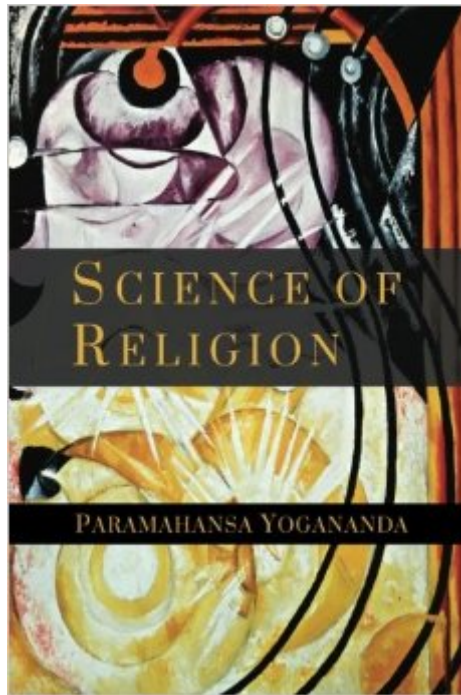


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The Science Of Religion



Synopsis

2015 Reprint of the 1926 edition. Full facsimile of the original edition, not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. This short book is an elaboration by Paramahansa Yogananda of his first speech introducing his philosophy to America - the historic talk that introduced his teachings to the Western World. He points out the universality of the world's religions and explains why the answers to the ultimate questions of life lie in the direct personal experience of a Higher Reality. Includes a detailed discussion of the scientific basis of yoga meditation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Religion or faith in fundamental principles, is the foundation upon which the edifice of reasoning, or science is built upon. While it is religion which binds us into courses of action consistent with those fundamental principles, it is science that enables us to stay clear of inconsistent systems of guiding principles, and to practically attain the goals posited by our principles. The Science of Religion by Paramahansa Yogananda arrives by analysis at inner happiness or bliss as the goal that binds all men. Thus, from the standpoint of the etymological meaning of the word religion as that which binds (from religio-onis in Latin), the author says that the pursuit of bliss is universal religion, as it motivates all human actions. Having arrived at universal religion, the author then goes on to present the practical means of attaining the goal, i.e.,the science. He outlines the four broad classes of methods that have been evolved to attain bliss, or God: the methods of reasoning, devotion, meditation, and life-force control. He points out the limitations of the first three methods, and

recommends the method of life-force control (which acts directly upon the vital organs of the body, slowing them down) to sever the identification of human consciousness with the body that underlies all human suffering.

In this small book, PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA clearly states a simple and profound truth that is the core philosophy of all of the world's great spiritual systems. As Douglas Ainslie says in his introduction "this small book offers the clue to the universe....between these narrow covers is to be found the flower of the Vedas and the Upanishads, the essence of Patanjali,...and the thought of Shankara, greatest mind that ever dwelt in mortal body.....This is the deliberate attempt of one who has at last found in the East, after many wanderings, the solution to the riddles of the world.....The essential point to be remarked about Paramahansa's teaching,....is that it is not speculative , but practical, even when dealing with the utmost reaches of metaphysics."The author was a great Yogi who lived and taught in the West for over 30 years. The example of his life and work have not only turned many people god-ward, but has also shown them the way to SELF-REALIZATION through Kriya Yoga and his prolific inspired teachings. His wisdom, insight and remarkable innovations in the field of human development and religion are legendary.The main theme of this book is "bliss", our deepest need and how to find it.Parmahansa Yogananda established the Self-Realization Fellowship as the sole authorized representative and spiritual path for his great work.Also Recommended: AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI.....SANCTUARY OF THE SOUL.....THE DIVINE ROMANCE.....MAN'S ETERNAL QUEST.....JOURNEY TO SELF-REALIZATION.....WHISPERS FROM ETERNITY.....WHERE THERE IS LIGHTetc....all by the same author.

Prior to reading Yogananda's books, i read several ones on philosophy which did satisfy to some extents, and doubts remained. Paramahansa Yogananda is direct, and his words hit the chord with body, mind and soul. It is difficult for the westerner to grasp faith without science and the easterner takes for granted all abstractions without science. This book and others by Yogananda provide the true link between the cosmos and us. What are we, who are we, what is our purpose in this world (beyond eat, drink, sleep), what is life and what is religion. His words echo those of Swami Vivekananda who gave a set of stunning argumentative lectures based on religion from science and their symbiotic existence. After all both words were invented by man seeking the vibration beyond religion, science and creation.

Yogananda's maiden voyage on the sea of authorship, *THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION*, surprises the reader us with paradoxes. In 1920, when still at his teacher's ashram in India, Yogananda received an invitation to speak to an International Congress of Religious Liberals in Boston, sponsored by the American Unitarian Association, thus beginning his three decades of teaching and work on this continent. "Science" and "religion" are usually discussed as opposites or adversaries, as are "reason" and "faith," but this expansion of his 1920 address to that congress brings the yoga approach: revealing the unities - in the most ancient and universal "unitarian" approach. The very word "religion" has roots in "unity:" the Latin 'religare', which dictionaries often define unpleasantly as to restrain or to tie back; Yogananda cites the more yogic definition: to bind. To someone accustomed to the term "yoga" with its common roots in "to yoke together" or "to unite," the positive implications become apparent for religion as a force of LIBERATION rather than of restraint. If you are among the thousands who shun the contemporary uses of "religious" and say, with many of my friends, "I am not so much a religious person as a spiritual person," you will appreciate Yogananda's use of this more universal and positive meaning of "religious." In this tightly reasoned essay on how ancient spiritual revelations from yoga science can elevate modern religion to liberating heights, Yogananda offers to even the most intellectual of audiences the best of reasons 1) why devotion to Truth and the experience of Spirit must logically go hand-in-hand and 2) how the airy realms of spirituality are pressingly practical: "...religion necessarily consists in the permanent removal of pain and the realization of Bliss or God." He moves forward to show the differences between the basic four approaches to spiritual realization (as described by another reviewer, below) and provides more fundamentals about meditation and esoteric yoga practice than his 1920 audience could possibly have coped with. It is more accessible to our new, better-initiated century. *The Science of Religion* is an introduction to the universality of yoga, meditation, and the experience of the Divine, and -- although lacking the fascinating anecdotes of his *Autobiography of a Yogi* or the inspirational upliftment of such later books as *Where There is Light* and *The Divine Romance* -- *The Science of Religion* is a powerfully reasoned call to the intellect to open its heart along with its mind. **RECOMMENDATION:** Especially good gift for your intellectual, agnostic friends - or those who have been alienated by narrow, orthodox, negativity-based presentations of religion.

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