The Religion of the Samurai

Kaiten **Nukariya**

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A STUDY OF ZEN PHILOSOPHY AND
DISCIPLINE IN CHINA AND JAPAN

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Discovery Publisher

The Religion of The Samurai
London Luzac & Co.

2021, Discovery Publisher

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INTRODUCTION

Buddhism is geographically divided into two schools[1] — the Southern, the older and simpler, and the Northern, the later and more developed faith. The former, based mainly on the Pali texts[2] is known as Hinayana[3] (small vehicle), or the inferior doctrine; while the latter, based on the various Sanskrit texts[4], is known as Mahayana (large vehicle), or superior doctrine. The chief tenets of the Southern School are so well known to occidental scholars that they almost always mean the Southern School by the word Buddhism. But with regard to the Northern School very little is known to the West, owing to the fact that most of its original texts were lost, and that the teachings based on these texts are written in Chinese, or Tibetan, or Japanese languages unfamiliar to non-Buddhist investigators.

It is hardly justifiable to cover the whole system of Buddhism with a single epithet[5] 'pessimistic' or 'nihilistic,' because Buddhism, having been adopted by savage tribes as well as civilized nations, by quiet, enervated people as well as by warlike, sturdy hordes, during some twenty-five hundred years, has de-

1. The Southern School has its adherents in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Anan, etc.; while the Northern School is found in Nepal, China, Japan, Tibet, etc.

2. They chiefly consist of the Four Nikayas: (1) Digha Nikaya (Dirghagamas, translated into Chinese by Buddhayacas, A.D. 412-413); (2) Majjhima Nikaya (Madhyamagamas, translated into Chinese by Gautama Sanghadeva, A.D. 397-398); (3) Sanyutta Nikaya (Samyuktagamas, translated into Chinese by Gunabhadra, of the earlier Sung dynasty, A.D. 420 479); (4) Anguttara Nikaya (Ekottaragamas, translated into Chinese by Dharmanandi, A.D. 384-385). Out of these Hinayana books, the English translation of twenty-three suttas by Rhys Davids exist in 'Sacred Books of Buddhist,' vols. II.-III., and of seven suttas by the same author in 'Sacred Books of the East,' vol. XI.

3. The Southern Buddhists never call their faith Hinayana, the name being an invention of later Buddhists, who call their doctrine Mahayana in contradistinction to the earlier form of Buddhism. We have to notice that the word Hinayana frequently occurs in Mahayana books, while it does not in Hinayana books. books, while it does not in Hinayana books.

4. A catalogue of the Buddhist Canon, K'-yuen-luh, gives the titles of 897 Mahayana sutras, yet the most important books often quoted by Northern Buddhist teachers amount to little more than twenty. There exist the English translation of Larger Sukhavati-vyuha-sutra, Smaller Sukhavati-vyuha-sutra, Vajracchedika-sutra, Larger Prajna-paramita-hradya-sutra, Smaller Prajna-paramita-hrdaya-sutra, by Max Müller, and Amitayur-dhyana-sutra, by J. Takakusu, in 'Sacred Books of the East,' vol. XLIX. An English translation of Saddharma-pundarika-sutra, by Kern, is given in 'Sacred Books of the East,' Vol. XXI. Compare these books with 'Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism,' by D. Suzuki.

5. Hinayanism is, generally speaking, inclined to be pessimistic, but Mahayanism in the main holds the optimistic view of life. Nihilism is advocated in some Mahayana sutras, but others set forth idealism or realism.

veloped itself into beliefs widely divergent and even diametrically opposed. Even in Japan alone it has differentiated itself into thirteen main sects and forty-four sub-sects[1] and is still in full vigour, though in other countries it has already passed its prime. Thus Japan seems to be the best representative of the Buddhist countries where the majority of people abides by the guiding principle of the Northern School. To study her religion, therefore, is to penetrate into Mahayanism, which still lies an unexplored land for the Western minds. And to investigate her faith is not to dig out the remains of Buddhist faith that existed twenty centuries ago, but to touch the heart and soul of Mahayanism that enlivens its devotees at the present moment.

The object of this little book is to show how the Mahayanistic view of life and of the world differs markedly from that of Hinayanism, which is generally taken as Buddhism by Occidentals to explain how the religion of Buddha has adapted itself to its environment in the Far East, and also to throw light on the existing state of the spiritual life of modern Japan.

For this purpose we have singled out of thirteen Japanese sects the Zen Sect[2], not only because of the great influence it has exercised on the nation, but because of the unique position it holds among the established religious systems of the world. In the first place, it is as old as Buddhism itself, or even older, for its mode of practising Meditation has been handed down without much alteration from pre-Buddhistic recluses of India; and it may, on that account, provide the student of comparative religion with an interesting subject for his research.

In the second place, in spite of its historical antiquity, ideas entertained by its advocates are so new that they are in harmony with those of the New Buddhists[3]; accordingly the statement of these ideas may serve as an explanation of the present movement conducted by young and able reformers of Japanese Buddhism.

Thirdly, Buddhist denominations, like non-Buddhist religions, lay stress on

1. (1) The Ten Dai Sect, including three sub-sects; (2) The Shin Gon Sect, including eleven sub-sects; (3) The Ritsu Sect; (4) The Rin Zai Sect, including fourteen sub-sects; (5) The So To Sect; (6) The O Baku Sect; (7) The Jo Do Sect, including two sub-sects; (8) The Shin Sect, including ten sub-sects; (9) The Nichi Ren Sect, including nine sub-sects; (10) The Yu Zu Nen Butsu Sect; (11) The Hosso Sect; (12) The Ke Gon Sect; (13) The Ji Sect. Out of these thirteen Buddhist sects, Rin Zai, So To, and O Baku belong to Zen. For further information, see 'A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects,' by Dr. B. Nanjo.

2. The word Zen is the Sinico-Japanese abbreviation of the Sanskrit Dhyana, or Meditation. It implies the whole body of teachings and discipline peculiar to a Buddhist sect now popularly known as the Zen Sect.

3. There exists a society formed by men who have broken with the old creeds of Buddhism, and who call themselves the New Buddhists. It has for its organ 'The New Buddhism,' and is one of the influential religious societies in Japan. We mean by the New Buddhists, however, numerous educated young men who still adhere to Buddhist sects, and are carrying out a reformation.

scriptural authority; but Zen denounces it on the ground that words or characters can never adequately express religious truth, which can only be realized by mind; consequently it claims that the religious truth attained by Shakya Muni in his Enlightenment has been handed down neither by word of mouth nor by the letters of scriptures, but from teacher's mind to disciple's through the line of transmission until the present day. It is an isolated instance in the whole history of the world's religions that holy scriptures are declared to be 'no more than waste[1] paper by religionists, as done by Zen masters.

Fourthly, Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist religions regard, without exception, their founders as superhuman beings, but the practisers of Zen hold the Buddha as their predecessor, whose spiritual level they confidently aim to attain. Furthermore, they liken one who remains in the exalted position of Buddhaship to a man bound by a gold chain, and pity his state of bondage. Some of them went even so far as to declare Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to be their servants and slaves[2]. Such an attitude of religionists can hardly be found in any other religion.

Fifthly, although non-Buddhist people are used to call Buddhism idolatry, yet Zen can never be called so in the accepted sense of the term, because it, having a grand conception of Deity, is far from being a form of idol-worship; nay, it sometimes even took an iconoclastic attitude as is exemplified by Tan Hia[3], who warmed himself on a cold morning by making a fire of wooden statues. Therefore our exposition on this point will show the real state of existing Buddhism, and serve to remove religious prejudices entertained against it.

Sixthly, there is another characteristic of Zen, which cannot be found in any other religion-that is to say, its peculiar mode of expressing profound religious insight by such actions as the lifting up of a hair-brush, or by the tapping of the chair with a staff, or by a loud outcry, and so forth. This will give the student of religion a striking illustration of differentiated forms of religion in its scale of evolution.

Besides these characteristics, Zen is noted for its physical and mental training. That the daily practice of Zazen[4] and the breathing exercise remarkably improves one's physical condition is an established fact. And history proves that most Zen masters enjoyed a long life in spite of their extremely simple mode of living. Its mental discipline, however, is by far more fruitful, and keeps one's mind in equipoise, making one neither passionate nor dispassionate, neither

1. Lin Tsi Luh (Rin-zai-roku).

2. "Shakya and Maitreya," says Go So, "are servants to the other person. Who is that other person?" (Zen-rin-rui-ju, Vol. I., p. 28).

3. A Chinese Zen teacher, well known for his peculiarities, who died in A.D. 824. For the details of this anecdote, see Zen-rin-rui-ju, Vol. I., P. 39.

4. The sitting-in-meditation, for the full explanation of which see Chapter VIII.

sentimental nor unintelligent, neither nervous nor senseless. It is well known as a cure to all sorts of mental disease, occasioned by nervous disturbance, as a nourishment to the fatigued brain, and also as a stimulus to torpor and sloth. It is self-control, as it is the subduing of such pernicious passions as anger, jealousy, hatred, and the like, and the awakening of noble emotions such as sympathy, mercy, generosity, and what not. It is a mode of Enlightenment, as it is the dispelling of illusion and of doubt, and at the same time it is the overcoming of egoism, the destroying of mean desires, the uplifting of the moral ideal, and the disclosing of inborn wisdom.

The historical importance of Zen can hardly be exaggerated. After its introduction into China in the sixth century, A.D., it grew ascendant through the Sui (598-617) and the Tang dynasty (618-906), and enjoyed greater popularity than any other sect of Buddhism during the whole period of the Sung (976-1126) and the Southern Sung dynasty (1127-1367). In these times its commanding influence became so irresistible that Confucianism, assimilating the Buddhist teachings, especially those of Zen, into itself and changing its entire aspect, brought forth the so-called Speculative philosophy[1]. And in the Ming dynasty (1368-1659) the principal doctrines of Zen were adopted by a celebrated Confucian scholar, Wang Yang Ming[2], who thereby founded a school, through which Zen exercised profound influence on Chinese and Japanese men of letters, statesmen, and soldiers.

As regards Japan, it was first introduced into the island as the faith first for the Samurai or the military class, and moulded the characters of many distinguished soldiers whose lives adorn the pages of her history. Afterwards it gradually found its way to palaces as well as to cottages through literature and art, and at last permeated through every fibre of the national life. It is Zen that modern Japan, especially after the Russo-Japanese War, has acknowledged as an ideal doctrine for her rising generation.

1. See 'A History of Chinese Philosophy,' by Ryukichi Endo, and A History of Chinese Philosophy,' by Giichi Nakauchi.

2. For the life of this distinguished scholar and soldier (1472-1529), see 'A Detailed Life of O Yo Mei' by Takejiro Takase, and also 'O-yo-mei-shutsu-shin-sei-ran-roku.'

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF ZEN IN CHINA

1. Origin of Zen in India

To-day Zen as a living faith can be found in its pure form only among the Japanese Buddhists. You cannot find it in the so-called Gospel of Buddha anymore than you can find Unitarianism in the Pentateuch, nor can you find it in China and India any more than you can find life in fossils of bygone ages. It is beyond all doubt that it can be traced back to Shakya Muni himself, nay, even to pre-Buddhistic times, because Brahmanic teachers practised Dhyana, or Meditation[1], from earliest times. But Brahmanic Zen

1. "If a wise man holds his body with its three parts (chest, neck, and head) erect, and turn his senses with the mind towards the heart, he will then in the boat of Brahman cross all the torrents which cause fear.
"Compressing his breathings let him, who has subdued all motions, breathe forth through the nose with the gentle breath. Let the wise man without fail restrain his mind, that chariot yoked with vicious horses.
"Let him perform his exercises in a place level, pure, free from pebbles, fire, and dust, delightful by its sounds, its water, and bowers; not painful to the eye, and full of shelters and eaves.
"When Yoga, is being performed, the forms which come first, producing apparitions in Brahman, are those of misty smoke, sun, fire, wind, fire-flies, lightnings, and a crystal moon.
"When, as earth, water, light, heat, and ether arises, the fivefold quality of Yoga takes place, then there is no longer illness, old age, or pain for him who has obtained a body produced by the fire of Yoga.
The first results of Yoga they call lightness, healthiness, steadiness, a good complexion, an easy pronunciation, a sweet odour, and slight excretions "(Cvet. Upanisad, ii. 8-13).
"When the five instruments of knowledge stand still together with the mind, and when the intellect does not move, that is called the highest state.
"This, the firm holding back of the senses, is what is called Yoga. He must be free from thoughtlessness then, for Yoga comes and goes" (Katha Upanisad, ii. 10, 11).
"This is the rule for achieving it (viz., concentration of the mind on the object of meditation): restraint of the breath, restraint of the senses, meditation, fixed attention, investigation, absorption-these are called the sixfold Yoga. When beholding by this Yoga, he beholds the gold-coloured maker, the lord, the person, Brahman, the cause; then the sage, leaving behind good and evil, makes everything (breath, organs of sense, body, etc.) to be one in the Highest Indestructible (in the pratyagatman or Brahman)" (Maitr. Upanisad, vi. 18).
"And thus it has been elsewhere: There is the superior fixed attention (dharana) for him-viz., if he presses the tip of the tongue down the palate, and restrain the voice, mind, and breath, he sees Brahman by discrimination (taraka). And when, after the cessation of mind, he sees his own Self, smaller than small, and shining as the Highest Self, then, having seen his Self as the Self, he becomes Self-less, and because he is Self-less, he is without limit, without cause, absorbed in thought. This is the highest mystery — viz., final liberation" (Maitr. Upanisad, vi. 20).
Amrtab. Upanisad, 18, describes three modes of sitting-namely, the Lotus-seat (Padmasana),

was carefully distinguished even by early Buddhists[1] as the heterodox Zen from that taught by the Buddha. Our Zen originated in the Enlightenment of Shakya Muni, which took place in his thirtieth year, when he was sitting absorbed in profound meditation under the Bodhi Tree. It is said that then he awoke to the perfect truth and declared: "All animated and inanimate beings are Enlightened at the same time." According to the tradition[2] of this sect Shakya Muni transmitted his mysterious doctrine from mind to mind to his oldest disciple Mahakacyapa at the assembly hold on the Mount of Holy Vulture, and the latter was acknowledged as the first patriarch, who, in turn, transmitted the doctrine to Ananda, the second patriarch, and so till Bodhidharma, the twenty-eighth[3] patriarch. We have little to say about the historical

the sitting with legs bent underneath; the mystic diagram seat (Svastika); and the auspicious-seat (Bhadrasana); — while Yogacikha directs the choice of the Lotus-posture, with attention concentrated on the tip of the nose, hands and feet closely joined.

1. The anonymous author of Lankavatara-sutra distinguishes the heterodox Zen from the Hinayana Zen, the Hinayana Zen from the Mahayana Zen, and calls the last by the name of the Buddha's Holy Zen. The sutra is believed by many Buddhists, not without reason, to be the exposition of that Mahayana doctrine which Acvaghosa restated in his Craddhotpada-castra. The sutra was translated, first, into Chinese by Gunabbadra, in A.D. 443; secondly, by Bodhiruci in A.D. 513; and, thirdly, by Ciksanada in A.D. 700-704. The book is famous for its prophecy about Nagdrajuna, which (according to Dr. Nanjo's translation) is as follows:

"After the Nirvana of the Tathagata, there will be a man in the future, listen to me carefully, O Mahatma, A man who will hold my law. In the great country of South, there will be a venerable Bhiksu The Bodhisattva Nagarjuna by name, who will destroy the views of Astikas and Nastikas, who will preach unto men my Yana, the highest Law of the Mahayana, and will attain to the Pramudita-bhumi."

2. The incident is related as follows: When the Buddha was at the assembly on the Mount of Holy Vulture, there came a Brahmaraja who offered the Teacher a golden flower, and asked him to preach the Dharma. The Buddha took the flower and held it aloft in his hand, gazing at it in perfect silence. None in the assembly could understand what he meant, except the venerable Mahakacyapa, who smiled at the Teacher. Then the Buddha said: "I have the Eye and Treasury of Good Dharma, Nirvana, the Wonderful Spirit, which I now hand over to Mahakacyapa." The book in which this incident is described is entitled 'Sutra on the Great Brahman King's Questioning Buddha to Dispel a Doubt,' but there exists no original text nor any Chinese translation in the Tripitaka. It is highly probable that some early Chinese Zen scholar of the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960-1126) fabricated the tradition, because Wang Ngan Shih (O-an-seki), a powerful Minister under the Emperor Shan Tsung (Shin-so, A.D. 1068-1085), is said to have seen the book in the Imperial Library. There is, however, no evidence, as far as we know, pointing to the existence of the Sutra in China. In Japan there exists, in a form of manuscript, two different translations of that book, kept in secret veneration by some Zen masters, which have been proved to be fictitious by the present writer after his close examination of the contents. See the Appendix to his Zen-gaku-hi-han-ron.

3. The following is the list of the names of the twenty-eight patriarchs: 1.Mahakacyapa 2. Ananda, 3. Canavasu, 4.Upagupta, 5. Dhrtaka, 6.Micchaka, 7.Vasumitra, 8.Buddhanandi, 9.Buddhamitra, 10.Parcva, 11.Punyayacas, 12.Acvaghosa, 13.Kapimala, 14.Nagarjuna, 15.Kanadeva, 16.Rahulata, 17.Samghanandi, 18.Samghayacas, 19.Kumarata, 20.Jayata, 21.Vasubandhu, 22.Manura, 23.Haklanayacas, 24.Simha, 25.Vacasuta, 26.Punyamitra, 27.Prajnyatara, 28.Bodhidharma.

The first twenty-three patriarchs are exactly the same as those given in 'The Sutra on the Nidana of transmitting Dharmapitaka,' translated in A.D. 472. King Teh Chwen Tang Iuh (Kei-toku-den-to-roku), a famous Zen history of China, gives two elaborate narratives about the transmission of Right Dharma from teacher to disciple through these twenty-eight patriarchs, to be trusted

value of this tradition, but it is worth while to note that the list of the names of these twenty-eight patriarchs contains many eminent scholars of Mahayanism, or the later developed school of Buddhism, such as Acvaghosa,[1] Nagarjuna[2], Kanadeva[3], and Vasubhandhu[4].

2. Introduction of Zen into China by Bodhidharma

An epoch-making event took place in the Buddhist history of China by Bodhidharma's coming over from Southern India to that country in about A.D. 520[5]. It was the introduction, not of the dead scriptures, as was repeatedly done before him, but of a living faith, not of any theoretical doctrine, but of practical Enlightenment, not of the relies of Buddha, but of the Spirit of Shakya Muni; so that Bodhidharma's position as a representative of Zen was unique. He was, however, not a missionary to be favourably received by the public. He seems to have behaved in a way quite opposite to that in which a modern pastor treats his flock. We imagine him to have been a religious teacher entirely different in every point from a popular Christian missionary of our age. The latter would smile or try to smile at every face he happens to see and would talk sociably; while the former would not smile at any face, but

without hesitation. It would not be difficult for any scholar of sense to find these statements were made from the same motive as that of the anonymous author who gives a short life, in Dirghagama-sutra, of each of the six Buddhas, the predecessors of Shakya Muni, if he carefully compare the list given above with the lists of the patriarchs of the Sarvastivada school given by San Yin (So-yu died A.D. 518) in his Chuh San Tsung Ki (Shutsu-san zo-ki).

1. One of the founders of Mahayana Buddhism, who flourished in the first century A.D. There exists a life of his translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva in A.D. 401-409. The most important of his works are: Mahayanacraddhotpada-castra, Mahalankara-sutra-castra, Buddha-caritakavya.

2. The founder of the Madhyamika school of Mahayana Buddhism, who lived in the second century A.D. A life of his was translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva in A.D. 401-409. Twenty-four books are ascribed to him, of which Mahaprajñaparamita-castra, Madhyamika-castra, Prajnyadipa-castra, Dvadacanikaya-castra, Astadacakaca-castra, are well known.

3. Sometimes called Aryadeva, a successor of Nagarjuna. A life of his was translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva in A.D. 401-409. The following are his important works: Cata-castra, 'Castra by the Bodhisattva Deva on the refutation of four heretical Hinayana schools mentioned in the Lankatvatara-sutra'; 'Castra by the Bodhisattva Deva on the explanation of the Nirvana by twenty Hinayana teachers mentioned in the Lankavatara-sutra.'

4. A younger brother of Asamga, a famous Mahayanist of the fifth century A.D. There are thirty-six works ascribed to Vasubandhu, of which Dacabhumika-castra, Aparimitayus-sutra-castra, Mahapari-nirvana-sutra-castra, Mahayana-catadharmavidyadvara-castra, Vidya-matrasiddhi-tridaca-castra, Bodhicittopadana-castra, Buddha-gotra-castra, Vidyamatrasiddhivincatigatha-castra, Madhyantavibhaga-castra, Abhidharma-koca-castra, Tarka-castra, etc., are well known.
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5. Buddhist historians differ in opinion respecting the date of Bodhidharma's appearance in China. Compare Chwen Fah Chan Tsung Lun (Den bo sho ju ron) and Hwui Yuen (E-gen).

would stare at it with the large glaring eyes that penetrated to the innermost soul. The latter would keep himself scrupulously clean, shaving, combing, brushing, polishing, oiling, perfuming, while the former would be entirely indifferent to his apparel, being always clad in a faded yellow robe. The latter would compose his sermon with a great care, making use of rhetorical art, and speak with force and elegance; while the former would sit as absolutely silent as the bear, and kick one off, if one should approach him with idle questions.

3. Bodhidharma and the Emperor Wu

No sooner had Bodhidharma landed at Kwang Cheu in Southern China than he was invited by the Emperor[1] Wu, who was an enthusiastic Buddhist and good scholar, to proceed to his capital of Chin Liang. When he was received in audience, His Majesty asked him: "We have built temples, copied holy scriptures, ordered monks and nuns to be converted. Is there any merit, Reverend Sir, in our conduct?" The royal host, in all probability, expected a smooth, flattering answer from the lips of his new guest, extolling his virtues, and promising him heavenly rewards, but the Blue-eyed Brahmin bluntly answered: "No merit at all."

This unexpected reply must have put the Emperor to shame and doubt in no small degree, who was informed simply of the doctrines of the orthodox Buddhist sects. 'Why not,' he might have thought within himself, 'why all this is futile? By what authority does he declare all this meritless? What holy text can be quoted to justify his assertion? What is his view in reference to the different doctrines taught by Shakya Muni? What does he hold as the first principle of Buddhism?' Thus thinking, he inquired: "What is the holy truth, or the first principle?" The answer was no less astonishing: "That principle transcends all. There is nothing holy." The crowned creature was completely at a loss to see what the teacher meant. Perhaps he might have thought: 'Why is nothing holy? Are there not holy men, Holy Truths, Holy Paths stated in the scriptures? Is he himself not one of the holy men?' "Then who is that confronts us?" Asked the monarch again. "I know not, your majesty," was the laconic reply of Bodhidharma, who now saw that his new faith was beyond the understanding of the Emperor.

The elephant can hardly keep company with rabbits. The petty orthodoxy can by no means keep pace with the elephantine stride of Zen. No wonder that Bodhidharma left not only the palace of the Emperor Wu, but also the State of Liang, and went to the State of Northern Wei.[2] There he spent nine

1. The Emperor Wu (Bu-Tei) of the Liang dynasty, whose reign was A.D. 502-549.
2. Northern Gi dynasty (A.D. 386-534).

years in the Shao Lin[1] Monastery, mostly sitting silent in meditation with his face to the wall, and earned for himself the appellation of 'the wall-gazing Brahmin.' This name itself suggests that the significance of his mission was not appreciated by his contemporaries. But neither he was nor they were to blame, because the lion's importance is appreciated only by the lion. A great personage is no less great because of his unpopularity among his fellow men, just as the great Pang[2] is no less great because of his unpopularity among the winged creatures. Bodhidharma was not popular to the degree that he was envied by his contemporary Buddhists, who, as we are told by his biographers, attempted to poison him three times[3], but without success.

4. Bodhidharma and his Successor the Second Patriarch

China was not, however, an uncultivated[4] land for the seed of Zen — nay,

1. Sho-rin-ji, erected by the Emperor Hiao Ming of Northern Wei A. D. 497.

2. Chwang-tsz in his famous parable compares a great sage with the Pang, an imaginary bird of enormous size, with its wings of ninety thousand miles. The bird is laughed at by wrens and sparrows because of its excessive size.

3. This reminds us of Nan Yoh Hwui Sz (Nan-gaku-e-shi, died A. D. 577), who is said to have learned Zen under Bodhidharma. He says in his statement of a vow that he was poisoned three times by those who envied him.

4. The translation of Hinayana Zen sutras first paved the way for our faith. Fourteen Zen sutras, including such important books as Mahanapanadhyana-sutra, Dhyanacarya-dharmasanyjnya-sutra, Dhyanacarya-saptatrimcadvarga-sutra, were translated by Ngan Shi Kao (An-sei-ko) as early as A.D. 148-170. Cullamargabhumi-sutra was translated by K' Yao (Shi-yo) in A.D. 185; Dharmatara-dhyana-sutra by Buddhabhadra in A.D. 398-421; Dhyananisthitasamadhi-dharma-parygya-sutra by Kumarajiva in A.D. 402; 'An Abridged Law on the Importance of Meditation' by Kumarajiva in A. D. 405; Pancadvara-dhyanasutra-maharthadharma by Dharmamitra in A. D. 424-441. Furthermore, Mahayana books closely related to the doctrine of Zen were not unknown to China before Bodhidharma. Pratyutpanna-buddhasammukhavasthita-samadhi was translated by K' Leu Cia Chan (Shi-ru-ga-sen) in A.D. 164-186; Vimalakirttinirdeca-sutra, which is much used in Zen, by Kumarajiva in A.D. 384-412; Lankavatara-sutra, which is said to have been pointed out by Bodhidharma as the best explanation of Zen, by Gunabhadra in A.D. 433; Saddharma-pundarika-sutra, in its complete form, by Kumarajiva in A.D. 406; Avatamsaka-sutra by Buddhabhadra in A.D. 418; Mahaparinirvana-sutra by Dharmaraksa in A.D. 423.
If we are not mistaken, Kumarajiva, who came to China A.D. 384, made a valuable contribution towards the foundation of Zen in that country, not merely through his translation of Zen sutras above mentioned, but by the education of his disciples, such as Sang Chao (So-jo, died A.D. 414), Sang Shang (So-sho, whose writings undoubtedly influenced later Zen teachers. A more important personage in the history of Zen previous to the Blue-eyed Brahmin is Buddhabhadra, a well-known Zen master, who came over to China A.D. 406. His translation of Dharmatara-dhyana-sutra (which is said to have been preached by Bodhidharma himself when he was in India) and that of Avatamsaka-sutra may be said without exaggeration to have laid the corner-stone for Zen. He gave a course of lectures on the Zen sutra for the first time in China in A.D. 413, and it was through his instruction that many native practisers of Zen were produced, of whom Chi Yen (Chi-gon) and Huen Kao (Gen-ko) are well known. In these days Zen should have been in the ascendant in India, because almost all Indian scholars — at least those known to us-were called Zen teachers — for instance, Buddhabhadra, Buddhasena, Dharmadhi, and some others were all Zen scholars.
Chinese Buddhist scholars did no less than Indian teachers toward the uprising of Zen. The

there had been many practisers of Zen before Bodhidharma. All that he had to do was to wait for an earnest seeker after the spirit of Shakya Muni. Therefore he waited, and waited not in vain, for at last there came a learned Confucianist, Shang Kwang (Shin-ko) by name, for the purpose of finding the final solution of a problem which troubled him so much that he had become dissatisfied with Confucianism, as it had no proper diet for his now spiritual hunger. Thus Shang Kwang was far from being one of those half-hearted visitors who knocked the door of Bodhidharma only for the sake of curiosity. But the silent master was cautious enough to try the sincerity of a new visitor before admitting him to the Meditation Hall. According to a biography[1] of his, Shang Kwang was not allowed to enter the temple, and had to stand in the courtyard covered deep with snow. His firm resolution and earnest desire, however, kept him standing continually on one spot for seven days and nights with beads of the frozen drops of tears on his breast. At last he cut off his left arm with a sharp knife, and presented it before the inflexible teacher to show his resolution to follow the master even at the risk of his life. Thereupon Bodhidharma admitted him into the order as a disciple fully qualified to be instructed in the highest doctrine of Mahayanism.

Our master's method of instruction was entirely different from that of ordinary instructors of learning. He would not explain any problem to the learner, but simply help him to get enlightened by putting him an abrupt but telling question. Shang Kwang, for instance, said to Bodhidharma, perhaps with a sigh:

foremost among them is Hwui Yuen (E-on, died D. 414), who practised Zen by the instruction of Buddhabhadra. He founded the Society of the White Lotus, which comprised eighteen eminent scholars of the age among its members, for the purpose of practising Meditation and of adoring Buddha Amitabha. We must not forget that during the Western and the Eastern Tsin (Shin) dynasties (A.D. 265-420) both Taoism and Buddhism grew prosperous to no small extent. And China produced, on the one hand, Taoists of an eccentric type, such as the Seven Wise Men of the Bamboo Forest, while she gave birth to many recluse-like men of letters, such as Tao Yuen Ming (To-yen-mei, died A.D. 427) and some others on the other. Besides there were some scholars who studied Buddhism in connection with Taoism and Confucianism, and led a secluded life. To the last class of scholars belonged Chwen Hih (Hu dai shi), known as Chwen the Great. He is said to have been accustomed to wear a Confucianist hat, a Buddhist robe, and Taoist shoes. It was in A.D. 534 that he presented a memorial to the Emperor Wu, in which he explained the three grades of good. "The Highest Good consists," says he, "in the emptiness of mind and non-attachment. Transcendence is its cause, and Nirvana is its result. The Middle Good consists in morality and good administration. It results in a peaceful and happy life in Heaven and in Earth. The Lowest Good consists in love and protection of sentient beings." Thus his idea of good, as the reader will see without difficulty, is the result of a compromise of Taoism and Buddhism. Sin Wang Ming (Sin-o-mei, On the Mind-King), one of his masterpieces, together with other minor poems, are still used as a textbook of Zen. This fact unmistakably proves that Taoist element found its way into the constituents of Zen from its very outset in China.

1. King Teh Chwen Tang Luh (Kei-toku-den-to-roku), published by Tao Yuen (Do-gen) A.D. 1004, gives a detailed narrative concerning this incident as stated here, but earlier historians tell us a different story about the mutilation of Shang Kwang's arm. Compare Suh Kas San Chwen (Zoku-ko-so-den) and Hwui Yuen (E-gen).

"I have no peace of mind. Might I ask you, sir, to pacify my mind?" "Bring out your mind (that troubles you so much)," replied the master, "here before me! I shall pacify it." "It is impossible for me," said the disciple, after a little consideration, "to seek out my mind (that troubles me so much)." "Then," exclaimed Bodhidharma, "I have pacified your mind." Hereon Shang Kwang was instantly Enlightened. This event is worthy of our notice, because such a mode of instruction was adopted by all Zen teachers after the first patriarch, and it became one of the characteristics of Zen.

5. Bodhidharma's Disciples and the Transmission of the Law[1]

Bodhidharma's labour of nine years in China resulted in the initiation of a number of disciples, whom some time before his death he addressed as follows: "Now the time (of my departure from this world) is at hand. Say, one and all, how do you understand the Law?" Tao Fu (Do-fuku) said in response to this: "The Law does not lie in the letters (of the Scriptures), according to my view, nor is it separated from them, but it works." The Master said: "Then you have obtained my skin." Next Tsung Chi (So-ji), a nun, replied: "As Ananda[2] saw the kingdom of Aksobhya[3] only once but not twice, so I understand the Law". The master said: "Then you have attained to my flesh." Then Tao Yuh (Do-iku) replied: "The four elements[4] are unreal from the first, nor are the five aggregates[5] really existent. All is emptiness according to my view." The master said: "Then you have acquired my bone." Lastly, Hwui Ko (E-ka), which was the Buddhist name given by Bodhidharma, to Shang Kwang, made a polite bow to the teacher and stood in his place without a word. "You have attained to my marrow." So saying, Bodhidharma handed over the sacred Kachaya[6], which he had brought from India to Hwui Ko, as a symbol of the transmission of the Law, and created him the Second Patriarch.

6. The Second and the Third Patriarchs

After the death of the First Patriarch, in A.D. 528, Hwui Ko did his best

1. For details, see Chwen Tang Luh and Den Ka Roku, by Kei Zan. As for the life of Bodhidharma, Dr. B. Matsumoto's 'A Life of Bodhidharma' may well be recommended to the reader.
2. A favourite disciple of Shakya Muni, and the Third Patriarch of Zen.
3. The: name means I Immovable,' and represents the firmness of thought.
4. Earth, water, fire, and air.
5. (1) Rupa, or form; (2) Vedana, or perception; (3) Samjnya, or consciousness; (4) Karman (or Samskara), or action; (5) Vijnyana, or knowledge.
6. The clerical cloak, which is said to have been dark green. It became an object of great veneration after the Sixth Patriarch, who abolished the patriarchal system and did not hand the symbol over to successors.

to propagate the new faith over sixty years. On one occasion a man suffering from some chronic disease called on him, and requested him in earnest: "Pray, Reverend Sir, be my confessor and grant me absolution, for I suffer long from an incurable disease." "Bring out your sin (if there be such a thing as sin)," replied the Second Patriarch, "here before me. I shall grant you absolution." "It is impossible," said the man after a short consideration, "to seek out my sin." "Then," exclaimed the master, "I have absolved you. Henceforth live up to Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha."[1] "I know, your reverence," said the man, "that you belong to Samgha; but what are Buddha and Dharma?" "Buddha is Mind itself. Mind itself is Dharma. Buddha is identical with Dharma. So is Samgha." "Then I understand," replied the man, "there is no such thing as sin within my body nor without it, nor anywhere else. Mind is beyond and above sin. It is no other than Buddha and Dharma." Thereupon the Second Patriarch saw the man was well qualified to be taught in the new faith, and converted him, giving him the name of Sang Tsung (So-san). After two years' instruction and discipline, he[2] bestowed on Sang Tsung the Kachaya handed down from Bodhidharma and authorized him as the Third Patriarch. It is by Sang Tsung that the doctrine of Zen was first reduced to writing by his composition of Sin Sin[3] Ming (Sin zin-mei, On Faith and Mind), a metrical exposition of the faith.

7. The Fourth Patriarch and the Emperor Tai Tsung (Tai-so)

The Third[4] Patriarch was succeeded by Tao Sin (Do-shin), who being initiated at the age of fourteen, was created the Fourth Patriarch after nine years' study and discipline. Tao Sin is said never to have gone to bed for more than forty years of his patriarchal career[5]. In A.D. 643 the Emperor Tai Tsung (627-649), knowing of his virtues, sent him a special messenger, requesting him to call on His Majesty at the palace. But he declined the invitation by a memorial, saying that he was too aged and infirm to visit the august personage. The Emperor, desirous of seeing the reputed patriarch, sent for him thrice, but in vain. Then the enraged monarch ordered the messenger to behead the inflexible monk, and bring the head before the throne, in case he should disobey the order for the fourth time. As Tao Sin was told of the order of the Emperor, he stretched out his neck ready to be decapitated. The Emperor, learning from

1. The so-called Three Treasures of the Buddha, the Law, and the Order.
2. The Second Patriarch died in A.D. 593 — that is, sixty-five years after the departure of the First Patriarch.
3. A good many commentaries were written on the book, and it is considered as one of the best books on Zen.
4. He died in A.D. 606, after his labour of thirteen years as the teacher.
5. He died in A.D. 651-that is, forty-five years after the death of the Third Patriarch.

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Zen may be the most misunderstood of the world's moral philosophies. While it is often classified as a Religion, it is frequently considered by its adherents to be a utilitarian philosophy, a collection of rational moral precepts or, even more simply, as a state of being. The aim of the practice of Zen is to become Enlightened and achieve the beatitude of Nirvana.

To reach Nirvana means to achieve the state of extinction of pain and the annihilation of sin. Zen never looks for the realization of its beatitude in a place like heaven, nor believes in the realm of Reality transcendental of the phenomenal universe, nor gives countenance to the superstition of Immortality, nor does it hold the world is the best of all possible worlds, nor conceives life simply as blessing. It is in this life, full of shortcomings, misery, and sufferings, that Zen hopes to realize its beatitude. It is in this world, imperfect, changing, and moving, that Zen finds the Divine Light it worships. It is in this phenomenal universe of limitation and relativity that Zen aims to attain to highest Nirvana.

ISBN 978-1-78894-575-2

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Cover: Miyamoto Musashi