



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.





CONTENTS

PROLOGUE Z/YEN THINGS YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT BUSINESS	11
CHAPTER ONE: CENTRALISATION/DECENTRALISATION CONFEDERAL UNITY	19
CHAPTER TWO: TECHNOLOGY GIZMO'S BIG ADVENTURE	27
CHAPTER THREE: HUMAN RESOURCES PEOPLE ARE FOR TURNING	39
CHAPTER FOUR: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT QUALITY IS FREE	51
CHAPTER FIVE: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION THE QUESTION OF HU	63
CHAPTER SIX: LEVERAGED GROWTH BROTHERS IN ALMS	79
CHAPTER SEVEN: STRATEGY GREEKS HAVE A GENERAL WORD FOR IT	91
CHAPTER EIGHT: COMMERCIAL ETHICS KLI NING'S PRINCIPLE PROBLEM	105
CHAPTER NINE: SALES AND MARKETING SAVING FAITH	119
CHAPTER TEN: RISK/REWARD FAT CHANCE'S RISKY BUSINESS	133
EPILOGUE SEE YOU, Z/YEN	149



REMEMBER WHAT THE DORMOUSE SAID,
“FEED YOUR HEAD, WASH YOUR SOCKS,
DON’T EAT MY SHORTS”

LATE NIGHT RUMBLINGS OF THE KWIK KLINING DUCK TEA HOUSE AND LAUNDRY

EVERY DAY, IN EVERY WAY,
THINGS GET BETTER AND WORSE

THE COLLECTED AFTER-DINNER REMARKS OF THE HOUSE OF Z/YEN



PROLOGUE

Z/YEN THINGS
YOU ALWAYS
WANTED TO KNOW
ABOUT BUSINESS

In which characters from *The Z/Yen Papers* are introduced and the discerning reader can quickly surmise that one character, Chao Kli Ning, has an uncanny knack for making a quick buck.

WHILST MANY HAVE DEBATED the value of Z/Yen philosophy in business, even doubters often quote the following passage from the annals of Chao Kli Ning, or *The Z/Yen Papers*:

One day a strange runner came to Chao Kli Ning with ill tidings. He had run long and hard from Kli Ning's restaurant to Kli Ning's mansion. Thus spake the runner, "The enemy's army advances rapidly on full stomachs. Our army is lean and overly mean; it needs food. Hence our army has requisitioned all of your food and conscripted all of your restaurant staff, apart from me."

"One-legged Fong, I notice that these circumstances present you with the senior restaurant position. Give me a status report," requested Chao Kli Ning.

"The restaurant itself is intact, but the business is surely ruined," replied the winded runner, leaning heavily on his crutch.

"Get a big picture grip on the details, One-legged Fong. What about the customers,



environment, supplies, competition and cash position of my laundry?” enquired Chao Kli Ning.

“Sire, the laundry is not my responsibility. However, I could not help but notice that the laundry was inundated with customers. The laundry manager, Lo Fan, tried to conscript me himself. Several soldiers told me that they would have to wait days to have their uniforms cleaned. The town is a mess. And we have no restaurant staff. What do you wish me to do? Does Z/Yen show us the true way in such dire circumstances, or are we doomed to bankruptcy?”

“Z/Yen business philosophy is about total business improvement, not transient crises such as bankruptcy. You want easy answers, go read a book¹. Now, please do excuse me. I must join my Z/Yen brothers who have gathered for our regular, midday commercial meditation.”

One-legged Fong, knowing the power of Z/Yen and the wisdom of Kli Ning, patiently waited as the sun slowly moved west. Three hours later, Kli Ning emerged from the mansion. And he spoke, “One-legged Fong, listen closely. A well-fed man in a dirty shirt can clean his shirt. A hungry man in a clean shirt is still a hungry man.”

Without further explanation, Kli Ning ordered One-legged Fong to buy all the ducks in the province, to buy all the rice the army had not seized and to buy all the tea a thousand men could drink in a year. Kli Ning also summoned Lo Fan and ordered him to

¹ It is unusual to the point of being strange that Chao Kli Ning uses the term “book” and not “scroll” in this encounter, but the ancient scrolls are unanimous and quite explicit.

purchase all the washing boards in the town, all the rope and twine the army had not seized and all the soap powder a thousand washers could use in a year.

One-legged Fong and Lo Fan exchanged glances, each wondering what on earth the old geezer was up to this time. Neither Lo Fan nor One-legged Fong were prepared for Kli Ning's next pronouncement. He ordered his calligraphers and messengers to post notices in all of the neighbouring villages and in all of the army tents: "Come to the Kwik Klining Duck Tea House and Laundry – all you can eat for a fixed price and get your laundry washed for free."

One-legged Fong and Lo Fan were astounded, but still unprepared for Kli Ning's final dictate. "Oh by the way, I know that you, Lo Fan, run my laundry and that you, One-legged Fong, run my restaurant. Well, it's time you both changed jobs. Take each other's. Lo Fan, you and your former laundry team shall become restaurateurs – playing host, preparing food, serving duck, rice and tea. One-legged Fong, you and your... well just you, you shall run a new laundry for all of my new clients."

One-legged Fong argued with Kli Ning, that without any staff, he would be unable to service so many clients. Kli Ning merely shrugged, "Get a detailed grip on the big picture, One-legged Fong. Run the laundry with all your heart and the staff will come." One-legged Fong bowed politely and withdrew, his heart full of despair. Lo Fan argued with Kli Ning, that he and his staff knew little about running a restaurant. Kli Ning merely shrugged, "Run the restaurant with all your heart and people will see the purity of your way." Lo Fan bowed politely and withdrew, his heart full of despair.

The calligraphers and messengers did their jobs too well. People came in droves to both the laundry and restaurant. One-legged Fong, unable to recruit a single member of

staff and realising the wisdom of Kli Ning's statement, conceived a new way of laundering. The customers had to do their own laundry and eat their food while it dried, but they didn't mind. The washing boards, soap and water were cheap for a village which had none. As Kli Ning had predicted, the customers were prepared to be their own laundry staff. Lo Fan, unable to teach haute cuisine to a crew of scrubbers and realising the wisdom of Kli Ning's statement, conceived a new way of dining. He made it simple. The only offerings were duck, rice and tea. The portions were a standard size. The customers didn't mind. They could buy duck, rice and tea in a village which had none. Further, the restaurant was scrupulously clean. The tables were covered, for the first time, in crisp, white cloth. As Kli Ning had predicted, the customers saw the purity of Lo Fan's way.

Thus did Lo Fan and One-legged Fong achieve Z/Yen enlightenment. Thus did Kli Ning's turnover increase manyfold. And thus, as ever, did Chao Kli Ning enhance his fortune.

In our opinion, the case studies on the following pages, known colloquially as *The Z/Yen Papers*, represent a true and fair view of the account of Chao Kli Ning – restaurateur, launderer, Z/Yen business philosopher, and man with an uncanny knack for spotting an opportunity to make a quick buck.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- What could Chao Kli Ning have gained from significant hedging opportunities on ducks, rice and soap?
- Write an equal opportunities statement that would enable One-legged Fong to take Chao Kli Ning to arbitration successfully.

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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- ◆ **“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).

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

CONTENTS

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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

“Clean Business Cuisine offers advice on business principles and practices in a highly imaginative and entertaining way. It will amuse and fascinate business managers, students of management and anyone interested in life.” - The Baroness Dunn of Hong Kong and Knightsbridge (July 2000).

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