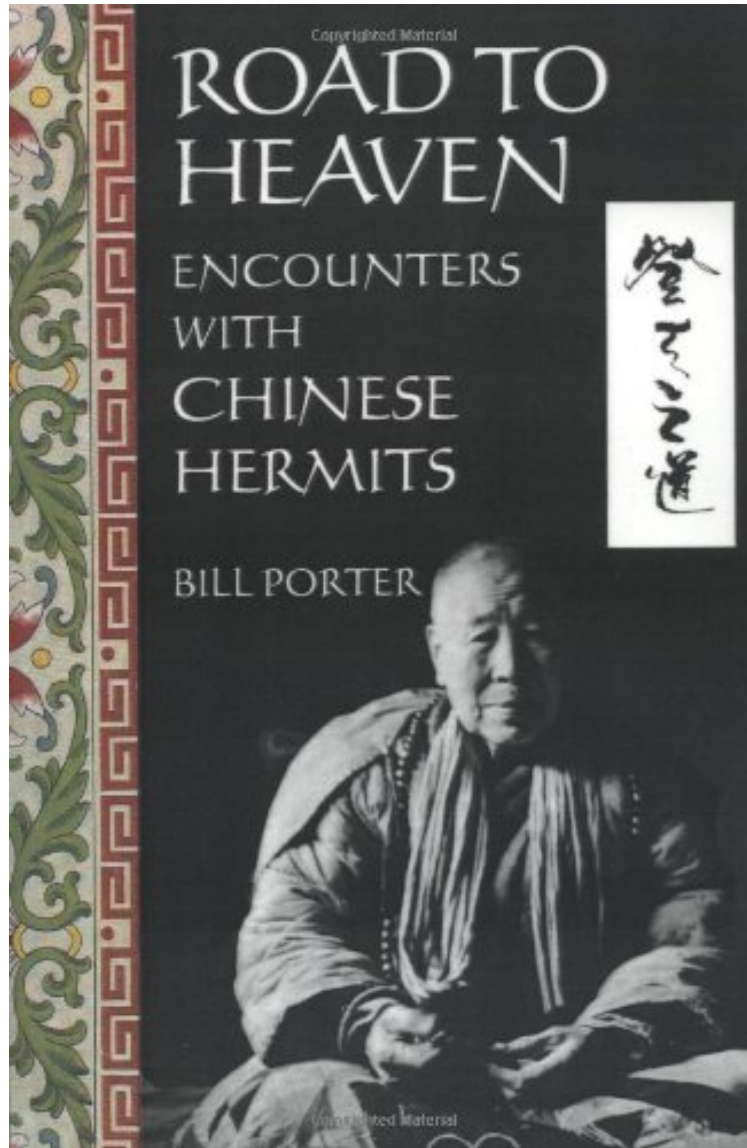


(Read download) Road to Heaven: Encounters with Chinese Hermits

Road to Heaven: Encounters with Chinese Hermits

Bill Porter

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Bill Porter : Road to Heaven: Encounters with Chinese Hermits before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Road to Heaven: Encounters with Chinese Hermits:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This book is almost unique, in that there are ...By Father BrendanThis book is almost unique, in that there are not many similar accounts. Very few westerners (or, for that matter, Chinese) have ventured into the mountains of far-west China to meet the Buddhist and Taoist hermits there. Bill Porter records their perspectives as they spoke to the author first-hand, in his arduous attempts to locate them even

after being told multiple times that they do not exist. His account includes opinions here and there which Americans should probably heed ("If your roots aren't deep and you practice Zen, you can practice all your life and never get anywhere"--Sheng-lin). Having spent a decade in China with a few visits with similar monks--though without climbing vertical mountains or icy passes--I found I wanted to hear more from these renunciates, and probably less from Porter. But this is a diary of his travels as much as an account of Buddhist thought in its various forms, and deserves to be read by students of modern China. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful account of 2 early travelers through the hinterlands of ...By Paul Kaplan Wonderful account of 2 early travelers through the hinterlands of China. Their encounters with what was probably the last generation of Taoist hermits is "must" reading. It's a little reminiscent of "The World We Have Lost." Enjoy. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful and insightful By Chris_NorCal Now I know why there are seekers that practice, for a time, maybe longer, in solitude. Interesting to read about how others practice, from a writer well versed in the language and the culture yet I can relate to, as an American. This book has been translated into Chinese, sans references to police and the CCP politics, that I wish to buy and send as gifts. This book has been so well appreciated that this American has been asked to teach Chinese about their own culture and has been invited to speak to Buddhist monks and nuns about Ch'an (Zen). Be sure to enjoy Bill's unofficial companion book to this "Road to Heaven:..." -- the "Zen Baggage: A Pilgrimage to China" I consider Bill Porter, AKA Red Pine, one of my life's teachers. Thank you, Bill. All his works have helped me to point the way to better enjoy my life, be more grateful, and more present in balancing my time with family, career, karate and zazen, mountain biking, and surfing (yes, I am all over the place, I know). This morning, after sitting meditation, zazen, at our zendo, Paul R. and I were chatting about this fine book and the fascinating "Zen Baggage" as the birds chirped in the court yard, the cool wind ruffled the branches, and the glimmer of dawn accented the smiles. May the grace of God, the only thing free in this life, bless you with enjoyment, and, perhaps, insights from this good book, "The Road to Heaven." Sincerely

Drawing on knowledge based on 20 years as a resident of China, Porter examines the ancient Chinese hermit tradition. Part travelogue, part history, part sociology, and part religious study, this record of extraordinary journeys to an unknown China sheds light on a phenomenon unparalleled in the West, and the philosophies that underlie it. Photographs.

.com From 1966 to 1976 the malevolent rage of the Chinese Cultural Revolution struck a devastating blow to all religions in China, destroying countless temples and shrines that had stood for centuries and forcibly returning thousands of monks and nuns to lay life. Bill Porter had been told that the venerable hermetic tradition in China had also succumbed, but he went looking anyway. What he found, Taoist and Buddhist monks and nuns living in huts and caves deep in the mountains of central China, is more than a revelation, it is a glimmer of hope for the future of religion in China. From Publishers Weekly Porter, a Hong Kong-based writer whose previous books were published under the pen name Red Pine (The Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma), lived in a Taiwanese monastery for three years in the 1970s and later translated works of some Chinese hermits long admired for their virtue. When travel to China opened up in the late 1980s, Porter began to search for hermits who might have survived under years of communism. His story is unusual, but his "encounters"--actually, brief interviews--produce not subtle observations but statements of gnomic profundity: ". . . the Tao is empty. It can't be explained." Still, Porter showed undeniable bravery as he trekked through the Chungnan Mountains in central China to interview more than 20 male and female hermits. Some hermits are circumspect about politics, having suffered under the Cultural Revolution, while others, like an 85-year-old monk who had lived in a cave for 50 years, are oblivious to the political changes. Porter's historical and literary reflections show sensitivity to his subject, but this book seems aimed only at those interested in such spiritual quests. Some of the photographs are starkly spectacular. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal In this first-person narrative, the author relates his journey to seek out the religious hermits of China, who left civilization and chose to live alone as monks in the mountains of China, quietly practicing their Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian faith. Sprinkled with Eastern religious philosophy, Chinese current affairs, and personal observations, this travel book reveals a secluded world very few people believed survived the purges of the Chinese Communists. The author wisely includes transcripts from conversations with many of the hermits, both men and women, and through their words the reader comes away with a better understanding of their lives and their reasons for deciding to live their harsh existence. This is not intended to be a scholarly study but an invitation to the public to discover this relatively unknown aspect of Chinese religious culture. Recommended for public libraries. - Glenn Masuchika, Chaminade Univ. Lib., Honolulu Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.