



ZEN
AND JAPANESE CULTURE

Daisetz T. Suzuki

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ad unum

J. M. Lewis.

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PREFACE

THIS book was first published in Japan in 1938, with the title *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, by the Eastern Buddhist Society of Otani Buddhist University, at Kyoto.

Since then, I have come to be better informed on the subjects it treats; and naturally, I have desired to rewrite the whole book. But to do so would involve a great deal of time and labor that I can ill afford in the present circumstances. What I have done, however, is to revise the original material only in so far as necessary, and add independently written chapters on such subjects as have happened to arouse my new concern, such as Swordsmanship (*kendō*), the Art of Tea (*cha-no-yu*), and the Haiku. As a result, repetitions have become unavoidable in some cases. Since the present work is not meant to be a textbook or a scholarly presentation, the author begs the reader's indulgence, hoping that he will not find the shortcomings too obtrusive or too prone to interfere with the coherence of thought.

Much of the contents originated as lectures given on various occasions in England and America in 1936. A section of the study on Love of Nature was given in Japan to a group of Western people in 1935, and was published in *The Eastern Buddhist* (Kyoto), VII: 1 (1936).

As the Japanese pronunciation of Chinese characters is different from the Chinese and often causes irritating confusion, I have tried to give in the index the original Chinese characters. Since my chief interest is not philological, I have perhaps not been entirely consistent, by present-day scholarly standards, in

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lectual. When I am in my isness, thoroughly purged of all intellectual sediments, I have my freedom in its primary sense.

(8) When the mind, now abiding in its isness—which, to use Zen verbalism, is not isness—and thus free from intellectual complexities and moralistic attachments of every description, surveys the world of the senses in all its multiplicities, it discovers in it all sorts of values hitherto hidden from sight. Here opens to the artist a world full of wonders and miracles.

(9) The artist's world is one of free creation, and this can come only from intuitions directly and immediately rising from the isness of things, unhampered by senses and intellect. He creates forms and sounds out of formlessness and soundlessness. To this extent, the artist's world coincides with that of Zen.

(10) What differentiates Zen from the arts is this: While the artists have to resort to the canvas and brush or mechanical instruments or some other mediums to express themselves, Zen has no need of things external, except "the body" in which the Zen-man is so to speak embodied. From the absolute point of view this is not quite correct; I say it only in concession to the worldly way of saying things. What Zen does is to delineate itself on the infinite canvas of time and space the way the flying wild geese cast their shadow on the water below without any idea of doing so, while the water reflects the geese just as naturally and unintentionally.

(11) The Zen-man is an artist to the extent that, as the sculptor chisels out a great figure deeply buried in a mass of inert matter, the Zen-man transforms his own life into a work of creation, which exists, as Christians might say, in the mind of God.¹¹

¹¹ After writing the above I feel somewhat uneasy lest my readers may not be able to comprehend what Zen means to us of modern time. Everything of life nowadays shows the tendency to turn into a complete routine of mechanization, leaving nothing that will demonstrate the dignity and destiny of human existence. Hence the two extracts from the *Hekigan-shū* ("Blue Rock Collection") and an abstract of the *Yuima Kyō* ("Vimalakīrti Sūtra"), which make up the first part of the appendices. Those who wish to pursue the study of Zen Buddhism further are advised to consult the works of the present author on the subject. See the bibliography.