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提要 | Eugen Herrigel’s “Zen in the Art of Archery” has been widely read as a study of Japanese culture. By reconsidering and reorganizing Herrigel's text and related materials, however, this paper clarifies the mythical nature of “Zen in the Art of Archery” and the process by which this myth has been generated. This paper first gives a brief history of Japanese archery and places the period at which Herrigel studied Japanese archery within that time frame. Next, it summarizes the life of Herrigel's teacher, Awa Kenzō. At the time Herrigel began learning the skill, Awa was just beginning to formulate his own unique ideas based on personal spiritual experiences. Awa himself had no experience in Zen nor did he unconditionally approve of Zen. By contrast, Herrigel came to Japan in search of Zen and chose Japanese archery as a method through which to approach it. The paper goes on to critically analyze two important spiritual episodes in “Zen and the Art of Archery.” What becomes clear through this analysis is the serious language barrier existing between Awa and Herrigel. The testimony of the interpreter, as well as other evidence, supports the fact that the complex spiritual episodes related in the book occurred either when there was no interpreter present, or were misinterpreted by Herrigel via the interpreter’s intentionally liberal translations. Added to this phenomenon of misunderstanding, whether only coincidental or born out of mistaken interpretation, was the personal desire of Herrigel to pursue things Zen. Out of the above circumstances was born the myth of “Zen in the Art of Archery.”

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