many variant forms of soma sacrifices collectively called jyotisāma, among which are the seventeen-day-long Vajapeya and the Rājasūya, the royal consecration. Other well-known itrāta rituals are the sacrifices to the new and full moons (Dārsāpūrṇamāsau), the horse sacrifice (Āsvamedha), and the animal sacrifice (Paśūbandha). Some Śrautasūtras end in more or less independent appendices called sullāsūtras; because they describe the exact layout of the sacrificial area (vedi), they are, in effect, the earliest Indian texts on geometry and mathematics.

In addition to rites that are part of the daily life of the householder and rituals on such occasions as building a house or digging a tank, the Gṛhyasūtras principally deal with the samāskāras. These are the rites of passage that guide a Hindu through the various stages of his life, from conception until death, especially the Upanayana (his second birth, at which time he begins the study of the Veda and is invested with the sacred thread) and marriage. Many topics treated in the Gṛhyasūtras also appear in the Dharmasūtras, although the latter expand their teachings to cover all the duties and obligations of the different āstamasā ("stages of life") and varnas ("classes of society"). The Dharmasūtras, in prose, are considered to be the precursors of the verified Dharmasūtras.

Treatises in sūtra style also form the basic texts for the six Hindu dārīnas (orthodox philosophical systems). They are Jaimini’s Pārvaminimāmśa Sūtras, Bādarāyaṇa’s Uttarāminimāmśa Sūtras, or Vedānta Sūtras, Gautama’s Nyāya Sūtras, Kanāda’s Vaiśeṣika Sūtras, Kapila’s Sāṃkhyā Sūtras, and Paṭañjali’s Yoga Sūtras. Some of these philosophical sūtras are so concise that they have lent themselves to divergent interpretations, and they have thus become the authoritative texts for very different philosophical systems. Bādarāyaṇa’s sūtras, for example, are the common source for all later schools of Vedānta, including Saṅkarā’s Advaita, Rāmānuja’s Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Madhava’s Dvaita. The sūtra style was also adopted in certain Buddhist and Jain scriptures.

The area of sūtra literature in which the ideal of brevity and conciseness has been realized most perfectly is the grammatical literature, which technically belongs to the Vēdāṅgas, mentioned earlier. Pāṇini’s Aṣṭādhyāyi not only uses as few words as possible; it has recourse to all kinds of devices to abbreviate the sūtras, such as the replacement of longer grammatical terms with shorter symbols. The commentators on Pāṇini’s work go to great length to account for the presence and meaning of each and every syllable in the Aṣṭādhyāyi.

It would be misleading to suggest specific dates for the Kalpasūtras and for sūtra literature generally. The texts clearly belong to the end of the Vedic period, and they are thought to be earlier than the epic period. Allowing for exceptions belonging to earlier or later dates, the major part of the sūtra literature may be safely situated in the second half of the first millennium BCE.

**See Also** Śāstra Literature.

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**New Sources**


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**Suzuki, D. T.** (1870–1966), also known as Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō, Buddhist scholar, prolific author, and itinerant lecturer, remains the single most important figure in the popularization of Zen in the twentieth century. At the time of his death in 1966, Suzuki had authored dozens of volumes on Zen and Buddhism in English and had produced an even greater oeuvre in his native Japanese. His writings on Zen remain influential in the West, and translations of his work into Korean, Chinese, and other Asian languages have contributed to a resurgence of popular interest in Zen throughout East Asia. Suzuki’s accomplishments as a scholar, popularizer, and evangelist are remarkable, given that his philological skills were acquired largely on his own and that he had no formal credentials as a Zen teacher. (Whereas he was a serious lay practitioner, he neither ordained as a priest nor received Dharma transmission.) He owed his success to his considerable intellectual and linguistic gifts, his seemingly boundless enthusiasm and energy, his prodigious literary output, and his having the right message at the right time.

**Early Years.** Born Suzuki Teitarō in the town of Kanazawa (Ishikawa prefecture) on October 18, 1870, Suzuki was the youngest of five children. (The name Daisetsu or “great simplicity” was given to him later by his Zen teacher Shaku Soen [1859–1919].) Suzuki’s family belonged to the Rinzai sect of Zen, but Suzuki credited his own serious interest in Buddhism to the influence of his high-school mathematics teacher Hōjō Tokiyori (1858–1929), a student of the Zen master Imakita Kösen (1816–1892). Hōjō was also responsible for introducing Zen to Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945), a classmate and friend of Suzuki who would later emerge as Japan’s preeminent modern philosopher.

Suzuki’s father, a physician, died soon after Suzuki’s fifth birthday, and in 1889 Suzuki was forced to leave school and a probable career in medicine owing to his family’s ongoing financial difficulties. Suzuki made a living for a while as a primary school English teacher and in 1891 entered the Tokyo Senmon Gakkō, later renamed Waseda University. Later that same year, at the urging of his friend Nishida, Suzuki transferred to Tokyo Imperial University, and at the
same time began to practice Zen with Kösen at Engakuji, an important Rinzai monastery in Kamakura. When Kösen died in 1892, Suzuki continued his Zen practice under Kösen’s successor, Shaku Sōen.

Both Kösen and Sōen were pivotal figures in the revival of Zen following the government-sanctioned persecution of Buddhism in the 1870s. Progressives like Kösen and Sōen sought to broaden Buddhism’s appeal, opening the doors of their monasteries to laypersons, encouraging secular education, and promoting an ecumenical attitude toward other Buddhist schools. (Sōen himself spent three years in Ceylon studying Pali Buddhism with Kösen’s blessing.) Suzuki took advantage of the liberal atmosphere at the Engakuji zendo (meditation hall), and it was through Sōen that Suzuki, who had considerable facility in English, became familiar with Occidental writings on Buddhism.

**Influences.** Suzuki’s life took a turn in the early 1890s when he became acquainted with the writings of Paul Carus (1852–1919), an offbeat German philosopher and writer who had emigrated to the United States and was working as a writer and editor for Open Court Press in La Salle, Illinois. Suzuki’s contact with Carus came by way of Sōen, who met Carus at the 1893 Chicago World’s Parliament of Religions. (Sōen attended as a member of the Japanese Buddhist delegation, and his speech to the Parliament had been translated into English by Suzuki.) Carus was in Chicago covering the Parliament for his journal, *Open Court*, and was so impressed by Sōen and the other Buddhist representatives that he became an ardent champion and exponent of Buddhism in his publications. Soon after the Parliament Carus sent Sōen some of his books, including a somewhat bowdlerized compendium of Buddhist scriptures entitled *Gospel of Buddha* (1894). Sōen, who knew little English, passed the Gospel on to Suzuki, who was immediately taken by Carus’s depiction of the Buddha as an eminently rational figure who eschewed religious institutions and meaningless ritual. Suzuki produced a Japanese translation of the Gospel and wrote to Carus expressing praise for his understanding of Buddhism. Carus responded by sending Suzuki more of his publications, including his book *The Religion of Science* (1893). Shortly thereafter, at Suzuki’s request, Sōen wrote to Carus saying that Suzuki “has been so greatly inspired by your sound faith which is perceptible in your various works that he earnestly desires to go abroad and to study under your personal guidance.” Carus agreed at once to Sōen’s request and promised to help Suzuki pay for the trip by offering him employment as his personal assistant.

It is not surprising that Suzuki, a talented student of Western philosophy and a lay practitioner of Zen, should have been attracted to Carus’s writings. Carus was passionately devoted to the reconciliation of science and religion, and his approach to Buddhism rendered it wholly commensurate with the modernist, rationalist, and scientific outlook that dominated university campuses in Meiji, Japan.

Suzuki arrived in America in 1897 and went on to spend some eleven years in La Salle, earning his keep as translator and proofreader at the Open Court Press. His life there was by no means easy—he was obliged to perform domestic services for the Carus household and he was provided with little remuneration for the long hours he put in at the press. By the time Suzuki was ready to return to Japan, he appears to have grown disillusioned with his eccentric host, and he rarely mentions Carus in later writings.

Whatever Suzuki’s personal relationship may have been with his employer, Carus’s philosophy left its mark on him. Carus’s interest in monism, his evolutionary approach to religion, and his attempt to reconcile religion and science are all in evidence in Suzuki’s later writings on Buddhism. But Carus was not the only influence on Suzuki during his years in La Salle. Open Court Press published two leading intellectual journals, *Open Court and The Monist*, and through them Suzuki encountered the writings of many prominent philosophers of the day, including Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) and William James (1842–1910). James’s book *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) was responsible in part for Suzuki’s later emphasis on Zen as a form of religious mysticism predicated on “pure experience.”

Upon returning to Japan in 1909, Suzuki held a series of lectureships in English at Gakushuin (1909–1921) and Tokyo Imperial University (1909–1914). In 1911 he married Beatrice Erskine Lane (1878–1939), a native of Newark, New Jersey, and graduate of Radcliffe College and Columbia University, whom Suzuki had met four years earlier in the United States. The two had a son named Paul, but not much more is known about Suzuki’s relationship with his wife. Clearly, they had many interests in common: in addition to having studied Western philosophy with William James and Josiah Royce, Lane was a Theosophist and student of religious mysticism. In Japan she turned her attention to Shinon, a school of Japanese Esoteric Buddhism, and went on to publish some of the earliest work on the subject in English.

Suzuki shared his wife’s interest in theosophy, and in the 1920s their Japanese home served as a meeting place for a branch of the Order of the Star in the East. (The Order, an offshoot of the Theosophical Society founded in 1911, continued until 1929 when it was disbanded by its spiritual leader, Jiddu Krishnamurti [1895–1986].)

Theosophy was fashionable at the time, as was Swedenborgianism, a Christian movement based on the writings of the Swedish mystic and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772). Suzuki was enamored of Swedenborg for several years and was instrumental in the introduction of Swedenborgianism to Japan, both as an active member of the Japanese Swedenborg Society and as translator of four of Swedenborg’s works. In 1910 Suzuki traveled to London to attend the international Swedenborg conference in the capacity of “Vice President,” returned again in 1912 to continue his work for the Swedenborg Society, and in 1913 wrote...
his own Japanese introduction to Swedenborg's life and teachings, dubbing him "the Buddha of the North." Where-as his passion for Swedenborg later cooled, his interest in Christian mysticism did not; his writings following the war are filled with appreciative discussions of the medieval Dominican mystic Meister Johannes Eckhart (c. 1260–1327/8).

In 1921 Suzuki moved to Kyoto to take a position as Professor of Buddhist Philosophy at Otani University, a university affiliated with the Shin denomination of Japanese Buddhism. (Suzuki had a life-long interest in Shin Pure Land teachings and published many works touting the unity of Zen and Pure Land thought.) Inspired in part by his experience with Open Court and The Monist, at Otani Suzuki launched the journal Eastern Buddhist, which was intended to serve as a non-sectarian vehicle for the propagation of Mahāyāna Buddhism. “Our standpoint,” wrote Suzuki in the second issue of Eastern Buddhist, “is that the Mahāyāna ought to be considered one whole, individual thing and no sects, especially no sectarian prejudices, to be recognized in it, except as so many phases or aspects of one fundamental truth. In this respect Buddhism and Christianity and all other religious beliefs are not more than variations of one single original Faith, deeply embedded in the human soul” (Suzuki, 1921, p. 156).

**Philosophy of Zen.** Virtually all of Suzuki's later writings are attempts to elucidate this “one single original Faith,” which he would come to understand as grounded in a transcultural, transhistorical, nondual religious experience lying at the core of all the major religions. The word “Zen,” insists Suzuki, refers precisely to this singular transformative experience. That is to say, Zen is not Buddhism, not religion, nor philosophy, nor reality anything that can be talked about at all. In his An Introduction to Zen Buddhism Suzuki writes: “Zen has no God to worship, no ceremonial rites to observe, no future abode to which the dead are destined, and, last of all, Zen has no soul whose welfare is to be looked after by somebody else and whose immortality is a matter of intense concern with some people. Zen is free from all these dogmatic and ‘religious’ encumbrances” (Suzuki, 1934, p. 14).

The claim that true Zen is free of the trappings of religion might seem commonplace to contemporary students of Buddhism, but it is nonetheless a rather peculiar way to characterize a tradition that placed tremendous emphasis on monastic ritual and liturgy, on funerary rites for the welfare of the deceased, on literary accomplishment, and on the formal veneration of a host of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and religious patriarchs. Suzuki’s characterization of Zen as something that transcends religious and cultural differences must be understood as the result of his life-long effort to synthesize a variety of religious and philosophical traditions, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist, Eastern and Western. If his presentation of Zen seems unremarkable to us today, it testifies to the enduring legacy of Suzuki and his intellectual heirs.

Suzuki’s claim that Zen refers to a universal mystical experience is considered by many modern scholars and Zen masters alike as an oversimplification, however well intentioned. More troubling, however, is Suzuki’s insistence that Zen constitutes the very essence of Japanese culture. Suzuki began emphasizing the connection between the Japanese cultural experience and the experience of Zen in the 1930s as part of his claim that the Japanese are more evolved spiritually than other peoples, including their Asian neighbors. Japanese life is, according to Suzuki, inherently “Zen-like,” and thus the Japanese are naturally predisposed to Zen understanding.

Suzuki’s attempts to ennoble Japanese culture must be understood within the context of the times—his writings on the subject first appear just as Japan’s imperial ambitions were reaching new heights, and their armies were driving deeper into Korea, Manchuria, and China. Suzuki’s extensive writings touting the innate spirituality of the Japanese, and linking this spirituality with the warrior ethos, were in keeping with popular sentiments of the day. (The Zen establishment was, on the whole, an enthusiastic supporter of Japanese colonial expansion.) As the war progressed, so did the extravagance of some of Suzuki’s claims. In 1944, for example, between trips to the air-raid shelter, Suzuki wrote a book called Japanese Spirituality, which argued that true Zen is not a product of China, much less India, but rather emerged out of the meeting of Buddhism and Japanese culture in the Kamakura period. Suzuki was fully aware of the Indian and Chinese roots of Zen, having written extensively on the topic, but here he insists that true Zen is not a “natural expression” of those cultures, and thus it was not until Zen came to Japan that it was fully realized. Besides, in Suzuki’s mind Zen had long since disappeared on the continent. In so far as such statements would have lent credibility to Japan’s sense of spiritual mission in Asia, Suzuki could understandably be construed as supporting the ongoing military campaign.

After the Japanese defeat, Suzuki claimed to have been opposed to the war; he said that he believed losing the war was in Japan’s own best interests. Private letters to friends written prior to the war substantiate Suzuki’s claims: they express his reservations about Japanese militarism, and his disgust with excessive public displays of patriotic zeal. Nevertheless, some Japanese intellectuals such as Umehara Takeshi (1925–) took umbrage with Suzuki: if Suzuki was so opposed to the war effort, why did he—a student of Zen who claimed to have attained satori—not speak out openly?

**Impact.** Be that as it may, Suzuki’s lifelong effort to impart his love of Zen and Japanese culture must be deemed a resounding success. Following the war he continued to travel to Europe and America, sometimes for extended periods of time. He was a popular lecturer, speaking at college campuses around the world, and from 1951 to 1957 he held a series of professorships at Columbia University. And he was, above all else, an indefatigable writer, producing over thirty volumes in English and even more in Japanese. Whereas much of Suzuki’s writings were intended for a popular audience,
he did make substantial contributions to Buddhist scholarship. His three-volume study of the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* published in the 1930s, for example, remains the most comprehensive work on the subject to date, and Zen scholars continue to consult his editions of important Dunhuang manuscripts.

Suzuki’s work made a significant impact not only among those interested in the study of religion, but also among theologians, philosophers, writers, artists, and musicians. In his preface to *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* Alan Watts reported that as early as 1927 James Bissett Pratt had observed “there are two kinds of cultured people: those who have read Suzuki and those who have not” (Suzuki, 1963, p. xvi). By the 1950s there seem to have been relatively few of the latter, as is evident from the flattering profile of Suzuki in the August 31, 1957, issue of the *New Yorker*. His influence on the beat poets is well known. According to William Barrett in his *Zen Buddhism: Selected Writings of D. T. Suzuki*, the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) remarked, “If I understand this man correctly, this is what I have been trying to say in all my writings” (Barrett, 1956, p. xi). Suzuki’s English works, such as *Zen and Japanese Culture* (first published as *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, 1938)—a book that unapologetically celebrates the unique spiritual gifts of the Japanese and the sublime affinity between Zen and Japanese martial culture—continue to capture the imagination of new generations of readers. Whereas more traditional Zen teachers may dismiss Suzuki for his intellectualism or for his lack of proper Zen credentials, they have Suzuki to thank for the currency of Zen in the West.

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**SUZUKI SHŌSAN (1579–1655)** was a Japanese Buddhist monk known for his advocacy of *Nio-zazen*, a meditative technique drawing upon both Zen and Pure Land methodologies. Shōsan was a bodyguard retainer (*hatamoto*) of Tokugawa Ieyasu and fought in the crucial battles that gave the Tokugawa family control of all Japan. In 1620, a few years after Ieyasu’s death, Shōsan tonsured himself as a Zen monk, favoring the Sōtō sect. Yet he never formally became affiliated with any sect and soon set himself up as the master of a small temple and meditation center called Onshinji some miles out of Okazaki, near Asuke, his birthplace. After six or seven years there, he moved to the Edo (Tokyo) vicinity, where he lived the rest of his life as a semi-itinerant teacher and writer.

Although Shōsan was well known in Zen circles, his influence was negligible for two reasons: He never became an official member of any sect, and his meditational methods and emphasis were nontraditional. He became widely known then and later for his so-called *Nio-zazen*. This “method” takes its name from Shōsan’s use as models for meditation the images of the two fierce warrior-gods (*Nio*) that guard the entrance of many Buddhist temples in Japan, rather than the quietly seated Nyorai image. He also suggested as a model Fudo, the “angry” Buddha portrayed as wreathed in flames and with sword and lasso in either hand.

The reasons for this advocacy are given clearly by Shōsan. For beginners in meditation—and he considered every contemporary, including himself, as such—the Nyorai model was too passive. It did not embody the fierce energy necessary for successfully engaging in the hand-to-hand combat with one’s self-love, which is essential for productive meditation. Hence he recommended setting the back teeth, tightly clenching the fists, scowling with a warrior’s fierce glare, and repeating the Pure Land Nembutsu vigorously, all the while thinking, “I am about to die.”

Although unique to Shōsan, *Nio-zazen* was not simply a casual mixture of Pure Land and Zen methodologies, as his detractors in both sects have alleged. Rather, it was a tangible embodiment of his dominant conviction that the Buddhist *dharma* must be made available to the masses in the most effective form, regardless of sectarian tradition. He was persuaded that Buddhism was being misperceived and bypassed as a passive, other-worldly faith in favor of “practical” and “useful” Confucianism. *Nio-zazen* was one way of combating this. But even more fundamentally, he sought to integrate Buddhism into the daily life of samurai, farmer, artisan, and merchant. He preached the inherent sanctity of all honest labor as Heaven’s appointment for earthly life. By so regarding it, and by combining daily activities with the continual saying of the Nembutsu, one could cut off evil thoughts, accumulate merit, and begin to walk the Buddha’s way toward enlightenment. Hence he preached that all work could be made into Buddha work; that is, into genuine religious discipline.