

# The Essential Writings Of Christian Mysticism

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this clear and comprehensive anthology culled from the vast corpus of christian mystical

literature by the renowned theologian and historian bernard mcginn presents nearly one hundred selections from the writings of origen of alexandria in the third century to the work of twentieth century mystics such as thomas merton uniquely organized by subject rather than by author the essential writings of christian mysticism explores how human life is transformed through the search for direct contact with god part one examines the preparation for encountering god through biblical interpretation and prayer the second part focuses on the mystics actual encounters with god and part three addresses the implications of the mystical life showing how mystics have been received over time and how they practice their faith through private contemplation and public actions in addition to his illuminating introduction bernard mcginn provides accessible headnotes for each section as well as numerous biographical sketches and a selected bibliography praise for the essential writings of christian mysticism no one is better equipped than bernard mcginn to provide a thorough and balanced guide to this vast literature this is an anthology which deserves to be read not only by those who study christian history and theology but by believers who long to deepen their own lives of prayer and service anglican theological review bernard mcginn a preeminent historian and interpreter of the christian mystical tradition has edited this fine collection of mystical writings organizing them thematically mcginn offers helpful introductions to each thematic section author and entry as well as a brief critical bibliography on mysticism published in the modern library classic series this is a great value christian century no one is better equipped than professor mcginn to provide a thorough and balanced guide to this vast literature a first class selection by a first class scholar rowan williams archbishop of canterbury this accessible anthology by the scholarly world s leading historian of the western christian mystical tradition easily outstrips all others in its comprehensiveness the aptness of its selection of texts and in the intelligent manner of its organization denys turner horace tracy pitkin professor of historical theology yale divinity school an immensely rich anthology assembled and introduced by our foremost student of mysticism both the scholar and the disciple will find god s plenty here barbara newman professor of english religion and classics john evans professor of latin northwestern university an unusually clear and insightful exposition of major texts selected by one of the greatest scholars in the field of christian mysticism based on his vast erudition and uniquely sensitive interpretation like his other books this one too is destined to become a classic professor moshe idel hebrew university jerusalem

the oxford handbook of mystical theology provides a guide to the mystical element of

christianity as a theological phenomenon it differs not only from psychological and anthropological studies of mysticism but from other theological studies such as more practical or pastorally oriented works that examine the patterns of spiritual progress and offer counsel for deeper understanding and spiritual development it also differs from more explicitly historical studies tracing the theological and philosophical contexts and ideas of various key figures and schools as well as from literary studies of the linguistic tropes and expressive forms in mystical texts none of these perspectives is absent but the method here is more deliberately theological working from within the fundamental interests of christian mystical writers to the articulation of those interests in distinctively theological forms in order finally to permit a critical theological engagement with them for today divided into four parts the first section introduces the approach to mystical theology and offers a historical overview part two attends to the concrete context of sources and practices of mystical theology part three moves to the fundamental conceptualities of mystical thought the final section ends with the central contributions of mystical teaching to theology and metaphysics students and scholars with a variety of interests will find different pathways through the handbook

is the christian mystical tradition a relic of another time shaped by celibates for celibates unable to engage meaningfully with people of our time who embrace their corporeality and sexuality as crucial aspects of their journey towards union with god this book reflects in serious theological depth and detail on the spiritual and sexual journeys of gay men of mature and committed christian faith employing the christian mystical tradition as the lens and the interlocutor in this process this study examines the major themes and stages of the mystical tradition as outlined by evelyn underhill but also including more recent work by ruth burrows thomas merton and constance fitzgerald using methods of qualitative research it then considers the texts of in depth interviews conducted with men most of whom are theologians or spiritual leaders with a deep catholic faith and all of whom are openly self affirmingly gay finally it employs ricoeur s hermeneutical theory to engage in a creative theological conversation between the traditional mystical stages and themes and these men s lives as described in their interviews this is a unique study that brings together ancient spirituality with contemporary lived religion as such it will be of interest to scholars of religious studies theology christian mysticism and spirituality and queer studies it will be of particular interest to those teach spiritual direction and to all who seek new ways to engage with the spiritual lives of lgbtqi people

this study offers a fresh perspective on mysticism in literature relating and balancing the western and eastern approaches it specifically looks at the mystical poetry of coventry patmore the francis thompson through new doors of perception available to the intelligent sensitive indian scholar from a point of view important in the study of both poets there are perceptive discriminations made between immanent and transcendental experience between purgative and illuminative stages of the mystic way and all these subtle distinctions are illustrated from individual works of the two poets a special strength of the work is its use of the stylistic approach to bring to light aspects of the delicate relationship between mystical experience and its articulation through literary language the book has a strong textual base and will be of interest to the general reader as well as to the specialist eager to explore comparative literary contexts mr dhar has studied the subject with loving care and he has imposed his own insight quietly but firmly in a way which can justifiably be commended as original work professor j r watson university of durham england the analysis of patmore s poetry in the specific context of the combination of the erotic with the divine is important chapter iii this is an area in which the indian bhakti poets have composed their finest poems the discussion of the transcendental and the immanent aspects of mysticism and their impact on patmore and thompson is a very refreshing part of this valuable study and deserves appreciation professor v a shahane osmania university hyderabad it is one of the attractions of the present book that dr dhar writing from within the traditions of india adds a further ring learned in his understanding of christianity especially in his sense of the central importance of the incarnation he adds the insights of another spirituality not dissonant but distinct and so additionally illuminating it is a book much to be enjoyed and savoured ronald tamplin university of exeter

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chapter one giving mysticism a body what s the problem is mysticism even a theological subject defining mysticism what hugel contributes to embodiment and obligation chapter two mysticism and mystical experience introduction only one element what is mysticism and mystical experience a critique of mysticism mysticism embodied htgel s critique of the quakers chapter three morality and obligation introduction hiigel s moral context what is moral obligation others as well as the other the moral life and joy conclusion chapter four embodied mysticism and biographical theology introduction the message and mystery of the saints james mcclendon and biographical theology edith wyschogrod the

saints and postmodernism friedrich von hogel and lived mysticism conclusion chapter five ethics and incamational mysticism introduction an ethically attuned mysticism a spiritually sensitive ethics the difference it all makes

in the context of the writings of a kar c rya

painstakingly researched reviewed by top experts in the field this practical and fascinating reference is an invaluable resource for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the mystery of alternative realities with more than 500 cross referenced entries this book is the most substantial and comprehensive encyclopedia of its kind in more than twenty five years back cover

this important anthology brings together the work of leading authorities on paranormal belief and experience includes chapters on mind expanding drugs near death experiences mysticism and meditation

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