



D.T. Suzuki and Thich Nhat Hanh: The Rise of Contemporary Zen in the West

Taoxi Xie

500 W Willow Grove Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19118, USA.

INTRODUCTION

During the last century, Zen has become a well-established part of Western culture. Major Western universities offer higher degrees in Zen Buddhism, courses about Zen Buddhism are in high demand, and aspects of Zen have made their way into mainstream Christianity and Judaism.¹ Yet, how has Zen achieved this general appeal? Zen has a long history; having originated in China during the sixth century, it quickly spread to Vietnam, Japan, and Korea. However, in the West, Zen was introduced to the general public only about a century ago.² Initially, people in the West were curious and viewed Zen as a symbol of Eastern philosophy rather than as a practice they could embrace.³ Later, Zen turned into a social movement and an embodiment of contemporary counterculture.

This paper will explore how Zen first began to gain a foothold in the West by tracing the careers of two influential scholars whose accomplishments contributed significantly to the introduction of Zen to the West. In the early 1900s, D. T. Suzuki was one of the first to provide Zen with an academic framework that allowed Western intellectuals to appreciate Zen as a philosophy. Several decades after the death of Suzuki, Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese monk, introduced the practice of Zen to the general public. Hanh's embrace of the peace movement and anti-Vietnam War efforts, as well as his subsequent exile, contributed to the popularization of Zen in the cultural life of the United States and Europe.

1 For more information on the intersection of Judaism, Islam, Christianity and Buddhism, see the following books: William Johnston, *Christian Zen* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997); David M. Bader, *Zen Judaism: For You, a Little Enlightenment* (New York: Harmony Books, 2002).

2 For a more detailed history on Zen Buddhism, see Damien Keown, *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, 5th ed. (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1975); Heinrich Dumoulin, *Zen Buddhism: A History* (New York: Macmillan, 1990).

3 Larry A. Fader, "Zen in the West: Historical and Philosophical Implications of the 1893 Chicago World's Parliament of Religions," *The Eastern Buddhist* 15, no. 1 (1982): 122-123.

Together, the contributions of Suzuki and Hanh have laid the groundwork that allowed Zen to develop from a minor academic interest to a significant religious movement.

D. T. SUZUKI'S LIFE AND LEGACY

I will begin with D. T. Suzuki, who was one of the first scholars to introduce the academic study of Buddhism, including Zen, to Western universities. Suzuki's father, a physician from a low-level samurai clan, died when Suzuki was a child, leaving Suzuki in poverty. Because of his financial hardships, Suzuki could no longer afford a formal education and became a student of Imakita Kōsen, the Zen master of Engakuji Temple. Lacking the financial means to pay for train rides, he walked all night to reach the monastery in time for morning meditation.⁴

Despite his financial difficulties, Suzuki excelled in his studies. In 1893, he was honored with the opportunity to attend the World's Parliament of Religions at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago as a translator for Sōen, the new abbot of Engakuji Temple.⁵ This opportunity proved to be a breakthrough for Suzuki and Zen Buddhism in many ways. Paul Carus, a wealthy and influential publisher who resided in Chicago, was so impressed by Sōen's speech that he invited Sōen to remain in Illinois and translate Eastern religious texts with him. Sōen had to decline the offer but recommended Suzuki in his place. Suzuki was hired on the spot and subsequently worked as a translator and a junior editor for the philosophical journal *The Monist*.⁶ Carus and Sōen embarked upon a collective intellectual endeavor toward an ultimate truth for humanity, reflective of an attitude that left its imprint on Suzuki's work.⁷

4 Eric, Cunningham, "D. T. Suzuki: A Biographical Summary," *Asia: Biographies and Personal Stories*, Part II, Volume 20:2 (Fall 2015): 42.

5 Margaret H. Dornish, "Aspects of D.T. Suzuki's Early Interpretations of Buddhism and Zen," *The Eastern Buddhist* 3, no. 1 (1970): 50.

6 Shōjun Bandō, "D. T. Suzuki's Life in La Salle," *The Eastern Buddhist* 2, no. 1 (1967): 137.

7 Dornish, "Aspects of D.T. Suzuki's Early Interpretations of Buddhism and Zen," 51.



Suzuki's fluency in English provided him with an opportunity to socialize with other influential philosophers, such as Carl Jung, Alan Watts, Thomas Merton, Allen Ginsberg, and Martin Heidegger, some of whom he even mentored.⁸ In the 1950s, Suzuki taught at several prominent institutions on the East Coast, including Columbia University.⁹ He published numerous celebrated works, such as *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, and *Zen and Japanese Culture*.¹⁰ His academic achievements further strengthened his position as an authority on Zen. Even after he retired from teaching in his early seventies, Suzuki worked continuously on his interpretation of the original Buddhist text in an academic manner. Suzuki's approach to Zen was undoubtedly revolutionary in his times. Suzuki's effectiveness in translating Zen presents this ancient tradition with a sound, authentic and profound effect.¹¹ Taken together, the consistency of his ideas has cemented his legacy in the early academic study of Buddhism.

D. T. SUZUKI'S APPROACH TO ZEN

Suzuki's intellect undoubtedly had a lasting impression on his contemporaries. However, what made Suzuki especially remarkable was his success in satisfying the Western interest in Eastern religion by formulating his philosophy of Zen. Because of his upbringing, Suzuki interpreted Zen not only from the perspective of a religious scholar but also as an active practitioner of Zen.¹² Highly regarded in academia, his *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* received attention from the general public and was republished after World War II.

An Introduction to Zen Buddhism was based on his previous work, *First Series of Zen Essays*.¹³ While *First Series of Zen Essays* explored Zen in the form of numerous shorter publications, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* analyzed Zen more systematically – focusing on several central ideas of Zen. Unprecedented in the 1930s, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* summarized the history of Zen Buddhism with emphasis on its practice and impact. Suzuki's language is considered "evocative" and "strangely fascinating and refreshing on repeated readings."¹⁴

8 Cunningham. "D. T. Suzuki: A Biographical Summary", 43.

9 Cunningham. "D. T. Suzuki: A Biographical Summary", 44.

10 For more information on Suzuki's publications, see the following books: Daisetsu Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, 1991); D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (New York: Grove/Atlantic, 2007); Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki and Richard M. Jaffe, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019).

11 Thomas Merton, "D. T. Suzuki: The Man and His Work," *The Eastern Buddhist* 2, no. 1 (1967): 6.

12 Dornish. "Suzuki's Early Interpretations of Buddhism and Zen," 52.

13 Yoshito S. Hakeda, "Review: An Introduction to Zen Buddhism by D. T. Suzuki," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 24, no. 3 (1965): 516.

14 Hakeda, "Review: An Introduction," 516.

Suzuki's An Introduction to Zen Buddhism

In this book, Suzuki argues that four ideas stand at the center of Zen. These ideas include the concepts of the illogical nature of Zen, *Satori* (sudden enlightenment), higher affirmation, and *Koan* (a paradoxical anecdote). The following passages will present the principal meanings of those four concepts. My analysis will illustrate Suzuki's articulation of Zen and its reception in the West.

The Illogical Nature of Zen

Suzuki's construction of Zen is unique to his scholarship. To highlight his contribution to the study of Zen, I will present a comprehensive scope as to what Suzuki wished his readers to understand. Although Suzuki regarded Zen as fundamentally "illogical," the emergence of logic in his writing is extensive. Suzuki merges philosophical and psychological interpretations of Zen with a set of pure Zen experiences.¹⁵ Initially, Suzuki's understanding of Zen might seem speculative and implausible because he describes the idea of Zen in contradictory terms. For example, Suzuki compares Zen to the "silence of an eternal abyss in which all contrasts and conditions are buried."¹⁶ In the following sentence, he describes Zen as the "silence of thunder."¹⁷ Those notions appear disparate, but they collectively reflect the inadequacy of words to interpret what Suzuki considered the essence of Zen. Another example of Suzuki's illogical explanation of Zen is his claim that Zen is not a religion. Zen has "no god to worship, no ceremonial rites to observe." At the same time, Zen does not deny the "existence of god" such that one could still consider it a religion in the most basic sense.¹⁸ Next, Suzuki clarifies that "Zen wants to rise above logic."¹⁹ In this interpretation, one can view Zen as a study that supersedes common logic to free human intelligence from the confines of sequential reasoning.²⁰ Thus, for Suzuki, Zen is best interpreted as illogical logic.

Satori and Koan

Logic is central in Suzuki's interpretation of the concepts of *satori* and *koan*, which are inextricably linked. In the process of gaining *satori*, *koan* functions as a preparation. *Satori* means acquiring a new viewpoint through enlightenment. Suzuki uses multiple paradoxical anecdotes or *koans* to analyze the fundamentals of *satori*. One such anecdote centers on Kyogen, an apprentice of the Zen master Hyakujo. The account begins with Kyogen's puzzle about the nature of Zen, which he does not comprehend. He thus turns to a senior apprentice of his master, Yisan, for advice: "Let me

15 Sakamoto Hiroshi, "D. T. Suzuki as a Philosopher," *The Eastern Buddhist* 11, no. 2 (1978): 36.

16 Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 35-36.

17 Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 36.

18 Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 39.

19 Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 39.

20 D. T. Suzuki, "Zen: A Reply to Van Meter Ames," *Philosophy East and West* 5, no. 4 (1956): 349.

have your view as to the reason of death and birth; that is, as to your own being before your parents had given birth to you."²¹ Yisan does not know how to reply; he trudges to his room but is unable to find a suitable passage to express his view. He then responds: "I really have nothing to impart to you, and if I tried to do so, you might have occasion to make me an object of ridicule. Besides, whatever I can tell you is my own and can never be yours."²² Kyogen considers Yisan unkind, since he fails to resolve his problems concerning the perception of Zen. We learn, however, that Kyogen does achieve *satori* in the end. When he retires, he spends his life in solitude in accord with certain Buddhist principles. Once Kyogen's mind is inherently prepared, the sound of percussion made by bamboo elevates his senses and permits him to achieve *satori*. He becomes joyous: all the questions he has asked have been answered.

We learn from this anecdote that if Yisan had answered him, Kyogen would never have achieved *satori*. Suzuki suggests that *satori* cannot be analyzed intellectually. One cannot obtain *satori* by analyzing dialogue. In that case, there is no need for *satori* at all. One can never reach enlightenment through a logical analysis in a situation, since *satori* is inherently illogical. Suzuki also insists that the process of *satori* is not associated with mere luck: "all the causes, all the conditions of *satori* are in the mind; they are merely maturing."²³ Extending this point, he argues: "When the mind is ready, for any reason – a bell rings or a bird flies and you at once return to your original home; that is, you discover your now real self."²⁴ Any object or incident can lead to one's *satori* when the mind is on the brink of an epiphany.

Suzuki believed that "the ultimate destination of *satori* is toward the self."²⁵ The seeking of true self is the true seeking of Zen. Nonetheless, Suzuki determined that *satori* is the product of suddenness. In his writing, he does not perceive meditation as a way to uphold the structure of *satori*. Suzuki summarizes *satori* and meditation as follows: "It is evident, therefore, that meditating on metaphysical and symbolical statements...play no part in Zen."²⁶ In Suzuki's mind, the existence of *satori* is the prerequisite to approaching Zen: "In Zen there must be *satori*; there must be a general mental upheaval which destroys the old accumulation of intellect and lays the foundation for a new life."²⁷ In other words, without escaping from the limitations imposed on the mind by traditional forms of rationality, *satori* can never be achieved and Zen can never be understood.

If *satori* has no logical approach, how can it be acquired? Suzuki believes that *koan*, a paradoxical anecdote, can

serve as a "leaven" during the acquisition of *satori*.²⁸ *Satori* prepares one for an awakening. One famous *koan* that illustrates the process of *satori* starts with the monk Myo asking the Sixth Patriarch to elaborate on the nature of Zen. The Sixth Patriarch answers in full affirmation: "When your mind is not dwelling on the dualism of good and evil, what is your original face before you were born?"²⁹ The Sixth Patriarch sees that Myo has tried earnestly to grasp the meaning of Zen. Eventually, this interaction between the two inspires Myo to find the "original face" or the true meaning of Zen. The "fruit" of Zen has ripened; it only requires some affirmation for the fruit to drop.³⁰ This *koan* shows that *satori* will blossom naturally when the time comes, meaning that it will occur when all mental conditions have been met. It is important to remember that listening to anecdotes (*koan*) is not sufficient for reaching *satori*. A *koan* might promote the growth of *satori*, but one can obtain *satori* only through personal experience. No one can analyze the how and why of *satori*, but if one engages in *satori*, one shall know Zen entirely in one's subconscious mind. The accumulation of *koan*, which could be considered a personal experience, plays a significant role in one's *satori*.

Higher Affirmation of Zen

The next concept for discussion is the principle of higher affirmation. Suzuki mentions that "life is affirmation itself," but to exist in Zen is to achieve absolute affirmation.³¹ The very objective of a Zen master is to "endeavour to take away all footholds from the disciple which he ever had since his first appearance on earth and then to supply him with one that is really no foothold." Suzuki's simplified interpretation of higher affirmation is to contrive an escape, not through common logic but through "a mind of higher order."³² Suzuki then uses a *koan*, a succinct paradoxical statement, to illustrate the higher affirmation of Zen: "Hoyen (Fa-yen, died 1104), of Gosoan (Wu-tsu-shan), once asked, 'When you meet a wise man on your way, if you do not speak to him or remain silent, how would you interview him?'"³³ He then defines absolute affirmation thus: "Not merely to escape the antithesis of 'yes' and 'no,' but to find a positive way in which the opposites are perfectly harmonized – this is what is aimed at in this question."³⁴ Then, he uses another *koan* to illustrate an example of an absolute affirmation. In this passage, Sekito asserts: "Assertion prevails not, nor does denial. When neither of them is to the point, what would you say?"³⁵ Yakusan remains meditative, as he does not grasp the meaning of the question. The master then tells him to go to

21 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 91.
22 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 91.
23 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 92.
24 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 92.
25 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 93.
26 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 95.
27 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 96.

28 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 105.
29 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 104.
30 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 105.
31 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 68.
32 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 69.
33 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 69.
34 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 69.
35 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 69.

Badaishi (Ma Tai-shih) of Chiang-hsi, who might be able to open the monk's eye to the truth of Zen. Badaishi remarks, "I sometimes make one raise the eyebrows, or wink, while at other times to do so is altogether wrong?" The very notion is that one can neither negate nor affirm. Suzuki insists that one shall reach a point where "negation and assertion are unified in a higher form of statement."³⁶ Further, it is noteworthy that one cannot blindly follow and adhere to the solutions within each *koan*. The key to one *koan* is not interchangeable, meaning that one cannot use the answer in any other *koan*. In each circumstance, Suzuki believes that if the individual can apply those principles accordingly without hesitation, they truly understand Zen.

Suzuki's analysis of Zen Buddhism has not gone uncontested. Van Meter Ames, for example, remarked that Suzuki applied an intellectual dichotomy that is foreign to Zen, in which Suzuki's conceptual analysis diminished the original intent of consciousness and plainness (non-abstract process).³⁷ In response to this critique, Suzuki stated that scholars are invited to interpret Zen with the help of philosophy. This approach is "not below the dignity of Zen." He objected to an attempt to interpret Zen through purely intellectual means, as Zen has always had a practical element. He further stated that intellectuals, big or small, could not comprehend Zen in their minds and writings if they choose not to experience Zen existentially.³⁸

Despite the occasional critical voice, Suzuki's academic analysis is logical and reasoned. His method is best perceived similarly to metaphysics rather than as an irrational conjecture or implication.³⁹ Suzuki uses a thought process comparable to the Socratic Method to inspire his readers' connection with Zen. Since Zen evades a precise definition, it allows for the coexistence of different interpretations.

BUDDHISM AS A PRACTICAL SUBJECT: THICH NHAT HANH

We will now turn to examine the life of the Vietnamese monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, who also played a significant role in introducing Zen Buddhism to the West. With D. T. Suzuki, we encountered a relatively academic approach to Zen. When we turn to the work of Hanh, we discover that Zen engages with contemporary issues such as world peace and social justice. Several factors cumulatively unique to Hanh have contributed to the popularization of Zen; these include his personal history, involvement in what he refers to as Socially Engaged Buddhism, openness to other religions and media presence.

Much of Hanh's activism was inspired by his personal story

36 Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, 70.

37 Van Meter Ames, "Zen and Pragmatism," *Philosophy East and West* 4, no. 1 (1954): 19-21.

38 Suzuki, "Zen: A Reply," 351.

39 Thomas P. Kasulis, "Reading D. T. Suzuki Today," *The Eastern Buddhist* 38, no. 1/2 (2007): 52-53.

and experiences. Contrary to Suzuki, Hanh was not forced into the monastery by poverty but rather, joined of his own free will. When Hanh was a child, he was fascinated by pictorial representations of Buddha, noting that he seemed to radiate an aura of peace.⁴⁰ As the years went by, Hanh developed an increasing commitment to Buddhism until, eventually, his parents granted their approval for him to join a monastery at the age of 16. For Hanh, practicing Zen meant that he could gain epiphanies through simple means. Having encountered the brutality and atrocities committed by the U.S. Military and two Vietnamese governments during the Vietnam War, he came to Europe and North America to appeal for peace.⁴¹ During his travels in the West, he was offered the opportunity to address the English, Canadian, and Swedish Parliaments, and he met Pope Paul VI.⁴² In 1966, Hanh held a press conference in Washington D. C., where he raised five points.⁴³ First, he declared that the best intervention would be for the U.S. to support the Vietnamese in building their own government immediately. He also appealed to the U.S. government to cease its war effort and resultant bombings. Moreover, Hanh declared that the U.S. military should only act in self-defense and that the U.S. should also demonstrate its willingness to withdraw its forces from Vietnam at the earliest possible point. Finally, he wanted the U.S. to help rebuild the country.⁴⁴

Unfortunately, this appeal did not only fall on deaf ears; it also led to his expulsion from his home country of Vietnam.⁴⁵ The Vietnamese government could not tolerate any obstruction of its foreign policy, which reinforced the necessity of war. Furthermore, Hanh's peacekeeping efforts were deemed dangerous, particularly because his work was well received in the West. As a result, Hanh's passport was revoked and his application for visas was automatically denied. He wrote continuously to Senators Robert Kennedy and George McGovern in the hope of regaining entry to the United States.⁴⁶

40 "Oprah Talks to Thich Nhat Hanh," Oprah, last modified February 16, 2010, accessed March 9, 2022, <https://www.oprah.com/spirit/oprah-talks-to-thich-nhat-hanh/2>.

41 Aidyn Fitzpatrick, "Thich Nhat Hanh, Father of Mindfulness, Awaits the End," *Time*, last modified January 24, 2019, accessed March 9, 2022, <https://time.com/5511729/monk-mindfulness-art-of-dying/>.

42 Fitzpatrick, "Thich Nhat," *Time*.

43 112 Cong. Rec. 14891 (June 6, 1966).

44 Celine Chadelat, Bernard Baudouin, and Bo du an, Zheng Nian De Zu Ji: Yi Xing Chan Shi Zhuan Ji = Thich Nhat Hanh : Une Vie En Pleine Conscience, chu ban. ed. (Tai bei shi: shi bao wen hua chu ban qi ye gu fen you xian gong si, 2018), 968, Kindle Edition(Iphone).

45 Fitzpatrick, "Thich Nhat," *Time*.

46 Thich Nhất Hạnh, *At Home in the World: Stories and Essential Teachings from a Monk's Life* (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 2016), 12.

Hanh's expulsion and subsequent exile elevated his reputation and public image in the West, making him a legendary character. Unsurprisingly perhaps, the expulsion from Vietnam did not keep Hanh from engaging in his peace-related activities; Hanh was determined to advance these efforts in the United States. In the early 1960s, Hanh enrolled at the Princeton Theological Seminary. Upon graduation, he taught Comparative Religions at Columbia University and eventually helped organize anti-Vietnam War protests.⁴⁷ In 1966, Harvard University invited him to present his ideal of self-determination to the public.⁴⁸ His reputation reached a pinnacle one year later, when Martin Luther King Jr. nominated him for a Nobel Peace Prize.⁴⁹ Recognized by the international community, Hanh's stature as an international leader bolstered his peace efforts and led to various publications, that helped launch his meditation villages worldwide.

To further explore Hanh's impact on the spread of Buddhism, I will analyze his principle of Engaged Buddhism and its moral justification. Then, I will discuss his book *The Miracle of Mindfulness* in two parts: (1) Hanh's approach to Zen and (2) meditational guidelines. Finally, I will provide further context of his perception on the universality of religions and his skill in utilizing his online presence to promote Buddhism in the West.

HANH AND SOCIALLY ENGAGED BUDDHISM

One of Hanh's most notable accomplishments was his implementation of Socially Engaged Buddhism and his striving toward world peace.⁵⁰ Much of Hanh's activism stemmed from his disappointment with his fellow monks, who contributed no actions against injustice. While Zen practitioners traditionally studied in mountains or other inaccessible locations, Hanh revolutionized Zen by encouraging monks to enter the cities and become involved in social work. Hanh was critical of the indifference that he detected at the well-respected Buddhist institutes of

47 Ashley Ross, "How Meditation Went Mainstream," Time, last modified March 9, 2016, accessed March 9, 2022, <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1966/5/27/vietnam-buddhist-thich-nhat-hanh-will/>.

48 Stephen D. Lerner, "Vietnam Buddhist Thich Nhat Hanh Will Lecture On Self-Determination," The Harvard Crimson, last modified May 27, 1966, <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1966/5/27/vietnam-buddhist-thich-nhat-hanh-will/>.

49 Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. nominating Thich Nhat Hanh for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967," Plum Village, <https://plumvillage.org/letter-from-dr-martin-luther-king-jr-nominating-thich-nhat-hanh-for-the-nobel-peace-prize-in-1967/>.

50 Sallie B. King, "Transformative Nonviolence: The Social Ethics of George Fox and Thich Nhat Hanh," *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 18 (1998): 11-13.

his country. He noted that "though many of our teachers [...] spoke about peace... few of them did anything."⁵¹ Hanh expressed his moral justification for Socially Engaged Buddhism in an interview with *Lion's Roar* magazine, where he stated: "[Socially] Engaged Buddhism is just Buddhism. When bombs begin to fall on people, you cannot stay in the meditation hall all the time."⁵²

The idea of Buddhist monks involving themselves in social activism is of course not new and in no way restricted to Hanh's work. The Chinese monk Tai-Xu, for example, adopted Socially Engaged Buddhism by saving soldiers in the Second Sino-Japanese War and by establishing new Buddhist institutions.⁵³ While Tai-Xu's activism was limited to China, Hanh's Socially Engaged Buddhism extended beyond the borders of his home country. It resonated with the American public, which was reeling from the fallout of the Civil Rights Movement and the country's involvement in the Vietnam War. One reason Hanh's take on Zen Buddhism has been so successful stems from the fact that it provides peaceful resolutions to contemporary conflicts.

Hanh's religious convictions were not well received in his home country. While the Vietnam War was underway, Hanh wrote to the Institute of Buddhism in Vietnam, calling for religious reform, but his proposal was struck down repeatedly.⁵⁴ Hanh pressured the Institute of Buddhism to take a more active approach in advocating for peace. Rather than engaging in a constructive dialogue, the Institute chose to expel Hanh. His expulsion from the Institute did not deter Hanh from his belief that reforms were needed. Consequently, he joined forces with a group of friends, including Sister Chan Khong, and together they succeeded in creating various social programs.

Hanh demanded three aspects of reform within the Institute: (1) cessation of hostilities among South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the United States; (2) the founding of a new Buddhist institute to train future Buddhist leaders; and (3) the establishment of a social work organization to reaffirm Buddha's teachings.⁵⁵ The Institute only accepted Hanh's second suggestion, and he proceeded to co-found the Van Hanh Buddhist University (then Institute of Higher Buddhist

51 Hahn, At Home, 40.

52 John Malkin, "In Engaged Buddhism, Peace Begins with You," *Lion's Roar*, last modified July 16, 2020, accessed March 9, 2022, <https://www.lionsroar.com/in-engaged-buddhism-peace-begins-with-you/>.

53 Darui Long, "An Interfaith Dialogue between the Chinese Buddhist Leader Taixu and Christians," *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 20 (2000): 167, 170, 173.

54 Hahn, At Home, 41.

55 Philip Taylor, *Modernity and Re-enchantment: Religion in Post-revolutionary Vietnam*; [Vietnam Update Conference (2005: Canberra, Australia)] (Singapore: ISEAS, 2007), 301.

Studies) in 1964.⁵⁶ Hanh followed his passion for reforming Buddhism, and shortly after founding the University, he established the School of Youth for Social Service (SYSS) without the support of the Institute. SYSS constructed housing for those who had lost their homes regardless of their political ideology during the Vietnam War.⁵⁷ Hanh also arranged transportation and help for Vietnamese refugees who were fleeing the violence and terror of the Vietnamese government.⁵⁸ Hanh implemented his religious beliefs as a means of social service. His novel interpretation of Zen transformed Zen and even after his expulsion from the Institute and Vietnam, Hanh utilized his principles to communicate the values of Zen to Western nations.

THE MIRACLE OF MINDFULNESS

Hanh further expanded on his general philosophy of Engaged Buddhism in his publications, especially in *The Miracle of Mindfulness*. This book, published in 1975, is perhaps the most notable popularization of Zen in the Western World and introduced American readers to a new idea: the concept of mindfulness which Hanh pairs with detailed instructions on meditation and Buddhist philosophy.

Hanh uses the principle of mindfulness to communicate the core values of Zen Buddhism. Throughout the book, his illustrations of mindfulness are plain and easily accessible. The first two chapters summarize “mindfulness” and Hanh’s progress as a Zen practitioner. To be mindful, a person must be “conscious of [their] presence” and “conscious of [their] thoughts and actions.”⁵⁹ By focusing on simple daily activities like washing dishes, Hanh presents Zen to his readers as something that was deeply connected to the details and experiences of their lives. Hanh’s simple language describes mundane tasks to create a link between him and his audience. He presents his thoughts with great clarity; he minimizes intricate ideas and illustrates them in a clear manner. His view that everything that has happened on this planet is a miracle is indeed extraordinary. For instance, the “black eyes of a child,” the “blue sky,” and the “white clouds” are all miraculous.⁶⁰ His thought reveals his appreciation and profound understanding of the world. According to Hanh, we must exist in the moment and value the time, objects, and people we encounter. Hanh’s justification of mindfulness is straightforward. “Mindfulness embodies us; without it, we are not truly alive.”⁶¹ Essentially, the motivation of the book is to persuade people to practice mindfulness or Zen using philosophical and analytical dialogue. In this case, Zen and mindfulness have equivalent meanings.

56 Taylor, *Modernity and Re-enchantment*, 301.

57 Hahn, *At Home*, 54-55.

58 Hahn, *At Home*, 61-67.

59 Thích Nhất Hạnh, *The Miracle of Mindfulness: An Introduction to the Practice of Meditation*, repr. ed. (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 2013), 8.

60 Hahn, *The Miracle*, 12.

61 Hahn, *The Miracle*, 33.

Hanh interprets his personal observations to illustrate his point. For instance, he mentions a close companion’s interactions with his young children to reveal different perspectives. At the beginning, Hanh asks about his companion’s life after he fathered his children. Initially, his companion, Allen, does not answer directly. Hanh senses Allen’s hesitation and fatigue. Then Allen mentions his new approach to familial duties: “In the past, I used to look at my time as if it were divided into several parts. One part I reserved for Joey, another part was for Sue, another part to help with Ana, another part for household work...But now I try not to divide time into parts anymore. I consider my time with Joey and Sue as my own time...The time for them becomes my time.”⁶²

Hanh’s audience can perceive his simple and well-intentioned anecdotes without further research. Exceptionally, Hanh’s writing consists of richness and transparency. For example, in the previous story, Hanh uses a concise fable to exemplify the meaning of altruism, generosity, concentration, and kindness. And yet, Hanh solely expresses and portrays the ideas, leaving the interpretations to his readers. The values Hanh embedded in his book appeal to transcend religious belief and embrace common understanding among humans.

HANH’S MEDITATIONAL GUIDELINES

The Miracle of Mindfulness is an outstanding book because it introduces the concept of mindfulness to a broader audience and contains extensive details regarding meditation guidelines which were unprecedented in the 1970s.⁶³ As a primary form of attaining mindfulness, meditation was rarely practiced by the general public. Even people motivated to research meditation had no access to adequate resources or information. This lack of information was the result of geographical isolation. For instance, to learn the basics of Tibetan meditation, one needed to be physically present in Tibet. The same applies to other styles of meditation, practiced elsewhere, for which no easily accessible sources existed.

Meditation is one of the most effective forms of training in Zen. Hanh recognized the value of including explicit and suitable content for Westerners to practice meditation. In *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, Hanh translates and explains traditional meditation techniques in ancient Buddhist texts. Just as texts are central to religions like Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Buddhism centers on religious writings. Hanh embeds his insights about mindfulness in a historical framework that his readers can easily follow. When Hanh quotes from the *Sutra of Mindfulness*, he expresses the idea

62 Hahn, *The Miracle*, 2.

63 *The Miracle of Mindfulness* was reprinted several times due to its popularity (See other reprint versions of *The Miracle of Mindfulness*): https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Miracle_of_Mindfulness_Gift_Edition/2NkiDQAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0&kptab=editions

through the following statement: “Breathing in a long breath, you know.”⁶⁴ To fulfill the interests of his audience and provide historical justification for his book, Hanh references several classical Buddhist texts. For example, he uses the *AnapanasatiSutta* to interpret meditation through the “awareness of the physical process involved in breathing,” such as “whether the breath is long or short.”⁶⁵ When stressing the importance of good posture and attitude, he references the *SiksamuccayaSutra*.⁶⁶ Similarly important is the *Vimalakirti Nirveda Sutra*, which contains a discussion of Dharma.⁶⁷ Finally, Hanh’s explanation of mindfulness also draws from foundational texts of Mahayana Buddhism and Pāli.⁶⁸ In short, Hanh brings the essence of Zen philosophy to life by incorporating the meanings of various religious texts and summarizing the central notion of the sutra.

The Miracle of Mindfulness contains philosophical dialogue that upholds the significance of meditation while simultaneously expressing its fundamental guidelines with great clarity. Hanh’s meditational guidelines always include titles that incorporate essential aspects of Zen, such as “Half-smiling during your free moments,” “Letting go in the sitting position,” and “Measuring your breath by your footstep.”⁶⁹ In other words, the title itself is a representation of Zen. The meditation steps are akin to the following: “Sit in the half or full lotus or take a walk. As you inhale, be mindful that ‘I am inhaling, one.’ When you exhale, be mindful that ‘I am exhaling, one.’ Remember to breathe from the stomach. When beginning the second inhalation, be mindful that ‘I am inhaling, two.’ And slowly exhaling, be mindful that ‘I am exhaling, two.’ Continue on up through 10. After you have reached 10, return to one. Whenever you lose count, return to one.”⁷⁰ By concentrating on one’s actions in the present, one can gain a clearer perspective.

Hanh’s decision to introduce mindfulness to the public proved a success. Popularizing traditional texts allowed Hanh to satisfy public curiosity and encourage physical and mental well-being. Eventually, Hanh’s pursuit of the generalization of mindfulness or Zen induced a contemporary era of “Zen” fever.⁷¹

64 Hanh, *The Miracle*, 15.

65 Robert E. Buswell and Donald S. Lopez, *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, course book. ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 41.

66 Susanne Mrozik, *Virtuous Bodies: The Physical Dimensions of Morality in Buddhist Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5-6.

67 Kumārajīva, and Burton Watson, *The Vimalakirti Sutra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 2-3.

68 Tse-fu Kuan, *Mindfulness in Early Buddhism: New Approaches through Psychology and Textual Analysis of Pali, Chinese and Sanskrit Sources* (London: Routledge, 2012), 58-60.

69 Hanh, *The Miracle*, 80-81.

70 Hanh, *The Miracle*, 82.

71 Ross, “How Meditation,” *Time*.

HANH, BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

An additional factor that secured Hanh’s success was his openness to incorporate other religious traditions into the philosophy of Zen. For instance, Hanh merged the principles of Zen Buddhism and Christianity, insisting that a common truth exists among religions.⁷² Hanh believed that “many elements of Buddhist teachings can be found in Christianity, Judaism and Islam.”⁷³ For him, this common truth among religions would “dissolve our wrong perceptions, transcend our wrong views, and see one another in fresh, new ways.”⁷⁴ He argued, “What they [Buddha and Jesus Christ] said may be less important than how they said it.”⁷⁵ It is in this context that Hanh stated: “Just as a flower is made only of non-flower elements, Buddhism is made only of non-Buddhist elements, including Christian ones, and Christianity is made of non-Christian elements, including Buddhist ones.”⁷⁶

Hanh further asserted that people could be Buddhist and Christian simultaneously: “There are many, many Christians who practice Buddhism, and they become better and better Christians all the time.”⁷⁷ As a case in point, Hanh used Jesus as his role model for his doctrine of non-violence. He stressed that “Jesus was non-violent and never encouraged people to respond to acts of violence with violence.”⁷⁸ By including Judeo-Christian values in his teachings, Hanh catered to individuals searching for religious unity by emphasizing the commonality of faiths and by validating religions other than Buddhism. Jeffrey Carlson, a professor of Theology at Dominican University, affirms Hanh’s notion when he states: “We are all, and each, intrinsically plural. Together we share that formal complexity, that syncretic identity.”⁷⁹

Hanh’s philosophy shows that he perceived religion as a way to promote peace rather than a necessity that coerces people into believing certain teachings. Because of this attitude, Hanh became a mentor for audiences who were conflicted about their religious and cultural upbringings. Even if people do not seek spiritual guidance, Hanh’s work can lead them in the direction of peace. Thus, his take on Zen appeals to the public, no matter their ages, experiences, or ways of life.

72 Jeffrey Carlson, “Pretending to Be Buddhist and Christian: Thich Nhat Hanh and the Two Truths of Religious Identity,” *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 20 (2000): 117.

73 “Extended Interview Thich Nhat Hanh,” PBS, last modified September 19, 2003, <http://Extended Interview Thich Nhat Hanh>.

74 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Living Buddha, Living Christ* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1997), 41, EPUB.

75 Hanh, *Living Buddha*, 99.

76 Hanh, *Living Buddha*, 40.

77 Hanh, *Living Buddha*, 99.

78 Hanh, *Living Buddha*, 99.

79 Carlson, “Pretending to Be Buddhist,” 124.

PR: MINDFULNESS OF THE MEDIA

Apart from being attuned to the social issues of his time, Hanh also proved himself to be flexible and open to innovation. As a case in point, Hanh began taking advantage of the Internet to spread his message of peace and social justice more effectively. His accomplishments, personal history, and educational efforts are to this day well documented on his website that also contains modern images and presents his monastery as a conduit of mindfulness.⁸⁰

To a considerable degree, Hanh's persona is shaped by the online profile he created for himself. Hanh adopted two methods to enhance his image: (1) He provided easy access to engage his audience, and (2) He used online media to spread his message and teachings. His official website documents his most influential interviews with *Time*, the *Guardian*, and even Italian and Spanish news outlets.⁸¹ Further, his personal YouTube account grants easy access to high-profile media appearances, such as his interview on the Oprah Winfrey show.

Beyond documenting his media appearances and interviews, Hanh employed multiple social media outlets to spread his teachings. With half a million followers, Hanh's official Twitter account presented his personality, quotes/sayings, and activities in Plum Village, the meditation center he founded in Dordogne, France in 1982.⁸² Plum Village's YouTube account, though not as popular as Hanh's personal Twitter account, still accumulates millions of views. In addition, Hanh's personal YouTube account lists many of his speeches that are still in high demand. Plum Village even launched a free meditation

⁸⁰ See Plum Village Website, Plum Village, Plum Village, <https://plumvillage.org/>.

⁸¹ Below is a list of interviews for reference purposes:

1. <https://www.oprah.com/spirit/oprah-talks-to-thich-nhat-hanh>
2. <https://plumvillage.org/about/thich-nhat-hanh/interviews-with-thich-nhat-hanh/the-guardian-uk-28-march-2014/#filter=topics-business>
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/zen-master-thich-nhat-hanh-love-climate-change>
4. <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1670911,00.html>
5. <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/10/16/us/a-monk-in-exile-dreams-of-return-to-vietnam.html>
6. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/beliefs-buddhism-exclusiv_b_577541

⁸² Plum Village was founded by Hanh together with the nun Chan Khong. It started out as a modest retreat south of Paris, France. Soon it began to grow in popularity and now it is one of the major meditation centers in Europe. See Robert Harlen King, Thomas Merton and Thich Nhat Hanh: Engaged Spirituality in an Age of Globalization (New York, NY: Continuum, 2003), 96-99.

app with Buddhist teachings in multiple languages. His mission statement promotes peaceful living within the doctrines of Buddhism. Hanh accommodated his audience by providing Dharma talks that center on common concerns. He elaborated on challenges such as "How to avoid doing too much" by drawing on personal experiences, and offered practical advice on dealing with related issues.⁸³ Through his online presence, Hanh spread his image globally and thus epitomized his stature as a religious leader. Even after his death, his leadership and vision persist through his various online channels.

CONCLUSION

This paper documented the rise of two of the most influential figures of the contemporary Zen movement. We first studied the Japanese scholar D. T. Suzuki, whose approach to Zen guaranteed its recognition as a world religion. Suzuki was one of the first academics to write and teach about Buddhism in English, thusmaking the subject matter accessible to a broader audience. Many established theologians and philosophers revere Suzuki's academic achievements. Though his academic analysis was not always entirely accepted, his historical significance in the academic study of Zen is profound.

Suzuki's endeavor of establishing Zen as a topic of academic interest was soon paired with a public need to experience the actual practice of Zen. Religious leader Thich Nhat Hanh actively merged the ideal of Zen with popular culture and contemporary social movements. Hanh preached peace through his vision and ideology of Zen. He crafted the concept of Socially Engaged Buddhism and reaffirmed values such as kindness and compassion as deeply rooted in Buddhism. Through his peaceful protest of the Vietnam War, he acquired a reputation as "an apostle of peace." He was a prolific writer and influenced readers around the globe. Hanh also institutionalized Buddhism in the West by creating Plum Village and EIAB (European Institute of Applied Buddhism), now recognized as influential Buddhist institutes. Hanh elevated the relevance of Zen in a modern context. Rather than portraying Zen as an obsolete course of study from the East, he fused Zen ideals to serve the common good. As a result, the values of Zen serve as the motto for an ideal society and promote sympathy, empathy, and compassion among religions.

In conclusion, it may be stated that Suzuki and Hanh undoubtedly articulated their own visions of Zen within the cultural and social frameworks of their times. Although Suzuki's and Hanh's methods and aspirations operated on fundamentally different levels, they are still complementary. Suzuki and his academic analysis constructed Zen as a serious subject worthy of academic study in the early

⁸³ Thich Nhat Hanh, lecture, Plum Village, <https://plumvillage.org/library/dharma-talks/?people=thich-nhat-hanh>.

twentieth century. Hanh, by contrast, used his public image and modern technologies to popularize and integrate Zen into contemporary society. Zen in the West evolved from a minor academic interest to a world religion through the works of Hanh, Suzuki, and many other prominent scholars of Zen.

REFERENCES

1. Ames, Van Meter. "Zen and Pragmatism." *Philosophy East and West* 4, no. 1 (1954): 19-33.
2. Bader, David M. *Zen Judaism: For You, a Little Enlightenment*. New York: Harmony Books, 2002.
3. Bandō, Shōjun. "D. T. Suzuki's Life in La Salle." *The Eastern Buddhist* 2, no. 1 (1967): 137-46.
4. Buswell, Robert E., and Donald S. Lopez. *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*. Course Book. ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013.
5. Carlson, Jeffrey. "Pretending to Be Buddhist and Christian: Thich Nhat Hanh and the Two Truths of Religious Identity." *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 20 (2000): 115-25.
6. Chadelat, Celine, Bernard Baudouin, and Bo du an. *Zheng Nian De Zu Ji: Yi Xing Chan Shi Zhuan Ji = Thich Nhat Hanh : Une Vie En Pleine Conscience*. Chu ban. ed. Tai bei shi: shi bao wen hua chu ban qi ye gu fen you xian gong si, 2018. Kindle Edition.
7. 112 Cong. Rec. 14891 (June 6, 1966).
8. Cunningham, Eric. "D. T. Suzuki: A Biographical Summary." *Education About Asia* 20:2 (Fall 2015): Asia: Biographies and Personal Stories: 42-45.
9. Dornish, Margaret H. "Aspects of D.T. Suzuki's Early Interpretations of Buddhism and Zen." *The Eastern Buddhist* 3, no. 1 (1970): 47-66.
10. Dumoulin, Heinrich. *A History of Zen Buddhism*. 5th ed. Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1975.
11. "Extended Interview Thich Nhat Hanh." PBS. Last modified September 19, 2003. <http://ExtendedInterviewThichNhatHanh>.
12. Fader, Larry A. "Zen in the West: Historical and Philosophical Implications of the 1893 Chicago World's Parliament of Religions." *The Eastern Buddhist* 15, no. 1 (1982): 122-45.
13. Fitzpatrick, Aidyn. "Thich Nhat Hanh, Father of Mindfulness, Awaits the End." *Time*. Last modified January 24, 2019. Accessed March 9, 2022. <https://time.com/5511729/monk-mindfulness-art-of-dying/>.
14. Hakeda, Yoshito S. "Review: An Introduction to Zen Buddhism by D. T. Suzuki." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 24, no. 3 (1965): 516-17.
15. Hanh, Thich Nhat. Lecture. *Plum Village*. <https://plumvillage.org/library/dharma-talks/?people=thich-nhat-hanh>.
16. Hanh, Thich Nhat. *Living Buddha, Living Christ*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1997. EPUB.
17. Hạnh, Thích Nhất. *At Home in the World: Stories and Essential Teachings from a Monk's Life*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 2016.
18. Hạnh, Thích Nhất. *The Miracle of Mindfulness: An Introduction to the Practice of Meditation*. Repr. ed. Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 2013.
19. Hiroshi, Sakamoto. "D. T. Suzuki as a Philosopher." *The Eastern Buddhist* 11, no. 2 (1978): 33-42.
20. Johnston, William. *Christian Zen*. 3rd ed. New York, N.Y.: Fordham University Press, 2003.
21. Kasulis, Thomas P. "Reading D. T. Suzuki Today." *The Eastern Buddhist* 38, no. 1/2 (2007): 41-57.
22. Keown, Damien. *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
23. King, Martin Luther, Jr. "Letter from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. nominating Thich Nhat Hanh for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967." *Plum Village*. <https://plumvillage.org/letter-from-dr-martin-luther-king-jr-nominating-thich-nhat-hanh-for-the-nobel-peace-prize-in-1967/>.
24. King, Robert Harlen. *Thomas Merton and Thich Nhat Hanh: Engaged Spirituality in an Age of Globalization*. New York, NY: Continuum, 2003.
25. King, Sallie B. "Transformative Nonviolence: The Social Ethics of George Fox and Thich Nhat Hanh." *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 18 (1998): 3-36.
26. Kuan, Tse-fu. *Mindfulness in Early Buddhism: New Approaches through Psychology and Textual Analysis of Pali, Chinese and Sanskrit Sources*. London: Routledge, 2012.
27. Kumārajīva, and Burton Watson. *The Vimalakirti Sutra*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.
28. Lerner, Stephen D. "Vietnam Buddhist Thich Nhat Hanh Will Lecture On Self-Determination." *The Harvard Crimson*. Last modified May 27, 1966. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1966/5/27/vietnam-buddhist-thich-nhat-hanh-will/>.
29. Long, Darui. "An Interfaith Dialogue between the Chinese Buddhist Leader Taixu and Christians." *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 20 (2000): 167-89.
30. Malkin, John. "In Engaged Buddhism, Peace Begins with You." *Lion's Roar*. Last modified July 16, 2020. Accessed March 9, 2022. <https://www.lionsroar.com/in-engaged-buddhism-peace-begins-with-you/>.

31. Masao, Abe. "Zen and Buddhism." *The Eastern Buddhist* 26, no. 1 (1993): 26-49. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44361979>.
32. Merton, Thomas. "D. T. Suzuki: The Man and His Work." *The Eastern Buddhist* 2, no. 1 (1967): 3-9.
33. Mroziak, Susanne. *Virtuous Bodies: The Physical Dimensions of Morality in Buddhist Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
34. "Oprah Talks to Thich Nhat Hanh." *Oprah*. Last modified February 16, 2010. Accessed March 9, 2022. <https://www.oprah.com/spirit/oprah-talks-to-thich-nhat-hanh/2>.
35. Pearson, James. "Thich Nhat Hanh, revered Zen Buddhist monk and peace activist, dies at 95." *Reuters*. Last modified January 21, 2022. Accessed March 9, 2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/22/thich-nhat-hanh-revered-zen-buddhist-monk-and-peace-activist-dies-at-95>.
36. Plum Village. *Plum Village*. <https://plumvillage.org/>.
37. Ross, Ashley. "How Meditation Went Mainstream." *Time*. Last modified March 9, 2016. Accessed March 9, 2022. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1966/5/27/vietnam-buddhist-thich-nhat-hanh-will/>.
38. Suzuki, D. T. *Essays in Zen Buddhism*. New York: Grove/Atlantic, 2007.
39. Suzuki, D. T. "Zen: A Reply to Van Meter Ames." *Philosophy East and West* 5, no. 4 (1956): 349-52.
40. Suzuki, Daisetsu. *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*. New York: Grove Press, 1991.
41. Suzuki, Daisetz Teitaro, and Richard M. Jaffe. *Zen and Japanese Culture*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019.
42. Swearer, Donald K. "RELIGION, WORLD ORDER, AND PEACE: Buddhist Responses." *CrossCurrents* 60, no. 3 (2010): 314-18.
43. Taylor, Philip. *Modernity and Re-enchantment: Religion in Post-revolutionary Vietnam ; [Vietnam Update Conference (2005: Canberra, Australia)]*. Singapore: ISEAS, 2007.

Citation: Taoxi Xie, "D.T. Suzuki and Thich Nhat Hanh: The Rise of Contemporary Zen in the West", *American Research Journal of Humanities and Social sciences*, Vol 8, no. 1, 2022, pp. 52-61.

Copyright © 2022 Taoxi Xie, This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.