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# The Gateless Gate: The Classic Book Of Zen Koans



## Synopsis

In *The Gateless Gate*, one of modern Zen Buddhism's uniquely influential masters offers classic commentaries on the Mumonkan, one of Zen's greatest collections of teaching stories. This translation was compiled with the Western reader in mind, and includes Koan Yamada's clear and penetrating comments on each case. Yamada played a seminal role in bringing Zen Buddhism to the West from Japan, going on to be the head of the Sanbo Kyodan Zen Community. *The Gateless Gate* would be invaluable if only for the translation and commentary alone, yet it's loaded with extra material and is a fantastic resource to keep close by: An in-depth Introduction to the History of Zen Practice Lineage charts Japanese-to-Chinese and Chinese-to-Japanese conversion charts for personal names, place names, and names of writings Plus front- and back-matter from ancient and modern figures: Mumon, Shuan, Kubota Ji'un, Taizan Maezumi, Hugo Enomiya-Lasalle, and Yamada Roshi's son, Masamichi Yamada. A wonderful inspiration for the koan practitioner, and for those with a general interest in Zen Buddhism.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Koun Yamada's superb translation of *The Gateless Gate* has accompanied me throughout my practice and my teaching ever since the first edition appeared over two decades ago. His teisho on the Cases are alive and pithy, directly conveying Master Mumon's vivid Zen and the life-transforming words of our ancestral teachers. How fortunate we are to have this new edition, with a Foreword by the esteemed Ruben Habito." (Roko Sherry Chayat, Abbot, Zen Center of

Syracuse Hoen-ji)"Yamada Roshi's straightforward commentary on the Wu-men kuan (Mumonkan) is again available in this new edition, and I'm delighted. As his Dharma heir, his teachings are my own, as they are for his many other successors in the Americas, Europe, and Asia. Now our students and a new generation of Zen students everywhere can benefit directly from his guidance. I'm very grateful." (Robert Aitken, author of Taking the Path of Zen, and Zen Master Raven)"Yamada Koun was of that fine old breed of Japanese Zen Masters- piercing, disciplined, and always on point. 'The Gateless Gate' distills his teaching and spirit marvelously. It is an essential text for anyone interested in the Zen koan, and in the process of Zen awakening. " (Norman Fischer, former abbot, San Francisco Zen Center, teacher and founder Everyday Zen Foundation. Author of Taking Our Places: the Buddhist Path to Truly Growing Up.)"This is an essential reference book for everyone working on koans, and an inspiring window on Zen practice for those who are not." (David Loy, author of The Great Awakening: A Buddhist Social Theory)"Koun Yamada Roshi played a seminal role in spreading Zen Buddhism from Japan to the West. His insightful and profound commentaries on the Gateless Gate arise from his deep understanding of the Buddha-Dharma. They will help Zen students of all abilities to appreciate the significance of koans, not as paradoxical riddles, but as touchstones of reality." (Gerry Shishin Wick Roshi)"Koans are the intimate family history of Zen. The awakened mind of the Zen ancestors is conveyed, but also their effort, sweat, pain, and joy. Koun Yamada's excellent translation and commentary helped opened the door to this world for many of us, and this new edition is sure to do so for many more.." (Kyogen Carlson, Dharma Rain)"The penetrating voice of a unique lay Zen master! The depth of Yamada Koun Roshi's insight doesn't allow him to keep any religious, cultural or racial border in his heart. Consequently many westerners as well as catholic fathers and sisters joined his sangha. Reading his words, we realize that the Dharma has nothing to do with east or west, Buddhism or Christianity. Buddha nature is universal." (Eido Shimano Roshi, Abbot of Dai Bosatsu Zendo, Kongo-Ji)

Koun Yamada became a dharma successor to the renowned Zen master Haku'un Yasutani while maintaining a prominent career in business and public health. He guided the Zen practice of many students including a large number of Roman Catholic priests, monks, and nuns. A former Jesuit priest, Ruben L.F. Habito is professor of world religions and spirituality at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, and resident teacher at Maria Kannon Zen Center in Dallas, Texas. A dharma heir of Yamada Koun, he is also the author of Healing Breath and other works in Japanese and English.

Yamouda's translation, and commentary to The Mumukon sits atop the heap of all great, classical translations of beloved spiritual guides to any mystical tradition. It can stand alone as a beacon, or it can be used to light the way through other important, but less ably translated, spiritual guides. I give The Gateless Gate in this translation my highest recommendation. Were this book the only guide to spiritual practice available to a pilgrim, I would count that pilgrim well-equipped to follow the Buddhist, mystical oath.

I find myself reading and rereading this book, and gaining new insights from every passage each time as though I'm reading it for the first time. The translation of the Koans are excellent, and Koun Yamada brings great insight to the meaning, and non-meaning of the great Zen Master Mumon's words. If you're interested in Zen, but don't know where to start, look no further! This book is truly priceless.

Great collection. I also have the Book of Equanimity and it is great to have multiple perspectives on these classic koans.

This is just what I needed in order for me to begin delving into koans. For the first time in years, I have seen the footprints of the moving concept of Mu.

This volume has an excellent set of historical observations about Zen and the commentaries on the "koans" are in progression as in any good law book. I feel this is the most outstanding edition available.

Excellent approach of this complex aspect of Zen. An amazing journey of discovery

On time:) great.

Thanks!

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