

Mystics and Zen Masters: Thomas Merton's Journey into the Heart of Interfaith Dialogue

Thomas Merton was a Trappist monk, poet, and social activist who played a pivotal role in the development of interfaith dialogue in the 20th century. Merton's writings on mysticism and Zen Buddhism have been widely praised for their depth and insight, and they continue to inspire people of all faiths today.



Mystics and Zen Masters by Thomas Merton

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 454 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 321 pages



In *Mystics and Zen Masters*, Merton explores the similarities and differences between Christian mysticism and Zen Buddhism. He argues that both traditions share a common goal: the realization of the ultimate reality that is beyond all words and concepts. However, Merton also notes that there are significant differences between the two traditions, particularly in their understanding of the nature of the self.

For Christian mystics, the self is a creature of God that is destined for union with God. Zen Buddhists, on the other hand, believe that the self is an

illusion that must be dissolved in Free Download to experience true enlightenment. Merton argues that these two views are not necessarily contradictory, but rather that they represent different paths to the same goal.

Mystics and Zen Masters is a challenging and thought-provoking book that offers a unique perspective on the nature of spiritual experience. Merton's insights into the similarities and differences between Christian mysticism and Zen Buddhism are invaluable for anyone who is interested in interfaith dialogue or in the pursuit of spiritual growth.

Merton's Early Life and Education

Thomas Merton was born in Prades, France, in 1915. His father was an artist and his mother was a devout Catholic. Merton was raised in a wealthy and privileged home, but he was also exposed to the suffering of the world at a young age. His mother died when he was six years old, and his father remarried a woman who was not kind to him. Merton was also bullied by his classmates and struggled with depression and anxiety.

Despite these challenges, Merton was a gifted student. He attended Cambridge University, where he studied English literature and philosophy. After graduating from Cambridge, Merton returned to the United States and worked as a teacher and writer. He also became involved in the Catholic Worker movement, which was a pacifist and anti-war organization.

Merton's Conversion to Catholicism

In 1941, Merton converted to Catholicism. He was baptized at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky, and he soon after entered the monastery. Merton

spent the rest of his life at Gethsemani, where he became a renowned author and spiritual teacher.

Merton's conversion to Catholicism was a profound experience that changed the course of his life. He wrote about his conversion in his autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, which became a bestseller and inspired many people to convert to Catholicism.

Merton's Writings on Mysticism

Merton was a prolific writer, and he published over 70 books and articles on a wide range of topics, including mysticism, spirituality, and social justice. Merton's writings on mysticism are particularly influential, and they have helped to make him one of the most important Christian mystics of the 20th century.

In his writings on mysticism, Merton argues that mysticism is not a special gift that is reserved for a few избранные people. Rather, he believes that mysticism is a universal human experience that is available to everyone. Merton also argues that mysticism is not about achieving a state of perfect bliss or union with God. Rather, it is about a journey of transformation in which we learn to let go of our ego and to live in the present moment.

Merton's Dialogue with Zen Buddhism

In the 1950s, Merton began to study Zen Buddhism. He was drawn to Zen's emphasis on meditation and its focus on the present moment. Merton also found that Zen Buddhism offered him a new way to understand the Christian tradition.

Merton's dialogue with Zen Buddhism was a significant turning point in his life. It helped him to deepen his understanding of mysticism and to develop a more compassionate and inclusive view of the world.

Merton's Legacy

Thomas Merton died in 1968 at the age of 53. He was killed by an accidental electrocution while he was staying at a hermitage in Thailand. Merton's death was a great loss to the world, but his legacy continues to live on through his writings and his work for peace and understanding.

Merton was a pioneer in the field of interfaith dialogue. He helped to bridge the gap between Christianity and Buddhism, and he inspired people of all faiths to work together for a more just and peaceful world. Merton's legacy is a reminder that we are all connected and that we have a shared responsibility to care for one another.

Mystics and Zen Masters is a challenging and thought-provoking book that offers a unique perspective on the nature of spiritual experience. Merton's insights into the similarities and differences between Christian mysticism and Zen Buddhism are invaluable for anyone who is interested in interfaith dialogue or in the pursuit of spiritual growth.



Mystics and Zen Masters by Thomas Merton

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 454 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

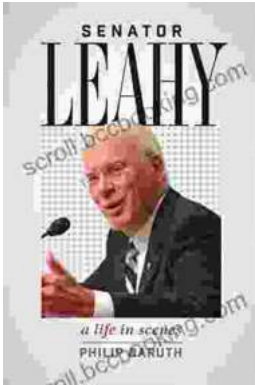
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 321 pages

FREE

DOWNLOAD E-BOOK



Senator Leahy: A Life in Scenes

Senator Patrick Leahy's memoir, *A Life in Scenes*, is a deeply personal and moving account of his life and career. The book is full of vivid...



Magda: A Mother's Love, A Daughter's Redemption - A Journey of Triumph Over Tragedy

Immerse Yourself in the Captivating True Story of Magda Trocme; In the tranquil hills of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, France, during the darkest hours of World War II, Magda...