

## A Finger Pointing at the Moon: Zen and the Photography of Thomas Merton

By Marilyn Sunderman, RSM

What I wear is pants. What I do is live. How I pray is breathe. Who said Zen? Wash out your mouth if you said Zen. . . . Is it true that you are practicing Zen in secret? – Pardon me, I don't speak English.<sup>1</sup>

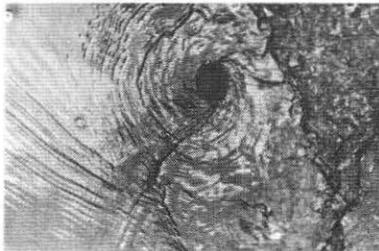
Zen is saying, as Wittgenstein said, "Don't think: Look!"<sup>2</sup>

If one reaches the point where understanding fails, this is not a tragedy; it is simply a reminder to stop thinking and start looking. Perhaps there is nothing to figure out after all: perhaps we only need to wake up (*ZBA* 53).

[B]efore I grasped Zen, the mountains were nothing but mountains and the rivers nothing but rivers. When I got into Zen, the mountains were no longer mountains and the rivers no longer rivers. But when I understood Zen, the mountains were only mountains and the rivers only rivers (*ZBA* 140).

I have my own way to walk, and for some reason or other Zen is right in the middle of it wherever I go. . . . If I could not breathe Zen I would probably die of spiritual asphyxiation.<sup>3</sup>

During the final years of his life, Thomas Merton became very interested in Zen Buddhism. He read extensively about Zen and developed meaningful relationships with some Zen theorists and practitioners. Merton wrote a number of books on Zen and incorporated Zen principles into his way of being in the world. It is the view of this student of Merton's life and literary and artistic legacy that his photography offers a lasting, visual testimonial to his commitment to integrating the Zen approach of




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**Marilyn Sunderman, RSM**, is Associate Professor and Chair of the Theology Department at Saint Joseph's College of Maine. She is author of *Humanization in the Christology of Juan Luis Segundo* and has contributed articles and reviews to *Review for Religious*, *The Bulletin of Saint Sulpice*, *The MAST Journal*, *The Merton Annual* and *The Merton Seasonal*.

**Marilyn Sunderman, RSM**

seeing/ being awake to reality into his life experiences, especially into his activity as a creative photographer.

In order to understand Merton's approach to photography, it is important to have a basic comprehension of Zen principles and the role of Zen in the development of Merton's spiritual life. It is then possible to view Merton's prolific photographic work through the lens of the Zen principle of seeing/being awake to reality, which became integral to his human journey that ended in the Far East where Zen originated.

## Zen

Zen is a mystical branch of Mahayana Buddhism that arose in China. "Zen developed from its Chinese roots to flourish in Korea, Vietnam, and Japan as well."<sup>4</sup> Since Zen is not a religion, it can be practiced by anyone – Christians, non-Christians, and those with no religious affiliation. As a contemplative way of being in the world, Zen seeks to experience reality as it is, without preconceptions or entering into thought processes. The goal of Zen is to come to grips directly with life itself, not with ideas about life. Alan Watts notes that a Zen master once taught that when a person begins to think about what she or he is seeing, that reality is altogether missed.<sup>5</sup> According to Watts, then, the fundamental insight of Zen is that, by excessive thinking, human beings have "lost touch with the real world. The solution to this problem is to be silent in one's mind and to look again at the real world, not thinking, but seeing it directly" (Watts, *Supreme* 171).

The purpose of Zen is to wake up to and abide in the present moment in a non-discursive way. Self-forgetfulness is essential to the Zen experience of non-reflective consciousness. Regarding this, the Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh notes that Zen teaches one "how to look at things deeply in order to understand their own true nature."<sup>6</sup> Zen involves experiencing reality "without the bifurcation between self and object."<sup>7</sup> Concerning this, Watts asserts that "Zen is an immediate contact with life, a joining of 'self' and 'life' into so close a unity and rhythm that the distinction between the two is forgotten."<sup>8</sup> In essence, Zen aims at the experience wherein subject and object become one.

Another way to describe the Zen experience of subject/object unity is the Zen doctrine of No-mind. According to T. P. Kasulis,

No-mind or No-thought is a state of consciousness in which the dichotomy between subject and object, experiencer and experienced, is overcome. . . . [T]he function of No-mind is to respond immediately to present, experiential data. No-thought involves one's full participation in the present. . . . No-thought or No-mind . . . is an active, responsive awareness of the contents of experience as experience before the intervention of complex intellectual activity (Kasulis 47-48).

Kasulis adds that "No-mind is characteristic of the state of enlightenment" (Kasulis 50). Zen teaches that the way to attain enlightenment is to "let be" the truth of what *is*. This involves deep, whole seeing, without words or speech, into the real nature of things. Such wakefulness enables one to experience a growing sense of community with and profound respect for the sky, the trees, rocks, water, fire, and everything else that exists. The way of Zen is the way of the "now." As Watts notes, according to Zen, the only place to be is here, right now.<sup>9</sup> The life of Zen is one of full, grateful "undiluted participation in the moment" (Kasulis 21). To practice Zen is to be truly alive to each moment. It is to be "open to the experience of the fullness of what is going on now" (Watts, *Supreme*

32). The world of Zen is the world of concrete, everyday life. Zen entails encountering the holy in and through seemingly mundane experiences. Zen teaches one to reverence the extraordinary encountered in the ordinary, for hidden in the depths of the ordinary is the sacred at the heart of reality.

In Japanese, enlightenment is called *satori* or *kensho*. Enlightenment today refers to the same experience as the “enlightenment of the Buddha in India 2,500 years ago” (Kasulis 158). The contemporary Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh has written extensively about enlightenment, which he refers to as mindfulness. According to Nhat Hanh, by living mindfully, one touches the Buddha. The word “Buddha” comes from the “root *buddh* which means, ‘to wake up.’ A Buddha is someone who is awake.”<sup>10</sup> Nhat Hanh maintains that when a person touches one thing in mindfulness, that is, with deep awareness, she touches the ultimate dimension of reality (see Nhat Hanh, *Living* 152). He teaches that “If you really touch one flower deeply, you touch the whole cosmos” (Nhat Hanh, *Writings* 129). To become truly aware of something is to discover the mystery of inter-being (see Nhat Hanh, *Writings* 66). The enlightened person is mindful of “the indivisibility of existence, the rich complexity and inter-relatedness of all life” (Kapleau 30). He is aware that the present moment is “overbrimming and more than can be circumscribed” (Kasulis 77). Such awareness results in profound respect for the “absolute value of all things and each thing” (Kapleau 30). Zen practitioners believe that all persons have the potential to become enlightened. Enlightened persons are humble; they are not boastful about their experience of seeing/being awake. They understand that the “enlightenment that was a moment ago dissolves into the enlightenment of right now” (Kasulis 92).

### Merton and Zen

Thomas Merton was an incessant spiritual explorer. During the last years of his life, Zen principles provided a way for Merton to continue his religious journey. Merton’s Zen experience enriched his life as a human being, a Christian, and a monk. In the 1960s, Merton entered “into the ideas and life of Buddhism to an extent possibly unequaled by other contemporary Catholic writers on the subject.”<sup>11</sup> Through his study of Zen, Merton sought to show “Western people that pluralism offers an invitation and opportunity for spiritual growth.”<sup>12</sup> Merton felt that Zen could “help the Westerner attain a higher level of religious consciousness within the Christian context.”<sup>13</sup>

Thomas Merton did not always hold Zen in high regard. According to Anthony Padovano, in his celebrated autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, Merton considered Zen to be a “nihilistic system, part and parcel of a false way of thinking”; again, in his book, *Exile Ends in Glory*, Buddhism is described as “superstitious, pagan, idolatrous.”<sup>14</sup> In later publications, including *The Way of Chuang Tzu*, *Mystics and Zen Masters*, *Zen and the Birds of Appetite*, and, posthumously, *The Asian Journal*, Merton explored the richness of Zen Buddhism. A plausible explanation for this sea change in Merton’s opinion about Zen is that he came to the realization that this way of seeing and being awake in the world provides a means to encounter God through direct experience of reality in its *isness*.

In *The Asian Journal*, Merton offers a statement that points to the shift in his view of Zen. He writes: “I think we have now reached a stage of (long overdue) religious maturity at which it may be possible for someone to remain perfectly faithful to a Christian and Western monastic commitment, and yet to learn in depth from, say, a Buddhist or Hindu discipline and experience.”<sup>15</sup> Again, in his work entitled *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, Merton reflects: “For myself, I am more and more

convinced that my job is to clarify something of the tradition that lives in me, and in which I live: the tradition of wisdom and spirit that is found not only in Western Christendom but in Orthodoxy, and also, at least analogously, in Asia and in Islam.”<sup>16</sup> Through his ongoing study and experience of Zen, Merton forged a new trans-cultural vision.<sup>17</sup> He became not merely an observer of Zen but rather a participant fully engaged in the quest to experience the *essence, suchness or thusness* of reality. In *Zen and the Birds of Appetite*, Merton captures this truth when he reflects that “The real way to study Zen is to penetrate the outer shell and taste the inner kernel which cannot be defined. Then one realizes in oneself the reality which is being talked about” (*ZBA* 13).

From Zen, Thomas Merton learned the preeminent importance of the direct perception of reality. He understood that the deepest level of communication is communion with what is “beyond words, . . . beyond speech, . . . beyond concept” (*AJ* 308). Merton captures this Zen principle of No-mind when he notes that “the chief characteristic of Zen is that it rejects all these systematic elaborations in order to get back, as far as possible, to the pure unarticulated and unexplained ground of direct experience. . . . The Zen experience is a direct grasp of the *unity* of the invisible and the visible, the noumenal and the phenomenal, or, if you prefer, an experiential realization that any such division is bound to be pure imagination” (*ZBA* 36-37). Zen taught Merton to gaze at reality and to sense how reality gazes back at oneself.<sup>18</sup> Zen enabled him to discover that words are but a “finger pointing at the moon. To focus on the finger instead of what it points to is to miss the whole reason for seeing.”<sup>19</sup>

In his poem, “Stranger,”<sup>20</sup> Merton captures the meaning of the Zen principle of a “finger pointing at the moon” when he declares:

When no one listens  
To the quiet trees  
When no one notices  
The sun in the pool

Where no one feels  
The first drop of rain  
Or sees the last star  
Or hails the first morning

...

One bird sits still  
Watching the work of God:  
One turning leaf,  
Two falling blossoms,  
Ten circles upon the pond.

Like the bird in this poem, human beings are called to listen closely to reality and, thus, become awakened to God’s incredible creativity. In this way, they become attuned to the extraordinariness of the present moment and experience first-hand that all that *is* points at the moon! This is the true meaning of Zen enlightenment. Through Zen, Merton learned that enlightenment entails an immediate grasp of being in its *suchness* and *thusness*. In essence, the Zen experience enabled Merton to “go . . . beyond distinctions between subject and object into a deep level of convergence.”<sup>21</sup>

During the last year of his life, Merton traveled to Asia as a Zen pilgrim. As it turned out, he had only several months there to be in touch first-hand with Zen. Prior to his pilgrimage, Merton relished the richness of Zen readings and encounters, through correspondence and face-to-face dialogues with Zen masters such as D. T. Suzuki. Dr. Suzuki was an eminent Japanese thinker and mystic who “devoted his life to making the history and nature of Zen Buddhism known to the West.”<sup>22</sup> Reflecting on Suzuki’s contribution to the understanding of Zen, Merton states:

An energetic, original and productive worker, granted the gift of a long life and tireless enthusiasm for his subject, he has left us a whole library of Zen in English. I am unfortunately not familiar with his work in Japanese or able to say what it amounts to. But what we have in English is certainly without question the most complete and most authentic presentation of an Asian tradition and experience by any one man in terms accessible to the West. The uniqueness of Dr. Suzuki’s work lies in the directness with which an Asian thinker has been able to communicate his own experience of a profound and ancient tradition in a Western language (*ZBA* 62-63).

In one of his letters to Suzuki, Merton muses: “At the moment, I occasionally meet my own kind of Zen master, in passing, and for a brief moment. For example, the other day a bluebird sitting on a fence post suddenly took off after a wasp, dived for it, missed, and instantly returned to the same position on the fence post as if nothing had ever happened. A brief split-second lesson in Zen” (*HGL* 563). In June 1964, Suzuki and Merton met for several days at Columbia University in New York City. They ended their face-to-face conversations with a tea ceremony. Merton was profoundly moved by this simple experience that included listening to water boil, stirring green tea, and drinking it together with Suzuki in the three and a half sips required by Zen rubric. Regarding this moment of ritualized silence, Merton later noted that “It was at once as if nothing at all had happened and as if the roof had flown off the building.”<sup>23</sup> This tea ceremony demonstrated what most captivated Merton about the Zen experience: the “paradox of discovering the deeply holy in the midst of the patently ordinary” (*Lane* 257).

### Merton’s Zen Photography

During the last years of his life, Thomas Merton’s home, the Abbey of Gethsemani, with its expansive acreage, provided ample opportunity for him to pursue the Zen art of seeing/being awake through the medium of photography. Engaging in photography on the grounds of Gethsemani helped Merton become more and more attentive to and mindful of the present moment. It enabled him to better “understand what is beyond words and beyond explanations.”<sup>24</sup> In his essay “Art and Worship,” Merton asserts: “We have lost the capacity to ‘see’ a chrysanthemum in the garden or the beech trees on the hillside.”<sup>25</sup> With his camera in hand at the Abbey,



Merton sought to rectify this situation.

Thomas Merton's Zen photography provides a visual feast springing from his awakened being. John Howard Griffin, who introduced Merton to photography and guided his friend in honing his photographic skills, notes that Merton "allowed himself to be saturated by an awareness of the reality of each moment, listening always for what it had to tell him."<sup>26</sup> For Merton, photography was an embrace of the immediate. In *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, he notes the need to "see directly what is right in front of us" (CGB 381). What Merton's Zen-type photos manifest is exactly this: mindfulness of the moment. Merton called his camera a "Zen camera."<sup>27</sup> In his hands, the Zen camera became a contemplative instrument. Merton contemplated the things he photographed and photographed the things he contemplated. Whatever Merton photographed, he held in deep reverence and regard.

Photography served as a medium for Merton's practice of the Zen principle of celebrating the world as it is. With the aid of his Zen camera, Merton truly saw reality in its "suchness." As a serious photographer, Merton sought to allow his photos to be self-revelatory. Most of all, he wanted them to speak their own truth and tell their own story. Regarding this, Brother Patrick Hart reflects that

While walking in the woods, Merton photographed the images of his contemplation as he experienced them, as they actually were, in no way manipulated to create artificial effect. He photographed whatever crossed his path: a dead tree, roots, the texture of a weather-beaten clapboard on an abandoned barn, a rusted distillery, or the play of light and shadow on dry leaves. His contemplative and incarnational vision of reality was quite simply "things as they are."<sup>28</sup>

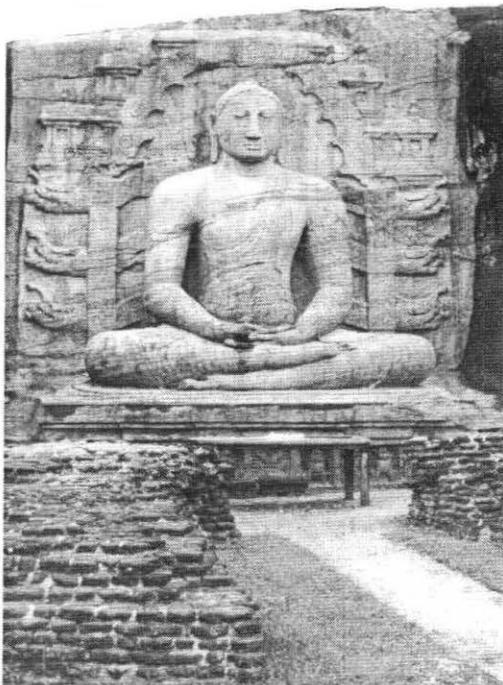
Merton's photographs demonstrate that he was a keen observer of nature. It is noteworthy that early in life Merton evidenced a strong interest in the natural world. Tom's mother recorded that at three months her son "watched and talked to a flower" and at eight months he "stood up in his pram, especially to see the river when we went on the bridge." Ruth Merton also noted that before the family left Prades, her son "had already begun to wave his arms toward the landscape, crying 'Oh color!'"<sup>29</sup> Her reflections indicate that long before Tom became interested in Zen, he was attuned to his surroundings.

In November, 1958, Merton journaled about an experience in the woods at the Abbey: "My Zen is in the slow swinging tops of sixteen pine trees. One long thin pole of a tree fifty feet high swings in a wider arc than all the others and swings even when they are still."<sup>30</sup> Addressing his friends, the birds, Merton proclaimed the following Zen insight: "Esteemed friends, birds of noble lineage, I have no message to you except this: be what you are: be *birds*" (DS 51). With rabbits rather than birds in mind, in his final conference before permanently entering the hermitage, entitled "A Life Free from Care," Merton offers a Zen reflection on the *isness* of rabbitness when he instructs: "You have to leave the rabbits what they are, rabbits; and if you just see that they are rabbits you suddenly see that they are transparent, and that the rabbitness of God is shining through in all these darn rabbits."<sup>31</sup> In his closing words from *New Seeds of Contemplation*, Merton explodes the meaning of Zen mindfulness:

When we are alone on a starlit night; when by chance we see the migrating birds in autumn descending on a grove of junipers to rest and eat . . . or when, like the Japanese poet Basho we hear an old frog land in a quiet pond with a solitary

splash – at such times the awakening, the turning inside out of all values, the “newness,” the emptiness and the purity of vision that make themselves evident, provide a glimpse of the cosmic dance.<sup>32</sup>

Merton’s nature photographs pay tribute to this cosmic dance. In exquisite photographs marked by masterful attention to detail, Merton captures the beauty of human faces, trees, rocks, roots, snow, lakes, hills and mountains, oceans, and structures such as barns and Abbey buildings. Commenting



ing on Merton as a “gifted . . . uniquely original photographer,”<sup>33</sup> John Howard Griffin notes that his friend “became excited by everything he saw [through the camera lens] – the peeling paint on window facings, plants, weeds, the arrangement of a stack of wood chips” (Griffin, *Hidden* 91-92). Photography heightened Merton’s awareness of God through attention to the intricacies of nature.

During the final year of his life, Merton traveled to New Mexico, California, Alaska, and, finally, the Far East – India, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and Thailand – where he practiced his Zen photography by capturing on film views of mountains, oceans, Native Americans, and Buddha statues. The Buddha statues that Merton visited during his Asian journey were located in a densely forested area in Polonnaruwa, approximately fifty miles northeast of Kandy, a town in mountainous, central Ceylon. There, Merton approached the colossal Buddha “monuments composed into the rock shape and landscape”<sup>34</sup> with great reverence, awe, and wonder. Regarding this experience, Merton journaled: “I am able to approach

the Buddhas barefoot and undisturbed, my feet in wet grass, wet sand. Then the silence of the extraordinary faces. The great smiles. Huge and yet subtle. Filled with every possibility, questioning nothing, knowing everything, rejecting nothing, the peace . . . of sunyata” (*AJ* 233). Merton’s encounter with the Buddha statues at Polonnaruwa was a deep, mystical experience for him. It represented perhaps the most profound moment of enlightenment – of true seeing/being awake to the “finger pointing at the moon” – in his life. As Deba Patnaik notes: “Clearly the experience is epiphanic – ‘flash of mighty intuition by which multiplicity is suddenly comprehended as basically one – penetrated through and through by . . . the divine fire.’”<sup>35</sup> Merton captures the essence of this epiphanic experience in the following way:

Looking at these figures I was suddenly, almost forcibly, jerked clean out of the habitual, half-tied vision of things, and an inner clearness, clarity, as if exploding from the rocks themselves, became evident and obvious. . . . All problems are resolved and everything is clear . . . everything is emptiness and everything is compassion. I don’t know when in my life I have ever had such a sense of beauty

and spiritual validity running together in one aesthetic illumination. . . . I know and have seen what I was obscurely looking for. I don't know what else remains but I have now seen and have pierced through the surface and have got beyond the shadow and the disguise. . . . It says everything; it needs nothing (*AJ* 233-36).

This experience triggered a tremendous illumination for Merton. He pierced through to profound mindfulness of the heart of reality and the essence of life. For him, "The Buddha statues were icons – windows into eternity – pulsating with divinity, reality and life" (Biallis 100).

Merton's friend, Thich Nhat Hanh, notes that "when the seed of mindfulness in you is touched . . . you become alive. . . . The Buddha is born again" (Nhat Hanh, *Writings* 143). This is exactly what the Polonaruwa experience meant for Merton. The Buddhas there represented enlightened being. They embodied here-and-now wakefulness. It is this very Buddha nature that lies dormant within each person that Merton experienced in Polonaruwa. There, Merton became a Buddha, an enlightened one!

### Conclusion

During his final years, photography offered Thomas Merton a means to integrate Zen insights into his contemplative way of being. It provided a vehicle for his deepening discovery of the *isness* of reality. "Capturing an instant of experience on film became for him . . . a moment of pure experience without depending on the complexity of language" (Lane 265). Through photography, Merton was able to become profoundly attuned to created reality and, thus, enter into communion with it and, through it, with God. Thomas Merton's Zen photography attests to the fact that, for those who have eyes to see, the ordinariness of knarled roots, sunsets, and seasoned tree branches is, in reality, extraordinariness. Merton's photos silently proclaim that the world is aglow with the glory of God. Creation is fecund; it is sacramental reality. Truly, in everything that is, there is a hidden wholeness, a stupendous "suchness." Indeed, all that exists is, as Zen practitioners such as Merton note, a "finger pointing at the moon!"

1. Thomas Merton, *Day of a Stranger* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1981) 41, 47; subsequent references will be cited as "DS" parenthetically in the text.
2. Thomas Merton, *Zen and the Birds of Appetite* (New York: New Directions, 1968) 49; subsequent references will be cited as "ZBA" parenthetically in the text.
3. Thomas Merton, *The Hidden Ground of Love of Love: Letters on Religious Experience and Social Concerns*, ed. William H. Shannon (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1985) 561; subsequent references will be cited as "HGL" parenthetically in the text.
4. Roshi Philip Kapleau, *Awakening to Zen*, eds. Polly Young-Eisendath and Rafa Martin (Boston: Shambhala, 2001) 74; subsequent references will be cited as "Kapleau" parenthetically in the text.
5. See Alan Watts, *Zen: The Supreme Experience*, ed. Mark Watts (Slovenia: Vega, 2002) 63; subsequent references will be cited as "Watts, *Supreme*" parenthetically in the text.
6. Thich Nhat Hanh, *Essential Writings*, ed. Robert Ellsberg (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001) 94; subsequent references will be cited as "Nhat Hanh, *Writings*" parenthetically in the text.
7. T. P. Kasulis, *Zen Action/Zen Person* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985) 90; subsequent references will be cited as "Kasulis" parenthetically in the text.
8. Alan Watts, *The Spirit of Zen* (New York: Grove Press, 1958) 121.
9. See Alan Watts, *What is Zen?* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2000) 50.
10. Thich Nhat Hanh, *Living Buddha, Living Christ* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1995) 22; subsequent references will be

- cited as “Nhat Hanh, *Living*” parenthetically in the text.
11. Aldhelm Cameron-Brown, “Zen Master,” in *Thomas Merton/Monk: A Monastic Tribute*, ed. Patrick Hart, OCSO (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1974) 167.
  12. Helena Christian Steyn, “The Influence of Buddhism on Thomas Merton,” *Journal for the Study of Religion* 3 (September, 1990) 12.
  13. Dennis Q. McNerny, “Merton and Oriental Thought,” *Cistercian Studies* 14.1 (1979) 67.
  14. Anthony T. Padovano, *A Retreat with Thomas Merton: Becoming Who We Are* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1995) 86, 87.
  15. Thomas Merton, *The Asian Journal*, ed. Naomi Burton Stone, Brother Patrick Hart and James Laughlin (New York: New Directions, 1973) 313; subsequent references will be cited as “*AJ*” parenthetically in the text.
  16. Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966) 176; subsequent references will be cited as “*CGB*” parenthetically in the text.
  17. See William M. Thompson, “Merton’s Contribution to a Transcultural Consciousness,” in *Thomas Merton: Pilgrim in Process*, ed. Donald Grayston and Michael W. Higgins (Toronto: Griffin House, 1983) 150.
  18. See Ken Butigan, “Thomas Merton’s Vision of the Natural World” in *Cry of the Environment: Rebuilding the Christian Creative Tradition*, ed. Philip N. Joranson and Ken Butigan (Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Co., 1984) 343.
  19. Belden C. Lane, “Merton as Zen Clown,” *Theology Today* 46.3 (October, 1989) 263; subsequent references will be cited as “Lane” parenthetically in the text.
  20. Thomas Merton, *Collected Poems* (New York: New Directions, 1977) 289-90.
  21. Anthony T. Padovano, “Merton’s Journey to the East,” in *The Drew Gateway* 50:3 (Spring 1980) 18.
  22. Joseph Chu-Cong, “The Far East,” in *The Legacy of Thomas Merton*, ed. Patrick Hart (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1986) 50.
  23. Thomas Merton, *Love and Living*, ed. Naomi Burton Stone and Brother Patrick Hart (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1979) 14.
  24. Lynn Szabo, “The Sound of Sheer Silence: A Study in the Poetics of Thomas Merton,” *The Merton Annual* 13 (2000) 220.
  25. Thomas Merton, “Art and Worship,” *Sponsa Regis* 31.4 (December 1959) 115.
  26. John Howard Griffin, *A Hidden Wholeness: The Visual World of Thomas Merton* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970) 9; subsequent references will be cited as “Griffin, *Hidden*” parenthetically in the text.
  27. See Michael Mott, *The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986) 516.
  28. Patrick Hart, OCSO, “The Contemplative Art of Thomas Merton,” in *An Easter Anthology: Catalogue of the Exhibit, February 26 to April 9, 1989* [Catalogue 23] (Owensboro, KY: Owensboro Museum of Fine Art, 1989) 54.
  29. Ruth Merton, *Tom’s Book: To Granny with Tom’s Best Love – 1916*, ed. Sheila Milton (Monterey, KY: Larkspur Press, 2006) [unpaginated].
  30. Thomas Merton, *A Search for Solitude: Pursuing the Monk’s True Life. Journals, vol. 3: 1952-1960*, ed. Lawrence S. Cunningham (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996) 232.
  31. Thomas Merton, “A Life Free from Care,” *Cistercian Studies* 5.3 (1970) 223.
  32. Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Directions, 1961) 296-97.
  33. John Howard Griffin, “Les Grandes Amitiés,” *Continuum* 7 (Summer 1969) 291.
  34. Leonard J. Biallis, “Merton and Basho: The Narrow Road Home,” *The Merton Annual* 15 (2002) 100; subsequent references will be cited as “Biallis” parenthetically in the text.
  35. Deba Prasad Patnaik, “Syllables of the Great Song: Merton and Asian Religious Thought,” in *The Message of Thomas Merton*, ed. Patrick Hart (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1981) 87.