

Martin Luther King and Thomas Merton: Prophets of World Peace

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So man's proneness to engage in war is still a fact. But wisdom born of experience should tell that war is obsolete. (Martin Luther King, Nobel Lecture)

On Saturday, January 19, 2003, tens of thousands of people gathered in San Francisco to celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King and voice their opposition to a war with Iraq that the United States government seemed poised to unleash despite mounting opposition throughout the world. The crowd was considered the largest peace demonstration since the end of the Vietnam War in San Francisco and coincided with the weekend celebrating the birthday of Martin Luther King who was a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and a prophetic opponent of the Vietnam War. My wife, Marita, and I joined approximately 200,000 other peace advocates from throughout the Bay Area in this demonstration supporting a non-violent approach to the conflict in Iraq and the Middle East. Among those present at the demonstration were the singer and peace activist, Joan Baez, Oakland Congresswoman, Barbara Lee and the actor, Martin Sheen. The speakers called for the US to honor the United Nations as the appropriate international body to adjudicate the issues involved with Iraq and throughout the world. It was appropriate that one of the largest demonstrations for peace in the world occurred in San Francisco named after the great patron of peace, St Francis of Assisi. San Francisco was also the host city for the founding of the United Nations in 1945.

This event took me back to the origins of the modern day peace movement and the prophetic figures that led it. As I reflected further on the legacy of Martin Luther King, I went back to the 1960s era in which many of the great freedom and peace movements in the United

States were founded or greatly expanded including the modern Civil Rights Movement and numerous organizations devoted to world peace such as *Pax Christi*, inspired by the teachings of Pope John XXIII's encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*. As I began to research the growth of this movement in the 1960s I was struck by the important role assumed by Thomas Merton in support of this fledgling peace movement within Catholicism but also within the broader movements for peace that were more secular in tone. Merton's close friendship with the leaders of the Catholic peace movement, Daniel and Philip Berrigan, is well known. Less well known is Merton's friendship with Joan Baez, folk singer and social activist for the past four decades. She had performed at the historic March on Washington, August 28, 1963, in which Martin Luther King had given the most noted speech of his life, the 'I Have a Dream' prophecy. Joan had visited Merton in Gethsemani on December 8, 1966. She and her partner, Ira Sandperl, had founded the Institute for Non-Violence and they were engaged in discussions with Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference about the development of training courses on non-violence that they would offer in conjunction with the SCLC the following year. They wanted Doctor King and SCLC to expand their mission to become part of a universal movement for non-violence and social change throughout the world.¹ Merton and Baez had a lengthy dialogue about non-violence in the context of music and their respective philosophies of non-violence. Merton thought highly of Baez and wrote that she was 'one of those rare people who keep things from falling apart.'²

We know that beginning in the early 1960s Merton began to struggle with the major social issues of his day, particularly the twin evils of racism and violence in the USA and in the world. Just prior to the death of Doctor King, some of Merton's friends were trying to arrange a retreat for Doctor King with Merton at Gethsemani. Merton was open to the idea but he felt that it might cause problems for his newly appointed abbot. The idea never reached fruition but it was clear that Merton welcomed such an opportunity to meet with Doctor King and share some moments of solitude with him. Shortly after the idea of the retreat surfaced in March of 1968, Doctor King headed to Memphis for his fateful speech that would be a premonition of his death:

Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now. Because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to

live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people will get to the Promised Land. And I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.³

On April 5, 1968 Thomas Merton wrote this letter to Coretta Scott King:

Some events are too big and terrible to talk about. I think we all anticipated this one. I am sure he did. Somehow when John Yungblut spoke of Martin coming here for a brief retreat before the big march, I had the awful feeling that it might be a preparation for something like this. It was to be Memphis instead of Washington – or somewhere else on the way.

Let me only say how deeply I share your personal grief as well as the shock, which pervades the whole nation. He has done the greatest thing anyone can do. In imitation of his Master he has laid down his life for his friends and enemies. He knew the nation was under judgment and he tried everything to stay the hand of God and man. He will go down in history as one of our greatest citizens.

My prayers are with you and with him. May he find the rest and reward, which God has promised to all who trust in his mercy? This morning my Eucharistic offering will be for him and for you.⁴

Merton began to speak out against the traditional concept of a 'just war' in the early 1960s. He realized that modern warfare could not be limited to military targets and that those who failed to brand such warfare as 'immoral, inhuman and absurd' were abandoning traditional Christian moral theology.⁵ Merton also challenged the American Catholic hierarchy shortly before the concluding session of Vatican Council II and appealed to them to speak out about the threat of nuclear war and to condemn it specifically. His concluding remarks challenged church leaders to apply the teachings of Christian love not just to individuals but to society as well:

What matters is for the Bishops and the Council to bear witness clearly and without any confusion to the *Church's belief in the power of love to save and transform not only individuals but society*. Do we or do we not believe that love has this power? If we believe it, what point is there in using language of adroit compromise in order to leave the last

word, in matters which affect the very survival of man, not to the Gospel but to power politics.⁶

Merton frequently clashed with other members of the clergy and the hierarchy over his views on nuclear warfare and his support for the Catholic Peace Movement. He shared with Martin Luther King a similar understanding of the link between racism and violence. 'Crime in the ghetto, which is called violence, is simply the result of the violence of injustice which creates ghettos in the first place.'⁷

In a Journal entry dated October 23, 1961, Merton stated that he was at a turning point in his spiritual life as he began to struggle with censors who would question his involvement as a social critic of all modern warfare and his support for an activist yet non-violent effort to solve international conflicts.

I am perhaps at the turning point in my spiritual life: perhaps slowly coming to a point of maturation and the resolution of doubts – and the forgetting of fears. Walking into a known and definite battle. May God protect me in it. The Catholic Worker sent out a press release about my article, which may have many reactions – or may have none. At any rate it appears that I am one of the few Catholic priests in the country who has come out unequivocally for a completely intransigent fight for the abolition of war and the use of non-violent means to settle international conflicts. Hence by implication not only against the bomb, against nuclear testing, against polaris submarines, *but against all violence*. This I will have to explain in due course. Non-violent *action*, not mere passivity. How am I going to explain myself and defend a definite position in a timely manner when it takes at least two months to get even a short article through the censors of the Order, is a question I cannot attempt to answer.⁸

Merton was staking out a position on the 'just war' theory that was at odds with that of major theologians such as John Courtney Murray who held that modern weapons, even nuclear weapons, could be used in a defensive war against a presumed aggressor nation such as the Soviet Union as long as they could avoid the mutual destruction of both nations. The just war theory had taken its classical form during the era of the collapse of the Roman Empire and the development of the Augustine's political thought on the divide between the City of Man and the City of God. Merton found that the teachings of the early church Fathers, such as he found in Tertullian and Origen, were closer to his own position advocating non-violence than that of Augustine. Merton regretted that the Vatican could not make a clear

statement on nuclear war even though it could do so on birth control and abortion.

One would certainly wish that the Catholic position on nuclear war was held as strict as the Catholic position on birth control. It seems a little strange that we are so wildly exercised about the 'murder' (and the word is of course correct) on an unborn infant by abortion, or even the prevention of conception which is hardly murder, and yet accept without a qualm the extermination of millions of helpless and innocent adults, some of which may be Christians and even our friends rather than enemies. I submit that we ought to fulfill the one without omitting the other.⁹

Merton was supportive of the peace activists within the Catholic tradition such as Dorothy Day and Jim Forest but he did not realize the strength of the opposition to his views on war and peace. By June of 1962, he had received word that his superiors no longer wanted him to speak out about war and peace. Merton expresses his frustration in a letter to his friend, W.H. Ferry.

Did I tell you that the decision of the higher ups has become final and conclusive? The Peace Book (I mean the one I just wrote) is not to be published. Too controversial, doesn't give a nice image of monk. Monk concerned with peace. Bad image.¹⁰

Martin Luther King set forth his own thoughts about the 'moral lag' in society during his Nobel lecture of 1964. This speech is probably one of the most profound of his entire career for it sets forth an analysis of the ills that plague our contemporary world and our own nation. King states:

Every man [and woman] lives in two realms, the internal and the external. The internal is that realm of spiritual ends expressed in art, literature, morals and religion. The external is that complex of devices, techniques, mechanisms, and instrumentalities by means of which we live. Our problem today is that we have allowed the internal to become lost in the external. We have allowed the means by which we live to outdistance the ends for which we live. So much of modern life can be summarized in that arresting dictum of Thoreau: 'Improved means to an unimproved end.' ... Enlarged material powers spell enlarged peril if there is not proportionate growth of the soul. When the 'without' of man's nature subjugates the 'within,' dark storm clouds begin to form.

The problem of spiritual and moral lag, which constitutes modern man's chief dilemma, expresses itself in three larger problems that grow out of man's ethical infantilism. Each of these problems, while appearing to be separate and isolated, is inextricably bound to the other. I refer to racial injustice, poverty and war.

Later in his Nobel lecture, Martin Luther King states clearly his own philosophy of non-violence:

In a real sense non-violence seeks to redeem the spiritual and moral lag that I spoke of earlier as the chief dilemma of modern man. It speaks to secure moral ends through moral means. Non-violence is a powerful and just weapon. Indeed, it is a weapon unique in history, which cuts without wounding and ennoble the man who wields it.

I believe in this method because I think it is the only way to re-establish a broken community. It is the method that seeks to implement the just laws by appealing to the conscience of the great decent majority who through blindness, fear, pride, and irrationality have allowed their consciences to sleep.

This approach to the problem of racial injustice is not at all without successful precedent. It was used in a magnificent way by Mohandas K. Gandhi to challenge the might of the British Empire and free his people from the political domination and economic exploitation inflicted upon them for centuries. He struggled only with the weapons of truth, soul force, non-injury, and courage.¹¹

We know that both Martin Luther King and Thomas Merton were profoundly influenced by the life and example of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi had been able to unite the interiority of the spiritual realm with a social movement based upon the moral force of non-violent passive resistance to an unjust and oppressive rule by the British. In his introduction to *Gandhi on Non-Violence*, Merton connects the internal and external worlds much as King had done in his Nobel laureate lecture on violence and as Gandhi had done before him in bringing to his public life the fruits of his inner spiritual unity. Merton writes, "For him [Gandhi] the public realm was not secular, it was sacred."¹² Merton and King were united in a radical application of Christian morality to the problems of the modern world, particularly the link they found between racism and violence. Merton held out the hope that nonviolent actions by King's supporters could liberate both whites and blacks by freeing both cultures from fear of the 'other.'

Merton and King both moved beyond the traditional framework of Christian moral thought to challenge assumptions about the separation of the moral order from the social order. The loss of the 'moral impulse' in the western social order began to occur in the Renaissance era. Beginning with the Renaissance we find the first examples of a purely secular political order and the birth of *realpolitik* expressed in Macchiavelli's *The Prince*. This growing secularization of political thought in the West found its fullest expression in the enlightenment theories of the secular state and ethical theories that gave the state almost ultimate sovereignty over the individual conscience. Thomas Hobbes' (1588–1679) *Leviathan* claimed that the state was necessary to control the natural war-like impulses of 'natural' man: 'Hereby it is manifest that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war is of every man against every man.'¹³

The medieval cosmology that was anchored in the Aristotelian teleology of Thomas Aquinas had placed political theory within the realm of natural moral law that was governed by a providential designer of the cosmos, God himself. In the Newtonian universe of the enlightenment, natural moral law was now relegated to a secondary role behind that of the purely physical laws of the universe. These new physical laws were largely mechanistic, mathematical and materialistic because they were based upon a purely atomistic analysis of the physical universe. Nature herself was viewed as an impersonal and clocklike structure without any real moral or spiritual purpose. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the thought of Darwin (Natural Selection) and Freud (the Unconscious) further distanced the world of 'nature' from any kind of divine design or moral governance. Modern warfare in the twentieth century witnessed the continued development of 'weapons of mass destruction' leading to the dropping of the atomic bomb by the United States on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, civilian population centers, at the end of World War II. The political realm no longer seemed capable of controlling the technology that was destroying the very fabric of western civilization and engulfing it in a nuclear arms race with other nations. Merton and King were part of this gloomy era but they were also attempting to be prophets of a new and universal order that would draw upon the spiritual traditions of both East and West.

The Cold War era began almost immediately after the end of World War Two with the growth of nuclear weapons arsenals by the United

States and Russia. The world was brought close to a nuclear conflagration during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October of 1962. It is in this context that we can put the passionate statements of Thomas Merton about the immorality of using nuclear weapons or even the testing of such weapons. Merton was attempting to right a ship that has been listing in the wrong direction for centuries. The Church has lost much of its credibility because of its failure to deal constructively with the Scientific Revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the growth of liberalism and democracy during the Enlightenment and the development of the evolutionary and cosmological theories that would replace the biblical understanding found in the Book of Genesis. Merton realized that he was now living in a post-Christian era in the West and that a moral consensus on almost any issue was lacking including the nature of war and peace.

The Cold War era in which Merton and King lived was dominated by an amoral *realpolitik* best expressed in Henry Kissinger's "balance of power" ideology that governed much of US foreign policy. Merton and King were attempting to bring moral thought into the twentieth century in which the technological superiority of the West was symbolized by the development of the atomic bomb and then even more powerful nuclear weapons and other weapons systems that dissolved the line of demarcation between military and civilian populations. The effect of nuclear weapons could not easily be contained in the case of nuclear warfare and the proliferation of these weapons seemed to be a hallmark of the 1960s era. Both King and Merton were attempting to utilize the basic human and Christian values found in the Gospel as well as the most progressive thought of their era. They also realized that Christians needed to act in concert with spiritual leaders from other religious traditions. We see this call for a universal spirituality in King's Nobel Lecture:

This call for a worldwide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class, and nation is in reality a call for an *all-embracing and unconditional love for all men*. This oft misunderstood and misinterpreted concept so readily dismissed by the Nietzsches of the world as a weak and cowardly force, has now become an absolute necessity for the survival of man. When I speak of love I am not speaking of some sentimental and weak response which is little more than emotional bosh. I am speaking of that force which all of the great religions have seen as the supreme unifying principle of

life. Love is somehow the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality. This Hindu-Moslem-Christian-Jewish-Buddhist belief about ultimate reality is beautifully summed up in the First Epistle of Saint John:

Let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.¹⁴

Thomas Merton also was moving to a more global spiritual awareness in the final years of his life. He was particularly involved with leading Buddhist figures such as D.T. Suzuki and the Dali Lama. He was particularly close to the Vietnamese monk and peace activist, Thich Nhat Hanh. During one of Merton's most eventful years at Gethsemani, 1966, Nhat Hanh paid a visit to Merton and spoke to the monks at Gethsemani. Thich Nhat Hanh was the leader of the Vietnamese Youth Peace Movement during the Vietnam War and an already noted spiritual writer when he came to visit Merton. He arrived at Gethsemani in May of 1966 during Merton's crisis over his relationship with a young nurse he had met in a local hospital while recuperating from surgery. Both men had lived in monasteries for years and realized that they shared many things in common, especially their devotion to the contemplative life and their quest for world peace. After their visit, Merton wrote an important essay entitled, 'Nhat Hanh is My Brother' in which he exclaimed that any favour done for Nhat Hahn would be a favour done for him as well. The essay ends with the following plea:

Do what you can for him. If I mean something to you, then let me put it this way: do for Nhat Hahn whatever you would do for me if I were in his position. In many ways I wish I were.¹⁵

In the final years of his life, Merton was focused on his intellectual and spiritual journey into eastern forms of spirituality, particularly Zen Buddhism. In November of 1966, he affirmed again his desire to unite the contemplative life of the monk with the life of the 'city' as a symbol for the sacred character of modern urban life. He wrote to a young seminarian who had visited him earlier that summer to comment on his 'desert theology':

I naturally sympathize with your 'desert theology' approach, and your intuition that the desert and the city are one. *We can no longer afford to*

be divisive, exclusive, remote, aristocratic, etc. It ends in the worst errors. And we cannot go around deciding arbitrarily what is real and what isn't either; we have to keep looking for the real in the middle of the unreal, the solid words in the middle of the empty ones.¹⁶

Merton was searching for a more inclusive spirituality that would unite East and West; the cloister and the city; the solitary contemplative and the global activist. In 1967 Merton made an important connection with John and June Yungblut, Quaker peace activists from Atlanta. June was completing a doctoral thesis at Emory University and provided a link to the King family, particularly Coretta King. June was also a correspondent with Philip Berrigan and other members of the radical Catholic Left. In November of 1967, Merton indicates his interest in becoming part of team to negotiate with the North Vietnamese National Liberation Front (NLF) to help end the Vietnam War. He realizes, however, that his superiors would never agree to such a proposal.

Today a letter came from the AFSC [American Friends Service Committee] in Philadelphia, asking me to form part of an unofficial peace team that is to meet with representatives of the NLF [Viet Cong] and try to get up some concrete proposals for Washington. A most unusual invitation, so unusual that if I were left to myself I'd have no alternative but to accept – and in my case I could not take it upon myself to refuse. I can't, in conscience, refuse. So I decided to turn it over to the Abbot.¹⁷

Needless to say Merton did not receive the permission of his Abbot for such a daring adventure but the letter does reveal the state of his mind and heart just about one year from the date of his death. His search for further contact with eastern spiritual masters did not eliminate his desire to be part of the peace movement and even to help negotiate a peace settlement with the Vietcong. Merton was attempting to combine the life of a contemplative hermit and a global peace activist. This was not an easy juxtaposition of roles and identities.

Merton had a close relationship with Daniel and Philip Berrigan and in 1967 the Berrigans were proposing more radical actions in opposition to the Vietnam War. Dan Berrigan wrote to Merton asking his thoughts on proposed civil disobedience by his brother, Philip Berrigan, which would involve pouring blood into the Selective Service files in Baltimore. Philip Berrigan and three other peace activists did take such an action on October 27, 1967. On October 10, 1967 Merton

shared his thoughts with Dan Berrigan on the question of 'violence.' Merton does not seem to support the revolutionary rhetoric that was popular during that period of mounting opposition to the Vietnam War. He does show sympathy for the revolutionary option, however, in Latin America. 'Hence I wonder if it makes sense to treat the thing as a serious revolutionary option in the first place? In Latin America I think a priest and a Christian might have a serious question to face. I don't think it is like that here – I mean in choosing for the Molotov cocktail.' ¹⁸

Later in the same letter to Dan Berrigan, Merton stakes out his position as very close to that of Martin Luther King and Gandhi. His comments to Berrigan probably represent his final position on the question of nonviolence:

Have we ever even begun to explore what real non-violence is about? Is this just testing that is essential before we even get sorted out enough to *begin*? Are we now ready for a novitiate? In my opinion the answer is to close ranks with people like King – insofar as non-violent: I don't know what his politics are right now. To become recognizable as committed to very clear limits on the violence thing? At least to take up enough of a basic position to be able to go on from there to decide whether yes or no we can be violent 'against property.' That is outside the Gandhian thing right away. My opinion would be some of us ought to stay with Gandhi's end of it until we have at least gone deep into it and seen what was there (as King has). ¹⁹

In April of 1967, Martin Luther King had given his famous speech on the Vietnam War to the clergy and laymen concerned about Vietnam at Riverside Church. In the speech he presented his rationale for opposition to the war in Vietnam and called for a new direction in the US foreign policy. The speech called for a 'revolution of values' that would lead to the elimination of war as a method for settling international conflicts. Merton was certainly aware of King's stand on Vietnam and his search for an alternative solution to the bloody conflict. Merton's letter to Berrigan supports the King/Gandhi approach to a new and more just political order based on the principles of non-violence.

In January of 1968 June Yungblut was attempting to arrange a retreat for Martin Luther King at Gethsemani. A March date had been discussed but Merton stated that King was welcome to come at an earlier time if it could be arranged. ²⁰ Merton continued to communicate

with June Yungblut on a variety of issues and concerns during the period leading up to King's death in April of 1968. In a letter to June Yungblut dated March 29, 1968, Merton thanks her for conveying a copy of an article he had written on Nat Turner to Martin Luther King and again mentioned the idea of King coming to Gethsemani for a retreat. ²¹ Just a few days later Merton learned of Martin Luther King's death on April 4, 1968.

In a letter to James Forest dated April 6, 1968 Merton reflected on the death of Martin Luther King:

Terrible about Martin Luther King. But I guess it was expected. I almost have the feeling he *wanted* it: even get the temptation to think that in a kind of desperation he realized that martyrdom was the most efficacious thing left for him. That the March wouldn't work. As to Johnson I didn't trust his withdrawal at all. I think he is totally dedicated to power for himself and his bunch. ²²

Merton's fatalism corresponded to the tenor of the times. In July of 1967 riots erupted in many urban areas of the USA such as Detroit and Newark. In March of 1968, the Kerner Commission report was issued and stated that racism was the key domestic problem facing the USA. The most quoted line in the report was 'Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black and one white – separate and unequal.' ²³ Martin Luther King was deeply troubled by the movement of younger black leaders such as Stokely Carmichael away from King's philosophy of non-violence and toward a philosophy of Black Power and rejection of integration with white society. King viewed this movement as a form of black racism. A garbage worker's strike brought King to Memphis, Tennessee where he attempted to lead a demonstration supporting the sanitation workers. The demonstration led to violent battles with the police and set the stage for King's final speech in which "He compared himself to Moses, who led his people out of slavery but died on a mountaintop in Jordan in view of the Promised Land." ²⁴

Thomas Merton wrote to June Yungblut on April 9, 1968, the day of Martin Luther King's funeral, about some 'Freedom Songs' that he had written for a Liturgical Conference in the coming summer. Martin Luther King was scheduled to appear at this conference. Merton hopes that the songs might be performed as soon as possible 'as a memorial to Martin. What we really need is a good strong Negro voice – someone like Harry Belafonte ... You and Coretta and anyone else likely to be

interested might look them over.'²⁵ Later in this letter Merton reflects on the 'apocalyptic' times in which King's death had thrust the US and the world:

These have been terrible days for everyone, and God alone knows what is to come. I feel that we have really crossed a definitive line into a more apocalyptic kind of time – the recent years were bitter enough, but mostly as anticipation of what now seems to be realizing itself. We will need a lot of faith and a new vision and courage to move in these new and more bitter realities.

Merton did not realize that he was also coming to the mountaintop of his own life and that he and Martin Luther King would both die within the same climactic and apocalyptic year of 1968.

In a letter to June Yungblut dated July 29, 1968 Merton seems to feel more hopeful about the future and that inter-religious dialogue with Eastern religions would be his top priority and not political action. He also mentions his desire to meet with Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese apostle of non-violence, in Thailand:

I much appreciate your letter of a week ago. I did not know Nhat was possibly in Thailand. Have you an address where he might be reached there. If I can't see him here, then why not there? Yes, I am more and more convinced myself of the great need for understanding and brotherhood with Eastern religions, especially Buddhists. This to me is becoming more and more of a top priority, and that is one reason why I don't want to risk fouling it up with politics when I am convinced that there is no issue in that direction anyhow. I want to try to get going on a real religious dialogue in depth, if I can, and really things are shaping up well so far, at least on paper. The prospects for contacts are very good. I hope it goes on that way.²⁶

Merton's fatalism about the value of political action in 1968 did not deter his strong sense of hope in religious dialogue with the East. He did not fully realize fully how important his vision about eastern religious dialogue with such figures such as the Dali Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh would become in future decades. They would continue his mission and that of Martin Luther king as advocates for peace and global understanding.

Notes and References

- ¹ For a further discussion of this meeting see the *Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton*. Michael Mott, *Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1984), pp.483–484
- ² *Ibid.*, p.464
- ³ Martin Luther King's Final Sermon, 'I've been to the Mountaintop' *Martin Luther King Papers Project*, Stanford University, www.stanford.edu/group/king
- ⁴ William H. Shannon (ed.), *The Hidden Ground of Love*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1985, p.451
- ⁵ Quoted in *Thomas Merton Social Critic*, by James Thomas Baker. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1971. p.80
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p.83
- ⁷ Thomas Merton, *Faith and Violence*. South Bend, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968, p.3
- ⁸ Thomas Merton, *Turning Toward the World. Journals, Vol. 4 1960–63*, Victor A. Kramer (ed.). San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1995, p.172
- ⁹ Thomas Merton, *Cold War Letters*, 14, p.27. Quoted in Mott, *Seven Mountains*, p.177, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁰ Merton to W.H. Ferry, June 4, 1962. *Ibid.*, p.379
- ¹¹ www.mlkonline.com Nobel Lecture of December 11, 1964. The full text of the lecture and an audio version can be found at the site of the Nobel Electronic Museum. www.nobel.se/peace/laureates/1964/king-lecture.html
- ¹² Thomas Merton, *Gandhi on Non-Violence*. New York: New Directions, 1965, p.8
- ¹³ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, in *The English Philosophers from Bacon to Mill*, Edwin Burt (ed.). New York: The Modern Library, 1939, p.161
- ¹⁴ Martin Luther King, *Nobel Lecture of 1964*, see Note 11
- ¹⁵ 'Nhat Hanh Is My Brother,' *The Nonviolent Alternative*, p.264. Quoted in Mott, *Seven Mountains*, p.455, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁶ Unpublished letter of Thomas Merton to James Donnelly, a Maryknoll seminarian, dated November 27, 1966. Letter made available to author through Markyknoll Archives, Nov. 27, 1966
- ¹⁷ Letter of Thomas Merton to June Yungblut, November 19, 1967. *The Hidden Ground of Love, op. cit.*, p.638
- ¹⁸ Thomas Merton's letter to Dan Berrigan, October 10, 1967. *Ibid.*, pp.96–99
- ¹⁹ Thomas Merton's letter to Dan Berrigan, October 10, 1967. *Ibid.*, p.97
- ²⁰ Letter of Thomas Merton to June Yungblut, January 20, 1968. *Ibid.*, p.640
- ²¹ Letter of Thomas Merton to June Yungblut, March 29, 1968. *Ibid.*, p.644
- ²² Letter of Thomas Merton to Jim Forest, April 6, 1968. *Ibid.*, p.306
- ²³ Quoted by Mark Kirlansky, in *1968: The Year That Rocked the World* (New York: Ballantine, 2004), p.97
- ²⁴ Quoted by Mark Kirlansky, *ibid.* p.115. King's final words in his sermon (see p. 115 above) are prophetic of his death. The full text of the speech is available at the following web site: <http://www.afscme.org/about/kingspch.htm>
- ²⁵ Letter of Thomas Merton to June Yungblut, April 9, 1968. *The Hidden Ground*

of Love, op. cit., p.645. Merton did receive a telegram from June Yungblut on August 20, 1968 in which she stated that his 'Freedom Songs' had been performed at the Liturgical Conference the previous evening

²⁶ Letter of Merton to June Yungblut, July 29, 1968. *Ibid.*, p.648