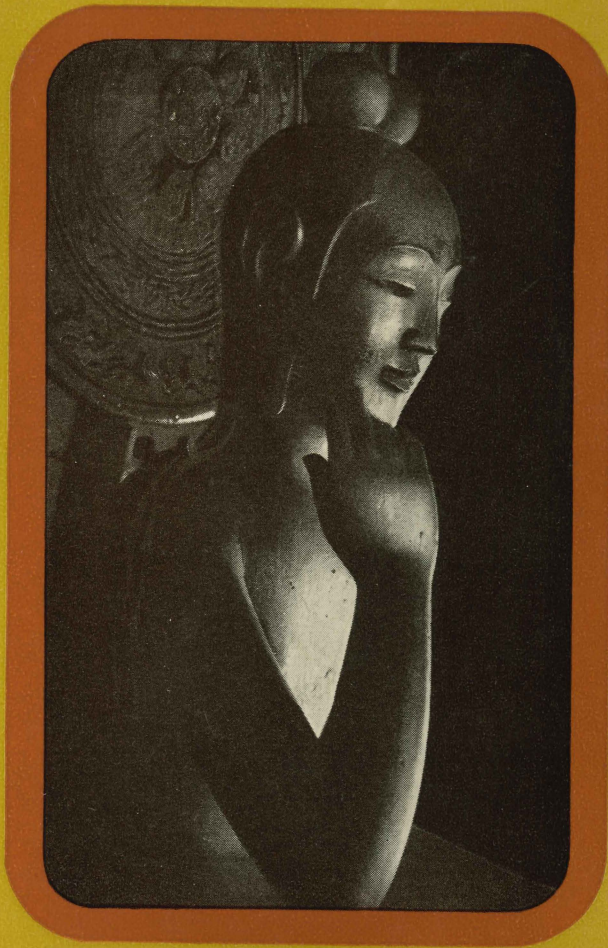


The WORLD of ZEN



AN EAST-WEST ANTHOLOGY

*The first comprehensive anthology
of Zen Buddhism. Selected, edited
and with an introduction by*

NANCY WILSON ROSS

The WORLD of ZEN

Edited by Nancy Wilson Ross

Illustrated with photographs and drawings

"During the past few years in America a small Japanese word, with a not inappropriate buzzing sound, has begun to be heard in unlikely places: on academic platforms, at cocktail parties and ladies' luncheons, and in campus hangouts. This word is 'Zen.' Sometimes called a religion, sometimes 'the religion of no-religion,' sometimes identified simply as a 'way of life,' Zen is ancient and alien in origin, its philosophy paradoxical. . . . Its sudden Western blooming is therefore something of a phenomenon." With these words, Nancy Wilson Ross begins her introduction to *The World of Zen*.

In a relatively short period Zen Buddhism has emerged as a major philosophical tendency in Western culture. By drawing together in one volume selections from both Western and Eastern authorities, Miss Ross has succeeded brilliantly in presenting the most comprehensive account of Zen Buddhism and its relation to modern life and thought yet offered. Zen's relationship to psychoanalysis and science; its influence on painting, poetry, architecture, and drama; its practical value in daily life; the stress it places on man as part of nature; its humor and its zany wit—all these and many other facets of Zen, both ancient and modern, are clarified in essays by outstanding interpreters: D. T. Suzuki, Alan Watts, Erich Fromm, Ruth Fuller Sasaki, and many more.

In addition to her Preface and Introduction, Miss Ross has written perceptive Forewords to several chapters of the section on Zen and the Arts, as well as an account of Zen's singular emphasis on the therapy of laughter, one of the characteristics which set it apart from other religious philosophies. She has also compiled a section called Universal Zen, which demonstrates, by way of quotations from such widely varied sources as Lewis Carroll, Meister Eckhart, the Christian Bible, T. S. Eliot, William Blake, Marianne Moore, the Hindu Upanishads, Martin Heidegger, Rainer Maria Rilke, John Donne—to name only a few—that the special "Zen way" of looking at life extends far beyond any one

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Compiled, Edited, and with an Introduction by

NANCY WILSON ROSS



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Contents

Preface	ix
I WHAT IS ZEN?	1
1. Introduction	3
<i>Nancy Wilson Ross</i>	
2. Zen: A Method for Religious Awakening	15
<i>Ruth Fuller Sasaki</i>	
3. A Few Statements About Zen	30
<i>D. T. Suzuki</i>	
4. The Religion of Tranquility	32
The Three Types of Religious Method	34
<i>Sokei-an</i>	
II THE ESSENCE OF ZEN	37
1. The Sense of Zen	39
<i>D. T. Suzuki</i>	
2. Satori, or Acquiring a New Viewpoint	
SUZUKI ON SATORI	41

CONTENTS

ALAN WATTS ON SATORI	42
HUBERT BENOIT ON SATORI	43
HISAMATSU ON SATORI	45
CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS ON SATORI	46
3. The Koan	
<i>D. T. Suzuki</i>	48
4. Two from Twenty-five Koans	
REPOSE OF MIND	57
THE CLATTER OF A BROKEN TILE	61
<i>Sokei-an</i>	
5. The Zen Teaching of Huang Po on the Transmission of Mind	65
<i>Translated, and with an introduction, by John Blofeld</i>	
6. Some Zen Stories	74
<i>Translated by Nyogen Senzaki and Paul Reps</i>	
III ZEN AND THE ARTS	87
1. Painting	
FOREWORD	89
ZEN AND THE ART OF PAINTING	92
<i>D. T. Suzuki</i>	
THE TAO OF PAINTING	96
<i>Mai-mai Sze</i>	
2. Gardens	
FOREWORD	100
GARDENS	101
<i>Langdon Warner</i>	
STONE GARDEN	104
<i>Will Petersen</i>	
3. Poetry	
FOREWORD	112
HAIKU	121
<i>Alan Watts</i>	

4. Ceremonial Tea	
FOREWORD	129
TEA	132
<i>Langdon Warner</i>	
5. Architecture	
THE TEA-ROOM	138
<i>Okakura Kakuzo</i>	
6. The No Drama	
FOREWORD	167
SOTOBA KOMACHI	170
<i>Translated by Arthur Waley</i>	
IV HUMOR IN ZEN	181
1. Foreword	183
2. Excerpt from MONKEY	189
<i>Translated by Arthur Waley</i>	
3. Three Old Chinese Zen Stories	192
<i>Chang Chen-chi</i>	
V ZEN IN PSYCHOLOGY AND EVERYDAY LIFE	195
1. Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism	197
<i>Erich Fromm</i>	
2. Zen in Psychotherapy: The Virtue of Sitting	204
<i>Akihisa Kondo</i>	
3. On the General Sense of Zen Thought	211
<i>Hubert Benoit</i>	
4. Practicing Zen Through Observing One's Mind in Tranquility	217
<i>Chang Chen-chi</i>	
5. Zen Buddhism and Everyday Life	220
<i>Robert Linssen</i>	
6. The Awakening of a New Consciousness in Zen	224
<i>D. T. Suzuki</i>	

CONTENTS

VI UNIVERSAL ZEN	235
1. Who Am I?	238
2. Non-Attachment	249
3. "Is-ness"	257
4. "Now-ness"	263
5. "One-ness"	269
6. The Zen Eye	277
7. The Archer, the Judoka, Puppets, Swords, and a Tame Bear	289
Excerpt from ZEN IN THE ART OF ARCHERY	290
<i>Eugen Herrigel</i>	
JUDO AND PSYCHO-PHYSICAL UNITY	291
<i>Robert Linssen</i>	
Excerpt from an ESSAY ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SWORDPLAY	292
<i>Takano Shigeyoshi</i>	
THE MARIONETTE THEATRE, a story	293
<i>Heinrich von Kleist</i>	
THE EXPERT, a story	299
<i>Nakashima Ton (Translated by Ivan Morris)</i>	
8. Zen and Science—"No-Knowledge," from <i>The Tao of Science</i>	308
<i>R. G. H. Siu</i>	
9. Lao-tzu: Poems	318
<i>Translated by Witter Bynner</i>	
VII ZEN AND THE WEST	321
1. Spring Sesshin at Shokoku-ji	323
<i>Gary Snyder</i>	
2. Beat Zen, Square Zen, and Zen	331
<i>Alan Watts</i>	
3. Zen for the West	341
<i>William Barrett</i>	

(Continued from front flap)

geographic area, although most training in the strict disciplines of this distinctive form of Buddhism takes place in Japan.

Miss Ross has made a wide selection of anecdotes, stories, poems, and the famous "riddles" called *koans*, and she has chosen more than fifty superb illustrations—photographs and reproductions of art—many of them hitherto unpublished. The photographs range through Japanese ceremonial archery, swordsmanship and judo, flower arrangement and the tea ceremony, gardens and architecture, scenes from the Zen-influenced theater. The reproductions of art comprise a careful selection of old Chinese and Japanese paintings on favorite Zen themes, done in the classic Zen styles, while scattered through the book are the witty line drawings of the notable eighteenth-century artist-monk, Sengai (accompanied by his often astringent comments), as well as modern "picture-poems" by the Western Zennist, Paul Reps.

The aim of the book, in all its selections and illustrations, is to indicate the wide range of Zen's appeal today. Without in any way underestimating the importance of traditional Zen training for self-knowledge, Miss Ross has sought to present to the general reader the major elements in this long-enduring philosophy which account for its growing strength in the Western world.

About the Editor

NANCY WILSON ROSS, who was born in the Pacific Northwest, where Oriental people have long been a familiar part of the local scene, made her first trip to Japan, Korea, and China in 1939. Since that time she has traveled extensively in Asia and has written on Asian subjects for many magazines, including the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Horizon*, *Mademoiselle*, the *New Yorker*, and *Vogue*. "What is Zen?" an article recently written by Miss Ross, has been widely distributed by the Japan Society to universities, schools, and libraries in this country. Her latest novel, *The Return of Lady Brace* (1957), used a Buddhist priest as a principal character in an American setting. As Mrs. Stanley Young, Miss Ross serves on the board of the Asia Society of New York City.

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