

## **A Philosophical Study on the Applicability of Zen Buddhism in Photography**

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Sewwandi S. Hewawsam<sup>1(\*)</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

(\*) E.mail: sewsam0@gmail.com

Zen is a branch of Mahayana Buddhism. Zen Buddhism has great emphasis on meditation and insight into the true nature of things. Zen is the direct experience of truth, beyond the reach of thoughts and feelings, and beyond the words used to express thoughts and feelings. This school has a rich development of artistic principles to enhance its Zen practice. The objective of the study is to examine the application of aesthetic techniques of Zen in photographic composition and to manifest how a photographer develops mindfulness in the process of photography by using Zen practice. With the development of photographic art, most prominent photographers in the twentieth century such as Ansell Adams, Edward Weston, and Minor White attempt to embody Zen spirit in their work and outlook. Zen in photography is used as literary sources and the information gathered are analytically and critically organized to reach a conclusion. The Zen photographer tries to focus on the inherent nature of the aesthetic object. The job of the Zen photographer is to suggest the essence and the eternal qualities of the object. In conclusion, this paper is carried out to discuss the experience of being an 'observer' of the self in the act of photography and use photography as a meditative vehicle for achieving 'Satori' or 'Nirvana', which is the ultimate goal of Zen practice.

**Keywords:** Zen, photography, aesthetic techniques