

monastic  
quest  
and  
inter-  
religious  
dialogue

GILBERT G. HARDY, O. Cist.

PETER LANG

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	xi
Abbreviations	xiii
Introduction	1
Notes	7
PART ONE: THE NATURE OF THE MONASTIC QUEST	
Chapter One: The Meaning of "Monk" and "Monastic"	11
Notes	24
Chapter Two: The Enduring Features of the Monastic Quest	27
I. The Absolute Quest: Singlemindedness	27
A. A Radical Quest	27
B. The Stripping of the Self	33
C. Life in Harmony with Nature	37
II. The Absolute Quest: The Quest of the Absolute	42
A. The Presence of the Sacred	42
B. Seeking Fulfillment in the One	47
III. The Community Principle: Rule and Abbot	49
Notes	55
Chapter Three: Monasticism in the Grip of History	59
I. Monastic Life and the Law of Temporality	59
II. The Encroachment of the World	64
III. The Meaning of Monastic Reforms	69
Notes	73

Chapter Four: The Religious Context of the Monastic Quest	77
I. The Dimensions of Religion	77
II. Religion and Monastic Beginnings	82
III. Monasticism as Paradigm of the Religious Quest	92
Notes	100
PART TWO: BENEDICT OF NURSIA AND DŌGEN ZENJI: TWO TYPICAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MONASTIC QUEST	
Chapter Five: The Meaning of Monastic Life According to Benedict of Nursia	107
I. The Father of Western Monasticism	107
II. Life According to the <i>Rule</i>	110
A. The Quest	110
B. The Monastery: A School of Divine Service	112
C. The Juridical Structures of Monastic Life	113
1. Definition of the Monk	114
2. The Rule	115
3. Monastic Profession	117
4. The Nature of Abbatial Power	119
D. A Supernatural Community	121
1. The Abiding Presence of Christ	122
2. The Dimension of the Sacred in All Things	124
3. In the House of God	127
E. The Chief Virtues	129
1. Obedience	129
2. Humility and Poverty	131
3. The Spirit of Silence	134
4. Compunction of Heart	135
5. Moderation and Discretion	137
F. A Program of Life: Prayer and Work	139
1. Prayer	139
2. <i>Lectio Divina</i>	143
3. Work	145
III. Pilgrimage Toward the Kingdom of God	147
Notes	149

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ix

Chapter Six: The Monastic Pursuit of Dōgen Zenji	155
I. Dōgen Zenji: The Man and His Achievement	155
II. In the Footsteps of the Buddhas and Patriarchs	159
A. The Buddha-nature as the Foundation of the Monastic Endeavor	159
B. To Take Refuge in the Community	164
C. A Life of Total Exertion	168
1. Practice is the Way	168
2. <i>Shikan-taza</i> or the Primacy of <i>Zazen</i>	170
3. To Drop Off Body and Mind	172
D. Spiritual Freedom	174
1. Poverty	175
2. Silence and Recollection	177
3. Reverence	178
4. The Seeking of No Reward	182
III. To Reach Enlightenment	184
Notes	188
Chapter Seven: Benedict and Dōgen: Two Expressions of Mankind's Religious Quest	195
I. The Absolute Quest as a Return to God	195
II. The Absolute Quest as a Descent to One's True Self	205
III. Religious Quest and the Dialectic of Immanence and Transcendence	212
Notes	221
PART THREE: IN THE SERVICE OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE	
Chapter Eight: Monastic Quest and Religious Anthropology	229
Notes	239

Chapter Nine: Interreligious Monastic Dialogue: Prospects and Limitations	243
I. Aspects of Religious Dialogue	243
II. The Specific Nature of Monastic Dialogue	249
A. Hospitality: A Dialogue of Community Experience	251
B. Prayer: A Dialogue of Contemplative Immersion	254
C. Apprenticeship: A Dialogue of Infinite Quest	257
III. Monastic Dialogue and Interreligious Under- standing — The Boundaries of a Hope	260
Notes	263
Bibliography	267
Index of Names and Titles	281

This work is a fascinating analysis of a timeless and timely topic. It treats of the monastic fact both phenomenologically and philosophically, reflecting on the contemporary role of monasticism in the acute issue of dialogue among major religions, especially between Buddhism and Christianity. Hardy's approach is refreshingly open to the challenge of religious pluralism; at the same time, it is conscientiously honest in stating the limits of dialogical discourse when it comes to religious truth claims. *Monastic Quest and Interreligious Dialogue* is at once thought provoking, sobering, and inspiring.

"(Dr. Hardy) has given a careful description of monastic life in the west and in Buddhism, and done so with a knowledge and sensitivity that is truly rare. Moreover, he uses primary documents and describes directly and with . . . a carefully non-technical prose throughout."

David Burrell  
University of Notre Dame

"(*The Monastic Quest*) is an excellent explication of the nature of monasticism and of its specific reflections in the work of Benedict and Dōgen Zenji. It also points beyond the field of comparative religions to a virtually untouched subject: the possibility of a *theological* dialogue between Christianity and other religions.

"The book makes glorious good sense. It asks new questions or old questions in new and creative ways. Much East-West dialogue has gone on and is going on, and, curiously enough, monks and nuns have been in the forefront of this dialogue. But, to this point, no one has seen why that is so or viewed that reality on a conceptual level. Father Hardy's book moves the focus and locus of dialogue from the purely practical, existential, and phenomenological level to the level of theology. The book is at once sophisticated and accessible."

John R. Sommerfeldt  
The University of Dallas

"Father Gilbert Hardy has undertaken the formidable task of comparing monastic figures stemmed from traditions as remote from one another as the Benedictine world and the Zen.

"And yet, the result is amazing: This encounter discloses features of our own tradition of which we would never have had any idea."

Father Pierre de Béthune, O.S.B.  
Chairman of the Benedictine  
Commission for Interreligious  
Dialogue

"Father Hardy has presented us with a notable contribution to (the Buddhist-Christian dialogue) by focusing on the monastics, that is, on those who experience, rather than theorize about, Buddhism and Christianity. His comparison between Benedict and Dōgen is innovative and should occasion much fruitful discussion about the cross-cultural features of the monastic life."

Roger J. Corless  
Duke University

Gilbert G. Hardy, a native of Hungary, is a Cistercian monk and professor of philosophy at the University of Dallas in Irving, Texas. He holds an S.T.D. from Pazmany University in Budapest, as well as a Ph.D. from the Sorbonne. Hardy has published extensively in the areas of the philosophy of language, the philosophy of religion, and contemporary French philosophy.