

# The Way of the Warrior

BY HOWARD REID AND MICHAEL CROUCHER

WOODSTOCK, NEW YORK: THE OVERLOOK PRESS, 1995  
240 PAGES

This attractively produced book is an introduction, not only to the Asian martial arts, but also to the philosophical systems and spiritual values which underlie them. While examining the martial arts of India, China, Okinawa and Japan, the authors emphasize the connections between fighting styles and diverse religious traditions, including Hinduism, Taoism, Buddhism and Shinto.

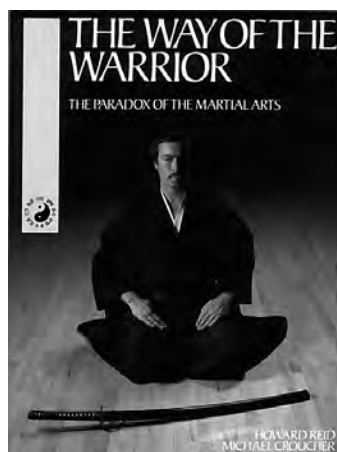
Throughout, the authors take pains to emphasize “The Paradox of the Martial Arts”: serious training under a proper master produces not only skill in the use of violence, but more importantly, the self-confidence and self-discipline that enable the martial artist to avoid violence.

The book begins with two introductory chapters on the martial arts in general and the legend of Bodhidharma, the sixth century C.E. Indian monk who brought Mahāyāna Buddhism to China, and who is considered both a patriarch of the Ch’an (Zen) school, and the founder of Shaolin boxing. The third chapter takes up a subject seldom addressed: the south Indian *kalaripayit* fighting tradition. The connection between mastery of the martial arts and practical medical knowledge is brought out in this chapter as well.

The authors, in their treatment of the martial arts of China, discuss the external or hard styles (Shaolin boxing, in both northern and southern styles), which they consider connected with Buddhism, and the internal or soft styles (*hsingī*, *pa-kua*, and *t’āi-chi-ch’uan*) which they consider inspired by Taoist principles. In the fourth and fifth chapters, which treat external and internal styles respectively, a great deal of information on history, religion, and philosophy is brought out as the authors place the training methods and principles of various fighting styles in their historical and cultural contexts.

In their treatment of the weapons schools of Japan, such as *kendō* (fencing with bamboo swords), *iaidō* (the art of drawing the sword), *naginata-dō* (halberd fighting, reserved for women), and other styles involving weapons, the authors distinguish between *bujutsu* (the original combat-oriented arts practiced by warriors in the past) and *budō* (modern martial arts practiced as a means of physical but above all of spiritual tempering).

Karate, perhaps the martial art best known in the West, is discussed in the context of its birthplace, the island of Okinawa. The historical reasons for the development of “empty hand” fighting (Okinawans were forbidden by their Japanese rulers to carry weapons) also explain the derivation of the standard karate weapons *bo* (staff), *kama* (sickle), *tonfa* (handle of rice-grinder), and *nunchaku* (rice flail) from common farm implements. Okinawan karate master Higaonna *sensei* eloquently explains the significance of *kata* (forms) and how, through a lifetime’s diligent application, karate is a way of



approaching spiritual enlightenment.

The final three chapters take up assorted modern and contemporary martial arts, including *aikidō* and *shorinji kempo* as practiced in Japan, and the Philippine *escrima* or stick-fighting. Perhaps the only significant Asian martial art not treated at any length in this volume is Korea’s national art of *tae-kwon-do*.

One of the book’s many strong points is its attractive production. It contains copious photographs, numerous illustrations, maps, and diagrams, and a number of examples of Asian paintings and calligraphy relevant to the text. There is also an extensive glossary of martial arts terms, and an index. Overlook Press, a prominent publisher of martial arts books, has done a fine job with this book.

Reid and Croucher’s book should lend itself to undergraduate and high school instruction, by reason of its clear and dramatic presentation, and the constant relating of the martial arts to their historical, cultural and spiritual roots. It would serve admirably as an adjunct text for courses in Asian civilizations. ■

Timothy A. Ross

TIMOTHY A. ROSS has taught history at Arkansas State University since 1965. He translated the Chinese novel *Hsuan-feng* by Chiang Kuei (1908–1980) and studied *tae-kwon-do*.

## Rude Awakenings

### Zen, the Kyōto School, and the Question of Nationalism

EDITED BY JAMES W. HEISIG AND JOHN C. MARALDO

HONOLULU: UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PRESS, 1994  
381 PAGES

**R**ude Awakenings is a work that addresses the concerns of European and North American scholars who have for at least a decade longed for a well-balanced consideration of the relationships between Zen Buddhists, the philosophical proponents of Zen in the so-called “Kyōto school,” and nationalistic trends in pre-World War II Japan. Most scholars recognize that many figures who called themselves Zen Buddhists or Zen “philosophers” were closely connected with the rising forms of nationalism

## BOOK REVIEWS

of the era. However, not many scholars, until the writing of this book, had an understanding of these connections, their ideological character, and their historical context.

The editors divide the book into four parts which total fifteen chapters. Part One addresses the question regarding the involvement of Zen Buddhist figures in Japanese nationalism. The chapters all concern the conflict between Zen Buddhists' emphasis on the absolute and their active involvement in support of Japan during the war. However, the conclusions of these chapters vary dramatically on occasion—differences that can be useful in the classroom. For example, Robert Sharf argues that the Zen of figures such as D. T. Suzuki is a twentieth century construct that is both ahistorical and nationalistic in character. Kirita Kiyohide, based on an extensive examination of Suzuki's letters and writings, comes to the conclusion that, given the times, Suzuki did what he was capable of to undermine Japanese militarism and its activist ideology. Sharf's study gives teachers an occasion to illustrate the Western underpinnings of some of the notions emphasized in popular Zen. At the same time, Kirita gives teachers as well as students an opportunity to explore the immediate context within which Suzuki wrote; it is clear that Suzuki had nationalistic leanings, but what was the ideological position of Suzuki vis-à-vis the constrained political and intellectual atmosphere of prewar Japan? Knowledge of Suzuki's praise of Japanese spirituality, on the one hand, and of his veiled criticisms of the military establishment and State Shinto, on the other, will help to problematize the figure of Suzuki for everyone in the classroom.

Parts Two to Four analyze questions concerning the connection between the thought of Kyōto school philosophers and nationalism but also their association of the war with the effort to overcome Western modernity. It is in these sections that the difficulties of disentangling Japanese nationalism from the effort to overcome Western imperialism become most apparent. Indeed, we might say that Parts Two to Four constitute the real core of the book, and offer the most grist for the classroom mill, because they present with both intellectual rigor and candor the variety of opinions regarding the nationalistic leanings of the Kyōto school. Part Two explores the variety of views on the connections between Nishida Kitarō, father of the Kyōto school of philosophy, and Japanese nationalism.

Part Three raises the book to a new level of cross-cultural and historical complexity by exploring the processes by which Japanese intellectuals of the early twentieth century attempted to articulate an East Asian alternative to Occidental views of the world and statehood. Given the ongoing debates about the problem of post-modernism, the idea that the Japanese attempted to resist the hegemony of Western ideas of modernity should prove a source of lively discussion; so should the apparent ease with which many of them reformulated such ideas to justify their belief in Japanese uniqueness and supremacy.

The final part of the book highlights case studies that pursue in even greater depth the specific character of the nationalistic concerns of members of the Kyōto school of philosophy. The chapter by John C. Maraldo that concludes the book is arguably its best, drawing our attention to what he argues are distinctions between the forms of nationalism in the thought of D. T. Suzuki, Abe Masao, and Nishitani Keiji. Indeed, as he claims, the rhetorical impact of their anti-government texts reveals their nationalism irrespective of their authorial intention: "Criticisms of nationalism, even with the

best of intentions, can display a nationalistic side of their own when considered in the context of the effects they produce" (361). Suzuki and Abe with their "cultural nationalism," Nishitani with his "globalist nationalism": each of these figures in his own way criticized what he saw as the wrong form of nationalism, not its inherent evil.

This book, ideal for use in courses in politics, religion, philosophy, and cultural studies, constitutes an invaluable source of knowledge for at least two groups of people—the lines between which are often blurred. On the one hand, there are those who have found in Zen or Kyōto school philosophy a kind of personal liberation from the confines of the peculiar world of the Cold War era and from disillusion at American involvement in Vietnam. This book challenges them to examine not only the heights of Zen realization but also its ideological and historical connections with Japanese nationalism. On the other hand, there are those who have investigated the works of Zen or the Kyōto school in their respective academic disciplines. This book offers them the most sophisticated study to date on intellectual life in prewar Japan, and beckons them to interpret these works with critical rigor and historical perspective. ■

Brian D. Ruppert

**BRIAN RUPPERT** is a specialist in East Asian Religions. Having received his Ph. D. from Princeton University, he is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He is a former Fulbright-Hays scholar and is currently working on problems concerning the relationship between Buddhism and social life in early medieval Japan.

## The Wild Goose

BY MORI ŌGAI

TRANSLATED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY BURTON WATSON

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN: CENTER FOR JAPANESE STUDIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, 1995

XIV + 166 PAGES

Many of us were aware that Burton Watson, the gifted translator of Chinese and Japanese, had a manuscript in his drawer ever since excerpts from *The Wild Goose* (Gan; 1911–13) appeared forty years ago in the well-known anthology of modern Japanese literature edited by Donald Keene. Now the manuscript has appeared in full, thanks to the University of Michigan's Center for Japanese Studies. This is indeed a welcome event. Although another translation of this novel has been in existence since 1959, the version by Watson, who is best known to students of modern Japanese literature for his supple rendering of Oda Sakunosuke's *Stories of Osaka Life*, is surer and