In the history of Chinese Buddhism since the 8th Century there were two main currents of thought—the one being subjective contemplation (Skt. Dhyāna) and the other objective worship of Buddhas (Skt. Buddhānusmṛti). A third religious system attempted to harmonize these two tendencies, regarding them as the two important practices for attainment of Bodhi or Nirvāṇa. This was the religion of Hin-jih (680–748), whose honorary title was Tz‘ū-min. According to Tsan-ning’s *Lives of Eminent Monks* (vol. XXIX) he was a native of Tunglai; he went to India in 702, stayed there for 18 years, making pilgrimage to Buddhist sacred places, at one of which he met a hermit and received from him instructions regarding the Western Land of Perfect Bliss. On returning to Chang-an, the capital of China, he devoted himself to works of piety praying for birth in the Pure Land both for himself and others. He wrote a work entitled ‘Wang-Sheng-Ching-tū-chi’ (Oil the Birth in the Pure Land). Thus far have we been informed about him and nothing further until recently.

It has been a great question for students of the history of Chinese Buddhism how an influential stream of Buddhism like Tz‘ū-min’s has been ignored for a long period of more than ten centuries. Suffice to say that his main work known as Tz‘ū-pei-chi (On the Merciful One) was proscribed by the Chinese government authorities in 1092, and there is some reason to believe that the work was brought over to Japan early in the 12th Century, but it seems to have been lost not long afterwards.

To my great delight I happened to find the first of three volumes of the work entitled Tz‘ū-min-chi (Collection of Tz‘ū-min’s Works), or Chingtu-tz‘ū-pei-chi (On the Merciful One in the Pure Land). This happened in the spring, 1925, when I was examining books in the T‘ung-hua Temple in Korea. Besides, I became acquainted with some of the ancient Buddhist MSS. belonging to the Bibliothèque Nationale,
collected by P. Pelliot in Tunhuang, Kansi, in which is included Fa-chao’s *Ching̣u-wu-hui-nien-fo-sung-ching-kuan-hsing-i* (Liturgy including Hymns sung in Five Intonations, the Way of Reading of the Sūtra and Meditation on Things in the Pure Land), a book hitherto unknown to the scholars in the East. This work of Fa-chao’s contains five hymnals.

A study of these works throws much light upon the doctrines of Tz‘ú-min and his leading followers.

Tz‘ú-min was a man of learning and piety. With a comprehensive and impartial altitude of mind he embraced all the branches of Buddhist teachings, assigning a proper place and use in every form of Buddhist discipline, to neglect of no one of the so-called three branches of learning. From a theoretical point of view, he insisted on that the holy teachings are all equally valuable. Recitation of the sutras, quiet meditation, observance of the precepts, invocation of the sacred name of Amitābha, or the works for the birth in the Land of Bliss, etc. are all indispensable for those who aspire after Prefect Enlightenment. On the practical side of his religion he perpetually applied himself to the work of piety for birth in the Land of Bliss, to devoted worship rather than metaphysical speculation.

As to his successors, though unknown until recently, we may now point out the following two different lines:

I. Direct successors.—Tz‘ú-min’s disciple Ch‘êng-yüan, a hermit on Mount Hêng-shan, had a disciple whose name was Fa-chao. Fa-chao was the author of the *Wu-hui-fo-shihtsan* (Hymns sung in Five Intonations), whose peculiar way of religion was studied by Ennin, or Jikaku Daishi, of Mount Hiei in Japan, when he visited Mount Wu-tai in Shansi, and was brought over to Japan. Ennin then inaugurated a new way of prayer, known as the “Perpetual Practice of Nembutsu” (*Jōgyō Nembutsu*),¹ in the Jōgyōdō Chapel on Mount Hiei.

II. Collateral successors.—There were some who were greatly influenced by Tz‘ú-min, but not always in perfect accord with him in some point or another. One of them was Yen-shou (904–975), the third patriarch of the Fa-yen school of the Dhyāna sect in China. Devotees of the faith in the Land of Bliss (or of Purity) in and after the Sung dynasty were mostly his followers. Another was Yüan-chao (1048–1116), a learned monk of the Lü sect in China, who failed to have published Tz‘ú-min’s works, the present copy found in Korea having been done by I-tien, a Korean

prince monk who died in 1101. A third, P'u-chao (1158–1210), a famous monk of the Dhyāna Sect in Korea, who maintained the identity of the principles of Dhyāna and Dharma, explaining with Yen-shou the *Nien-fo* or Buddhanusmruti from an idealistic point of view. From the foregoing we are well convinced that the Korean followers of the doctrine were also in general adherents of Tzʻū-min.

Thus we see that the Jōdo doctrine advocated by Fa-chao owed its origin all in all to that of Tzʻū-min. We see also that the various schools of Japanese Jōdo Buddhism originating from Mount Hiei are in a great measure based on Tzʻū-min’s teachings; the method of Nembutsu practised there, as mentioned before, was introduced by Ennin from the Chu-lin Temple on Mount Wutai, and this was what was called *Pan-shou-san-mi* (SK. Pratyupasthita-samādhi), a form of prayer organized by Fa-chao. In other words the doctrines of Tendai on Mount Hiei are in accord with those of Tzʻū-min, comprising the five distinctive forms of doctrine, viz. Tendai (1), Tantra (2), Dhyāna (3), Mahāyāna precepts (4), and the perpetual practice of Nembutsu (5). From this last issued the various branches of Japanese Jōdo Buddhism such as the dancing Nembutsu advocated by Kūya (903–972), the Yūzū or Intercommunion Nembutsu by Ryōnin (1072–1132), the Senju (exclusive practice of the) Nembutsu by Hōnen (1133–1212) and Shinran (1172–1262), etc.

It is interesting to notice that the religion of Tzʻū-min took a different turn of development in Japan from that in China and Korea. In Japan Hōnen, being dissatisfied with the Jōgyō Nembutsu or Tzʻū-min’s Jōdo religion then in vogue on Mount Hiei, started a new way of Nembutsu insisting upon an exclusive invocation of the sacred name of Amitābha in simple faith, rejecting all the contemplative elements from the idea of Nembutsu. This was a renewal of the thesis and practice of Shan-tao (613–681). Since then, in Japan, a sharp distinction has been drawn between the two systems of Zen (subjective contemplation) and Nembutsu (objective worship of Buddha). On the other hand we see that, in China and Korea, Shan-tao’s religion had practically died out long ago, giving its way to that of Tzʻū-min which has in these several centuries exercised, and is exercising, a great influence upon the people of the two continental countries—indeed a striking contrast to Japanese Buddhism.