

**Cycle 6 Project**  
**Beta Vanguard**  
**Esoteric Order of Beelzebub**  
**Örlög 3**

**Exploration of Initiation using Zen – The Wordless Cycle**

*Life spawns from the dead,  
The seed nourished by ashes,  
The Serpent's egg formed.*

*From this pitch black egg,  
Further rebirth can come forth.  
What of Buddha's Way?*

**Six Questions That Turn the Mind**

**1. What is the aim of the Work?**

The aim of the Work is to investigate and discover True Self-Nature. To do this is to discover one's inherent wisdom and virtue, thereby actualizing oneself as a Tathagata. The Tathagata, the Buddha, is one's own Heart-Mind. The Heart-Mind is pure Awareness itself. One must find and then serve the Mind-Master, which is none other one's own Self-Nature. This is the aim of the Work; seeing the face of one's Original Self.

**2. What is the quality of the Work?**

The nature of the Work is arduous investigation first fueled by need and then sustained through duty. The way of the monk and the samurai are united through practicing the Way with fierceness and vitality. One does not rest in indifference, dull-mindedness, or idiot-compassion. One must Work for the attainment of Gnosis and first-hand experience, not intellectual understanding and mere words. One embraces embodied existence but daily considers the reality of death, thereby persevering to go beyond life and death. Only by savoring adversity and being one's own Lord, can one experience the Enlightenment that is the destruction of the Universe.

**3. What is the training of the Work?**

The training of the Work is to take all experience as your teacher. Constantly recalling that the Work is to Be a Buddha, one focuses on removing internal contradictions and concentrating the mind. One does not abandon or repress thoughts, but spends one's time investigating the mind above all else. Daily tasks turn into a practice of Remembering, allowing one to derive power from one's activities. Putting one's will to arduous tests and engaging in pure conduct, one does not need to flee to mountains and caves to find out that Self-Nature is pure. Like a warrior fighting an army single-handedly, disdaining words, every practice becomes a chance to Awaken through Remembering.

#### **4. What ideas help guide the Work?**

The ideas that guide the Work are about using this precious human life to focus on Essential substance and essential activities. We must use the time that we have to Recognize Self-Nature, allowing us to be in the world without being attached to it. In this Dharma-Ending Age, we can still develop the Dharma Eye to see ourselves and reality as they truly are. We can realize the clarity and illumination that we already possess within us, if we persevere in the Work to transform our delusions and ignorance. Beyond unity, diversity, good, evil, clinging, aversion, and other illusions, there is the reality of our Eternal Being. But having this Gnosis is not the end goal of the Work; there are always more Mysteries and profound wisdom to be pursued.

#### **5. What happens after doing the Work?**

The Work has no final goal or destination, and we have to engage in seamless practice every day and train to a point of not slipping backwards. Enlightenment and realizations aren't final, so there is always more to be done; we can create space for others and help them on their paths. As we deepen our own minds, we may act as Generals of the Dharma and use our activities to positively influence our environments. Everyday affairs, duties, house-holding tasks, and other concerns do not vanish because of one's realizations. We must strive to be the highest caliber of Wisdom-Warriors and strive forth not only in our own Work, but in ways that help shatter the illusions of Samsara for others. The Bodhisattva has a heart of wise-compassion and the venom of an Asura King.

#### **6. What am I personally pursuing from this Work?**

The Sixth Angle can represent Death and Sleep, but I also associate it with Berkano and the time of gestation needed before further Remanifestation. My intuition told me to turn to Zen and its focus on cutting right to the Essence of matters. Studying those selected Zen texts, in addition to a couple Vajrayana texts, has helped me understand the necessity of cutting to the core of what matters in my Initiation. I can more clearly see the importance of everyday mindfulness and the need to refine that skill within my life. I have come to sincerely think that Buddhism is not only compatible with the Left Hand Path, but also can serve as a necessary contemplative addition to the practice of Black Magic. Through further practice and study, I shall do the Work of becoming a true Master of my own life!

#### **Elaboration**

As mentioned above, my mind naturally turned towards Zen when I was thinking of what to pursue for the 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle. I felt that this was a time in my life for really drilling down to what matters and chopping away the useless fluff. I recalled reading one of the books listed below once before, the *Precious Mirror Cave*, and being struck by its talk of "death dealing amulets" and the "claws" of the Dharma. All this talk of Dharma being something that utterly crushes a person until realization is achieved made an impression in my mind and came back to me when I thought about what I truly Needed. So, I set out to reread that text, along with others, to help me

consider what really matters and what does not, in terms of my own Initiatory Quest and my life as a whole.

Out of the texts I read and contemplated, certain important themes arose. Namely, that Buddhism understood from the Zen perspective is all about self-inquiry. All other activities, even Sutra reading, is a distraction compared to this singular task of examining one's own nature. And even after this nature has been witnessed, a truly Gnostic act, one must still diligently refine one's mindfulness into a seamless practice done throughout the day. I think this idea is present in the other forms of Buddhism but it is more plainly taught in Zen. It was truly inspiring to read of the exploits and austerities of these Zen Masters, and I had to ask myself if there are very many practitioners in the world with such daring today. Surely, if one could practice to even a fraction of their degree, Ultimate Reality could be seen in this very lifetime!

One challenge that arose in my study is that the Zen texts do not describe in detail what it is they learn about their Self-nature. This makes sense, as the experience of that realization is indescribable. But this also makes any synthesis of the Work quite difficult, as there are no key points to compare to Left Hand Path thinking. I turned to two Vajrayana sources to help with this. I'm glad that I did this because it greatly clarified my own thinking about Buddhism and the Left Hand Path, while also giving me further lines of investigation. This isn't the proper space to give an exhaustive listing of what I think on the matter but I can discuss a couple key points below.

Right off the bat, one crucial point to consider is that there is no equivalent to a Yaweh in Buddhism. There is a demiurge, Brahma, that creates the Objective Universe. However, Brahma doesn't create the "soul" nor does Brahma exist forever; he is another student of the Dharma subject to birth and death. Likewise, the Objective Universe itself is a temporary creation that comes and goes. With that understood, the Self that transmigrates from life to life is without beginning nor does it have an end; it is Eternal by definition. Furthermore, there is a Self but it is only individual, and there is no Buddhist equivalent to a "cosmic consciousness" or Brahman; this would seem to be the proper understanding of Non-Self. What this points towards is a religious\philosophical perspective where there are individuals that have lived before death and will live on after it, without a God figure or any other naturalistic source to "merge with" or "dissolve into", and a path towards transpersonal realization of a state of Being that is made up of completely pure, luminous Mind (Buddhahood). This fits the bill for a truly Left Hand Path perspective in my mind!

The next lines of investigation for me are to better understand some of the deepest Mysteries of Buddhist thought. Namely, these are: the Trikaya ("Three Bodies"), Suññatā ("Emptiness" or "Freedom"), Rigpa ("Awareness"), and Bodhichitta ("Awakened Mind"). To do so, I will have to continue to practice diligently and refine my own mindfulness, as well as continue to study as many sources as I possibly can. In this vein, I recently attended a talk by Dr. Robert Thurman about cultivating the Four Mindfulnesses and I will do that practice for a month as a way to get the ball rolling. Through earnest practice, the result shall be achieved!

***Auspiciousness shall increase!***

## Works Referenced

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