



ACCORDING TO LEGEND, the Z/Yen chop – symbol of the quest for Z/Yen enlightenment – was inherited by Chao Kli Ning's most fervent disciple, Lo Fan. Given Lo Fan's Z/Yen, a philosophical desire to make money, he began a chain of successive sales of the Z/Yen chop to faithful disciples through the centuries. Legend has it that the chop was lost in a fairly messy takeover battle in the early late Middle Ages. However, there are dark rumours that the chop still survives, wielded by modern disciples who continue to spread the Z/Yen creed, for a quick buck.

MICHAEL MAINELLI and **IAN HARRIS** are founders/directors of the risk/reward management firm Z/Yen and the modern scions of Chao Kli Ning's dynasty. Before reaching total Z/Yen enlightenment, Michael and Ian's monastic duties included service as management consultants and corporate strategists, advising businesses and organisations on the one true path(s), as well as writing and contributing to numerous business publications.

CHAO KLI NING (499BC TO 401BC?): Quasi-mythological, proto-businessman from the late Zhou period in ancient China. Said to have had an uncanny knack for spotting an opportunity to make a quick buck. Legend has it that the Z/Yen business philosophy (see opposite), which later came to dominate the Early Imperial Eastern Mercantile Period, was founded as the result of a massive endowment from Chao Kli Ning's stupendous fortune (although some accounts attribute the Z/Yen Institution to Lo Fan, protégé of Chao Kli Ning, patriarch of the powerful Lo family and holder of Chao Kli Ning's subsidiary rights in perpetuity). The only evidence of Chao Kli Ning's existence is a rich oral tradition of case studies.

Z/YEN (PRONOUNCED "ZEE-YEN"): A mystical philosophy that encompasses enlightenment in business and enlightenment in life. Z/Yen is based on a unique blend of Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, decadent subcultures, arrogant supra-cultures and humour. The philosophy, which highlights the duality in all business problems and solutions, is sometimes summarised as "a philosophical desire to make money." Z/Yen is believed to have been founded by Chao Kli Ning (see opposite), although only fragmentary evidence of the origins of Z/Yen survives in its rich oral tradition. Historians have long sought documentary evidence of Chao Kli Ning, the origins of Z/Yen and the zest for enlightenment which made the ancient business world what it is today.

EXCERPTS FROM THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BUSINESS ARCHAEOLOGY PRIOR TO
THE DISCOVERY OF THE Z/YEN PAPERS – THE ANCIENT EASTERN BUSINESS TEXT
CONTAINED HEREIN.





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WHEN THE MIGHTY WHALE IS
DRAGGED DOWN, IT IS BY A BILLION
REPLICATING MICROBES FEASTING

STUDIES IN MICROBIOLOGICAL CULINARY TASTE

NEVER LOOK A MAD MONK IN THE
MOUTH, HE MIGHT HAVE HALITOSIS.
BUT DO LISTEN, HIS WORDS MIGHT
CHANGE THE COURSE OF YOUR LIFE

(BELIEVED TO BE FROM) THE BOOK OF CHAO KLI NING



CHAPTER SIX: LEVERAGED GROWTH

BROTHERS IN ALMS

Containing a parable of life, the universe and
augmenting a bank account through the power
of faith.

CHAO KLI NING RUSHED BACK from the laundry to his home. He had only half an hour to get packed and moving or he would not make it to the first staging post before nightfall. The staging post was on the road to Guilin, the city of hills, karsts, rivers and nocturnal pleasures. He could hardly wait to be on the road. After all, this was his annual business trip. His only regret was that, as usual, his untrustworthy staff at the laundry and two restaurants had needed an entire morning of discipline before he felt comfortable leaving them in charge. He was hardly in the right frame of mind for an enlightening journey in search of innovative ideas and invigorating, competitive, self-analysis – in short, a business trip.

During the flurry of packing, Cha, Kli Ning's wife, entered their room. "My esteemed and beloved husband, surely you cannot leave our Kwik Klining Duck Tea House and Laundry alone for so many weeks while you travel on this ludicrous 'business trip'. Neither of us trusts the staff to run the places properly



when you are away. Last time, they so insulted the food inspector that you spent six months wining and dining the entire inspectorate in our restaurants for free, to prevent the inspector from revoking our licences on health grounds.”

“Don’t be absurd, Cha. That sort of thing won’t happen again. This time, I have left very clear instructions. Besides, this business trip is essential. Get a detailed grip on the big picture. Without this trip, we may fall behind in catering and cleaning standards. This particular conference in Guilin only happens every three years. With this year’s theme, ‘How to Clean Up in Feasts’, my colleagues have insisted that I present a paper on the future of bleach in laundry and catering. I simply must go, and I am going.”

And so he did. Kli Ning breezed out of the house with his baggage. His mood visibly improved as he passed through the gateway followed by a slightly overburdened donkey, struggling to carry copies of Kli Ning’s paper, produced by Win Kin’s automated calligraphy machine in Kli Ning’s laundry basement.

In the long shadows of dusk, not so far from Kli Ning’s first staging post, an unassuming monk wheezed along the road. The monk’s breathing was the least of his problems. His legs were bowed, his back bent, his face had seen better days. In short, there was little time to make it to the staging post before nightfall – and possibly even less time after that. It was then that the monk took a wrong turn, heading through the bush for two hours before popping out, exhausted, right in Kli Ning’s path, in the twilight.

“Greetings, old brother,” hailed Kli Ning, as night began to fall. “It gets dark in these hills quickly, doesn’t it?” Kli Ning remembered well the old superstition

of helping the first needy person one meets when setting out on a journey.

The monk wheezed a little by way of reply.

Taking the wheeze as a good sign, Kli Ning tried again. “Brother, I have just started on my journey and left our village only a few hours ago, but I think you might find that it is too far to go without light. Perhaps you would accompany me to the staging post up the road, where I intend to spend a restful night?”

The monk managed to gasp, “Thank you, young man. May the blessings of the wheel of fortune spin in your favour.”

“Oh,” said Kli Ning, “from your blessing I assume that you belong to the Brothers in Alms. I see more and more of your fellow monks in our village. Your sect must be doing well.”

Kli Ning only just heard the monk’s response, which seemed to lack reverent modesty. “You bet we’re doing well,” panted the monk.

“Yes, brother. Anyway, I am Chao Kli Ning, restaurateur, launderer and businessman. I am on a business trip to Guilin, presenting a paper at an important conference.”

“I am Alm, founder of Brothers in Alms, former master of the order until my ungrateful acolytes decided that they knew a better way.”

“Yes, I know how you feel. If my laundry and restaurant managers pursued their better ways, they would have thrown me out long ago. Let me help you onto the donkey. We can talk some more when we get to the staging post.” Kli Ning wondered about the identity of his fellow traveller on the way to the staging post. If he truly was Alm, why was he here alone at night? However,

the fame of Alm was such that only a fool would try to impersonate the great monk, perhaps bringing untold misfortune upon himself. And what did Alm mean by “ungrateful acolytes”?

After supper, Kli Ning and the monk shared a room. Kli Ning felt he would either gain grace by paying the bill or save money by splitting the bill. The monk knew in his soul that he would not need to pay his half of the bill. The monk droned on immodestly for a while, then suddenly fell into a snoring sleep. Kli Ning found it difficult, but managed to get to sleep over the monk’s strained breathing. Kli Ning dreamed vividly and seemed to feel a tapping on his shoulder. When he turned around to look in his dream, he saw the monk floating cross-legged, six inches off the floor.

“The wheel of fortune is unlucky for some. Such is my ill luck that a mere businessman shall be my final confessor. You, Kli Ning, shall hear my life’s tale and assist me in the next turn of the wheel. I shall make my final confession to you.”

In his dream, Kli Ning sensed the monk’s frustration and lack of humility. Kli Ning felt the passing of millennia, the rise and fall of great faiths. He imagined some complex future religion where this notion of guilt and confession formed the basic tenets of faith, in conjunction with long pilgrimages, strictures on dietary habits, tortuous reproductive logic and fanatical beliefs in everlasting, interminable rebirth rather than a quiet, decisive death. Kli Ning made a mental note to try and forget these horrors when he awoke.

What a dream! The monk continued, “Forgive me brother, for I have sinned. At first I was a truly devout monk of my order. I kept my silence. I did

not crave wealth and power, nor fame and riches, nor fortune and favour, not even money. I didn't like the early hours, the cold gruel, the silence or the hard floors but I believed that my brothers and I were having a good time. I accepted that this lifestyle was the way to enlightenment. Later I became disillusioned with our lack of focus. We sought to enlighten all mankind, but when our brethren sought our advice, we remained silent. I began, tentatively, to advise some of our donors in whispers. In the beginning my advice didn't stick, although my fame grew as the only local talking monk. Rather than chastising me for breaking silence, my abbot realised that we had more donors than any neighbouring monastery and he encouraged me to continue."

"But still I was frustrated. The same people kept returning each week with the same problems unsolved. How could I truly help them? My first major sin was losing my temper with an old woman when she returned for the umpteenth time posing the question 'Does my budgerigar have a soul?' I was about to answer for the umpteenth time, 'Does a sparrow sing with swallows in summer?' but I realised that repetition would not help the old woman. I lost my temper, 'If you really want the answer to that question, pledge all your belongings to my abbot,' knowing that she would bother me no more. She ran away surprisingly quickly for a woman of her age. To my astonishment she returned the same day with a deed of transfer to the abbot. She asked me her question again. Again I replied, 'Does a sparrow sing with swallows in summer?' The old woman sighed and walked away peacefully, apparently satisfied. I knew I had discovered a deep secret, but I wasn't sure what it was."

Kli Ning pinched himself, failed to wake up, shrugged, and then interjected, “But surely it’s not a sin to charge people for good advice?”

The monk continued virtually seamlessly. “The abbot told me I had sinned because never had we told a donor the amount they should give. He threw me out of the monastery for my presumption. I left and wandered the region. I pondered my misdeeds. I realised that I should have charged the woman more; she had wealthy relatives. I also realised that people value advice more, the more they are charged for it. I resolved to found a new order to help people to help themselves by charging them significant amounts of money for advice. I founded the Brothers in Alms.” With his legs still crossed, the monk hovered out into the garden of the staging post.

Kli Ning followed the floating monk into the garden and asked, “So you lost your temper and told an old woman how much she should pay. Surely that is not so great a sin, especially as such great good flowed from your behaviour?”

“Oh losing my temper wasn’t the sin, the sin came from the temptation of money. When I founded Brothers in Alms, I wanted to be sure of controlling the quality of our work. I insisted that the brothers donate a portion of their donations to me. From this I established a personal monastery. I insisted that monks came for regular briefings and retraining in our Way. I wrote our order’s book, *Advice Ain’t Easy if it’s Free*. Many people, including that old woman, spread our fame far and wide.”

Kli Ning burst in here, anxious to participate in what was, after all, his own dream. “Yes, your local brothers are the most expensive advice givers in my

area. I would happily pay for quality advice, although maybe not theirs, but I still don't see the big sin. What of a little temptation and your own monastery?" Kli Ning wished his theological underpinnings weren't quite so rusty.

The monk returned to his life's tale. "You are so right. A little pyramid monkery business is not new. The new part was the idea of compensation for using the order's insignia, begging bowls, uniforms, walking sticks, official song scrolls, prayer oil, sandals, incense, holy bells and sacred books. We made a packet. It exceeded my wildest expectations. I had never understood the power of brand image; that was my temptation, and my downfall."

Kli Ning was aghast. "You mean you franchised our deepest beliefs in the fundamental concepts of existence in order to make some extra money for your personal monastery?"

The monk seemed indignant, especially for a person humbly reviewing his life before a stranger. "How dare you question my motives? Get a big picture grip on the details. I was helping people. People just hadn't spent enough on helping themselves before. I made it easy. My monks made it easier. Our franchising system worked and we prospered. You, a mere businessman, cannot comprehend the subtle workings of religion."

The monk's voice began to rise and a far away look entered his eyes. "I had influence. I had real power. For a while, the emperor himself consulted me on the course of his life daily. I established some teaching seminaries. We manufactured our own prayer wheels for all our prayer wheel halls. I had plans for a chain of rest monasteries. I even had overseas rights. I tried all

these things: seminaries, the monastery chain, prayer wheel manufacturing, overseas operations. We lost a packet, but I could have been a contender!" The monk's mind seemed to wander a bit and he began to drool.

Kli Ning had had enough. In his disgust, Kli Ning broke a branch from the banyan tree in the garden and chased the monk down the road, "Begone from my dreams, you mercenary monk; you, you avaricious abbot, you failed friar, begone."

Kli Ning woke in a sweat. Without turning over to see his roommate, Kli Ning knew he shared the room with a corpse. After some expensive arrangements with the innkeeper, Kli Ning managed to pack. He lamented the inconvenient demise of the monk, not just because he had to pay the full room charge. He hoped he had gained some extra grace from these unfortunate proceedings, particularly from covering the funereal charges for a penniless evangelist. Kli Ning wanted to believe deep, deep down that this costly experience must have been good for his soul.

As Kli Ning left the staging post, followed by his overburdened donkey, he looked at the garden and noticed the branch which he dreamt of breaking in that strange dream, save that the branch was in reality... well, broken. Now Kli Ning was sorely troubled. He pondered the strange dream of the night before, certain that the dream had little significance. Or had it been a dream? The previous night unnerved him and he wondered if he was in the right frame of mind for an enlightening business trip.

As he pondered, Kli Ning became indignant. The very thought of a penniless monk calling him, Chao Kli Ning, proprietor of the Kwik Klining

Duck Tea House and Laundry, “a mere businessman”. He, the owner of the largest laundry in his region. Indeed, the only laundry in the region. And he, Chao Kli Ning, owner of surely two of the largest restaurants in all China. And he had plans. Big plans. A second laundry perhaps. After that, who knows, perhaps a third restaurant. No one called Chao Kli Ning “a mere businessman”, not even in his wildest dreams. And certainly not some deranged monk who probably couldn’t even run a tea stall, let alone a restaurant. In fact, that stupid old monk probably couldn’t have even, what did he call it, “franchised” a tea stall, let alone a restaurant. Then the big idea hit Chao Kli Ning. This was big time Z/Yen enlightenment. Franchise the Kwik Klining Duck Tea House and Laundry. Kli Ning was going to be a contender.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Would you expand the Kwik Klining Duck Tea House and Laundry through organic growth, acquisition, franchising, war or merger with an already established religion?
- Do you believe, do you really believe, do you really really believe or do you believe at all? Just testing.

Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen the humorous risk/reward management novel

The Sunday Times Book of the Week

“highly entertaining . . . wonderfully daft . . . hilariously sophisticated stuff” - DJ Taylor, “Zen and the Ancient Art of Making Yen”



OVERVIEW How to manage organisations, motivate people and make a quick buck: the eternal Z/Yen questions. As with many ancient questions, the answers have been locked away in obscure Eastern texts that have only recently re-emerged. At last, these excerpts from The Z/Yen Papers, modernised and re-published as *Clean Business Cuisine*, reveal to our age the one true path(s) to enlightenment. Today, with the benefit of these teachings, businesses everywhere will thrive and the course of history will be irrevocably improved.

DESCRIPTION *Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen* is a novel modelled as a rediscovered ancient business text. It comprises a series of stories (or case studies) set around the workings of an ancient laundry and restaurant and its legendary proprietor, Chao Kli Ning. Each story is based on a simple duality, centralisation versus decentralisation, managing people or managing results, technology is wonderful or technology is useless. *Clean Business Cuisine* is firmly grounded in management theory and practice, served up in a wry, lighthearted manner for the general reader to enjoy.

Clean Business Cuisine is a uniquely enjoyable yet informative read, perfect for managers, students and anyone interested in enlightenment. The design of this book is stunning – a great gift.

DETAILS

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Clean Business Cuisine: Now and Z/Yen the humorous risk/reward management novel

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- ◆ **“Cleverly constructed and amusingly related, this will appeal across the board.”** - Ingrid Fisher, “Best of the Rest”, Venture, page 202 (September 2000).
- ◆ **“it’s a must for any management student . . . it really does make management studies fun while simultaneously covering all the main topics”** - Lucy Cole, “Dealing with Dirty Laundry”, Kaleidoscope, page 26 (Autumn 2000).
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- ◆ **“Clean Business Cuisine is the 1066 and All That of management.”** - Francis Beckett, “No More Chinese Laundry Blues”, Ambassador, page 32 (September 2000).
- ◆ **“very tongue in cheek and very funny but also strangely enlightening”** - Alex Smith, “Clean Business Cuisine”, Business Age, page 126 (September 2000).
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Michael Mainelli and Ian Harris are founders/directors of the risk/reward management firm Z/Yen and the modern scions of Chao Kli Ning’s dynasty. Before reaching total Z/Yen enlightenment, Michael and Ian’s monastic duties included service as management consultants and corporate strategists, advising businesses and organisations on the one true path(s), as well as writing and contribution to numerous business publications (see also www.zyen.com).

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TELEVISION

“a fascinating book with fascinating accolades” - Becky Anderson, CNN World Business This Morning (7 August 2000).

“a recipe for success” - Heather Scott, Sky News, (1 September 2000).

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

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