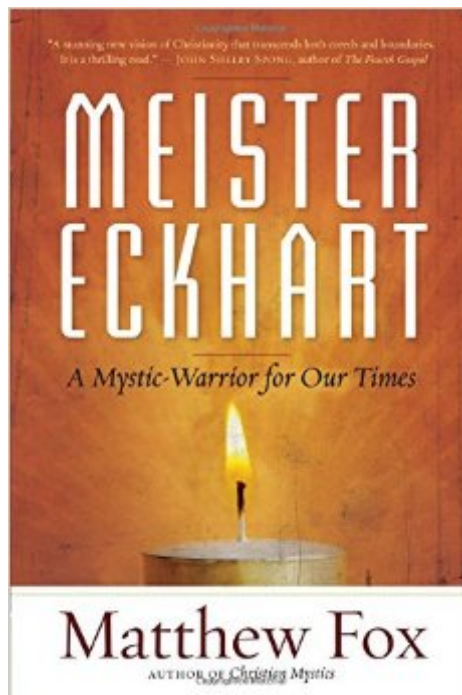


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Meister Eckhart: A Mystic-Warrior For Our Times



Synopsis

Though he lived in the thirteenth century, Meister Eckhart's deeply ecumenical teachings were in many ways modern. He taught about what we call ecology, championed artistic creativity, and advocated for social, economic, and gender justice. All these elements have inspired spiritual maverick Matthew Fox and influenced his Creation Spirituality. Here, Fox creates metaphorical meetings between Eckhart and Teilhard de Chardin, Thich Nhat Hanh, Carl Jung, Black Elk, Rumi, Adrienne Rich, and other radical thinkers. The result is profoundly insightful, substantive, and inspiring.

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Customer Reviews

Meister Eckhart by Matthew Fox is a book written based on the teachings from Meister Eckhart in the 13th century. Fox is able to write in a way about the teachings that transcends religions, and gets to the heart of all of it no matter what religion you may be, because beneath all of it "it is spirituality. Meister Eckhart is a must read book that really shows us all that what we do in our life matters, even if it is doing something not as big as you may think it really is. Fox is able to show in this book that the teachings of Meister Eckhart from the 13th century are actually very influential even in this modern world we live in now. I really enjoyed learning about Eckhart through this book. It is actually the first time I had read about him, but a lot of what he taught is what I have believed in. Not 100% of all of it, but such is spirituality, right? The overall message is there for all of us to take in and become a better spiritual being. Overall, I really like this book and will

re-read it again. It is definitely an excellent resource for teachings of Eckhart and just being true to one's own spirituality. I highly recommend it.* Thank you to the publisher of Meister Eckhart, New World Library, for providing me with a copy of this book for review. All opinions expressed are my own.

My step-father a follower of Rudolf Steiner had informed me of many of the thoughts and principles, but it is a wonderful book since it brings these ancient truths with immediate clarity into our minds. I love reading it at special times, when I feel a need for centering myself and looking into my past and anticipating my future. It helps me in many ways, and I am grateful for a friend who had suggested it to me.

The author has written an exceptional book about Meister Eckhart. The book is highly recommended especially for anyone interested in Christian spirituality and learning more about Meister Eckhart's ecumenical teachings.

It is next to impossible to describe either the depth, or the breadth of the exploding nebula of comprehension which simply spontaneously unfolds through this deeply insightful probe into the heart of humanity's spiritual and conceptual evolutions. It is also equally difficult to summarize Meister Eckhart's far-reaching vision which, according to Fox, encompasses it all. The book spans centuries and every major belief system to expose the essential kernel of mysticism revealed as glowing through the works of a host of justly courageous (though not always popular) thinkers and activists, and whom Fox positions as exemplary voices in a comparative interface with the teachings, writings and actions of Meister Eckhart. Condemned by papal bull post-mortem, Eckhart, a Dominican who lived around 700 years ago in Germany and France, little known to most people was nevertheless highly influential especially through his preserved writings---which over the centuries have inspired many great men and women and thus, the quite often revolutionary movements of thought and social change spearheaded by them. (The reader may be surprised to learn who among the well-known have embraced Eckhart's worldview.) Spotlighted also are many worldwide, who never having even heard of Eckhart, nevertheless were or are now prototypes of a similar thought and message---proof in itself that a mystical current of truth, independent of any physically discernible means of conveyance, runs directly from the same source and flows through the veins of all genuine humaneness. And, the skill with which Fox is able to synthesize and transform deeply complex meaning into simple, clear revelations---is a downright breathtaking thrill

to experience! There was only one chapter which struck me as oddly incongruent..in places. "The Historical Jesus" opens with mention of the intensive work done recently by historical Jesus scholars who have whittled down the sayings of Jesus in the Bible to only 15% authentic (pp. 97-98). While their intent was allegedly to make sure that what is written isn't merely words put in his mouth by misinterpreters, or tacked on to propagate "the agendas of empires and bureaucracies" (p. 103), based on some comments by the various theologians cited, I couldn't help but wonder if the baby might be getting thrown out with the bathwater. For one thing, the emphasis on required self-annihilation and suffering (pp. 109-110) was sounding to me like a carryover from the "born sinner" themes which have always disparaged the importance of inborn inclinations towards joy and optimism, childhood itself, and the individual's intrinsically deserved sense of self-worth.

"Self-annihilation," "self-abandonment," "self-shattering" are harsh words, are not the ones used in any traditional scriptures, and establishment of such necessity as a "lifelong principle" sounds like a persistent taboo against ever identifying one's self as a part of God too! After wrestling quite awhile with this seeming incongruency, certain ideas came to me so strongly that I've decided to leave them here as a cushion, in case any other readers encounter a similar jolt: Acquired identity-aspects, such as the smug, conventionally-superior self as well as the convention-intimidated inferior one (which may deserve self-annihilation), are significantly different from the self which is rather automatically differently-inclined to be egalitarian---despite all onslaughts of criticisms it must suffer to remain so...When in recognition of "this" self as of the primal One, "letting go" of the "dead" self is not an extinction but a self-silenced/surrendered/relieved/welcomed expansion" from single self-conscious aloneness into greater allness-awareness...And, former conceptions---of what anyone has thought "heaven and earth" is---pass away, to be replaced by greater Clarity [ref. Matt. 24:35/Mark 13:31/Luke 21:33]. ---Perhaps, using harsher terms, this is what Eckhart and the theologians were all driving at? (I'm not sure, but all the other chapters in the book seem to be going that direction!) Even though there were a few other questionable conjectures or superior/inferior-designative presumptions, I along with Fox also do applaud the historical researchers for bringing to life, from documented and archeological evidence, a vivid depiction of what the Roman empire-affected cultural setting looked like, because it helps us to better understand how "radically different" the changes that Jesus proposed were,as perceived in those days. (Tough situations do sometimes require "tough love," and tough words.) Of course, in "this" work by Fox, Jesus' life is but one among many dozens of others which are also inviting and deserving a much deeper consideration and perhaps a good, long second look!

So far into the book I feel like the author is spending an awful lot of time paraphrasing Thomas Merton. I would have chosen one of Merton's excellent books had I realized this. But since the author quotes Merton a great deal, all is not lost.

I found this book difficult to get into at first, but the more I read, the more I liked it. The further you read, the easier it is to understand because Matthew Fox brings in quotes from mystic after mystic and shows how each one is either influenced by Eckhart or saying the same things that Eckhart said at a completely different time. This is a book well worth reading, and an excellent source of valuable information.

a great mystic writer. and Matthews Fox has opened him up for us to understand and compare with other mystics and great thinkers. there is so much more about our connection and part of God that is left untold by our churches. these are writers who have met their god and which to share their journey with you so you may learn the same path.

Matt Fox has much to offer an old and airless Christianity. He has fluffed up the tired beds of belief and asked people to come alive and assert their intelligence through a dynamic heart. He has given us a resurgence of the mystic and I applaud that. My only critique is that as many religious writers, the text feels caught in the academia of thought so popular in former times; A need to justify, to present one's case, for what one writes through quotes and top heavy rational knowledge. When Matt Fox speaks in person, his passion is so much more compelling.

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