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Investigating The Impact of Zen Buddhism on Theory and Practice of Japanese Noh Theater

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Abstract

Six centuries after its emergence, Japanese Noh theater is still being performed. Mixtures of Japanese ideologies and arts can be found in this complicated and enigmatic play, and the influence of Zenism on the creation and enhancement of Noh theater can be investigated and contemplated upon. Despite the fact that some scholars questioned and challenged the significance of this influence, others argued that Noh theater is completely derived from Zenism in Buddhism. This paper aimed at revealing the profound and unbroken connection between Zenism and Noh theater by investigating some of the theoretical and practical principles of Noh theater, including the aesthetics, kinesthetic, mask features, the directing of actors, etc. Such a link was created largely because of the ingenuity and ideas of Zeami Motokiyo, an actor, playwright and theoretician of Noh theater. He has utilized Zen concepts in Buddhism directly and indirectly to compile the principles of Noh theater, that is why ideas of this Eastern theater master can themselves be regarded as the manifestation of Zenism's concepts in Noh theater.

Keywords

Japanese Noh Theater, Zen, Zeami Motokiyo, Yugen, Buddhism, Zenism.

Introduction

As one of the most prominent poets of the late Heian period (749-1185 A.D.) in Japan, Fujiwara No Shunzei has stated: "the poetry of (Kado) is similar to the Buddhism of (Butsudo)" (Yusa, 2011, 19). If the same statement is applied to a

large number of Japanese art forms, it cannot be considered as an exaggeration because in the Japanese art world, the lines between artwork and religious beliefs fade away in many cases; to put it another way, Japanese do not consider religious values and aesthetic values as two separate concepts



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and they are ultimately the same thing to them (Moore, 2002, 226). In this article, Noh theater is regarded as the aesthetic value and Zenism as the religious value, and the main question of this article concerns the connection between Zenism and Noh theater and its impact. It is not possible to answer this question without taking into consideration the ideas of Zeami Motokiyo, because he, as a theoretician, playwright and actor of Noh theater, has been influential in shaping this form of theater. This research has been conducted through a descriptive-analytical method. First, the researchers' views on the ritual in Noh theater are revealed. Then the principles of Zenism in Buddhism and Zen art are looked into briefly to identify the signs required to be taken into account when encountering a Noh theater. Then, we shall examine the different aspects of Noh theater and introduce points that confirm the presence and manifestation of Zenism in Noh theater.

Review of Literature

By publishing *The Nō Plays of Japan: An Anthology* in 1921, Arthur Waley¹ took an important stride towards familiarizing the West with this form of theater. In a short prologue to his book on the ritual of Noh theaters, he has written: "It was in a style tinged with Zen that Seami wrote of his own art. But the religion of the Noh plays is predominantly Amidist; it is the common, average Buddhism of medieval Japan".

Sir George Sansom also agrees with Waley about this issue that Noh texts are replete with the ideas and technical terms of Amidism² in those days, however the atmosphere, form, and presentation of these texts are completely similar to those of Zen (Tyler, 1987, 19). On the other hand D.T. Suzuki³ asserts that the Buddhism observed in Noh, completely comes from Zenism (Ibid, 20). But Royal Tyler believes Waley and Suzuki's views are slightly exaggerated, arguing that the

Buddhism which is felt in Noh belongs neither to the Amidism nor to Zenism, because these two were completely new concepts at the time of the advent of the Noh theater. He believes that Noh Buddhism is a different and older form of Buddhism and was respected by the Japanese people at the beginning of the Middle Ages (Ibid, 21). Moreover, the author reviews the Buddhist sects' similarities in terms of methodology, texts, and ideologies, and claims that this makes it difficult to identify the Buddhist rituals in the play. The Lotus Sutra, for instance, is regarded as a very important and key sutra in most Buddhist sects, therefore, if a character in a Noh theater reads this sutra, it makes it hard for us to comment on his religion or sect. Paul Arnold rejects the presence of Zen Buddhism in Noh theater entirely. In his opinion, it is also wrong to use the term "Buddhist art" for a Noh theater. Arnold views Noh theater as a form of non-religious art that has developed and expanded in and around Shinto⁴ temples (Nafziger leis, 2008, 129). Cheryl Nafziger⁵ confirms the presence of Shinto ritual in Noh, believing that Noh's perfection was because of the influence of the Zenism (Ibid, 130). Oscar Brockett also regards Buddhism's Zen as one of the main factors forming Noh theater (Brockett, 1987, 47).

Having reviewed these comments, two conclusions can be drawn. First, there is a collective disagreement over the existence of any religion or rituals in Noh theater, and the other is the fact that we have to differentiate between the religion in the plays and the religion which has influenced Noh theater in terms of performance and its form, of course making this distinction has been criticized by various critics (Ford, 1980). While using the aforementioned ideas of the researchers, we shall try to analyze Noh theater and its relationship with Zenism by focusing on the performing this type of play.

Basic Concepts in Zen Buddhism

Zenism is one of the branches of Buddhism that

entered China from India and then Japan. The word Zen is derived from the Sanskrit word “Dehyana” meaning central meditation. According to Zen masters, “The truth of the religion is passed on without the help of any Buddhist text, it is passed on (since the time of Buddha from generation to generation) directly to the hearts of people and they achieve this state of being a Buddha by actualizing their true identities; (Yusa, 2011, 69). Therefore, in Zenism, one tries to follow the path of truth practically without resorting to any words. The following concepts should also be regarded as relevant concepts to the point mentioned above.

• **Non - Duality**

This extremely well-known poem by Fu Daishi may describe the concept of “non-dualism”:

“Empty-handed I go and yet the spade is in my hands ;I’m walking on foot, and yet on the back of an ox I’m riding: When I pass over the bridge, Lo, the water does not flow, but the bridge doth flow” (Moore, 2002, 203).

Zen masters do their best to teach a disciple that as long as he pictures himself as the subject, he cannot perceive any object. In general, the principle of non-duality is of overriding importance in Eastern ideology. In this regard, Nagarjuna⁶ said “Soul is the matter, and the matter is soul. There is no matter outside of soul and no soul outside of the matter”(Nhat han, 1997, 101).

• **Tathata**

“Tathata can be defined as seeing things as they are, understanding them in their own state, or accepting their real nature and accepting them as they are” (Suzuki, 2007, 62). In this sense, the subject adds nothing to the phenomena to possess them for himself. In Tathata state, there is no line between the subject and the object.

• **Sunyata**

It refers to the emptiness inside everything; it means that we have to look at the emptiness in everything to understand it completely. The empty

part displays the fact that the item lacks an absolute identity and possesses the quality of no-self. For instance, the empty valley between two mountains or the inside of the balloon are the empty part of these phenomena; however, Sunyata is not an empty concept because if the valley did not exist, the mountains wouldn’t exist either. “Things are only possible when they are free from themselves (Nhat hanh, 1997, 119). When they are free of themselves, the real Tathata emerges. In the end, we must refer to this famous statement in Zenism : “Tathata is nothing but Sunyata and Sunyata is nothing but Tathata” (Suzuki, 2007, 65).

• **Prajna**

The favorable insight of Prajna in Buddhism can be defined as intuitive cognition as opposed to analytic identification or Vjinana. It has been compared to the lightning or spark that comes from the collision of two flint rocks (Moore, 2002, 138). This analogy refers to the non-mediatory state of intuitive cognition.

• **Samadh**

Enlightenment or in the Japanese language “Satori” is the ultimate objective of all teachings in Buddhist schools. The state in which the soul reaches Satori is regarded as unknown state referred to as Mushin in Chinese, which literally means no-soul or no-heart. This does not mean that one is unconscious or unaware of what is going on around him. In this unknown state, the soul operates freely and easily without feeling the ego (Suzuki, 1999, 43).

Zen Art Features

Before starting the main discussion, we have to briefly point out characteristics of Zen art. The Muromachi era (1392-1573 A.D.) is considered as the golden age of Japanese art (Morton, 1985, 121). During that period, various art forms such as Noh theater, Sumi-e⁷ painting, Ikebana⁸ and Chanayo⁹ developed and thrived under the auspices of the ruling government, the Ashikaga

dynasty. Because Ashikaga ruler on the one hand, supported Zen and on the other hand, many of the creators of the aforementioned arts themselves were Zen monks or influenced by Zen, these art forms can be considered as representatives of Zen art and it can be argued that the Noh theater was developed in a setting filled with Zenism. There is a famous saying among Japanese painters: “spend ten years looking at a bamboo, become the bamboo, then forget about everything and paint it.” In this sentence, two important features of the Zen artists are pointed out. First, no line exists between them and their work, and the painter turns into the subject of painting. The second is about the artist’s state of mind while creating his work; forgetting everything and starting to paint. This state is well-defined in Zen, which is the *Mushin* state that was mentioned earlier. *Mushin* culminates in an unintentional action and plays a significant role in the work of Zen artist.

Shin’ichi Hisamatsu¹⁰ believes that there are seven characteristics for the aesthetic principles of Zen art: lack of symmetry, purity (brevity), rigidity or firmness, naturalness, profoundness, contentment and tranquility (Hosseini, 2003, 66). In addition to these features, what is shared by all Zen arts is the inclination for simplicity. This component has eliminated any extra and unnecessary features in Zen art. As a result, empty spaces are regarded as an integral part of Zen art, which despite being empty, they possess “something positive within themselves” (Nafziger- Leis, 2008, 135). Here, the relationship between emptiness and the concept of *Sunyata* can be clearly seen in Zen ideology. Empty spaces help the work of art to be created as *Sunyata* creates *Tathata*. In Zen art, there is an obvious urge for limited expression, and everything is presented in the shortest form possible. In this way, the audience are given the opportunity to create unobservable pieces of artwork with their imagination and thought.

D.T Suzuki points out inequality, asymmetry, *Wabi*, *Sabi*¹¹, mysticism, loneliness and other similar concepts as the most prominent manifestations of Japanese art and culture, arguing that all these traits are derived from this concept of Zen: one in all and all in one (Suzuki, 1999, 71). If we review Noh theater, the impact and presence of many of these components will come to light.

Noh Theater

As the Zen rulers swept to power, the Japanese Noh theater started to grow in Japan in the late 14th and early 15th centuries.

• Zen and Theoretical Foundations of Noh Theater

Zeami Motokiyo and his father, Kanami Kiyotsugu, are believed to have created Noh theater. During his career, Zeami wrote a number of treatises on this form of art and is now recognized as the author and main theorist of the Noh theater. In his writings, he developed the theoretical foundations and aesthetic criteria for the performance of Noh theater, explaining the principles of the play in the form of concepts such as *Yugen*, *Hana*, etc. These concepts are sometimes directly rooted in Zen ideology and culture, and occasionally create a feeling by which one can see the relation with Zen beliefs. In the following, two concepts of *Yugen* and *Hana*, both of which play an important role in the theory of Noh theater and Zeami thought, will be reviewed.

• Yugen

Yugen literally means the art of dyeing. Both parts of the word, “*Yu*” and “*gen*”, mean black, and have been used to refer to darkness and depth. There are various definitions for the term. Many writers preferred to put it in a few expressions rather than defining this word by a word. In the book entitled *Zen and Japanese Culture*, D.T. Suzuki, has tried to define the term: “[*Yugen*] meaning [is “obscurity,

“unknowability” “mystery , “beyond intellectual calculability but not utter darkness”. An object so designed is not subject to dialectical analysis or to a clear-cut definition. It is not at all present to our sense-intellect like this or that, but this does not mean that the object is altogether beyond the reach of the human experience. In fact, it is experienced by us, and yet we cannot take it out into the broad daylight of objective publicity” (Ibid).

Arthur Waley has translated Yugen into “what lies beneath the surface” and he has continued to move pass the literal meaning of the term and illustrate the quality of the concept:

“To watch the sun sink behind a flower-clad hill, to wander on and on in a huge forest with no thought of return, to stand upon the shore and gaze after a boat that goes under the far-off islands, to ponder on the journey of wild-geese seen and lost among the clouds...such are the gates to yugen” (Waley, 1998, 22).

It is noteworthy this term was first used aesthetically to express this situation: when a poet’s feeling reaches a level of profundity and depth that he cannot express his feelings (Tsubaki, 1971, 58). In this case, words are unable to express the truth. This is the situation that a Zen master strives to inform the disciple about. Here, the disciple realizes that he must move beyond the borders of words to attain Satori. As defined by Zen, Yugen is a “word – non- word” or a “word of speechlessness”.

Zeami looked at Yugen as the last step to perceive all different fields of art, and he believed that Yugen was a crucial subject in Noh theater (Ibid, 61). Oscar Brockett argues that Yugen is the mystery of Noh Theater and Komparu calls Noh theater a Yugen Art, therefore, if there is a strong connection between Zenism , it can confirm the link between Zen and Noh theater.

In the introduction of the above-mentioned book, Arthur Waley stresses the fact that the word Yugen is derived from Zen literature. On the other hand,

Andrew Tsubaki ¹² considers the advent of Yugen in Noh theater as a clear indication of the presence of Zen Buddhism in this type of theater and thus analyzes it in this way:

“What Kanami and Zeami call yugen is in essence nothing more than exquisite harmony created by unifying the elegance and magnificence of the aristocrats in the Heian period and the straightforward, practical, healthy, and forceful quality of the warriors who are the representative of the rural plebeian... what is elevated to its height by means of unifying the contrast... and is an example of the application of a doctrine of Zen Buddhism to the art of the Noh” (Ibid, 63).

Another sign indicating the link between Yugen and Zen is the relationship between Yugen and Satori. Suzuki writes “Where Satori flashes ,there is the tapping of creative energy; where creative energy is felt art breathes myo and yugen” (Suzuki,1999, 259). Then he draws this conclusion “When Satori artistically expresses itself, it produces works vibrating with “spiritual (or divine) rhythm” {ki-in}, exhibiting myo(or the mysterious), or giving a glimpse into the Unfathomable, which is yugen” (Ibid).

Therefore, Suzuki believes the presence of Yugen in a work of art is the outcome of the artist’s enlightenment. Zeami’s emphasis on the fact that the Noh theater is a way of enlightenment and awakening connects Noh Theater to the ultimate objective of Zenism, which is Satori.

• Hana

However, another very significant term used in the aesthetics of the Noh theater is the word Hana meaning flower. In Kadensho, a book on Hana’s aesthetics Zeami himself answers the question of “What is the flower”: “After you master the secrets of all things and exhaust the possibilities of every device, the one that never vanishes still remains” (Komparu, 1983, 11). Zeami defines two flowers in an actor’s work: one is Jibun-no-hana which

means a temporary flower and the other is Makoto-no-hana meaning real flower (Takahashi, Morita & Takaoka, 2010, 244). The flower has a very special effect on the viewer and keeps the public interested. According to Zeami, the temporary flower is enough for a young actor which originates from his attractive appearance, but for a 45-year-old actor the beauty of the temporary flower starts fading away. If he is a true genius, the real flower emerges during this period and is manifested by a full understanding of his profession, resulting from one's true understanding of oneself and enlightenment (Pronko, 1974, 80). Hence, finding the real flower for an actor is directly related to his understanding of his true nature. The true flower can be compared to the Satori concept in Zen Buddhism. A Zen monk who wants to achieve this status of Satori and a young actor who wishes to obtain the real flower are two expressions of one truth. Zeami suggests the term "Rojaku" for the eternal flower which means "the quiet beauty of old age" (Komparu, 1983, 14). Rojako is full of obscurity and complexity manifested in the form of a bloom of flowers on a withered branch. The very image and the connection between freshness and aridity strongly depicts the notion of non-dualism in Zen.

Zen and performing the Noh theater

Regardless of the contents of the play, there is a great deal of importance attached to the performance of the Noh theater. Concerning this, Zeami asks the audience not to avoid seeing the poor plays because the actor's attention will revive the texts and revitalize such plays (Pronko, 1974, 71). To enjoy the Noh theater, some Japanese critics also believe that one does not need a full understanding of the play. Modern Japanese will not understand Noh texts without having technical knowledge of the terms because they are full of ancient vocabulary, phrases, and

complex structures. Eugen Harrigel puts forward his comment: "The Japanese play turns into a real play only by means of the genius of the actor who adds to the play whatsoever cannot be expressed in words." As it was mentioned above, in Zen efforts are made to pass on the truth without using the words. Here, too, the truth of the play is transferred to the audience not by words but through acting.

• Actors' movements

One of the significant moves of the Noh's actor is when he moves very slowly. Shite (the leading actor of the Noh theater) usually steps onto the stage in this way, and his movements are so slow that the audience might think that she has stopped moving. This type of movement can be called "the movement of no-move." The actor is both moving and standing. This type of movement creates a magical state and engulfs the audience in the actor's movements. Eugen Harrigel calls this kind of movement "danceless dance" and Jan Kott compares these movements of the Noh theater to the paradoxical theory of Zeno about arrows. Zeno is famous for his paradoxes in the history of philosophy, and in his theory, he practically considers movement and transportation to be an illusion and believes it is impossible for the arrow to move towards the target.

The quality of movement in the Noh theater can be attributed to the idea of movement in Zen. Zen's distinctive definition of movement can be easily seen in this famous statement by master Kai about Mount Taiyo: "The green mountain is constantly moving" (Izutsu, 2011, 12). But what does this mean? To clarify this concept, it is essential to turn to Dogen's views on movement, which Prof. Izutsu¹³ has defined in the book entitled *Perpetual Creation*. Dogen was a Zen master in the Kamakura period and is considered as one of the leading figures in Zen history. Dogen believed any phenomenon has a "before" and "after" moment in time, meaning

that each phenomenon is shaped by a sequence of the before and after moments. For example, if you look at a piece of wood, it is nothing but a collection of past and future moments. But this wood can be still separated from these moments, and what separates this phenomenon from the moments of before and after is the present moment which is called “Timeless Now”. This very brief moment is the Tathata of the phenomenon and its existential moment. At this point, these piece of wood can exit time dimension and our imagination of the wood, as a phenomenon in this dimension, goes beyond time. Now we shall return to the example of the green mountain. The mountain we see today is another mountain tomorrow, as it is constantly changing and renewing through a series of continuous moments. The mountain is therefore in the process of moving in the moments before, after, and we cannot identify an absolute identity for it. Therefore, the mountain is unstable. But before it becomes the moment of the past, every moment of the mountain’s existence is Tathata of the mountain. This moment of being and existence of the mountain are one and there is no difference between them. Time is the same as existence and existence is the same as time (Izutsu, 2011, 7-17).

By his movements, a Noh actor appears to be displaying Zen’s thought about movement. Through his movements on the stage a Noh actor represents, on the one hand, the unstable nature of the world; i.e. he depicts himself as a phenomenon which is subject to “before” and “after” moments, and on the other hand, he displays Tathata and moves beyond time dimension and confirms his “timeless now”

Also, the slow motion of the Noh actor is regarded as an embodied form of non-dualism. As it was pointed out earlier, his movements are motionlessness and his motionlessness is nothing but movement. Another form of this non-dualism in Noh performances is when the actor is supposed

to play non-existence. The actor, while being present, must play non-presence simultaneously. Here, also, we can understand this concept better by reviewing Dogan’s thought. The actor does two things at the same time. He reveals his “before” and “after” moments of his existential essence and thus attains non-presence, announcing his “present moment” or “Tathata”.

The Noh actor wishes to leave the most impact on the audience with the fewest moves possible. “A few words, bending one’s head in two different directions, a hand movement, perhaps just a finger movement is enough for the actor to speak more smoothly than he can speak with the word” (Herrigel, 1998, 72). This “silent acting” can be considered as a concept which is in line with the concept of Tathata and Sunyata in Zen. While acting, the actor can attain the status of Tathata and a shining performance on the stage by using fewer movements and words.

• Mask characteristics

Masks are of overriding importance in a Noh theater. There are so important that a Noh actor describes them in this way:

“Before I begin to act, I have to look at the mask for many hours. I don’t exist, the mask does. I’m not real, the mask is real.” (Kott, 1974, 574) In fact, masks help Noh’s actors get into the world of Noh theater.

A Noh mask does not cover the actor’s entire face and is smaller than his face. When looking at the actor, one can see some parts of the face around the mask. Therefore, the mask is both covering and not covering his face at the same time, that is why the masks of the Noh future can be called “faceless faces”. This might be an adaptation of the notion of non-dualism in Zen.

In addition, Noh masks possess another feature that makes them stand out. These masks change with the slightest angle change. In the following, an account by Jan Kott’s has been given regarding

his encounter with the Mogajiro mask, one of the well-known masks of the Noh theater:

“kongo (Noh’s actor) picked up the mask gently with his two fingers and held it at arm’s length. The relation of light to shade changed and the smile disappeared. Now, Magojiro’s face looked mortally sad. Kongo lowered the mask again. The lifted lip-corners and the suddenly narrowed eye sockets spoke only of a restrained cry. One more movement of hand and Magojiro is now looking at us with her eyes hollow, smiling into her own self” (Ibid, 684).

This mode change can be seen in most Noh masks. Ko Omote mask is one of the masks displaying a great variety in expressing different facial expressions. Because of its asymmetrical shape, it shows different emotional states with the slightest changes of angle. In one study, the audience members were able to see various emotions such as happiness, sadness, shyness, pride, calmness and ecstasy with slight variations of the mask’s angles (Heshmati, 2016, 137).

To explain this quality, it seems that we can use Dogen’s opinion regarding the Noh masks. The masks have certain identity and are changing every second, but at each moment they possess their own Tathata status. Therefore, these masks reflect Zen Buddhism’s ideology regarding Tathata and Sunyata. Also the changing moods of the Noh masks can be regarded as a statement of the world’s instability. According to Buddha, there are three common features shared by all phenomena, one of which is instability; i.e. “things are never to stay in the same form, but they appear and disappear every second” (Pashai, 2010, 94). Given these evidence, these masks have an identity very closely related to the ideas expressed in Buddhism.

• Directing Actors (and the Audience)

When directing an actor, some of Zeami’s instructions can be related to Zen ideology. Using

the concept of non-duality, he advises an actor who wants to play the role of an old man, to act as a young man who wants to move but lacks the power to do so instead of choosing an old man as his role model (Pronko, 1974, 85). According to this view, old age and youth are not two opposites sides of a concept but they are two forms of the same truth.

Zeami believed that an actor is always practicing during his life. That is why he asks the actor to recognize what Prajna is and to let the instructions penetrate his subconscious. But this subconscious recognition is not just about the actors but also about the audience. The Japanese believe: “The best way to see a Noh show is a state between being awake and asleep. Among the Noh audience are many people whose eyes are semi-closed” (Schechner, 2007, 366). By calming their consciousness, these audience actually activate their subconscious. It can be concluded the viewers, by experiencing as state of being awake and not-being awake, are also coordinated with the actors in the ‘presence and non-presence’ state.

• Other Features

As it was mentioned earlier, Zen art also possesses other features that can be observed in the Noh performance.

Lack of symmetry symmetry is regarded as one of the distinguishing features of Zen art. Although the Noh theater’s stage has changed over time, the Noh theater building is now asymmetric and the balance of the square-shaped section of the stage with the bridge called Hashigakari, which is attached to the stage is completely eliminated. The format of the audience’s seats, the music band, and the choir are also asymmetric.

Among other elements of the performance, simplicity is also seen as another feature of Zen art; the stage is empty and minimal stage tools are used during the performance. face of Waki (supporting actor) and others actors who are

not wearing masks is free from any emotion. Actors must accurately have full control over their movements at all times. This is understood through the concept of Kokoro or the invisible principle In Noh theater. This principle controls the actor's moods and forces him to act in the most selective manner possible (Nafziger- Leis, 2008, 143).

Conclusion

Of all the religions and sects that have played a role in shaping the Noh theater, Zenism has a special place. The theoretical foundations and performing systems of the Noh theater are directly or indirectly influenced by Zenism. This influence of Zen on the Noh theater is clearly revealed by reviewing concepts such as Yugen and Hana and systems such as actors' movement, masks, directing actors, and so on. On the other hand, Zeami Motokiyo, the lead theorist of the Noh theater, has vividly used Zen Buddhism's ideas to formulate and teach the principles of this play, which also confirms the important position of Zenism in the evolution of the Japanese Noh theater.

The relationship between Zen and the Noh theater can be compared to Aioi trees, which are highly respected in Japan. In Japanese, Aioi means "growing together by relying on each other." According to the Aioi gardening technique, two different trees are planted together to grow together. Here, too, the convergence of Zenism and Noh theater has helped Noh theater to thrive.

Endnote

1. An English sinologist whose brilliant translations of classical Chinese and Japanese literature have had a profound impact on modern poets such as William Butler Yates and Ezra Pound.
2. Amidism, sect of Mahāyāna Buddhism centering on worship of Amida, Buddha, whose merits can be transferred to a believer. Amidism holds that the faithful—by believing in Amida, hearing or saying his name, or desiring to share in his Western Paradise—can be reborn in the Pure Land.
3. A Japanese scholar and researcher who played an important role in introducing Zen Buddhism to the West.
4. Japan's native religion which means the path of God

5. Doctor of Philosophy of Religion at the University of Toronto's Center for Religious Studies.
6. An Indian Buddhist philosopher who is believed to have introduced the theory of Tathata.
7. It is the Japanese word for Black Ink Painting. East Asian Painting and writing developed together in ancient China that was invented and expanded during the Sung period (1260-960) in China. Later, in the middle of the fourteenth century, this art was introduced to Japan by Zen monks. The Muromachi painting reached its peak by artists such as Sashu and Sean Soon.
8. Japanese flower art based on an understanding of the delicate beauty of flowers and natural elements.
9. The ancient Japanese tradition that underpins the beauty of everyday life. The art of tea is an aesthetic way of welcoming guests where everything is organized according to an organized order.
10. philosopher and professor at Kyoto University and a researcher on Zen, and also a professor of tea ceremonies.
11. Wabi and sabi refers to a mindful approach to everyday life. The aesthetic defined as the beauty of things "imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete". Things in bud, or things in decay, as it were, are more evocative of wabi-sabi than things in full bloom because they suggest the transience of things. As things come and go, they show signs of their coming or going, and these signs are considered to be beautiful. In this, beauty is an altered state of consciousness and can be seen in the mundane and simple.
12. Professor of Drama and Directing at the University of Kansas, International Center for Theatrical Studies
13. A prominent Japanese linguist, Qur'an researcher, Islamologist, and philosopher

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