

ZENGA PAINTINGS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
JOSH GOLDBERG  
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## ABSTRACT

### ZENGA PAINTINGS

By Josh Goldberg

Zenga are the paintings from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, Edo, Japan. They are a "committed and commissioned art," reaching back to the prolegomena of formulated koan study of Zen Buddhism; utilized, acclimatized and assimilated for the sole purpose of tapping the "unconscious" of the student involved.

Zenga are visual ideographs of the Masters who inscribed the koans or riddles, by Masters themselves. They are permeated with Zen Buddhistic thought and character, devoid of all dogmatic and canonical rigidity, artistic and theological.

In the process of Far Eastern ontology, psychological and religious, Zenga traverses the chasms of Void and Nirvana, seeding the student's "Ground of Being" for the cultivation of the Bodhi Tree; the subsistence in the sacraments of everyday living.



That the nature of Zenga lies within the koan, the means for handling the paintings have been to treat them through the practice of Zen: zazen (sitting), mondo (dialogue), koan (riddle), and satori (enlightenment). Each respective chapter (the technique) has its root in Zen Buddhism itself. Without one, the other fails to follow. And as the paintings of Hakuin and Sengai were not looked upon for "aesthetic" possibilities, but rather active meditation, each successive chapter was dealt with according to the standpoint of the student's contemplation of the Zenga. From this the findings were that Zenga, being instructional, had its raison d'etre in the koan. And that these koans are substantiality from substance; the residue of "artistic" consciousness left over from Zen Buddhism, hopefully uniting the student in Enlightenment.

ZENGA PAINTINGS

By

Josh<sup>u</sup> Goldberg

A THESIS

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Art History

1968

The plays?

Whatever happens plays us.  
These are produced (seen-heard-moved)  
in you, me. This makes them "plays"  
in the playful sense on the breezy  
flaming real-life mind stage of attention.  
Attention is the miracle.

-Paul Reps.

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## ZENGA PAINTINGS

### INTRODUCTION

Zenga are the Zen Buddhist paintings from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, Edo, Japan. They are the "direct sketches," an l'art pour l'art<sup>1</sup> yet tutored by the Zen disciplines of zazen, mondo, koan, and its raison d'etre, enlightenment or satori.

The Zenga masters were Masters of Zen and not professional painters. By painting, they wanted to help their followers seek the understanding of the koan; to empty the mind and attain satori.<sup>2</sup> "Thus Zenga paintings may be considered as teaching material for the followers who are pursuing this illumination. The Zen Masters distributed their paintings amongst their disciples who would

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<sup>1</sup>Heinz Brasch, "Zenga: Zen Buddhist Paintings from 17th-19th Century," Oriental Art, VI (Summer, 1960), p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 60.



hang them up at home or fix them to the walls like posters as aids to the liberation of their minds."<sup>3</sup>

Zen paintings are known to have existed as early as the tenth century. Shih-k'o, Hsia Kuei, Liang K'ai, Mu Chi all were inspired by the Zen spirit by choosing such themes as Bodhidharma, Buddha coming Over the Mountains, The Tearing of the Holy Scriptures by Hui-Neng; as Mokuan, Koa, Shubun, and Sesshu (who laid their quiet spirituality to the rolling hills of Japan).

But these were professional painters rather than monks. When he sees a waterfall, the ordinary painter visualizes it as a part of a beautiful landscape. He puts the three-dimensional vision into a two-dimensional painting by reducing the brush strokes to a minimum. At the same time, his well-developed gifts for observation enable him to seize and reproduce the moment he finds most memorable.

The Zenga painter, a Master of Realization, a Zen Buddhist monk, sees the waterfall as water flowing without end which retains its original form. To him the waterfall is not necessarily beautiful. He is supposed to reproduce the depth and eternity of nature in an optically suggestive

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

manner, without the polarity of beautiful and ugly, affirmation and negation. Thus, the transmission of the "spiritualness" of these paintings are not always identical with visual beauty.<sup>4</sup>

Japanese Zen paintings (differentiated from Zenga paintings), were prized by wealthy and royal families alike, as well as rich and powerful daimyo's. Together with the other non-religious painting it can therefore be considered as tokonoma art, tokonoma being a niche in the Japanese living-room where art objects are displayed. It was an art to be appreciated by the nobility as well as the novus homo whose taste in "cultural appreciation" grew simplex munditiis. However, that very striving for aesthetic values in painting is against the spirit of Zen, and it was the Zen monk Ikkyu (1394-1481; Pl. I) who destroyed the facade in order to reveal in painting the true nature and the spiritual force of Zen Buddhism. He then, is the "originator" of Zenga of the Edo Period.<sup>5</sup>

Zenga diffuses entirely from Zen paintings and if Zenga can be considered artistically this is no coincidence, since the spiritual outlook of Zen is to transmit the

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

truth, and truth in its absolute sense must always appeal to something mirrored.

The Zenga paintings comprising of portrait of Zen Masters, unlike the chinso portraits of the Kamakura, were mostly written by the painter himself. A relation between the meaning of the san and the picture was established giving a perfect harmony between calligraphy and painting. Although Zenga, unlike their forerunners, were produced for the common people, and a simple text in easy writing used, the meaning of the san is not understood readily by those who are not conversant with the koan and other literature of Zen. The calligraphy as well as the pictures were "flung" onto the paper, as a prescription of the image of the Master was carried with him, on which he had formed in his mind.<sup>6</sup> The figures are in the true Zen tradition, full of "back-slapping" humour and reeking with "character," executed with an almost fumbling realism--that realism is never entirely absent from Japanese painting.<sup>7</sup>

This type of suiboku-ga, painting with water and black ink, are the un-Selfich caricatures. Un-Self-conscious,

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

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off-hand and "irreverent" notations<sup>8</sup> void of superficialities and kirikane, possessing a vis a tergo, analogous only to that Zen sepulchral dropping of the i-ti-shui,<sup>9</sup> water into the Source. It is this spirit resonance which the Chinese termed chí-yun, dealing with both the physical aspects of brushwork and the spiritual qualities of the painting.<sup>10</sup> Zenga commands this as well as "eloquence" (hsiu) and a sternness (ch'iao) in execution.<sup>11</sup>

Zenga paintings have a close similarity to the "play paintings" of Ch'an Buddhist priests; another among the Chinese schools that inherited the i-p'in style (untrammelled). Aiming not at nobility and purity as did the wen-jen hua (bun jin) or literati,<sup>12</sup> but rather making their astringent points through the most straightforward

<sup>8</sup>Sherman E. Lee, "Japanese Monochrome Painting at Seattle," Artibus Asiae, XIV (1/2), p. 43.

<sup>9</sup>Hajime Nakamura, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1964), p. 179.

<sup>10</sup>Wen Fong, "Chinese Painting a Statement of Method," Oriental Art, IX (Summer, 1963), p. 73.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>12</sup>S. Shimada, "Concerning the I-P'in Style of Painting III;" trans. J. Cahill, Oriental Art, X (Spring, 1961), p. 26.

statements, transmitting without alterations the impetus of Zen Buddhist action. They are "coarse and corrupt, without antique method,"<sup>13</sup> and have a strong centrifugal force apposite Zen teaching.

It is this Zen "teaching" that Zenga arises out of. In Zen-ga "aesthetics" the state of perfection and sacredness are challenged, claiming that one must be above the desire of attaining perfection and serene ideals. This is the main differentiation between Zen paintings (of Sesshu) and Zenga (of Hakuin or Sengai). It [Zenga] favors the apparent unbalance of surface appearance which overrides perfection and order. In Zenga "aesthetics," artistic deformation does not represent the inability of attaining perfection but rather it is a challenge against the definition and idealization which set the limits of artistic exploration.<sup>14</sup>

There is, as Hisamatsu says in Zen and Fine Arts, a subjective and psychological "nature," This "nature" in Zenga art terms is the creative act without having the conscious attempt to create "naturalness." Once the act is

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Shinichi Hisamatsu, Zen and Fine Arts (Kyoto: Bokubi-Sha, 1958).

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made aware, there is no longer an "awareness." If one tells a child to dance, the child then becomes too self-conscious to move. But if one cautiously watches this same child dancing alone, unconscious of the awareness of others, then it becomes spontaneous, a rhythm of Be-ing, a vis vitae pure and un-reflected.

In Zenga, the whole must not be entirely outwardly expressed. The artistic talent must also be hidden within. In these water and ink paintings, there is an unconstrained transcendency over worldly affairs of trivial values and a direct responding to the world of intuitive faith and instinctive living via Zen cultivation. There is no one way as to "experience" these paintings as they do not define any rule or logical progression. This is the reason why Zenga have such a wonderful feeling of exuberance. The Confucian, "Man should follow his own nature"<sup>15</sup> is extemporized here. No way, no oracular, no orthodox method, no right answer--and if there were it could not be Zen; yet in this folly there is wisdom and in this madness there is sanity. Hanshan and Shih-te knew that all earthly wisdom

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<sup>15</sup> Hajime Nakamura, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: Japan, India, China, Tibet (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1964), p. 277.

is but folly.<sup>16</sup> And it follows:

One thought of folly makes a man an ordinary man,  
The next enlightened thought and he is a Buddha.<sup>17</sup>

Han-shan (Pl. II) holds a blank scroll in his hand indicating that written or printed sutras are nothing compared to the book of nature, while Shih-te carries a broom, a symbol of his previous calling as a kitchen boy, with which he sweeps out the cobwebs in our impure soul. They are laughing and carefree for they know that the things which most men strive for are illusions, and that what really counts is not rank or riches but their own Buddha--nature.<sup>18</sup>

Since the Tao, the ultimate essence is all perfading yet formless and without substance. Zen itself cannot be explained in verbal or philosophical terms. It is even more difficult to say "This is a Zenga work" and it is just as difficult to discuss its Zen meaning in the way that it is possible to talk about the meaning of a Christian work

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<sup>16</sup>Hugo Munsterberg, "Zen and Art," The Art Journal, XX(Summer, 1966), p.198.

<sup>17</sup>R. H. Blyth, History of Haiku (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1952), Vol. I, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup>Hugo Munsterberg, "Zen and Art," The Art Journal, (Summer, 1966), p. 198.

such as Grünewald's Isenheim Alterpiece. Perhaps the story of the man who came to the Zen abbot Nan-in for instruction and was served a cup of tea may illuminate at least one aspect of the problem.

The Master, however, instead of stopping when he had filled his visitors cup kept on pouring. The professor watched the overflow until he no longer could restrain himself, and then he said, "It is overfull. No more will go in!" "Like the cup," Nan-in said, "you are full of your opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen [Zenga] unless you first empty your cup?"<sup>19</sup>

Before you begin, you must first rid yourself of all conventional and preconceived notions. To create out of your inner self without conscious effort, to let the spirit move you is this essence. As Shih-ta'o, the great monk of the early Ch'ing period said, "Men whose minds beclouded by (material) things become attached to the dust of the world. Men who are dominated by (material) things reap trouble in their hearts. With such trouble in their hearts they create their pictures and wear themselves out. The dust of the world beclouds their brush and ink, and they become tied up. Such painters are cramped. There is no advantage, only disadvantage in it. It brings no joy to their hearts. As to me: I leave (material) things

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

to be concealed by things and let dust mix with dust.  
 Thus my heart is free from trouble; and as it has no  
 trouble, painting ensues (becomes natural).<sup>20</sup>

Only if this state of mind is achieved, Shih-ta'o goes on, can one reach the all-pervading unity and create out of the inspired heart. Only then will the artists' work, penetrating the very essence of reality give voice to the Tao.

Reflecting the Zenga preoccupation with simplicity and its absence of display, the very relationship of the inspired "writing" brush to the blank paper, symbolizes at once the void (sunyata) of Buddhism and the Tao. And it is not by pure chance that many Zen priests were outstanding calligraphers as well as painters. In fact, calligraphy is often used for Zen sayings, and the forceful character instruct both through their form and meaning.<sup>21</sup>

Zenga offers a drastic antidote to any prevailing mood. It is indifferent to secular values; it is immediate in its experience; it accepts life as it is; it penetrates

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<sup>20</sup> Osvald Siren, The Chinese on the Art of Painting (Peiping: Hong Kong University Press, 1936), p. 172.

<sup>21</sup> Hugo Munsterberg, "Zen and Art," The Art Journal, XX(Summer, 1966), p. 199.

beneath the surface to the essential self, the rustic state of "Is-ness."

At the center nothing.  
 Borrowers don't bother me.  
 In the cold I build a little fire  
 When I am hungry I boil up some grass.  
 I've got no use for the kulak  
 With the big barn and pasture  
 He just sets up a prison for himself.<sup>22</sup>

This is nothing simpler than Joshu's Mu: When I get hungry, I eat. That's it. No more.

Ser, nada mas  
 Y basta  
 Es la absoluta dicha.<sup>23</sup>

Far above and away from social prejudices, lacking in malice but instead an attitude of sympathy for fellow man and creature alike. Through the use of parody and paradox, springing from the simplest of motives, which are anything but intellectual, the Zenga painter "makes love to life." He embraces the aspects of life which seem contradictory to us, not only the separation of the subjective and objective-but also the schism that sets apart body and spirit. "This curious compulsion to resolve life into

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<sup>22</sup>Gary Snyder, Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1958).

<sup>23</sup>Juan Mascaró (trans.) The Upanishads (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1965), n.p.

an either-or-finality is deadlier than death because it makes enemies of us and puts daggers in our prejudiced hands."<sup>24</sup> And this world of separation; the "sensuous" from the "sublime," the "expressive" from the "contemplative" can lead only to what is a matter of fashion and not of content and form. The Zenga work is one which combines these seemingly opposite qualities, producing an believable totality of expression at once sensuously visual, and as a rebus of intrigue. A flash of Insight into the world of the Spirit which transcends any fashion and evokes that only criterion of a meaningful work, timelessness.

In dedicating himself, the Zenga painter effects a transormation of the values of mankind into the world of this spirit. He does not, because he cannot, set out to describe the Spirit (or Zen). It becomes the fruit of his labors, however it happens, to produce a good work let alone a great one, by combining the smell of the earth with a vision of heaven, exonerating the foibles of humanity in the name of the totality of All-Things.<sup>25</sup> The Zenga painter expresses life, imagined and real, idealistic and factual; the life that is reflected onto the still waters

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<sup>24</sup>Richard Lippold, "To Make Love to Life," College Art Journal, XIX (Summer, 1960), p. 298.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 302.

of the Mind. He must let his Self go "tarashi-komi,"  
 spilling into the recesses of its Echo. His Buddha-nature,  
 like the waters trickling into the cracks of his being,  
 fill into an ocean of consciousness. Then there will be  
 no "need to discuss the white and red color."<sup>26</sup> The brush  
 will follow; in the picture will be the great opening of  
 the "no-gate" (wu-men).<sup>27</sup>

Here then is the Zen of the Zenga, the spirit of  
 the Spirit which reveals the Essence Itself:

To drip a drop of water is to drink the universal  
 water.<sup>28</sup>

I am not-I; my soul and the Over-soul are one.  
 There is no duality of the knower and the known. But I  
 am not-I, I am also I.<sup>29</sup> There is a doubled and (intellec-  
 tually) unresolvable contradiction, so that if we admit  
 that the basis of Zenga painting is paradox, we must also  
 say that Zenga is the very essence of its Weltanschauung.

<sup>26</sup>Noritake Tsuda, Ideals of Japanese Painting  
 Tokyo: The Sanseibo Co., Ltd., 1940), p. 35.

<sup>27</sup>Isshū Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Zen Dust  
 (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), p. 28.

<sup>28</sup>R. H. Blyth, Oriental Humour (Tokyo: Hokoseido  
 Press, 1959), p. iii.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid, p. i.



When there is a total activity, mind and body un-separated, when an action is done, not only by somebody, but to somebody, for a certain purpose, there is Zen and correspondingly, Zen-ga.

This is the true "picking up and playing" (nenro)<sup>30</sup> of the Master. It is the koan.

According to Dr. Suzuki the characteristics of enlightenment are "irrationality, intuitive insight, authoritativeness, affirmativeness, a sense of exhaltation, and momentariness. It is the breaking of something understood (through the koan); it needs no proof of itself; it is in no sense destructive or pessimistic or concerned with sin or punishment. It is a state of being here and also everywhere, an infinite and timeless expansion of one's own nevertheless unalienable being. It is an odd and deeply significant thing that Zen begins with a smile. The story as given in the sixth case of the Mumonkan (koan anthology) is this:

When the World-Honored One was on the Mount of the Holy Vulture, he held up a flower to the assembled monks. All were silent. Mahakasyapa the Venerable only smiled.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

It is the same "occultic" response that gives rise to the koan, this enigma, riddle, when properly understood is the "counting of stripes on the tulip." What then is the meaning of Dharma's coming from the West? It is no more than: Basho--

Fleas, lice  
A horse pissing  
Near my pillow.

And no less than:

Via, Verita, Vita.

Zenga is the koan. The koan is Zenga.<sup>32</sup> A visual experience offered to those who have the courage of Ulysses to solve, An adaptation from the abstract word-of-mouth to that of the concrete, three-dimensional. A glimpse into the Way on the edge of our fingertips and on the tips of our tongues. What more can one ask? It is only a breath --quick now! Take it! Look into the painting, for here is the wisdom of ages handed down from Master to disciple; a kaliedoscopic immigration into enlightenment.

Zenga paintings being the graphic example of the koan have been put into active use by Zen Buddhist Masters for their students. Concretely and completely acclimatized

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<sup>32</sup>Heinz Brasch, "Zenga, Zen Buddhist Paintings from 17th-19th Century," Oriental Art, VI (Summer, 1960), p. 60.

from the "case records" (kung-an) of their Chinese predecessors<sup>33</sup> (the records what sages and worthy men regarded as the highest Zen-Ch'an principles), and reviewed alike by us and by the hundreds and thousands of bodhisattvas of the three realms and the ten directions. "This principle accords with the spiritual source, tallies with the 'mysterious' meaning, destroys birth and death (samsara), and transcends passions."<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, the paintings in which these principles were embodied, cannot be understood by logic; it cannot be transmitted in words; be explained in writing; nor measured by reason. One has to accept them at the scene of koan and questioner. But in order to penetrate Zenga it is necessary to do "Dharma combat" with them. And to do this, one has to know and accept that these Zenga are what is referred to as the "direct pointing of Bodhidharma at Shao-lin-ssu"<sup>35</sup> that is, the direction pointing to man's own mind.

If there is an understanding of an enlightenment which cannot be "settled," a student will go to his Master about it, and the roshi on the basis of the koans, will

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<sup>33</sup> Isshū Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Zen Dust (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), p. 4.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

"settle" it for him.<sup>36</sup> If there is still a doubt in the mind of the student, when he leaves dokusan, the private interview in which this is usually transacted, the roshi will refer him to the "visual koan," knowing that sometimes a concrete image will aptly turn about the student's mind. This is what Zenga is all about. "A touch of wisdom that lights up the darkness of feeling and discrimination, a golden scraper that cuts away the film clouding the eye, a sharp ax that severs the root of existence and non-existence, a divine mirror that reflects the original face of both the sacred and the secular. Through it the intention of the patriarchs is made abundantly clear, the Buddha-mind is laid open and revealed. For the essentials of the complete transcendence, final emancipation, total penetration, and identical attainment, nothing can be surpassed."<sup>37</sup> A graphic demonstration of THE Principle. To awaken the questioner to the deeper levels of understanding, uniquely, with no instruction in dogma, nor precepts.

If you understand a single koan right now, you can clearly understand all the teachings of the ancients as well as those of the men today.<sup>38</sup>

Zenga paintings are poetry in motion, for they are the Parnassus of our subconscious, the gentle landscape

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

where the lightning of satori (enlightenment) mutely flashes. It becomes the means to "ride the wind"; to recognize that "the All are the One and the One is the All."<sup>39</sup>

The Zenga koan forms an integral part of the education in Zen Buddhism. The roshi handles the painting from the standpoint of a teacher (and artist secondary), ad libitum, bringing to light the student's problem. There is no use for "academicism" here, only spontaneity, as this is characteristic of intuitive perception and satori. Therefore these paintings are unthought-out, crude, sometimes vulgar, and wonderfully refreshing. They can be as clear as the trees growing outside your window or as vaporous as:

Illusory dreams, phantom flowers--  
   sixty-seven years.  
 A white bird vanishes in the mist,  
 Autumn waters merge with the sky.<sup>40</sup>

Like Ummon's "one-word barriers" (ichijikan)<sup>41</sup> the paintings BECOME a dialogue with the participant. This duologue in Zen terms is called mondo (wen-ta), an exchange of questions and answers.<sup>42</sup> Normally, mondo takes place

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 171.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

when a student questions a roshi, but this is where the similarity ends. Instead of the student asking the nature of a koan, he poses this same question to the painting which has on it the reflecting image of the question and questioner, answer and non-answer. The painting then takes on the part of a Master, utilizing the student's own zeal, frustration and understanding in making for a clear response.

The Zenga mondo is the silent preparation which will lead the student into the heart of the matter. That is, he will set up this aggressive tête a tête which enables him to be in the right frame of mind for the correspondence of the visual koan. Now the mondo is only the second step on the ladder of understanding and achieving a satori-end, via Zenga.

The starting point in which the painting becomes alive, activated entity is when the viewer looks upon this with his whole being. This is done through and in the technique of zazen. Zazen is sitting (with mondo and koan) and is the means of revealing to us the true nature of the Dharmakaya (hisshin); the essence of being<sup>43</sup> that is transmitted through the Zenga work to the very core of

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., pp. 47-48.

subsistence. With the aid of the Zenga painting-koan, the student has his first glimpse "into the undifferentiated realm of the Dharma-kaya."<sup>44</sup> To deepen this insight into this realm, to be acquainted intimately with this, our original home, and to make it our constant dwelling place, the student studies this graphic example knowing "that underlying great doubt there is great satori; where there is thorough questioning there will be a thoroughgoing experience of awakening."<sup>45</sup>

"Dogen taught that zazen is the 'gateway to total liberation,' and Keizan-zenji, one of the great Japanese Soto Patriarchs, has declared that only through Zen sitting is the 'mind of man illumined.' Elsewhere Dogen wrote that 'even Buddha, who was a born sage, sat for six years until his supreme enlightenment, and so towering a spiritual figure as Bodhidharma sat for nine years facing the wall.' (Also Dogen and all other Patriarchs sat this way)."<sup>46</sup> It is no different while making use of the Zenga painting. For this sitting with the Zenga can lead to a "Self-realization which is neither idle reverie nor vacant

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>46</sup> Philip Kapleau, The Three Pillars of Zen (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 9.



inaction but an intense struggle to gain control over the mind and then to use it, like a silent missile, to penetrate the barrier of the five senses and the discursive intellect."<sup>47</sup>

This drive toward enlightenment is powered by a painfully felt inner bondage which is led by the conviction that one can gain satori. But it is in zazen that the Zenga painting, with all its perplexing characteristics, takes on a body-force-of-mind for the breakthrough of this new freedom. Energies which formerly were squandered in compulsive drives and purposeless actions are preserved and channeled into a unity through Zenga by zazen, or Zen sitting. Here is where the mind attains a One-pointedness.<sup>48</sup>

A monk once said to Dairyō Oshō: "The physical body decomposes. What is the indestructible Dharmakaya?" Dairyō answered with this verse:

"Blooming mountain flowers  
Are like golden brocade;  
Brimming mountain waters  
Are blue as indigo."<sup>49</sup>

Zazen has always been regarded as fundamental to Zen discipline, whether reflecting on "three pounds of

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Isshū Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Zen Dust (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), p. 48.

flax" or a Zenga painting. Centuries of experience have demonstrated that it is the easiest way to still the mind, and as an instrument of Self-discovery. In the long history of Zen, thousands upon thousands have attained enlightenment through zazen practices. Satori is the first sight of Truth, and whether this is merely a glimpse or a sharp, deep view, it can be enlarged through zazen practice of further koans, visual (Zenga) or "otherwise."<sup>50</sup>

Zazen is the technique for the actualization of Zenga through our own True-nature.<sup>51</sup>

Ka!<sup>52</sup> The spontaneous cry made at the moment of the attainment of satori, and thus by inference, satori or enlightenment itself. Satori, or "seeing into one's own nature"<sup>53</sup> is the awakening of the Buddha-nature in every human being. This is the ultimate aim. Zenga has this great power rhythmically present and in unison with all created force. The painting was done by a Master who

<sup>50</sup> Philip Kapleau, The Three Pillars of Zen (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 20.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Isshū Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Zen Dust (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), p. 82.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 228.

has attained this Illumination, and this insight into the nature of things is as lucid as a haikai moon . . .

usually the same moon,  
But as soon as there are plum flowers  
It becomes a different moon.<sup>54</sup>

One only has to look.

As "no words are employed in this transmission which in Zenga, is considered to be the only method by which the ultimate truth of Buddhism"<sup>55</sup> is reached; the final encompassing goal of zazen, mondo, koan are

Enwrapped in billows of white clouds,  
I do not see the white clouds;  
Absorbed in the sound of flowing water,  
I do not hear the flowing water<sup>56</sup>

of a satori-end.

These four (three and the "expectant" result) events are directed towards Zenga painting with the faith that it will become "One Dharma Seal"<sup>57</sup> with that of the disciple.

Zenga painters, however exceptional they were as artists, were Masters of Zen Buddhism. There are eight of them who contribute to Zenga, but only two who are the primum mobile of this painting. They are Hakuin, the

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 109.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 120.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 240.

first, and Sengai, the last of the Zenga painters. Both were also two of the most outstanding and powerful Zenji's in the history of Zen Buddhism. Therefore, the paintings discussed will be primarily theirs, as they embody the best of Zenga and of Zen.

Hakuin Ekaku (or Hakuin Zenji), 1685-1768, the temple priest who shaved his head giving him the name Ekaku, was the son of a samurai,<sup>58</sup> and the founder of modern Japanese Zen.<sup>59</sup> His writings on Zen, for the most part in Chinese style, are rough, vigorous and full of vivid imagery and graphic expression;<sup>60</sup> as are the paintings of this Master, who managed to translate his wisdom and teaching into the medium of painting. For his lay followers and students, many of them the simple people from neighboring farms and villages, he wrote and painted in a Japanese "syllabary" which could be easily "read." In these works he stresses morality, obedience, all the "psycho-ethical" disciplines of Buddhism; faith, honesty,

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>59</sup>Hugo Munsterberg, "Zen and Art," The Art Journal, XX (Summer, 1966), p. 60.

<sup>60</sup>Isshū Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Zen Dust (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), p. 25.

teaching experience (koans, etc.) with the humour and charm of a folk-song.

He trained his disciples severely in traditional methods exhorting them to zazen practice and further study of koans,<sup>61</sup> either written anthologies, spoken, or in the form of Zenga.

Hakuin's teaching was that "Men must realize the Absolute Mind through their zazen practice and their koan study; through zazen practice, koan study, and daily life that the realization must ever be deepened so that it may be visible in every thought, word and act, whatever these may be."<sup>62</sup>

"Hakuin Zen," the use of systemized koan study,<sup>63</sup> was an innovation created by this Master where the importance of the koan was epitomized by poetry, painting, or the combination of both (including and through calligraphy). He knew that in the curriculum of the monastery, koan study unquestionably held first place. Every monk studied koans under the personal supervision of the Master of the monastery. "When a monk entered 'sodo' the Master gave him his first koan; he did not choose it himself. On this koan the monk meditated until he had attained a satori

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

deep enough to satisfy the Master that was already to begin his' practice with satori.'" <sup>64</sup> The means in which the koans were employed were left up to the Master.

Hakuin's Zenga painting as well as his own koans were created with the knowledge of an "inside man." He knew that enlightenment was the personal experience of Reality, of man's only true dictum nosce te ipsum. The quest for this experience was the most difficult quest upon which man can embark. It demands of him, faith, determination, sacrifice, and above all, passion. Without the sustained sense of urgency which passion imparts, the goal cannot be achieved. All the great men of Zen have understood this. The koans were devised to keep the sense of urgency sustained. The seemingly unsolvable problem goads the disciple on mercilessly; when at last it is solved, the assurance that the insight attained tallies with the insight of the enlightened men before him renews the disciple's faith in himself and his determination to press on. The koans are indeed priceless aids in the quest for the experience of enlightenment." <sup>65</sup> Hakuin knew the value of these "Zen sketches," and painted them with this same urgency.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

In his Zenga is the Buddha-nature of all sentient beings. Those wanting to seek the Buddha-nature, only have to look introspectively to themselves through the mirror of Zenga. "If you wish to seek Buddha, you must first have insight into your own real nature, without this insight, what benefit will you derive from reciting the Nembutsu or chanting the sutras? The word "Buddha" means "awakened." When you awaken, if it is your own mind you seek or Buddha having a tangible form, you are a foolish fellow. It is like a man who is seeking for fish. He must first of all look into the water because, since fish are the product of water, outside there are no fish. Just so, he who wishes to seek Buddha must first of all look into his own mind because, since Buddha is the product of the mind, outside mind there is no Buddha."<sup>66</sup> Without this insight, or knowledgeable Zen, Zenga paintings remain at the profane nadir of being another "charm" in the world of "art nouveau."

As the spirit of Hakuin's Zenga is closely related to his Zen, the character of his brush and ink are in tempo with his Buddha-nature. If this is missed so is Zen and Zen-painting.

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

....It is not transmitted through books but  
directly to the heart (Zen).  
On a bit of paper, create darks and lights--  
mountains amid faint rain,  
(and you were) an inspired ink painting of the  
setting sun.<sup>67</sup>

Sengai (1750-1837), a farmer's son from Mino, consummates Zenga painting. Sprung from the people, he became a Zen monk, then abbot of Shofu-kuji, and in 1811, at the age of sixty-two, he resigned his abbacy and spent the remaining twenty-five years of his life as a "free man."<sup>68</sup> This "free man" is evident in his paintings which are resultant from his own kind of Zen interpretation, enlightenment and spontaneous activity with the artist's brush. His paintings are very similar to that of the haiga, paintings representing haiku, and also otsue-e, folk art, probably<sup>69</sup> because of the close interest and friendship for humble people. He never kept himself aloof from humanity; indeed during the last phase of his life he was so accessible that he was moved to write a verse:

<sup>67</sup>Jon Carter Covell, Under the Seal of Sesshū (New York: The Pamphilis Press, Inc., 1941), p. 85.

<sup>68</sup> Philip Rawson, "Sengai," Oriental Art, IX (Autumn, 1963), p. 175.

<sup>69</sup>Hugo Munsterberg, "Japanese Folk-Art," Oriental Art, VIII (Summer, 1962), p. 69.



They seem to think  
 my study is a kind of lavatory,  
 They each come  
 with a roll of paper.  
 (for him to do a drawing or calligraphy on)<sup>70</sup>

Sengai's humour was the humour of the "plebs."

His paintings were meant to be understood by lay followers and students alike, who had their roots in the earthy atmosphere of Edo, Japan. Like Hakuin, and the other Zenga, his abrupt brushwork was used in Zen monasteries as a part of the process of training, and such Zenga helped to indicate to the Master the stage of spiritual awareness the student had reached.<sup>71</sup>

Sengai, like all his contemporaries, was heir to an enormous fund of ready-made motives, icons, and designs created by a continuous tradition nearly two-thousand years old. Always in Japan there was some traditional image or precedent that could be adapted to virtually every situation. Sengai himself repeated countless times the standard images of Far Eastern iconography-Buddha's Hotei's, Darumas, Lao Tzu's, Han-shan's and Shih-te's. But where the consciously "artistic" artist of the age would have fallen

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<sup>70</sup> Philip Rawson, "Sengai," Oriental Art, IX (Autumn, 1963), p. 175.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

into the repetition or echoes of other men's art, Sengai laughed and made a new thing. (Sometime no one had ever made before, or would ever make again.)

The image is the pretext, the grain of catalyst on to which his forms were instantly precipitated. The precipitate is a clutch of crude inartistic lines. For Sengai never bothered with the appearance of his pictures. It was not made to flatter any man's aesthetic susceptibilities. Each of his lines or patches is the trace of a unique, unrepeatable sequence of muscular spasms that reveal the here-and-now activity of the mind and body. Not yesterday's or the day before's, his own or anyone else's. And the spasms are not mere spasms, they are the authenticated light of Zen Buddhist teaching at the very highest.<sup>72</sup> They are "vulgar" in the sense that they "swim with the stream" of all things concordant with this life; they are irresponsible in their responsibility to freedom as a Buddhist ideal; and are jocose in the most "tragic" sense of the word.

"These stock responses are affectionately mocked, side-stepped, cheated, poked through by Sengai's stubby

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

finger of fun, just as the stock responses to verbal ideals are in the famous mundos."<sup>73</sup> Idle scribbles, not to be "taken seriously," meaningful of life . . .

...a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury  
signifying nothing.

In Sanskrit terminology, art operates through its appeal to the vasanas, whose energized trace of experience with their concomittant emotional responses that lie stored in our minds. Buddhist theory holds "that these same vasanas are the product of past activity of all kinds; their seminal possibilities lie in the storehouse of the Mind; and if we are capable of grasping the nature of the vasanas we may be capable of intuiting the nature of the Mind. We can only communicate by appealing to the vasanas. When we talked to each other or made art for each other we used them. The forms of our expression play upon them, the more so as feeling and "value judgement" are involved rather than mere knowledge."<sup>74</sup>

"The bravura of Zenga demands immediacy and kinetic response. What happened just then on the paper happened with untrammelled verve. We are challenged to measure up to that verve. Because if we do we shall see awakening

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

before us an image of the active mind busy fabricating its gestalten and perceive directly the nature of the vasanas. Tidy and noble versions of the eternal Verities, verbal and visual, providing a comfortable home for the spirit, and an ever present danger to the pious of every age."<sup>75</sup>

The personal vasanas of these Zenga painters (Hakuin, Takuan, Isshi, Ungo, Fugai, Suio, Torei, and Sengai) tickle our own vasanas into life. The characters of Zen teaching are the same characteristics of Zenga and should not be regarded as individual separate entities. Vasanas, or spirit, here is the root of creative artistic activity. As this spirit has no form, it is not a permanent entity. It comes and goes instantaneously, yet it exists at the highest in the creative mind.

As Hisamatsu says, "Zen is the realization of formless self and Zen art is the expression of the selfless image."<sup>76</sup> It is the "moon behind the clouds, the symbol of the Clear Mind that sustains the world of apparent particulars."<sup>77</sup> A (Sengai) painting has inscribed on it

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>Shinichi Hisamatsu, Zen and Fine Arts (Kyota: Bokubi-Sha, 1958).

<sup>77</sup>Philip Rawson, "Sengai," Oriental Art, IX Autumn, 1963), p. 176.

"Pictures of the world have certain rules they must conform to. Mine are free from any rules." Says Buddha:  
 "The primary Dharma itself is no Dharma!" As this is made clear, the paintings will themselves be made clear; the motives, the actualities and the revelations. The zazen, mondo, koan and the realization of satori will all be nothing more than "two mirrors mutually reflecting one another with no shadow between them."

Because the great bell is of itself soundless,  
 When it is struck by the bell-beam  
 It reverberates with a flood of sound.<sup>78</sup>

The following chapters will be dealt with concomitantly. As one would be in "Dharma combat"; e.g., the penetration of the koan by the "technique" of zazen. Through the chapter on zazen, the progression will be made into the mondo, koan, and hopefully the sight of Enlightenment. The chapter will be the Zenga painting itself, and will be handled as Zen-ga; an entity without being, formless as its true-form and colorless as the "colorless white cloud of Zen." It will be an art of non-art; aesthetically rich in its artlessness, graceful

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<sup>78</sup> Isshū Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Zen Dust (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), p. 53.

and spontaneous as a block of concrete, witty and light as  
 a deathman's holiday. As red is red and green is green,  
 so red is green and green red. I will point at Zenga, as  
 I will (try to) point at the moon without the loss of a  
 finger. If this can be accepted, then Zenga can Be. One  
 more thing should be remembered:

However we look at it.  
 There's nothing so black  
 As snow<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>R. H. Blyth, Japanese Life and Character in  
 Senryu (Tokyo: Hokoseido Press, 1960), p. 72.

## Chapter I.

### ZAZEN

Re-stated, zazen is Zen sitting. Beginning here, is the active involvement of student and Self, Zenga and Zen. Through the practice that is known as zazen, the initiate can gain the importance of the painting (koan). But only through intense occupation is the meaning of the Zenga at once All-important and meaningful. It is on the ground of Zenga that the students' unitive cognizance harmonizes in zazen and embarks directly upon the Yoga of Knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

By continual sitting with the Zenga, the I-ness of human being or Ichhaftigkeit (ts'ao-yuan)<sup>2</sup> remains subjugated to the conscious will; and as the student becomes a parvirajaka or traveler throughout the painting,<sup>3</sup> without dogma or words, he enables a concrete experience in

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<sup>1</sup>Aldous Huxley, The Perennial Philosophy (New York: Harper & Row, 1945), p. 90.

<sup>2</sup>Hajime Nakamura, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1964), p. 179.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 180.

zazen (as a universal truth manifesting itself in the form of Zenga). The painting asks of him "What is Buddha?" But only transcending his illusions for the divine Reality through zazen, can he answer "three pounds of flax."<sup>4</sup>

A Zenga painting of Zazen or Meditation (Pl. III) by Sengai reads:

To be a mere sitting Buddha,  
you had better kill the Buddha.

What does this mean in terms of zazen and Zenga? Is this blasphemy? (How is it possible to admonish in such a manner?)

Sengai is no fool. He knows the nature of human beings and their habits, thus he justifiably warns: To sit without exercising the supported meditation it would be better to do away with Buddha completely.<sup>5</sup> Sitting or performing zazen with the antinomic ideal that one will attain Buddha-hood is as false as the mistaking of copper for gold.

This Zenga shows a little figure seated in the traditional lotus-position. The san or inscription, leads

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>5</sup>Heinz Brasch, "Zenga: Zen Buddhist Paintings from 17th-19th Century," Oriental Art, VI (Summer, 1960), p. 63.



the eye compositionally downward to the spiritually "intense" face of the disciple. The student studying Zen was to "identify" with the figure, and remember most of all the warning voiced in the Zenga of Master Sengai: as well as the teachings in shikan-taza (meditation technique),<sup>6</sup> the koans of Joshu and Hakuin, and the kyosaku (stick) of Rinzai.<sup>7</sup>

In the Zenga, Sengai's sparse brushwork touches the blank paper with a critical Eye. A lesson in zazen emphasized through painting. Quick and immediate in the application, an unthought-out composition communicating the directness of man to material to man, and coming to growth by the route of the zazen obedient. A creative ACT through the zazen wholeness of being whole. An Escape from samsara; a process of being born again and again, each time with greater "perfection" of Being. The immense joy of Be-ing alive more and more, in an ever recurring new possibility thrusting forth to the student from zazen and Zenga alike, not the Buddha, into an expression such as Sengai's. And to add to the Master's caution: The

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<sup>6</sup>Philip Kapleau, Three Pillars of Zen (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. xvi.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

painting itself is neither Buddha-like nor zazen-full.

Zazen is the "technique" of attaining a Zen one-pointedness when applied to the Zenga, thus bringing about Buddha-nature. When a Zenga of a monk in zazen occurs, the painter is telling the participant that this is the way or not the way; with the regulation of the breath, the stilling of the ego and the unification of the mind and body, with a cultivation of a profound silence, there are established the optimum preconditions for looking into the heart-mind and discovering there the true nature<sup>8</sup> of the Master's painting.

"If one realizes the truth that all things are the same through zazen, he, the disciple immediately returns to his True Nature."<sup>9</sup> As Illusion and Enlightenment are to be derived from the natural character of man, in Zenga this character is primary to its importance, For this is the ground where nature BECOMES Mind. Buddha-mind is created by self-nature through zazen, and the student must not look for the Buddha (by sitting alone) with the

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<sup>8</sup> Philip Kapleau, Three Pillars of Zen (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. xvi.

<sup>9</sup> Hajime Nakamura, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1964), pp. 278-79.

body. Self-nature is Enlightenment, the sentient being is namely the Buddha,<sup>10</sup> a state of the One Vehicle (Ekayana);<sup>11</sup> only when everyday life, just as it is, is practiced through zazen. Zazen is the plunge into the pure nature of "thusness" (tathata)<sup>12</sup> as Hakuin's (Pl. IV) painting indicates:

Hey, bonze!  
 Wonder of wonders  
 you're doing zazen today.  
 Sure!

A fat little monk doing zazen. "SURE!" The pithy affirmation of the "real aspect of all things (dharmata)."<sup>13</sup> The search for the Reality experienced in zazen, portrayed in and throughout Zenga, being NOTHING more than the world of daily living. "As the real aspect is all things, all things ARE this aspect. This character, this body, this mind, this world, this me, this zazen, this painting, this wind and rain, this sequence of daily going, living, sitting and lying down, this series of melancholy, joy, action and inaction, this stick and wand, this Buddha's smile, this transmission and reception of the doctrine, this study and practice, this evergreen pine and ever unbreakable bamboo,"<sup>14</sup> are THE SPIRIT of Each line and patch of brushwork found

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 279.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 280.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 352.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 352.

living in the Zenga. The culmination of Statement through painting by painting to the receiver, the student of Zen Buddhism.

Raising  
The Tea-kettle on the hanger  
To heaven.

This (part of a) painting by Hakuin Zenji (Pl. V) is like Emerson's Hitch your wagon to a star! but has more to it. The jizai is an iron rod suspended from the ceiling over the fireplace with a metal arrangement to regulate the height of the kettle. Dajizai, in Sanskrit Mahesvara, is the King of the Thousand Worlds. (His statue has eight arms and three eyes, and he rides a white bull.) He is worshipped by the Brahmins as controlling all life and death.<sup>15</sup> Through this "cryptic" work lies the student's "raising to heaven," the achievement of Nirvanic insight. The insight gained through the penetration of its zenga meaning by zazen, breaking the hyphen between confusion-understanding; leading to the actualization of the student's true knowledge, no longer suspended by his own "jizai" over the fires of Hell and under the dome of Heaven.

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<sup>15</sup>R. H. Blyth, Japanese Life and Character in Senryu (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1960).

With concentration, the darkness of the ink against the white becomes the student's symbolic "foot-steps into enlightenment." The involvement in Zenga is the Involvement into the Fundamental Principle, making the universe "universally co-relative, interdependent, and mutually originating."<sup>16</sup> Having no single being existing independently, it intersects the coordinates between zazen and Zenga.

No aesthetics, only that putting down of ink and brush with Mind. The meaning of Zenga and Zazen, not the values of beauty, relative to the teaching of Zen, committed and commissioned for the purpose of exploration into the nature of one's Self. When the sitter becomes AWARE of the intent of Hakuin's Zenga, zazen is efficacious.

I hold it  
I tell of it, standing  
I look there  
Standing<sup>17</sup>

Holding onto it, focusing on this "exercise" (koan), Zenga and student exist simultaneously. Once taken through

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<sup>16</sup> Isshū Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, Zen Dust (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), p. 182.

<sup>17</sup> Gary Snyder, Myths and Texts (New York: Totem Press, 1960), p. 37.

zazen, life is acting in the ever-present NOW. Not looking for or through the "deeds of men" but generating THOUGHT, working its existence by fertilizing itself in the hands of Zenga Master, and student. Now breathing and non-breathing, becoming and disbecoming, subsisting and non-subsistence; without sin or grace, heaven or hell, jizai or Dajizai.

Zenga is the tool in which the student cuts away his delusions of Reality. The tool bearing a double edge; one side the Zenga painting, the other, zazen (Zen) practice. A vajra sheathed in the mode of concentration, drawn and used so as the student can let go of his delusion and fall into this meditation. Until then, he will be like Hakuin's Monkey (Pl. VI):

The monkey is reaching for the moon in the water.  
Until death overtakes him he'll never give up.  
If he'd let go the branch and disappear in the  
  deep pool,  
The whole world would shine with dazzling pureness.

Hakuin sees that the student will have to use both hands to let go of the branch so that he may fall into his Self. Once in the cool waters of the Mind, doer and deed are undivided and the Eye of the Mind is the same with

the eye with which I see God is the eye with  
which God sees me<sup>18</sup>

The form of Hakuin's Monkey remains nondescript, non-corpulant, and light as the atmosphere that surrounds it. True to the formlessness of the Zen Mind, the painting instills a tranquility of Essence. It becomes the coeval existing of the three aspects of Times Past, Present, and Future, on the plane of one Reality. The presence of the contemplating monkey (like student), the dropping of the monkey and the monkey in the water. The Zenga has the same spirit resonance as Basho's Furu-ike-ya:

The old pond,  
A frog jumps in,--  
The sound of the water.

It is this reverberation of the water that likens monkey, frog, and student to enlightenment. Sitting in zazen, but releasing oneself to fully, that the same "sound" as Basho's frog and Hakuin's monkey becomes absolute on the Ground of All-Being. Freedom from rationality through the recourse of the Zenga enables Hakuin to impart ultimately what he is portraying as "monkey" as the concrete, not fanciful vision of Zen. This use of highly

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<sup>18</sup> Lucien Stryk and Takashi Ikemoto, Zen Poems, Prayers, Sermons, Anecdotes, Interviews (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963), p. xxx.

evocative terms to create the type of image which Zenga has as its substance, is analogous to the true nature of Buddha that comes not so much in words but through experience. The universal truth in the human being and not in a universal proposition.<sup>19</sup> Hakuin's portrayal is the empirical voice speaking to the student from the depths of this pool called Mind. As the shock of the cold water hits his face, supreme enlightenment is as simple and natural as the falling into the pond. If it looks difficult it is because it is so simple:

Not knowing how close the truth,  
People look for it in the far  
Like the man dying with thirst,  
Still cries for a drink amidst the water.<sup>20</sup>

No-thing, no doctrine but the creation of a mental vacuum (zazen) to prepare him for this "plunge into the Void, into the abyss of his own Primal-nature."<sup>21</sup> As the Great white Ox symbolizes this Buddha-mind, Hakuin's monkey is

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<sup>19</sup> Hajime Nakamura, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1964), p. 196.

<sup>20</sup> Heinz Brasch, "Zenga: Zen Buddhist Paintings from 17th-19th Century," Oriental Art, VI (Summer, 1960), p. 58.

<sup>21</sup> Philip Kapleau, Three Pillars of Zen (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 199.



representative of the "music that lies within the flute." Only through the playing of the instrument and its knowledge of its source, can the student realize its Prolegomena. Then there is no need to fall into the pond, for he is already there!

The Zenga Master is a sage (sheng-jen): a Man not a god. He is in accord with the principles of an ideal. In his art, he is also sage-like; the corporate idea of Wu, the concept of the creator and created amalgamated with the "consummate" human being who realizes this principle of nothingness and is able to manifest every phenomenon, giving the correct way of life to every person through his art,<sup>22</sup> Zenga.

But as one cannot catch a catfish with one's hands, much less with an unmanageable gourd, one cannot realize Zenga without the practice of zazen. It now becomes obvious that without this zazen preparation Zenga loses all its intrinsic meaning which we know to be Zen Buddhism. Without zazen, Zenga is reduced to the common denominator of Far Eastern painting: and to talk of Zenga without

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<sup>22</sup> Hajime Nakamura, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1964), p. 281.

zazen, mondo, koan, and satori, would be reductio ad absurdum: Thoreau--

As naturally as the oak bears an acorn,  
and the vine a gourd, a man bears a poem  
either spoken or done.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>R. H. Blyth, Japanese Life and Character in Senryu (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1960), p. 14.

## Chapter II.

### MONDO

In mondo, the dialogue, there are no semantic connections between the "questions and answers." The questions and answers are given in a moment, unlike sustained development in Greek dialogue. The answers may seem strange, but it is said that many of those who heard the answers attained enlightenment. The answers are not given in the form of universal propositions, rather they are grasped through the most basic, steadfast and impromptu characteristic known as intuition.<sup>1</sup>

Beyond teaching; apart from tradition.  
Not founded on words and letters.  
Pointing directly to the human mind.  
Seeing into one's nature and attaining Buddhahood.<sup>2</sup>

Transcending all teaching (as a logical progression) and pointing directly to the primary nature of the student, mondo begins to take shape through the form of Zenga.

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<sup>1</sup>Hajime Nakamura, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1964), p. 190.

<sup>2</sup>Heinz Brasch, "Zenga: Zen Buddhist Paintings from 17th-19th Century," Oriental Art, VI (Summer, 1960), p. 58.

The dialogue of questions and answers usually is between the student and his roshi. The difference here, is the fact that the Zenga replaces the Master, enabling the student to become less aware of his presence and to feel a "security" in the concrete image. What happens is that the mondo is carried out as the student sits in zazen, preparing himself to do battle with the koan. As soon as he asks the most rudimentary question, or rather, as soon as his Mind asks this question, the very thought itself insures his conflict between the Self and the question raised (koan).

The job of the Zenga is to help or guide him along the koan, so as this dialogue may result in a profitable end, and not in total frustration. In the representing of a painting, the visual perception which we are accustomed to, is set in front of the student. Relating him with the Zenga or this graphic exercise, the student assimilates himself into the dialogue, knowing there are no right answers, but only the intrinsic "looking into the mirrorless image." As no one can really tell him whether or not this perception is accurate, excepting the roshi as to various degrees of perception, the responsibility is largely the student's. He will know whether the insight gained is

tantamount or comparable to the Master's. Examples of this are in the koan anthologies of Zen Masters; the enlightened student always having that "certain way" about him--in his answers, mentally and physically.

The Zenga painting not only acts as the student's dialogue, but in itself is this very same dialogue. It is the converse carried out by the Zenga Master in the Zenga painting. Putting down the ink with brush the mondo became carried out (in light of the koan), raising and answering the question at the same time. It is therefore important that the student see into this painting, for here is the actual Insight achieved by the Enlightened Master. This is what differentiates Zenga painting from the ordinary realm of "just" painting. And without this mondo, there would be no Zenga nor koan nor Zen practice.

The Zenga painting by Sengai (Pl. VII), is an illustration of a famous poem taken from the Questions and Answers in Zen,<sup>3</sup> by Fudaishi (d. 569 AD). The calligraphy reads:

He creeps along the log  
in fear and trembling,

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<sup>3</sup> Nancy Wilson Ross, The World of Zen (New York: Random House, 1960), n.p.

He does not know that  
 the bridge is flowing  
 And the water is not.

These lines refer to the famous Gatha of Fudaishi:

Empty-handed I go, and behold the spade  
                                   is in my hands;  
 I walk on foot, and yet on the back of  
                                   an ox I am riding.  
 When I pass over the bridge, Lo, the  
                                   water floweth not,  
 But the bridge doth flow.

In zazen, the student is ready for the mondo between himself and the painting. In this instance Sengai is paraphrasing the poem of Fudaishi, creating a mondo out of this classic example, in which it becomes a koan. The question arises where and how is this done? Obviously, the text is the koan and that the painting or what is painted, is nothing more than the reinforcement of what is stated in this text. The Sengai figure is humourously related to the text itself, and the use of paradox is characteristic of its folly. The student looking at this painting should not be too serious about the breaking of the koan, as this would only hinder him. But instead attack this with the air of merriment, for it is this very humour that is the Mind itself; the whole mind's free acceptance of all things in their self-and-other contradictions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>R. H. Blyth, Oriental Humour (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1959), p. 200.

Creeping along the student fears and trembles at everything and everyone. Absorbed in his ego, he knows nothing except this Ego. He becomes alienated to all that lies around him, and likewise inimical. Frightfully creeping along the bridge with the worries of life and death, the student becomes so concentrated on his own little world, that he becomes intensely afraid of this same little world and the fear of losing it. He becomes like Sengai's man; a fat, stubby little ball rolling along, bouncing here and there, trying to hold on to this and that! It is only when the student is no longer worried about existence and non-existence, ego and nicht-Ich, that he realizes all things remain the same interrelated pieces of the puzzle known as the Here and Now. It is "Here" that the student comes into be-ing when the mondo discovered is taking place. It is the "Now" when the student knows the koan of Fudaishi and it is "Now" when the water floweth not, but the bridge. All these things are apparent and clear, no longer hostile or divorced. When understood by the student, he remains empty-handed but finds somehow he has gained a spade; when walking on foot, he rides. This is what Sengai is saying in the Zenga: Look at this figure! See the written text and comprehend what is said! Question! Question! Question!

Yourself, me, the Zenga, the man, the water, the bridge!

Here is where true meaning lies:

the bridge is flowing  
and the water is not!

It is the same as being:

Hit on the shaven head with a "nyoi,"  
Enlightened to the fact  
That it hurts.<sup>5</sup>

The pain of the stick hurts, but the pain is still associated with the stick, not separate from it. Equally true with the Zenga by Sengai. It is not important whether one is hit by the nyoi, or the nyoi itself, or even the resultant pain. It is the fact that everything remains in the nexus of living, organic matter. It hurts and it doesn't hurt, the water flows or it does not flow, we live or we die. What counts says Sengai, is that we realize in Zen there can be both, as well as one or the other. The evidence that we can say "'tis this" or "'tis that" is reason enough to be able to accept both. Having done this the student may begin to flow with the bridge.

While the student involves himself with such things as zazen, mondo, koan, and satori, he must not forget the outside world. To do this would be antithetical

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<sup>5</sup>R. H. Blyth, Japanese Life and Character in Senryu (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1960), p. 597.



to his Zen teaching. Although the student is isolated in his Buddhist environment, contact is never lost. It is part of his training to journey to one monastery to another studying under various Masters, obtaining the roshi's viewpoints; and getting the student to realize that there is an outside world--that he is a part of it.

A Zenga by Sengai, The Crab (Pl. VIII), is the "way" the student should act in the light of all things "happening." The text reads:

The crab makes his world  
the harbor of Naniwa.  
And goes sideways  
through the reeds of good and evil.

In Japanese "good" is yoshi and "bad" is ashi. Both these words also mean reeds or rushes. A crab is shown walking alone along the waterside among the reeds.

Here Sengai is playing on the idea of the ambivalence of human beings as compared to the consistent behavior pattern of the crab. (Another painting by Sengai (Pl. IX) is similar. It shows a contented man in the summer evening, with a haiku:

Just because we are  
In the midst of good and evil  
We enjoy this cool!

This is the same play on the words "good" and "evil.")

The important thing to the student in this mondo, is the "crab." As the crab walks sideways through life, so the student too, should walk sideways, disregarding the callings of his ego. Forgetting the conceptions of good and bad, you and I, he must regard everything as the crab does. To go through the marshes of life enjoying everything, accepting all whether "right" or "wrong." According to the Zennist, it is acting in this midst of good and evil, that he can enjoy living. This might sound paradoxical, but only through the recognizing and the acceptance of Everything--can joy, sorrow, good, bad, you and I, be meaningful to "my-Self." To put it more succinctly: It is being able to live with oneself. We, you and I and the student questioning, should be crab-like, understanding its essence. For when we Be:

Cucumber  
unaccountably  
cucumbering.<sup>6</sup>

No longer in Thoreau's words, "do our thoughts begin to rustle"; instead we become like the man who has penetrated Life and into Death (Pl. X).

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<sup>6</sup>Nancy Wilson Ross. The World of Zen (New York: Random House, 1960), p. 261.

Hakuin:

He whose insight penetrates here  
is a truly Great man.

Indeed, we metamorphisize Death Itself. The student in  
mondo has to realize this, as Life:

The universe is deathless,  
Is deathless because, having no finite self,  
It stays infinite.<sup>7</sup>

The crab slowly moving along his "way," is infinite.  
Not hampered by obstacles or boundaries, there is nothing  
finite about him. He crawls over things that lie in his  
path; and when he dies, he dies as with everything else.  
He is like the cadence of Tennyson's Tithonus:

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,  
The vapours weep their burden to the ground,  
Man comes and tills the fields and lies beneath  
And after many a summer dies the swan.<sup>8</sup>

Hakuin Zenji was very fond of portraying people  
crossing over bridges. (Pl. XI) The people crossing were  
often blind, and in this respect are very similar to Sen-  
gai's crab.

For health,  
And for the next world,  
A blind man  
Crossing a log-bridge  
Is a good guide.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 319.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 259.

(This verse was written by Taiko Dokuon, a monk of the Rinzai sect who died in 1910.) It means that a blind man is oblivious of the danger that he cannot see-imagine. There is another such picture of Hakuin (Pl. XII) of a single monk crossing a log-bridge. The verse is similar in meaning:

Try and build  
A patchwork bridge  
Over this world,  
Whoever has  
A heart intact and fancy-free!

The "joke" of all this is that it is only the blind man, the unromantic, unsuperstitious, whole-hearted man who can pass by in safety and tranquility the imaginary danger, the illusory profit and loss, the liking and loathing of this world.

The blind man like the crab neither becomes aware of the two dichotomous sides of being. Instead, they pursue their course without stumbling and without recourse. In mondo, the student is ridding this very same thing. By questioning and answering; by delving into the Zenga, he relates him-Self to the cosmic irony of the picture. In its content between the small human figure (like him-Self), and the spans of the bridge, the swirling waters, and the equally indifferent pine and cliff, the monk is blind to

folly and passion; he is blind to the blindness of others,  
like God, who is of too pure eyes to behold evil.

It is going to bloom  
As bloom it can--  
The flower in the bottle.<sup>9</sup>

Even when it is cut, the flower will do all it is able to do, no more, but no less. This is the Zen of the flower. Even when the student sits in zazen and tries in mondo to answer a koan, even when the student crosses a bridge, when he eats, sleeps and goes to the bathroom, when he is sick and when he is well; he will do all he can and no less. He will have the eyes of the flower, of the blind man, and will pursue his course, undauntedly across the bridge to the "other shore."

Zenga and student, blind man and Self relate to one another in "a mystical and also mystifying atmosphere due to the absence of thought, the transcendence of cause and effect; the rejecting of the intellectual components instinctively. No moral elements as they are dismissed as being generalities. It has nothing to do with the Good, the True, or the Beautiful."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>R. H. Blyth, Japanese Life and Character in Senryu (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1960), p. 522.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

The student and painting involved in mondo has this richness: its overtones, the meaning-sound, the physio-spiritual dancing, the heightening of its sensitivity to the significance of the whole and its parts, and of its Interrelation. These two entirely different, yet similar things, Zenga and student, are joined in the sameness with poetry and sensation, spirit and matter, Creator and Created in a nature which is the most living thing in an existing universe--living in its life!

Here is where the student is homogeneous with the painting, in a kind of onomatopoeia; there the sound of the word is not the sound of a thing, but where the word Is the thing and the thing Is the word, spontaneously, naturally, and "accidentally."

An old mondo goes:

"What is the one word?"  
 "What do you say?"  
 "What is the one word?"  
 "You make it two."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Christmas Humphreys, Zen Buddhism (New York: Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 101.

### Chapter III.

#### KOAN

The aim of Zen Buddhism is to open the eye of the "supreme reason" (aryajnana), that is, to awaken the innermost sence which has remained altogether dorman since the beginning of the human consciousness, When this is accomplished the student sees directly into the truth of Reality and confronts a world which is new and not yet at all new.<sup>1</sup> Hindu philosophers call this eye of the supreme reason "Mahendra's Third Eye." It is said to open virtically between our two horizontal ones. When this third eye expresses itself, the expressions are paradoxical or contradictory. A mountain is a mountain and, at the same time, a mountain is not a mountain. To state this in "logical terms," A is A and not-A, zero equals infinity, one is all and all is one.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>R. H. Blyth, Zen and Zen Classics, Vol. IV: Mumonkan (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1948-50), p. vii.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. viii.

In truth, to understand Zen, the student must plunge sooner or later into a world of non-duality where he is to deal with things not expressable in terms of relativity. As long as he lingers in the realm of this or that, questions such as "What is life?" "What is the limit of birth-and-death?" "Whither are we destined?" "Whence is this existence?" will never be completely solved.

Questions of such ultimate nature for human beings are compared to "barriers," and are called "the barriers of the patriarchs" whereby the Masters test the sincerity and genuineness of the traveller-students who are wishing to go beyond the realm of relatives. Though the barrier-questions may often be set up in terms of ordinary language such as "Where do you come from?" or "What is your name?" or "Did you have your breakfast?," they gain a deeper meaning when handled by the Masters, and the questioners are put in a quandary. The student has to confront the barrier which defies all possible device born of relativity, intellection, and mere verbalism. And so long as the questions are not completely solved, they will recur and torment him in one form or another.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. viii.



This is the nature of the koan (question-riddle). With Zenga, the koan becomes a graphic description, so to speak, of this "barrier." And it is this "looking at words" that is the nature of Zenga, by which emotional and intellectual religion is rejected and the existence-value of things, of all things, is grasped.

The void is unborn,  
The void does not perish.  
If you know the Void,  
You and the Void are not different.<sup>4</sup>

Zenga-koan is a question in Zen. If the question is a Zen question, and if the student understands it in a Zen way, he will know the answer also, because the real answer to any question is the question really understood. "The universe itself is an unspoken question. When the student truly knows what the universe is asking him, he doesn't need to answer. This is the meaning of Emerson's Sphinx. Thus, Zenga is like everything else, a set of non-Zen, rational, and non-non-sensical questions, until he realizes that they are Zen questions, non-rational, non-sensical, and when he sees each problem in this poetical way he has already answered it."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

Strictly speaking, Zenga-koan has its aim in enlightenment. "A cutting of the Gordian knot of emotional and intellectual entanglements," through the state of mind enlightened by the perpetual contemplation of the problems or cases. The viewer becomes as a man entering freely into a whole great universe; a sort of universalism; by which all men are saved effortlessly.

Mumon--

Buddhism makes mind its foundation. It makes No-gate its gate. If it is a No-gate, how can we pass through it? Have you not heard, "Things that come in through the gate are not treasures. What is gained as a result of cause and effect has a beginning and an end, and will be annihilated? Such remarks are like raising waves when there is no wind, or gouging a wound into a healthy skin. Those who rely on words, trying to strike the moon with a stick, scratching a shoe because they have an itchy place on the foot,--what concern have they with reality?<sup>6</sup>

If the student hesitates on the Zenga-koan, he will be like the man watching a horse gallop past his window. In the twinkling of an eye it will be gone! A verse follows:

The Great Way is gateless;  
There are a thousand alleys.  
If once you pass the barrier,  
You walk alive through the universe.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

The dog and his Buddha--nature--  
Do not say he has none, mu.  
The breeze is blowing hard,  
And the gourd rattles, hanging on the  
eastern wall!

A monk once asked Joshu, "has a dog  
the Buddha-nature?"  
Joshu answered, "Mu" (No).

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

in the Zenga, however, are four! Joshu, the monk, the student sitting before the Zenga, and his Self. It is only when all four become one, that the dramatis personae are no longer separate from "Mu."

A monk asked, "Who (or What) is Joshu?"  
Joshu answered, "East Gate, West Gate,  
South Gate, North Gate!"

That is to say, if you want to come and see me, you can do so from any direction, all the gates are open, there is no concealment--in fact, it is all gate and nothing else! Concomitantly, "Mu" is the All-gate, no more, no less; approach it from any direction, it remains open, all is needed is to walk through, When done so, the realization is that it is nothing more than "Mu." It is Itself. There can be no separation from student nor Joshu's dog.

The mind differentiates this or that, a dog and its nature, myself and the dog, the dog and the Buddha-nature, my Buddha-nature, --yet with the faint consciousness,

Not in entire forgetfulness  
And not in utter nakedness . . . .

the differentiation is fictitious.<sup>9</sup> But by sitting with the Zenga, raising mondo with the koan, the student's

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

discrimination is slowly cut away, and the Buddha-nature manifests itself here, in the acting of "right now!"

As Saigun entered the temple he noticed a sparrow making droppings on the head of an image of Buddha, and said to Nyoe, "Has the sparrow the Buddha-nature or not?" Nyoe answered, "Yes!" Saigun said, "Then why does it make droppings on the head of Buddha?" Nyoe replied, "Does it make droppings on the head of a hawk?"<sup>10</sup>

Ecclesiastes 3.21 . . . .

Who knoweth the spirit of the beast,  
whither it goeth downward?

So who is to say whether or not, this is "right or wrong." The constant speculation of "it has or has not" is only the rattling of the empty gourd. When Pilate asked Christ, "What is the truth?" he really meant, "I don't want to know what truth is; it is no doubt something very tiresome and disagreeable, so please don't tell me." This is why Christ was silent (the same silence of Vimalakirti). In other words, a question contains and must contain, more than half the answer. "Mu" here is used to reach the ground of one's nature, the Buddha-nature present in Sengai's Zenga, hopefully transmitted to the student. If the student knows what "Mu" is, he knows what Buddha-nature is; if he knows what Buddha-nature is, he is in the

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

state of "Mu," the "blessed state of the poor in spirit."  
 "It is a condition of the soul which he sees unmistakably  
 in Buddha and Christ, when he wants nothing and yet wants  
 everything as it is, or rather, as it is Becoming. He  
 must have No and no, or Yes and yes; for Yes equals No,  
 but yes and no are Opposite. Joshu says with Sengai, at  
 one time (Yes and) yes, at another time (No and) no.  
 Their "Mu" is No and no; his "U" [yes] is Yes and yes, so  
 it doesn't matter which they say, though they are not  
 quite the same."<sup>11</sup>

By "vicious" contemplation (of Zenga) the student  
 must cut the workings off, at the umbilical cord, or "even  
 before that," so that he may become like the phantom among  
 the undergrowth and weeds of this gate-less gate. It is  
 only then that the student will walk hand in hand with  
 Sengai's withered brush, Joshu and his dog. The eye that  
 saw "Mu," Sengai's eye, will be the same eye with which  
 the student will see; his ear will be the same ear with  
 which to hear this "Mu." If the student concentrates with  
 his whole body, with his three-hundred and sixty bones and  
 joints and eighty-four thousand hair-holes, this question  
 will spontaneously answer itself. But only by the throwing

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 30-31.

off of his useless accumulation of knowledge, of all the wrong things learned up to that point. For the fruition with the internal and external unity will not blossom unless done so, then and only then will the student's whole activity be put in motion, shaking the heavens above and the earth beneath.

The Question is the problem of the Buddha-nature, "Mu." The student must compose his mind, hold it undisturbed, so that a knowledge of the truth may arise willingly in it:

Think you, of all this mighty sum  
of things forever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking?<sup>12</sup>

The universe, for all its ceaseless activity, is motionless in its essence, and the Mind also shares in this repose. It also implies correct sensation of the contemplated object. In this sense it is like the state of mind of the poet, who alone (like the Master) sees things as they really are. The student reads Sengai's picture-poems, and relates him-Self to this. In doing so, he sees and hears:

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

Even the ocean  
 Rising and falling all day...  
 Sighing green-like trees.<sup>13</sup>

It remains the student's unification of the micro-cosm and macrocosm through "Mu."

The dog! The buddha-nature!  
 The perfect manifestation, the  
   command of truth.  
 If, for a moment, you fall into  
   relativity,  
 You are a dead man!<sup>14</sup>

The student must apprehend, that the truth is not mere addition, the adding together of two pairs of relatives. Instead, it transcends this. "Has the dog Buddha-nature?; the dog, Mu; the Buddha-nature, Mu; No-dog, Mu; the devil nature, Mu?"<sup>15</sup> Is this what is meant by "Mu"? Is this what Sengai meant by Joshu's Dog? Is this All? Is It? It IS!

An inscription from Sengai's Nansen Killing the Cat (Pl. XIV), reads:

Kill! Kill!  
 Not only the cat,  
 But the leaders of both parties  
 Including Nansen the Old Master himself!

<sup>13</sup>Peter Beilenson, The Four Seasons (New York: The Peter Pauper Press, 1958), p. 14.

<sup>14</sup>R. H. Blyth, Zen and Zen Classics, Vol. IV: Mumonkan (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1948-50), p. 36.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 36.



"Once, when the monks of the Western and Eastern Halls were quarreling about a cat, Nansen, holding up the cat, said, 'You monks! If (any of) you can speak (a word of Zen) I will spare the cat, otherwise I will kill it!' No one could answer, so Nansen killed it. In the evening, Joshu came back from somewhere, and Nansen told him what had happened. Joshu thereupon took off his shoe, put it on his head, and walked off. Nansen said, 'If only you had been there, I could have saved the cat!'"

Whatever the monks were arguing about, it was in the most un-zennish occupation of asserting one of a pair of relatives (including Nansen, as we shall see later). However, Nansen put a stop to this by killing the cat. But this is not what Sengai is saying. Sengai is saying that all should have been killed! A verse by Mumon:

If Joshu had been there,  
Everything would have been done the  
  other way around.  
He would have snatched away the knife  
And Nansen would have begged for his life.<sup>16</sup>

"Nansen begging for his life" means that Joshu would have taken the initiative and Nansen would have had to acknowledge Joshu's spiritual invincibility. This implies no competition, but simply, "Let the best man win!,"

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 125.

that is, let Best be Master. Nansen (more or less) wanted the cat saved, but the folly, indecision, attachment to words, and indulgence of the monks won the day. If Christ and Thoreau and Bach and Shakespeare had not been born.....

Nansen was flustered, Joshu realized this, as did Sengai and Mumon. Joshu, thus, retorted by putting his shoe atop his head. It is not necessary to explain this action, or ever express Joshu's meaning, because first of all he had none and second, we are not put on this earth to express other people's meanings, but our own. "Suppose Joshu butted Nansen in the stomach as a punishment for his scatter-brained and hysterical action; he might have ulcers or a tendency to appendicitis. Suppose he picked up the cat's gory remains and rubbed them all over his face,--what good would that do? Suppose he burst into tears for the cat. Suppose he said, 'Bring me another cat, and the monks again!'"<sup>17</sup>

Sengai is saying kill all the stupid people involved in that stupid game of opposites; kill the "supposes," the useless showing off of Ego. The student interpreting this must be made aware of Sengai's "reason." The

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 125.

cat, Nansen and Joshu must all be present in the Zenga, in order for the student to see this concatenation, And to know why the Zenga says, "Kill!," the student must attack this koan, as he would attack those who argue the causes of nothingness. Only until then will he realize the import of Sengai's painting, Joshu's effortless action, and Nansen's resultant, however inefficacious act.

Ummon said, "the world is vast and wide; for what is it you put on your seven-piece robe at the sound of the bell?"

This verse is from Sengai's painting, Ummon's Seven Fold Robe (Pl. XV). "Probably what happened was this. The bell for the sermon had rung and Ummon watched the monks preparing to assemble, scurrying to and fro with robes flying. When he ascended the 'pulpit,' the monks having now calmed their spirits with the chanting of the sutra, Ummon said to them, 'When the bell rings, you hurry to put on your robes, forgetting the vast universe, the flaming stars, the empty spaces between them, the infinity of worlds, the eternity of time!' The interesting point is that Ummon is urging the monks to one extreme from whence he will drive them back to the other. If any monk comes to him drivelling of eternity and infinity, he will soon let him have the taste of a very finite and temporal stick. Ummon is attacking his monks in their

Zen, or at least in their zazen, for their intentness and concentration on what they are doing. What he wants to teach them is that "patriotism is not enough." Firm and steadfast belief in half-gods, and the resolution to die for them is not enough. To concentrate on rouging one's lips or God's lips is too good as far as the concentration goes, but there is too much omitted, and as Hamlet says, anything lacking spoils all that is not. When we put on our clothes, like Carlyle in Sartor Resartus, we put on the clothes of the universe."<sup>18</sup>

"The Art of Tea is to drink the universe, past, present, and future, in each sip. The world is vast, but the sound of the whole is heard in a bell, whether marriage, funeral, prison, school or cow. On the one hand, every hair of our head is numbered, every thread of our clothing. On the other, we have no thoughts that wander through eternity. Each is nothing without the other. Alternately, also they are still nothing. When one is All, one is one, and All is all, but not otherwise."<sup>19</sup>

Sengai is portraying in his Zenga that learning the way and grasping Zen means the avoidance of attachment to sounds and forms. Though through hearing a sound

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 132-33.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 132-33.

there may be realization, or from seeing the form of an object the mind may be enlightened, nevertheless this is the ordinary way of things. Especially the student who does not understand how to guide sound, or use forms, or to see clearly the inherent value of each thing, each activity of the mind. Does the sound come to the ear, or does the ear go to the sound? When sound and silence are forgotten, are both forgotten, what can you say of this state?

If you listen with your ear, it is hard to hear truly, but if you listen with your eye, then you begin to hear properly.<sup>20</sup>

Again Ummon through Sengai: The thing is to take All sights and sounds as "such-ness" (sono-mama). Only and only that: do not crave nor abhor them. A famous example is of Kyogen, becoming enlightened when he swept a stone against a bamboo (Sengai, Pl. XVI):

One strike made him forget  
                                  his learning  
What kind of sound was it?  
A piece of brick immediately  
Turned itself into gold.

However, to hear something unusual in the sound of a stone striking a bamboo, or in the sight of a flower

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

blooming in a kind of mistake. Everything should be as natural as it possibly can.

The question of the origin of sound is raised in the Suramgama Sutra, the third chapter:

Buddha said, "The sound of the bell continues during a space of time; how do we become conscious of it? Does the sound come from the ear, or the ear go to the origin of the sound? If it does not go (one way or the other) there is no hearing. For this reason, it must be understood that hearing and sound are neither special. We mistakenly put hearing and sound in two (different) places. Originally it is not a matter of cause and effect or of natural law.<sup>21</sup>

To the student with Zenga, all sounds and sights should have the same infinite value, and to single out one above all others (even as in Kyogen's case) is just what the common run of people do in their attachment to particular things and people. Enlightenment is at various depths, and Sengai is voicing the warning issued by Ummon, not to rest satisfied with this "commonplace" realization.

If you are enlightened, all things are as though of one great family,

But if not, everything is separate and disconnected.

If you are not enlightened (it makes no difference anyway because) all things are as one great family.

And if you are enlightened (this also makes no difference to reality, in which) every single thing is different from every other thing.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

Relative judgment and absolute judgment come to the same conclusion, --that all things are different, and that at the same time all things are identical. In the practical sphere, what corresponds to this philosophical transcendentalism is:

Thirty blows if you can say something,  
Thirty blows if you can't.

This is having Baso's Very Mind (Pl. XVII): "Addressing the congregation of monks, Baso said, 'You must each realize that your mind is the Buddha. Your mind--that is the Buddha! Daruma (Bodhidharma) came from Southern India to China, transmitting the One Mind of the Mahayana in order to bring you to the state of realization, to approve and seal your Mental Ground. He quoted from the Lankavatara Sutra--fearing lest you should not believe, in your perversity, that each of you has the Mind,--where it says, 'Buddhism takes its basic principle, no-gate as the Gate into the Truth. Thus he who seeks the law must not look for it in a specific place. Outside the mind there is no Buddha; outside the Buddha there is no mind.'"<sup>23</sup>

Sengai's Zenga reads:

One "Kwatz!" Three days!

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 214-15.

Baso's "Kwatz!" is said to have made Hyakujo deaf for three days. It is the voice of Enlightenment that deafened Hyakujo for those three days. The student pondering Zenga, must recall not only the humorous parables of Sengai, but go further, back to the source, into the cases of the koan itself.

Daibai asked Baso, "What is the Buddha?"  
Baso answered, "The mind is the Buddha."<sup>24</sup>

This is What Sengai's "Kwatz!" means: When we ask, "What, who, which, where, how when, why is the Buddha?," the form of the question already forbids the right answer. As soon as the student has "this or that," his Mind is lost. However, it is not really lost because the Buddha is everything, not merely this or that. He should not keep his mind on the One either. His mind which plumes itself above all things on distinguishing good and evil, God and Devil, truth and error, by this very distinction commit a greater error than the whole-hearted embracing of the error:

If a fool would persist in his folly  
would become wise.<sup>25</sup>

But this is not the folly of distinguishing but the folly of not distinguishing. The word does not mean

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.



the Buddha-mind, for this would make Baso's answer tautology: "The mind (or Buddha) is Buddha. Clearly 'mind' means Hitler's mind, or a kangaroo's mind, or the mind of a dewdrop trembling from the eaves with a 'mind to fall.' It does not mean that my mind is part of a World-Soul, but that my soul is the whole of the World-Soul. That the Buddha, the World-Soul is a part of My-soul, so that Baso's answer is, 'the Buddha--that is Your Mind!'"<sup>26</sup>

The student must grasp Baso's meaning. When he does he will wear Buddha's clothes, eat Buddha's food, speak Buddha's words, do Buddha's deeds, be Buddha Himself! But he must not explain the word "Buddha." If he does, he should rinse his mouth out with soap, and then get "Kwatz-ed!" by the enlightened Master, who knows:

It is a broad daylight, a fine day;  
It is silly to rummage around,  
And asking about the Buddha  
Is like declaring oneself innocent  
while holding on to stolen goods.<sup>27</sup>

There is no need for the student to search for the truth or to ask what the meaning of life is. He has it right in his pocket all the time, why shouldn't he realize this?

One "Kwatz!" Three days!

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

He Is the Buddha--only he must not say so. Because if he states so, he sets Buddha apart from himself, just as the words in a dictionary are apart from things. Whe he can speak the language, there is no need for a book of words. When he lives the Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Moslem, Quaker or Zen life, such phrases become meaningless. Saying that his mind is the Buddha is like going out with someone who insists on telling everyone all his-  
 torical anecdotes of places and botanical names of all the pretty weeds.

One "Kwatz!" Three days!

The Student needs this deafening; for only when all hearing is lost:

Onitsura--

We are obedient,  
 And silent flowers too  
 Speak to the inner ear.

Since is the life of flowers, the True Mind, the Buddha; or Baso, Daibai and certainly Hyakujo. It is this same silence that is thought, feeling and expression; of conjuring up "speak-less" images in Zenga or in the silence of:

stone-flake  
 and salmon. 28

Daruma's Mind-Pacifying by Hakuin (Pl. XVIII), relates to the whole basis of systematized koan study. In this portrayal of Daruma (Bodhidharma), is embodied in both verse and painting, the crux of what the student should look for:

Seeing into one's Nature  
is being Buddha.

"Daruma sat facing the wall. The Second Patriarch (Eka), having cut off his arm, stood in the snow. He said, 'Your disciple's mind has no place as yet. I beg the Teacher to give it rest.' Daruma replied, 'Brind your mind here and I will give it rest.' The Patriarch said, 'I have searched for that mind, and have not found it.' Daruma said, 'Then I have put it to rest.'"<sup>29</sup>

Not being able to find the self, and to be able to find the Self, is the same thing; also it is of course different. This is what the student will work through. Seeing into the nature of Hakuin's Zenga, he will swallow this koan, vomit it up, and re-swallow again until it becomes digested. When done so, the realization will come about that there was nothing to swallow in the first place. It is this conclusion of the students that is the nothing-ness

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<sup>29</sup>R. H. Blyth, Zen and Zen Classics, Vol. IV: Mumonkan (Tokyo: Kokuseido Press, 1948-50), pp. 268-69.

of Itself: the natural, part of the things as they are. The knowing and experience that becomes the best of all possible worlds. This is the pointing to the True Mind-- the realization that Mind Itself is the Mind in all its capacities.

Coming from the West, and directly pointing--  
All the trouble comes from this!  
The jungle of monks being at all sixes and sevens  
Comes from those two chaps.<sup>30</sup>

So man, as man remains man; cowardly, brave, wise, foolish and patient. He eats, sleeps, sings and makes love, war and peace. He is Paradox personified. As the only paradox, he dies by this paradox, but also lives by it. He cannot have peace without war, religion without irreligion. Or as the verse says, all the problems of the meaning of Daruma's coming from the West; the pacification of Eka's mind; not finding or finally finding that Mind. He is THE koan, and embracing it Becomes every particle of It.

"Zen though the greatest creation of mankind, is at the same time its growing pains, like man and student, the inadvertent but inevitable cause of religious mania, masochism, persecution, fruitless asceticism and other

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

less agreeable things in human history."<sup>31</sup> If not it would not be Zen, nor would it be anything else.

Pigs eat acorns, but neither consider the sun that gave them life, nor the influence of the heavens by which they were nourished, nor the very root of the tree from whence they came.<sup>32</sup>

But immanently: Pigs eat acorns!

Lodgepole Pine: The wonderful reproductive power of this species on areas over which its stand has been killed by fire is dependent upon the ability of the closed cones to endure a fire which kills the tree without injuring its seed. After the fire, the cones open and shed their seeds on the bared ground and a new growth springs up.<sup>33</sup>

As the world is imprisoned in its own activity, so is man, the student--until he can liberate himself. He must purge by fire, if necessary, (Himself) in order to reach this state of freedom. The koan is the seed that remains left behind; the means by which this freedom will take its place, and grow into something new and yet not-new.

The pointing to the Mind, whether Daruma's or Eka's, students or mine, yours or his, cannot come from outside;

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>32</sup>Aldous Huxley, The Perennial Philosophy (New York: Harper & Row, 1944), p. 66.

<sup>33</sup>Gary Snyder, Myths and Texts (New York: Totem Press, 1960), p. 5.

it cannot because it has never left its abode; never been lost or found, never can and never will be. This is Daruma's "putting it to rest." This is the Thou art Thou!" of the Mind, whether present in the darkened abyss of the student's sublimation, or in the ever-present Zenga. It is only by "awareness" that the "direct pointing" manifests itself as Mu, Ummon's Robes, Nansen's Cat, or Hakuin's Daruma, that is to say, the koan! The final revelation of the student that he is no longer apart, but is, as ice to water. For when the student and Zenga become as ice is to water, the koan will quiet his Mind and he, for the first time will be able to hear this Mind.

Wallace Stevens, The Snow Man:

For the listener, who listens  
                                   in the snow,  
 And, nothing itself, beholds  
 Nothing that is not there and  
                                   the nothing that is.

## Chapter IV

### SATORI

Satori or enlightenment, the "unregarded river of our life," is the culmination of the practice of Zen, with regard to Zenga painting. It is the releasing from the desperate struggle (of the koan), to freedom and harmony:

He--would have inward peace,  
Yet will not look within  
He--would have misery cease  
Yet will not cease from sin;<sup>1</sup>

Matthew Arnold, in Empedocles on Etna is right in describing this "desperate struggle" of the students; but once the student has "looked within," and once he has used all his means. . . .

Once read thy own breast right  
And thou hast done with fears;  
Man gets no other light  
Search he a thousand years:  
Sink in thyself! There ask what ails thee,  
at that Shrine!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>R. H. Blyth, Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1948), p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 96.

in which he now knows himself most intimately, most directly, he is in the state of Enriched Enlightenment.

It is this Enlightenment that has emerged from the soil of Zen Buddhism, seeded, fertilized, and thoroughly weeded through Zenga,--coming to mind that the Buddha-truth is within it-Self; the combination, not separation of self-and-other. "As the clock chimes, it no longer remains as the 'clock' but the Mind; the universe itself chiming, but no longer the Mind nor the universe, but the reverberating sound plunging into the world.<sup>3</sup> This is tada, "only," "just," "nothing but"; thus if one is eating, one must be absorbed in just eating. If the mind entertains any ideas or concepts during eating, it is not "tada." Every moment of life lived as "tada" is the eternal Now.<sup>4</sup> This is the "tada of Realization that comes from enlightenment. "Among the innumerable phenomena in the universe one only is immediately manifesting itself. What is it if not you!"<sup>5</sup> It is the same state of St. Catherine of Genoa when she says,

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<sup>3</sup> Philip Kapleau, The Three Pillars of Zen (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 288.



My Me is God, nor do I recognize  
any other Me except my God himself.<sup>6</sup>

God, the eternal Now, the Buddha-truth; this is  
the sole objective of the student working on Zenga. This  
is satori where the,

Knower and the known are one.  
Simple people imagine that they should see God,  
as if He stood there and they here. This is not  
so. God and I, we are one in knowledge.<sup>7</sup>

The student after reaching kensho, the first satori,  
does not differentiate between himself and things "opposed."  
Instead he finds that he has been there the whole time,  
that it was his mind, not his Mind that was the cause of  
this dis-unity.

Yet even when man forsakes  
All sin,--is just, is pride,  
Abandons all which makes  
His welfare insecure,--  
Other existences where are, that clash with ours.<sup>8</sup>

As Shakespeare said, nothing clashes or agrees with  
us, but thinking makes it so. This is the "instruction"  
given by the roshi in the form of the Zenga painting:

<sup>6</sup>Aldous Huxley, The Perennial Philosophy (New York: Harper & Row, 1944), p. 11.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>8</sup>R. H. Blyth, Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1948), p. 96.

that the student can be concordant with his innermost feelings, if wanting to be so. All it takes is seeing into his Nature, opening the door, as Emerson says, in Self Reliance:

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself.<sup>9</sup>

The student who finds himself, that is, him-Self, loses both his misery and joy, but finds his Joy. And those words of Polonius; heard for the first time, merely sententious, then hackneyed out of all meaning, now, most profound:

This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Zenga is prorating this very thing into a graphic expression by the use of koan. There is nothing more than this. The end will hopefully justify the means, for if it does, the student will know the true teachings of Buddha, his very own Buddha. And no matter what form it comes or how or from whence it comes, as Suzuki translates in Zen and Japanese Culture,

The three teachings agree in one point,  
In one point the three teachings agree.  
What is it after all?  
The limit is absolute good.

(The Three Sages Tasting Vinegar  
by Hakuin. Pl. XIX)

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

The Enlightened man is a man who does not dissect, but rather creates as his thoughts come into being. He creates in the sense, that all things remain new and fresh, that nothing is neither "good nor bad"; but exist on the same plane of reality, testifying to himself, that he is a part of the living. He is alike Sengai's Willow Tree (Pl. XX):

Though there must be winds  
That it does not like,--  
Still the willow!

Can anything exist more than the "as-it-is-ness" of the willow? Or of the child in Sengai's The Hundred Days Law-Preaching (Pl. XXI)? In this painting, the teaching of the "Law of a Hundred Days," the hundred days refer to, of course, every day. At the side is written:

Now then! Eat away!  
Drink up your tea!

(And as R. H. Blyth interprets . . . "fart like mad, without the repression of good manners.")<sup>10</sup> "Zenga shows the beatific pleasure of the farter, the child, and his helping the farting with the right hand stretched to the rear. From the Freudian point of view farting is supposedly a

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<sup>10</sup> R. H. Blyth, Oriental Humour (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1959), n.p.

sexual pleasure, and a sexual symbol. But more profoundly, the universe is God's fart. Most of us find that it stinks, and hold our noses. We should, instead, take a deep breath of it." There is great humour in this Zenga, and much truth. Enlightenment does not differ, but remains an unchangeable Attitude. The important thing is to embrace this whole-heartedly, not to pinch the nose. The student will understand this, as he has omitted the "sacred and profane" dichotomy from his Be-ing. He has been emancipated, finally, from this very speculation of affirmation and negation. Surely now, the student can really laugh at himself. Oscar Wilde:

Humanity takes itself too seriously.  
It's the worlds original sin. If the  
cave-man had known how to laugh,  
history would have been different.<sup>11</sup>

Or, Josh Billings:

Confess your sins to God, and they  
will be forgiven; confess them to men,  
and you will be laughed at.<sup>12</sup>

This is the universal laughter of satori. The Zen characteristic seen in Zenga, whether Hakuin's or Sengai's; Christ or Buddha. Or the haiku poet's when he sees:

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 201.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

The straight hole  
 Made by pissing  
 In the snow outside the gate.<sup>13</sup>

The student's "portrait" (of satori) is now the portrait of Sengai, the poet's, and Hakuin's; the self-portrait of Falstaff's portrait of Falstaff. And just as Falstaff had his "philosophy of life" which every word and act of his expressed, so the student sees the humour in his and everyone's folly; the attractiveness of illusion, in its danger and indeed attempting the Illusory.

This kind of Art, of Living, is Zen itself. The expressions of the Zenga painters being the expressions of the student (whether farting or not.); in the unification of the very highest with the very lowest that has its meaning in humour, poetry and the Whole Truth. Nothing remains sacrosanct and at the same time all is sacred.

The sudden smell of satori:

Striking with the axe  
 How surprised I was at the smell  
 In the winter grove.<sup>14</sup>

It is this activity of the enlightened student, the immediacy of circumstances and action that come as a flash of lightning. It is the striking of a match on the

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<sup>13</sup>R. H. Blyth, Japanese Life and Character in Senryu (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1960), p. 131.

<sup>14</sup>R. H. Blyth, A History of Haiku, Vol. II (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1952), p. 42.

box, the ignition and extinction that all are the expression of the suchness of things; their real Nature, their poetry. Thus the sound, the smell, and the flame with its dying away, when preserved in the unclouded mirror of his mind, becomes one with the activity of his perceiving mind; and at the same time the ordinary world and the life of perfection.

This is the experience gained from the Zenga. Through the forcible participation with Zenga, the way has been opened up for enlightenment. Zazen, mondo, koan have all been put into dynamic utility for this one thing, --satori. This is where the student truly becomes,

Blind, deaf, dumb!  
Infinity beyond the reach  
of imaginative contrivances!<sup>15</sup>

With the use of the Zenga, the student has swept away everything. What he sees together with what he does not see, what he hears together with what he does not hear, and what he talks together with what he cannot talk about; all these are completely brushed off, and he attains the life of the blind, deaf, and dumb. Here all his imanginations, contrivances, and calculations are once and for all

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<sup>15</sup>Aldoubs Huxley, The Perennial Philosophy (New York: Harper and Row, 1944), p. 62.

put an end to; they are no more made use of. This is where lies the highest point of Zenga study; this is where the student has true blindness, true deafness, and true dumbness, each in its artless and effectless aspect.

What life can compare with this?  
Sitting quietly by the window,  
I watch the leaves fall and the  
flowers bloom as the seasons come  
and go.<sup>16</sup>

It is this stage of Realization; when seeing is no-seeing, hearing is no-hearing, preaching is no-preaching; that the method of koan study portrayed in Zenga has had its applicability. When the leaves fall, the student knows it is the autumn; when the flowers bloom, he knows it is the spring. Can anything be more simple? This is then the cooperative assimilation of student and Zenga.

Do you understand, or not?  
An iron bar without a hole!<sup>17</sup>

Now the Zenga has done everything, all it could for the student. It has presented him with an iron bar without a hole. "This is a most significant expression. Look and see with your eyes! If you hesitate, you miss the mark forever. What precisely is the significance of that iron bar without a hole? Zen has always specialized in

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

nonsense as a means of stimulating the mind to go forward to that which is beyond sense; so perhaps the point of the bar resides precisely in its pointlessness and in our disturbed, bewildered reaction to the pointlessness."<sup>18</sup>

Seeing this the student understands. For the first time, he really understands. The Zenga no longer is a riddle, nor is him-Self. The sole purpose has been to bring the student as close to life as possible:

The autumn wind;  
For me  
No gods, no Buddha.<sup>19</sup>

It has been a pilgrimage; a long, hard trek into the unknown, as in the poem The Search by Henry Vaughan:

Leave, leave, thy gadding thought;  
Who Pores  
and spies  
Still out of Doores  
describes  
Within them nought.  
The skinne, and shell of things  
Though faire,  
are not  
They wish, nor pray'r,  
but got  
By new Despair  
of wings.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>19</sup> R. H. Blyth, A History of Haiku, Vol. II (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1952), p. 81.



To rack old Elements,  
 or Dust  
 and say  
 Sure here he must  
 needs stay,  
 Is not the way  
 nor just  
 Search well another world; who studies this  
 Travels in Clouds, seeks Manna, where none is.<sup>20</sup>

"The student has examined within. He has examined his present and past experiences. Now when it rains, it is God's will, and God's will is his will, God's rain, his rain. Thus it is the student's rain that rains, it is his own specially ordered rain that wets him to the skin and chills him to the marrow, gives him consumption and kills him. It is the student's sun; the student's time that silvers his hair by his own request, loosens his teeth at his command. This is the faith, the love, that moves the sun and the other stars."<sup>21</sup> The belief that the student has gained for himself, through the rigorous application of a Masters knowledge and wisdom, through what we now know as Zenga.

Hokushi, one of the ten disciples of Basho has the following poem:

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<sup>20</sup>R. H. Blyth, Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1948), p. 103.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

I kept haning the moon  
 On the pine-tree and taking it off,  
 Gazing at it the while.<sup>22</sup>

Issa also expresses this vast thought, which includes all religion, all poetry, all the meaning of life, in seventeen syllables:

I take a nap  
 Making the mountain water  
 Pound the rice.

Here is the identification of man with Nature: "Man equals Nature. Issa-in-the-water turns the mill-wheel that pounds the rice, while Issa-by-the-water slumbers, --yet there is only one Issa. Thoreau says that it is Nature that does the best work of the carpenter, Nature that does the best part of the work of the artist. This is the homogeneity of Nature with man; Nature equalling Man. That is to say, Nature-in-the-water drives the water-wheel; Nature-in-Issa sleeps, --yet there is only one Nature. Combining the two, Issa pounds the rice while asleep; Nature sleeps while pounding the rice."<sup>23</sup>

This is not the "nature" that we see outside ourselves; it is not "mother nature," but rather it is our primary nature. The feelings that rise and fall like

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

waves, basic to our consciousness. The student's nature is the nature primordial; it is water-sky-ground-love-hate-create-living nature. This was sought and discovered in the koan.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?  
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;  
 Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
 Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
 Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers  
 And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
 Steady thy laden head across a brook;  
 Or by a cider-press, with patient look,  
 Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.<sup>24</sup>

This is the same condition of mind (after understanding the Zenga's intent) though attained by very different means as in Tolstoy's Master and Man. Vassili, money-lover and self-lover, who has left his servant Nikita to die in the snow, returns, and lying on him, warms him back to life, dying himself. "The following lines describe his thoughts as he wakes, for the last time, from his frozen sleep."

Yes, he awoke--but awoke a very different man to what he had been when he fell asleep. He tried to rise, and could not. He tried to move his leg, and could not. He tried to turn his head, but that also he could not do. Nikita was lying beneath him, and that Nikita was growing warm and

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

was coming back to life. It seemed to him that he was Nikita, and Nikita was he, and that his life was no longer within himself, but within Nikita. He strained his ears till he caught the sound of breathing--yes, the faint, deep breathing of Nikita. "Nikita is alive!" he cried to himself in triumph, "and therefore to also am I!"<sup>25</sup>

The student dies in order to live; he re-awakens to a new man. He submerged himself into the Zenga; scrounging around at the bottom of his soul, only to find that he is alive! "Therefore I am," or better yet,

Before Abraham was I am.

"The Buddha is the tree in the garden. Issa flows over the waterwheel. Autumn is sitting on the floor. Vassili, the master, is Nikita his servant. I and my Father are one. Do they not all say the same thing?"<sup>26</sup>  
Zenga and student, painting and Master; zazen, mondo, koan and satori,--do they not all say the same thing, seek and reveal the same thing?

"For years the Second Patriarch, Eka, had been in stuffed with doubts, his heart weighed upon with sins of ommission and commission. When he came to Daruma, he was told, 'This is not to be sought through another.' He then asked that his mind should be set at rest, and when Daruma

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

asked him to bring his soul (mind) to have it set to peace,  
 he was forced to say, 'I have sought it but could not find  
 it.'" Now was the question,

To see if we will poise our life at last,  
 To see if we will now at last be true  
 To our own true, deep-buried selves,  
 Being one with which we are one with the whole world;  
 Or whether we will once more fall away  
 Into some bondage of the flesh or mind,  
 Some slough of sense, or some fantastic maze  
 Forg'd by the imperious lonely thinking power.<sup>27</sup>

"But when Daruma said, 'There! I have set your  
 soul at rest for you!' Eka felt that transformation" de-  
 scribed as,

A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,  
 And what we mean, we say, and what we would,  
 we know.<sup>28</sup>

Zenga is this gate to enlightenment; the koan is  
 the lock on this gate. Zazen and mondo go to make up the  
 key that will open the gate. But once opened and through,  
 the student sees that it had been opened all the time. He  
 knows now, that the role of the Zenga,--the zazen, mondo,  
 and koan have shown him that satori is his, as it is  
 Buddha's. He is now Buddha; his-Self, the skylark, the

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

Stone image of Jizo  
Kissed on the mouth  
By a slug.<sup>29</sup>

and the "cool breeze taking its abode in a single blade of  
grass."<sup>30</sup> He is Enlightened!

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<sup>29</sup>R. H. Blyth, Japanese Life and Character in Senryu  
(Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1960), p. 143.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 337.

Post-Script

The poems?

Something we see or hear poems us.  
We feel it, free it, it frees us.  
Incredible joy. Before why.

-Paul Reps.

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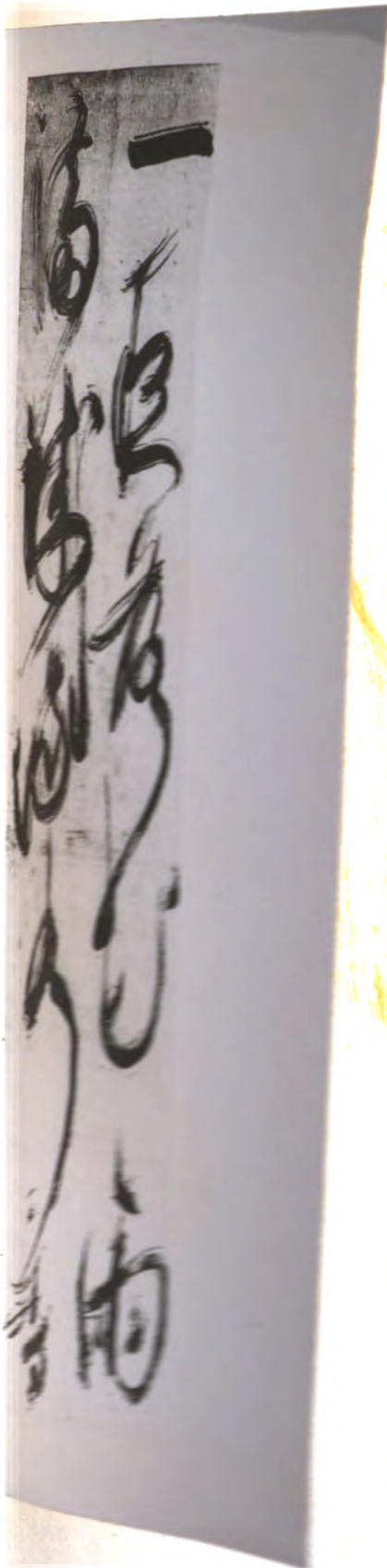
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## ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE I



## PLATE II

与君不相识  
相月不忘情

与君不相识  
相月不忘情



Han-Shan by Sengai

## PLATE III



Zazen or Meditation by Sengai



Zazen by Hakuin





PLATE V

Teakettle by Hakuin

PLATE VI



Monkey by Hakuin

PLATE VII



Man On a Log by Sengai

PLATE VIII



The Crab by Sengai

PLATE IX

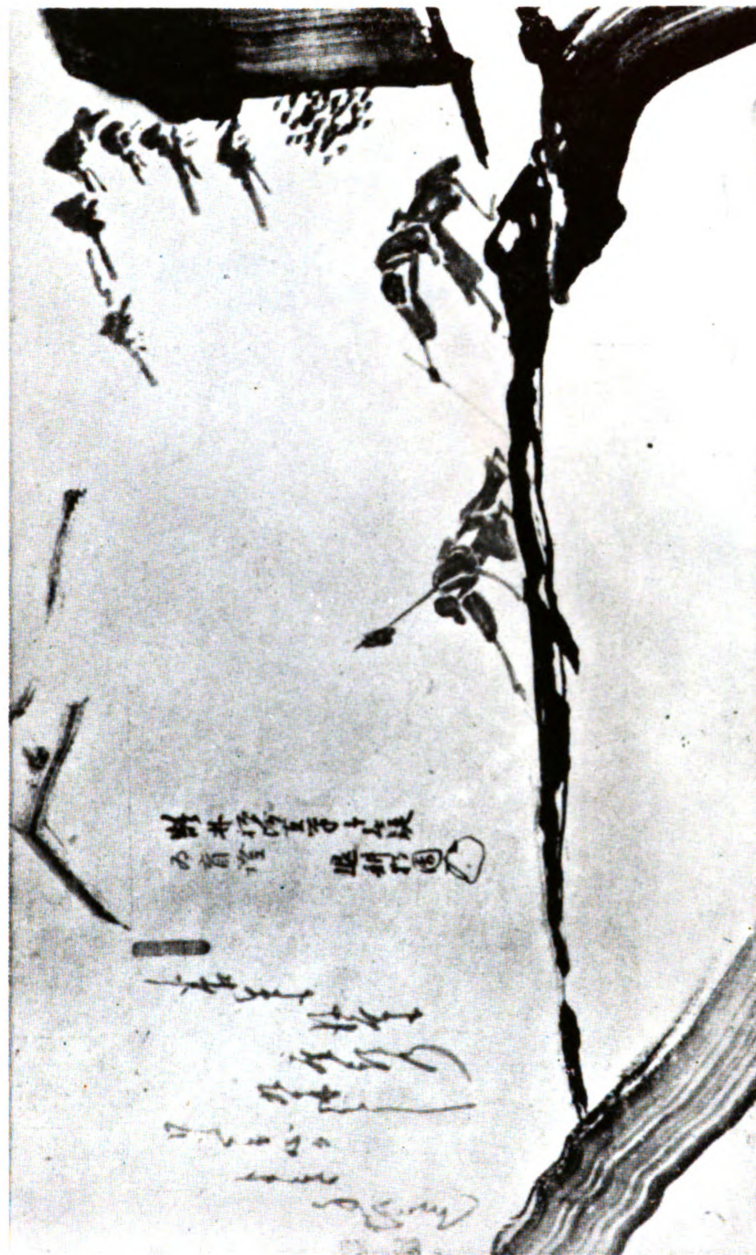


Man with Haiku by Sengai



Death by Hakuin

PLATE XI



BLIND MEN ON A BRIDGE by Hakuin

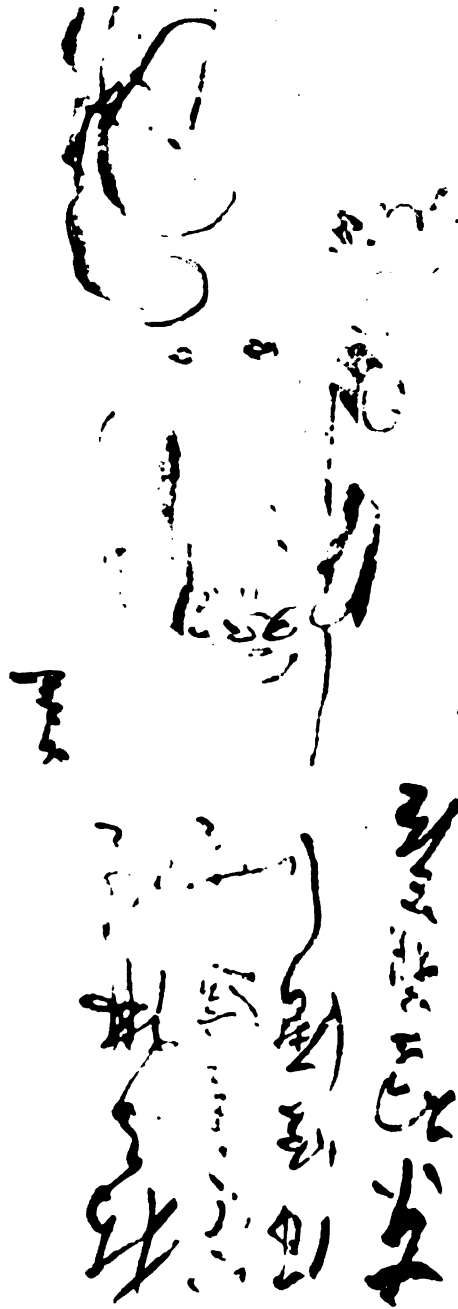


PLATE XII



Man On A Bridge by Hakuin

## PLATE XIII



Joshu's Dog by Sengai

## PLATE XIV



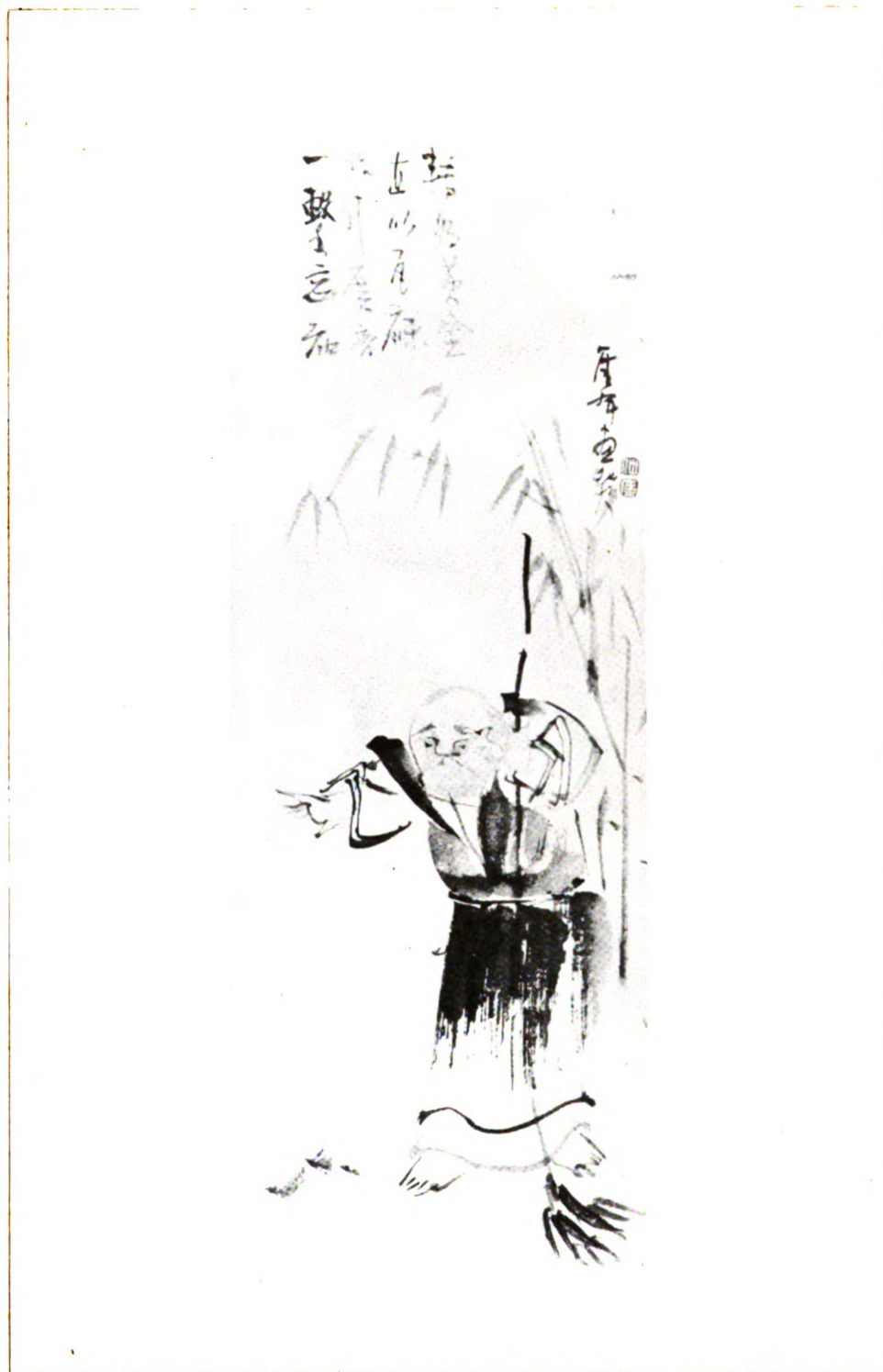
Nansen Killing the Cat by Sengai

## PLATE XV



Ummon's Seven Fold Robe by Sengai

## PLATE XVI



Kyogen by Sengai

PLATE XVII



Baso's Very Mind by Sengai

PLATE XVIII



Daruma's Mind Pacifying by Hakuin



The Three Sages Tasting Vinegar by Hakuin



## PLATE XX

Willow Tree by Sengai

PLATE XXI



The Hundred Days Law-Predaching by Sengai

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