana no shita hōmei o osamu
ichidan no fūryū mugen no jō
sekibetsusu chintō ji-nyo no hiza
yoru fukakushite un-u sanshō o yakusu
Departing From the World Poem

Ten years ago, under the flowers, I made a fragrant alliance;
One step more delight, affection without end.
I regret to leave pillowing my head on a girl's lap.
Deep in the night, cloud-rain, making the promise of past, present and future.

This poem, like the "South of Mount Sumeru, who meets my Zen" verse (see Chapter II), is a death poem, yet the two are quite different in character. One has the ring of traditional Zen death poems, extremely confident, almost defiant, going to meet death in a warrior's manner. The other is gentle, nostalgic and fondly remembering. Ikkyū even expresses regret at leaving this world, a sentiment most unbecoming a Zen monk. Strangely enough, both poems are typical of Ikkyū at different times in his life. On both occasions, Ikkyū honestly expresses his feelings of attachment and longing with no thought given to whether they were appropriate for a Zen monk. This ability to accept without criticism whatever one feels as real and valid is a mark of true enlightenment. It shows trust in one's buddha nature.
NOTES

Abbreviations


Preface

1. For full citations for this and all other books mentioned in this study, see the bibliographical section.

I. Introduction

1. See Chapter V for the complete poem.

2. Akizuki Ryūmin, Zemmon no Iryū, 324.

3. Ichikawa Hakugen, Ikkyū, 183.

4. Ibid., 170-200.

II. Ikkyū and His Times


3. Ibid., 52.

4. Ibid., 108.

5. Ibid., 117.


8. Ikkyū tokushū, Yamato Bunka Kan, 28 (Poem No. 287).
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 6.
13. Ibid., 127.
14. Ibid., 112.
16. Ichikawa, 76.
17. Nagahara, 147.
18. Varley, 139-140.
19. Ichikawa, 75.
20. Ibid., 76-77.
22. Ibid., 750.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid. This poem is not included in the Kyōunshū.
26. Ibid., 751.
27. Ibid., 752.
28. Ibid.
29. Ichikawa, 76; also 74.
30. Ikkyū oshō nempu, 752.
31. Ibid., 753.
32. Ibid.
33. Arhat originally meant simply a monk who had attained enlightenment. Later, as the two schools of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna diverged, it came to be more associated with the individual enlightenment attained through the rigorous imitation of the historical buddha Shakyamuni as emphasized by the Hīnayāna school. In Mahāyānā Buddhism, the term came to have a slightly pejorative meaning.

34. *Ikkyū oshō nempu*, 753. A revised version of this poem appears in the *Ikkyū tokushū*, 36 (Poem No. 545).

35. *Ikkyū oshō nempu*, 754.

36. Ibid., 756.

37. Ibid., 762.

38. Ichikawa, 140. Those who falsify the dharma are supposed to fall victim to leprosy in one life or another.

39. Ibid., 143.

40. *Ikkyū oshō nempu*, 757; also *Ikkyū tokushū*, 21 (Poem No. 85).

41. *Ikkyū tokushū*, 21 (Poem No. 85).

42. *Ikkyū oshō nempu*, 753-754.

43. Ibid., 757.

44. Ibid., 759.

45. *Ikkyū tokushū*, 25 (Poem No. 203), 41 (Poems Nos. 646, 647, and 648), 47 (Poem No. 825), and 54 (Poem No. 1055).

46. Ibid., 38 (Poem No. 575)

47. Ichikawa, 66.

III. Poems About Zen


3. Ibid., 31; also Hiranō, 5.

4. Demiéville, 52.


7. Ibid., No. 27, 73.

8. Hiranō, 70; Demiéville, 240-241.


10. Demiéville, 53.


12. Rinzai roku, KYZS, XI, 10n.


15. Demiéville, 54.

16. Morohashi Tetsuji, Daikanwa jiten, VIII, 175.


18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., 63.


22. Hekigan roku, KYZS, VII, 64.


24. Kaneko and Nishioka, No. 21, 64.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., 65; see also Philip Yampolsky (tr.), The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, 62.

30. Dumoulin and Sasaki, 8.
32. Kyōunshū, KYZS, 72n.
33. Morohashi, XI, 672-673.
34. Dumoulin and Sasaki, 47.
35. Uï, 47.
37. Ikkyō oshō nempu, 756.
38. Kaneko and Nishioka, No. 22, 64.
39. As translated by Rev. Coates and Rev. Ishizuka, in Honen, the Buddhist Saint, 728.
41. Wu-men kuan (Mu-mon kan), KYZS, 19.

IV. Poems of Criticism and Protest
1. Morohashi, III, 797.
2. Oda Tokunō, Bukkyō daijiten, 1794a.
5. Akizuki, 314.
V. Poems About Love


2. As quoted in ibid., 351. See also Etienne Lamotte, L'Enseignement de Vimalakirti, 111, and Shuo wu kuo ch'eng ching, TSDZ, XIV, 559, 1.1.

3. Suzuki, Outline, 357.

4. Morohashi, XL, 16.

5. Mochizuki does not record this meaning for kaju but "rather its use as a metaphor for the illusive nature of existence, alātacakra, "fire circle" (Mochizuki Shinkyō, Bukkyō daljiten, III, 2952b). It is obvious, however, that this is not the meaning in this case.


8. Fu Tung-hua (comp.), Li Po Shih, 47.


10. Mochizuki, V., 4990c.

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