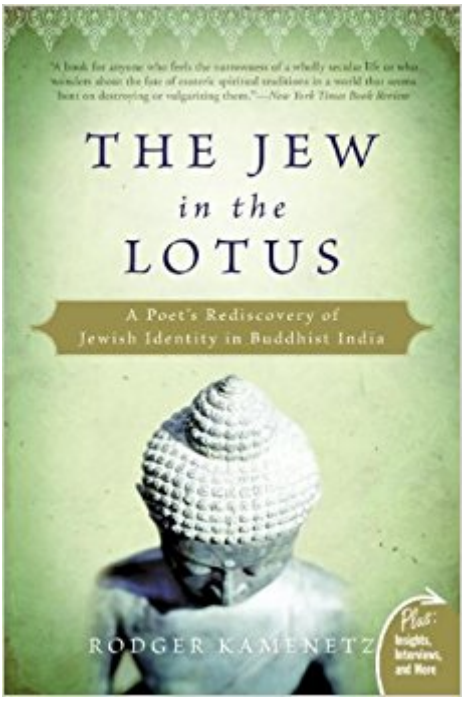
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The Jew In The Lotus: A Poet's Rediscovery Of Jewish Identity In Buddhist India (Plus)



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Synopsis

While accompanying eight highÃ¢â ¬â œspirited Jewish delegates to Dharamsala, India, for a historic BuddhistÃ¢â ¬â œJewish dialogue with the Dalai Lama, poet Rodger Kamenetz comes to understand the convergence of Buddhist and Jewish thought. Along the way he encounters Ram Dass and Richard Gere, and dialogues with leading rabbis and Jewish thinkers, including Zalman Schacter, Yitz and Blue Greenberg, and a host of religious and disaffected Jews and Jewish Buddhists. This amazing journey through Tibetan Buddhism and Judaism leads Kamenetz to a renewed appreciation of his living Jewish roots.

Book Information

Series: Plus

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: HarperOne; Updated edition (August 21, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0061367397

ISBN-13: 978-0061367397

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.8 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 73 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #175,043 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #50 inÃ Â Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Theology #92 inÃ Â Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Jewish Life #549 inÃ Â Books > History > World > Jewish

Customer Reviews

Kamenetz, a poet and professor of Eng-lish, accompanied a group of eight Jewish leaders to Dharamsala in October 1990 for a Jewish/Tibetan Buddhist interfaith dialog that reinspired him both spiritually and as a Jew. The narrative reveals interesting parallels, thorny problems, and profound mystical insights as Kamenetz relates his encounters with Tibetan leaders, including the Dalai Lama, and with Jewish rabbis and cultural leaders. Highly recommended for all libraries.Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Kamenetz, a poet and a Jew, was invited to attend and write about a historical meeting between a delegation of American Jews and a group of Tibetan Buddhists that included the Dalai Lama. This

interfaith get-together was inspired, in part, by the increasing number of Jews who have become Buddhists as well as the Dalai Lama’s perception of Jews as "survival experts." The Dalai Lama felt that the Jews, experts in exile and the preservation of faith and practice, would offer advice and comfort; participating rabbis were intrigued by the surprising similarities between the two religions, including esoteric traditions and a profound awareness of suffering. Kamenetz not only chronicles the resultant discussions, which proved to be enlightening and emotional, but also profiles a number of Jewish Buddhists, including Allen Ginsberg and Ram Dass. As his investigation throws his own beliefs and assumptions into high relief, Kamenetz is amazed and humbled by the intensity and altruism of Buddhism. Kamenetz defines and comments upon these complex matters with skill, personableness, and a welcome dash of levity. Donna Seaman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I really loved the way this was written.I read this right before I went on a Buddhist pilgrimage to India and Nepal, and while I enjoyed it the first time, I had very little knowledge aboutJudaism and the Tibetan story beforehand.While I was on the trip, I experienced so many flashbacks to my religious Jewish upbringing.I was really struck how many similarities there were with the lineages, practices, prayers, etc.So, when I returned from the trip, I started reading this book again.It is a beautifully articulated account of the conversations between HH the Dalai Lama and the different representativesfrom different Jewish sects.Mystical Hassidism, strict Ultra Orthodox, Progressive/Reform, Zionist, JUBU...they are all given the chance to discuss their areas of concern/expertise with HH.It covers many spiritual, religious, and philosophical analysis and comparisons between the two religions.Truly fascinating.The writer paints a really beautiful picture of India, as well.It’s colorful, humorous, and incredibly informative.My thinking in this day and age is that if you get to the core of most ideologies,you can find much that is similar, and it is kind of comforting when we find that essenceof truth and compassion.For anyone interested in getting a pretty well rounded glimpse into the one-nessin Judaism and Buddhism (as well as the differences), this is a lovely read.

I read this book when it first was published and again for a book club now; It ages wonderfully.

Wow, what a book!I’ve read a good half dozen books about the Jewish faith, but this one tops the list. I’m even temped to read it again. This memoir wonderfully outlined and discusses the strengths and challenges within the Jewish faith, and other religions.It is so encouraging to see these spiritual

leaders coming together and supporting each others religion. One of the things I love about studying world religions, is that I've discovered how much each religion influences the other religion. There are so many similarities.

This book turned me upside-down. As a longtime meditator drawn to Buddhism raised in a nonreligious Jewish family, every page carried a revelation. This account of an extraordinary meeting of Jewish leaders from different traditions with the Dalai Lama in India in the 1990s around the theme of surviving in exile is worthwhile reading on many levels. I learned of many threads in Judaism, many as well in Buddhism, and similarities and differences both within and between them. Personally, it led to an extraordinary reawakening and consideration of my roots and a quest to learn more.

In writing this book the author did the world a favor. Through the authors travel and experiences we are gradually introduced to the notion that many of the deepest mystical and meditative ideas that attracted many Westerners (and Jews in particular) to Buddhism were also known and practiced by Jewish sages for thousands of years.Of course there are is an ultimate difference in the Jewish conception of G-d and in some of the intrinsic goals of meditation and life as practiced in Judaism. But remarkably, there are many striking overlaps and similarities. Literally most of what this author was searching for was in his own backyard and he shares this with the world in this book and his his sequel, In Search of Elijah.

I loved this book and want to read again

A few years ago ten Jews of all types of observance were invited by the Dalai Lama to come to the Indian side of Tibet to explain how Jews survived several episodes of expulsion since he saw a parallel to their own expulsion from the Chinese side of Tibet. This book tells about these meetings, encounters on the way, and although it started as a more historical-political discussion, a large part of the book deals with what attracts Jews to Buddhism: a large proportion of practicing Buddhists in the US, but apparently also of non-native Buddhists in Tibet, are Jews. An amazing similarity between Jewish traditions, particularly mysticism, and Buddhism emerges. During this journey, several of the protagonists rediscover their own Jewish tradition in a new light. For anyone interested in interfaith dialogue, Judaism, Buddhism, intercultural exchange, reading this book will take you on a wonderful journey.Both Jewish and Buddhist expressions and traditions are explained

in a fairly good and detailed glossary at the end.Nevertheless, for those completely unfamiliar with Jewish traditions, it may be more difficult a read.

I highly recommended this book to anyone looking to understanding spiritual journeys. It is relevant to Jews, Buddhists, and Muslims looking to understand the decline of western religion in a modern world. It tells the story of a Jewish encounter with the Dalai llama, and discusses how western eastern spiritually can be leveraged together to renew spiritual practice.

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