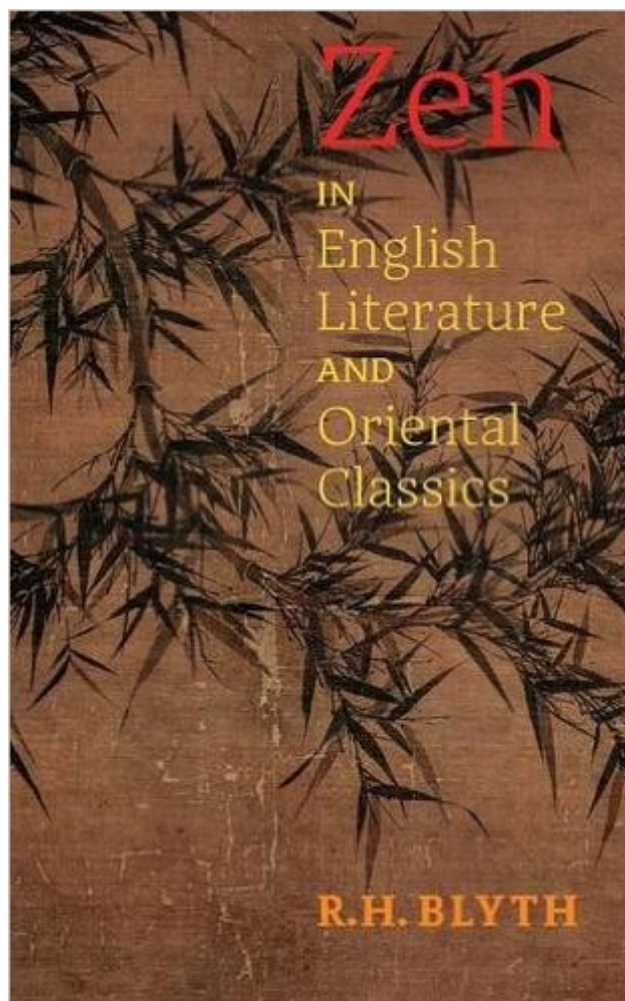


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Zen In English Literature And Oriental Classics



Synopsis

It was R.H Blyth's belief that "all that is good in European literature and culture is simply and solely that which is in accordance with the Spirit of Zen." He thereafter applied himself to the task of searching the writings of East and West in an attempt to discover that Spirit. Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics embraces the classical literature of China and Japan and the whole extent of English literature, with numerous quotations not only from English but also from French, German, Italian, and Spanish writing. Don Quixote has a chapter all to himself, and the author considers him possibly the purest example in all of world literature of a man who lives by Zen. In English, the Zen attitude toward life is found most consistently in Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Dickens, and Stevenson. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in Zen, haiku, or indeed English literature. R.H. Blyth was born in London in 1898 and studied English literature at London University. He traveled extensively in the East before moving first to Korea and then Japan and teaching English at several universities. Blyth eventually became the English tutor to the Crown Prince of Japan. He also studied Zen Buddhism under Kayama Taigi Roshi. Blyth was interned during the war years, and it was during this time that he wrote his first book, Zen in English Literature. He went on to write numerous other books on Zen, haiku, senryu, and humor. Blyth was a man whose sensibility took root in two disparate cultures and found a harmony that he beautifully and effectively communicated in his writing.

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