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**Remarks on Su Shi's "RAKU":
An Examination of Zen Meditation and Creativity**

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Su Shi (1036-1101) has been called "the gay genius" (means the Cheerful Genius) by some literary critics, because although he was exiled to the borderlands of China (Huang Zhou) and suffered great hardship, he never gave up on life and always tried to find personal joy and pleasure, which he called "RAKU."

By examining his use of "RAKU", one can see a difference between his use of the word as a young man and his use of it after his exile. The former is relatively simple, but the latter is more complicated. It may mean his painful experience gave his thoughts and poetry profundity. It is

natural that his way of thinking changed after he was unreasonably accused of lese-majeste.

At the same time that he changed his place of residence, he started to devote himself to the study of Buddhism, especially Zen meditation. Zen meditation gave him tranquility, so he regarded practicing “RAKU” and Zen meditation training as originating from the same conceptual origin.

In this paper, through examples of his use of “RAKU”, I would like to clarify his thought about religion and the relationship between Zen meditation and his creativity or works.