

A Side View of Ikkyu's "Insanity"

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1970

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1.

In Ikkyu Sojun’s anthology of poems, the word “furyu” (風雨) (henceforth, Elegance) can be seen innumerable times (152) with various meanings, while the word “fukyou” (風狂) (henceforth, Insanity) can only be found in two places – “An Insane Visitor Stirs Up a Raging Wind” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (156) and “False Poems, Brilliantly Drunk, I Am Insane” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (119) – words concerning Ikkyu himself. However, we can examine exceedingly numerous matters on Insanity.

Sidebar: According to “Crazy Swarm” (風狂の客は嵐を起す), collated by Mr. Toshiko Ito. The Arabic numerals in the quotations are from the same book. The “Self-Admonition Collection” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) was not included.

In Ikkyu’s own case, Insanity was often the equivalent of Elegance (in the broad sense), while in other cases Elegance was a particular orientation that was developed towards (in the narrow sense). We can take Ikkyu’s Insanity in the broad definition of madness as a way of life that goes beyond the customs of worldly people, and in that sense, the framework of what is considered normal, that make Elegance and Insanity equivalent to each other, for example, “Pampas grass shoes and bamboo cane of 3000 cognitive objects, staying on the water eating in the wind for 20 years” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (117), “The vedana’s purpose is the eating in the wind once again staying on the water” (風狂の客は嵐を起す)(169), “50 years of being a straw hat-sedge cap visitor” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (574), “The beauty of the rivers and mountains, my rice boiled in tea with sake, one laughs their whole life reciting poetry in midwinter” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (204).

Although Insanity in the narrow sense is not uniform, here I would like to mention some notable ones such as “Another journey inside the Licentious Monk” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (156), “swimming through the Licentious Monk again” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (85), “Drinking and sex, and poetry that is also licentiousness” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (373), “Many cups of brilliant drunkenness, women’s sexuality and male sexuality” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (574), and (風狂の客は嵐を起す) “Even in the middle of the Licentious Monk, there too is male sexuality” (620). Let’s call the former type “Eating in the wind staying on the water Insanity” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) and the latter type “Barroom Licentious Monk Insanity” (風狂の客は嵐を起す). At this point, let us attempt to investigate the perspective (風狂) of Barroom Licentious Monk Insanity.

Comment: Romance and sexual relations with the blind female attendant Mori are excluded from the category of Insanity. This is because it is not Barroom Licentious Monk Insanity.

2.

Ikkyu’s own Insanity was a humorous expression of self-reliance/self-mockery that was contemplative of the bitterness of self-reflection, and at times a form of play within the pleasures of a pious life. This often overlaps with Elegance. And so Elegance is tinged with extraversion and aggressiveness developing in a particular way, while Insanity in the narrow sense is abrupt, though skillfully. The main part of Insanity in this category is the Barroom Licentious Monk Insanity. What I would like to draw your attention to here are 2 clauses one “abrupt” (風) and the other “binding” (風) in the gathas “Taken Cognitive Objects, Un-Taken People” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) and “An Elegant Friend with pampas grass shoes and bamboo sticks, A bent wooden bed is Zen’s fame and fortune” (風狂の客は嵐を起す) (14) respectively. To define the abrupt and binding clauses: they are movement toward antithetical targets without tension, it is a mistake to oppose Elegance

and fame and fortune, fame and fortune regards Elegance hiding its frustration. In this case, the original meaning of “the ancestors’ way is a reverberating breeze” is connected to the traditions of Bodhidharma, the Sixth Patriarch, Linji, Kyodo, Shuho Myocho, etc. Therefore, this Elegance becomes a lament or fury, as in “Eating in the wind staying on the water, no one has written about it for twenty years around the Fifth Bridge” (8, “The End of the Life of Daito Kokushi”).

By the way, Gojo Riverbed, and Kamo Riverbed, which was much larger than it is today, was a region where political evil, social contradictions, and natural disasters concentrated and ended up a region of “non-human” people such as eta (𠮟), hinin (𠮟), beggars, lepers, and low class laborers. At the top of this human existence were the extravagant and oppressive powerful families, such as Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa and his wife Hino Tomiko, while at the bottom were the rebellious local people, ronin (𠮟), and villains, as well as courtesans of various ranks.

3.

Eating in the wind staying on the water Insanity is a kind of “progress” that follows the correct path of Buddhism, both in terms of jnana (wisdom) and karuna (compassion). Barroom Licentious Monk Insanity is an attack on other peoples’ hypocrisy and depravity, even if it is a paradoxical criticism; self pleased and pious play, and an inhuman offense against Buddhist commandments even though the pair are wrapped into one. A Barroom Licentious Monk way of life and an Eating in the wind staying on the water way of life mutually contradict each other and yet are difficultly compatible. Vimalakirti, Bodhidharma, Linji, Puhua, Hanshan do this, unlike Kodo and Shuho Myocho, who both did not consistently live as one or the other. The inseparability of klesha and bodhi, immorality and the Buddha path are the honor of Mahayana Buddhism. Eating in the wind staying on the water Elegance and Barroom-Licentious Monk Elegance are contradictory equals; one’s body, by means of daily life in this place becomes physical in this way and it’s a risky gamble to step forth; this is Ikkyu’s Insanity Zen.

4.

Barrooms (𠮟) and The Licentious Monk (𠮟) are tentatively distinct. If we consider a barroom to be a sake store, it is not a sake retailer, but rather a sake store in the sense of a dosou-sakaya (𠮟𠮟𠮟), in this particular case, a sake brewery. Since the time of the Hojo clan there existed so-called money lenders called “Mujinzeni” (𠮟𠮟 lit. inexhaustible money), these moneylenders kept custody over pledges in warehouses in order to guard them from fires, the earth of these places being plastered over: later on, sake dealers, synonymous with pawnshops and usury houses operating concurrently, being referred to as “Dosou-sakaya” (𠮟𠮟𠮟). Shrines and temples also monopolized the right to brew sake. In the early days of the Muromachi period, in the space between the Saga valley in the west, Awataguchi to the east, and the capital in the center, there were 343 sake dealers counted. From the taxes levied from the dosou-sakayas, the bakufu reaped influential financial reserves, and the magistrates in control of this were called the Nozenikata Ichishu (𠮟𠮟𠮟), composed of several Buddhist temples, Shojitsubo, Jokkobo, Josenbo, Zenjubo, and so on; the head of this was called Ogura, and Shojitsubo was the main temple in this case. On, the sakaya-dosou’s taxes to the bakufu, interest rates were constantly raised on the pledges, and deep resentments grew towards the sakaya-dosous in the streets, often becoming peasant uprisings

(四三). Despite the accumulation of these uprisings, the sakaya-dosous remained nevertheless prosperous.

This is what a sake dealer is like. They did not sell sake to the common folk. Sakaya-dosous were for privileged business guests and their supplies, employees of chefs, and the coming and going high level prostitutes. If Ikkyu had been on friendly terms with sake merchants in Kyoto or Sakai, he would have been entertained with sake, food, prostitutes and enjoyed the singing and dancing of Shirabyoshi (四三). The previously mentioned sake dealers were the targets of raids during the peasant uprisings, including uprisings for the cancellation of debts (四三三), horse lending revolts (四三三), and cart lending revolts (四三三). There is a verse titled “Moratorium on Debt” in “Crazy Swarm.” “Thieves originally struck against the unhoused poor, there is nothing strange in the isolation of riches in the 10,000 nations, unbelievable, good fortune returns to a place of wickedness, 100,000 bronze Reijin (四三) vanish.” It says that the poor were not the target of the revolt’s assault. That by becoming a slave to money, the human soul becomes an empty shell. Ikkyu was not criticizing the uprisings demanding debt cancellation orders.

5.

In China, the word “shushi” (四三) often means a store that sells alcohol. “Daozi sent courtiers to make a shushi (四三), buying and selling by the water side.” (四三,四三三三,四三三三.) (Book of Jin, The Tale of King Daozi of Kuaji) (四三三三三三三三). “The sound of a cracking whip passes through the shushi, a black-dress robe walks in, instigating the door. (四三三三,四三三三) (Chu Guangxi, Chang’an Road Poetry) (四三, 四三三) From Tetsuji’s (四三) “Daikanwa” (四三) vol.11, page 357.

Crazy Swarm’s shushi’s sake seem to be of an inferior grade. In the middle of the Muro-machi period, around the front gates of temples and shrines were self-named “tea-houses” called “one-sip-one-sen” (四三三) where very young tea-serving-women – sometimes serving double as bathhouse prostitutes – would bring out tea and sake and songs of their services to sell. In Crazy Swarm, the language of “The teahouse is a beauty who is a good enemy” (四三三三三三)(479) and “Elegant teahouse with ancient singing” (四三三三三三) (483) can be seen. It is considered that the prostitutes Ikkyu messed about with were those of the common class. The approach to Gojo bridge’s dry riverbed served as a base of all kinds of day-walkers, night-walkers, street-walkers and the lowest of low caste geisha-prostitutes (四三), the prostitutes that Ikkyu messed with were considered – Crazy Swarm’s “business women”- not the higher-class courtesans of the day. The courtesan establishments – Crazy Swarm’s “brothels” – were a kind of courtesan agency, a place which was a special privilege to reside in. It seems that Crazy Swarm’s Licentious Monk was a courtesan establishment. Licensed red light districts, licensed prostitutes, and high ranking noh actors were the summit of prostitution’s status, established in the Edo period, and in Ikkyu’s period there were already the likes of Nishinotoin and Yanaginobanba, which were well-known willow planted red light districts. It is a Japanese concept based in Chinese origin; by means of Ming Dynasty trading vessels and priests, both as a means of money making, but also the ground, arrangement, and rules of the red light districts were imported. They (prostitutes) would stand in as representatives for corrupt monks, and now corrupt monks and prostitutes have deep connections. (There were also bride peddlers selling young women.)

Around that time there was the encyclopedia “Kagakushu” (kakakushu) states, “the eta are butchers and kawaramono” (kawaramono), also the “Inryoken Nikki” (inryoken) of the 2nd year of the Chokyo era (7 years after Ikkyu’s death), 8 months since “They slaughter horses and cattle, eating only the leftovers, many of them are thin” (inryoken), and the “Gaun Nikkenryoku” (gaunnikkenryoku) of the Bun’an Era’s 2nd year (Ikkyu’s 53rd year), 12 months since, “lid, to this extent the lowest of society butcher dead horses and cattle for the sake of others” (gaunnikkenryoku). The lower castes were dependent on the Kamo river. The historian Harada Tomohiko (haradatomohiko) describes, “A consistent history of the limits and status of the human disgrace and discrimination of the Kamo river throughout Japan is not existent. Throughout Japan, the noble peoples’ flesh unjustly spoiled the Kamo river, and the noble people’s spirits were not unjustly polluted by the river.” (haradatomohiko) (“Concerning The Battle of Sekigahara from Front to Back” (sekigahara))

7.

During the prime of Ikkyu’s life, there were nearly annual revolts in the developed provinces of Kyoto and Nara. It seems that if Ikkyu was in the cities, riverbeds, and teahouses of the middle/lower classes of commoners, natives, wanderers, he was personally exchanging talk with them and was also hearing their gloomy hate filled complaints. It seems he saw to keep in mind the shadow of terrible suffering that hung over the top of the body of the prostitutes in the Shushi Licentious Monk. A close friend of 6 years, whose whereabouts later became unknown, Rennyō, his mothers origin was also of the lower castes, perhaps he was hitting on something.

Comment: Prostitutes in a yokyoku, many of them madwomen, are thought to be substantiated as women becoming Buddhas in thought. For instance, in the case of “Eguchi”, of which I would like to bring attention to its aim, the prostitute is originally Samantabhadra, ascends to reach a status like a white elephant, the highest rank of the world placed in the lowest caste in the depths of society.

Ikkyu’s elegance/insanity was a kind of pleasure that frequently kept in mind people’s pain and bitterness. That bitterness was to participate in a profound crime of consciousness in Buddhist thought. Doesn’t it seem to be the case that the crime of consciousness is, in some cases, oneself feeling indebtedness to the powerless and oppressed? While at any rate, does the retrograde samadhi of the licentious monk purchasing a “business woman” and playing with her legitimate the existence of the licentious monk and of human trafficking? It may be possible to say that for the premise of manners and customs, as far as Ikkyu is concerned, the bounds regarding his insanity consisted of so-called facts and the retrograde motion of history’s complicit nature consisting of so-called facts was a natural unavoidable historical limitation, and if they didn’t crystallise into his subjective task, it would forcibly change this grim fact into a philosophy of being for others.

P.S. “If you expel prostitution from society, you will unsettle everything on account of lusts” (St. Augustine)

“Prostitution in towns is like the sewer in a palace; take away the sewers and the palace becomes an impure and stinking place.” (St. Thomas) [misattributed]

Supplementary Explanation

a.

In Ikkyū's collection of poems and verses the majority of them concerned male homosexuality. If it is possible to give an example, “XXXXXXXXXX..XXXXXXXXXX”¹ (996), a love poem to the second son of Kamparu Zenchiku (Zeami Motokiyo's son in law). The boom in male homosexuality was a threat to prostitutes. Out of this state of affairs, there appear “dancing girls” (XX) dressed as men with suikan (XX), upright eboshi (XXXX), and on the hip a sayamaki (XX). The likes of Gio (XX), an upper class prostitute, other prostitutes, Hotoke Gozen (XXXX), Minamoto no Yohitune's (XXXX) Shizuka Gozen (XXXX) received Kiyomori's (XX) affection.

A young Yamato Sarugaku (comment, he was Fujikawamaru, Zeami's childhood name) went out one season as a beggar with nothing but a bowl to earn the favor of the Daiju (Yoshimitsu (XX)). And thus, although he takes pleasure in this nearby award of office, it is said that the rest of the public approached the slope. He had the intention to leave the estate by means of acquiring a gift from the Daiju, but the Daimyo contested the gift and therefore incurred a great cost. (“Gogumaiki”) (XXXX).

In Yuzaki there is a great man called Zeami Motokiyo. It is the spot he loved Rokuenkoso (Yoshimitsu). (“Hanlin Koroshu”) (XXXX)

Zeami Motokiyo says in number 6 of the “Kodensho” (XXXX) on cultivating beauty:

Regarding the numerous types of people, whether a court lady, court attendant, prostitute, a lecherous person, a handsome man, even a plant, can become a kind of beauty, a form of mysterious profundity.

Noh plays and male homosexuality maintain a deep connection.

b.

In Marx's “Notes on James Mill” (1844), as well as continued discourses in his “Grundrisse” (1857–58), the established logic of money's fetish character becomes clear in the sense of how money plays a part in inverting the general equivalence of specific commodities in the exchange process of commodities, further with the expansion of exchange, elucidates the necessity of directing people towards the definite position of general equivalence as the optimum societal functionalism of precious metals as monetary commodities, in particular gold and silver, insofar as as the commodity economy/monetary economy develops, then inverts the person to person relation into a monetary one as a higher purpose. Certainly, modern day western Europe seems to be leading to the likeness of middle age Japan's “gold/silver power” (this is a candidly flaunted type of political authority, as in golden/silver pavilions), if given the chance.

The point of the “Mill Notes” is all but the same and was collected in the “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts” (1844), sketching the process logic of dehumanisation by means of money: “looking from the eye of God” and “prostitutes cheat the people” (3rd manuscript); and by extension chapters and sections of Shakespeare that called out money. And then, consider the appearance of the human commodity, the wage worker (menschenware), who have no choice but to sell their labor in order to make a living, having a popular metaphorical expression of selling oneself like a prostitute (allgemeine Prostitution). (This stage of Marx's concept of the labor power commodity was never settled). A. Bebel, author of “Women's Theory”, later describes prostitutes as a “living commodity” and that, “Japan is not a good market. Japan domestically

produces very many unmarried and cheap daughters.” The “business women” in Crazy Swarm are not signifying a living commodity. They are effectively dealers of things. The business women sold or didn’t sell their sex according to their subjective whim, and those whims were never identical. I’m not able to say if I caught younger Marx’s thoughts on the history of the development of money and commodities into the present day, nor the indication of Middle-age Japan’s subject nature on dehumanisation, nor encounter Ikkyu’s unconscious anguish of Insanity, of which I only started to speak on.

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