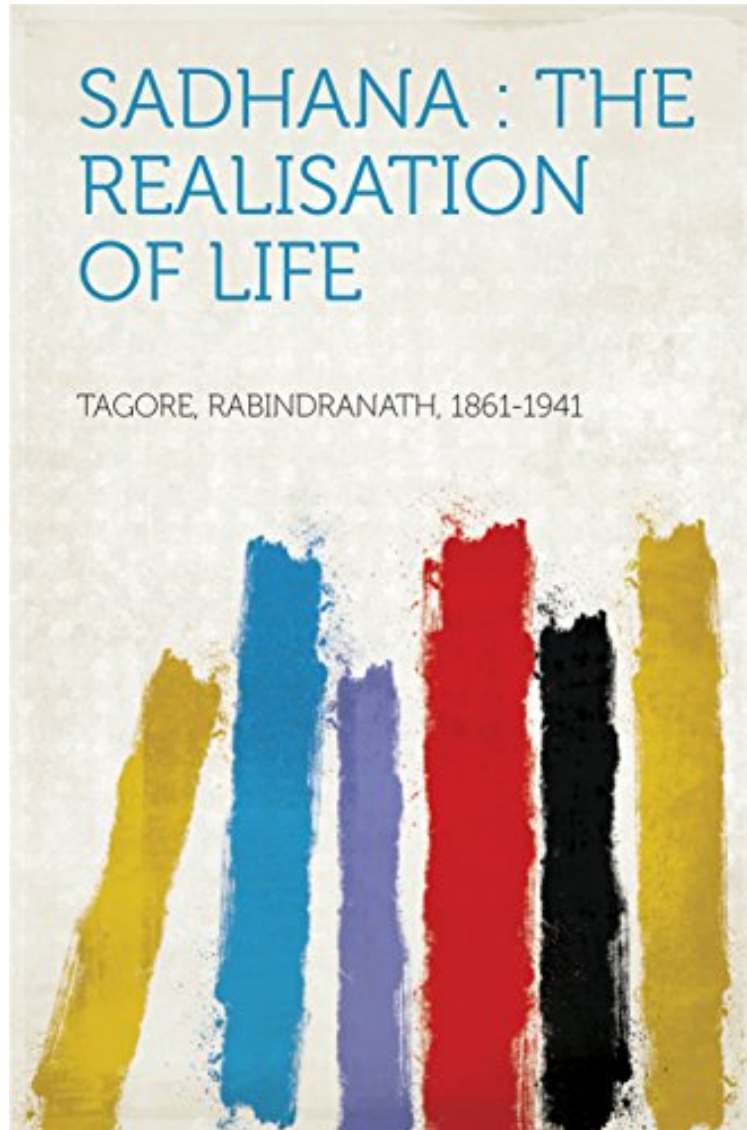


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Sadhana : the realisation of life

Von Rabindranath, 1861-1941 Tagore
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Von Rabindranath, 1861-1941 Tagore : Sadhana : the realisation of life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sadhana : the realisation of life:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The realisation of western-eastern body of thoughtsVon Roman NiesThe English subtitle "The Realisation of Life" sounds rather ambitious. But it is true that following the advices of the author could bring yourselves to a kind of realizing what makes life more worthy to be lived and loved. But, alas! Life still will have an end! So what? The author would say: To substantiate the eternal! The author, about whom Albert Schweitzer said, he is one of the greatest thinkers of

mankind, cannot conceal, that he is a Hindu- or better Brahman- thinker. He is convinced that India could give the world spirituality. Interestingly this is what all spiritually breathed Indians are thinking. India has to be the country where the world-spirit is at home! About this is Tagore's writing, about the big Brahman, the big spender, whom to get to know in a spiritual union has to mean the greatest bliss at all. The author grew up in a family, in which the texts of the Upanishads, the most worthy of all Brahmin texts, were used in daily ceremony. And he had the example of his father in front of his eyes, he who spent his long life in daily efforts to have union with the super-ego. Tagore wants with this book to make the ancient spirit of India available for the reader. Tagore is in fact a great thinker who has many beautiful thoughts. Nevertheless he is closely linked to Hindu-spirituality. Likewise it is not astonishing when he emphasizes, that life giving words of experience originate in the hearts of people, those very hearts, which also generate evil words, thoughts and actions. In this context his assumption that a religion has to be judged by the momentary stage of development as well as it must have developed by the inward spirituality, virtually enriched by the experience of man, is better understood, but at the same time disproved. Truths with eternal validity are independent of reasoning man and his lack of insight. But in Hinduism there is no tradition of logical thinking, there is spiritual thinking in which sometimes the wise men appear as elephants or monkeys. And what they have to say is "a" truth, not "the" truth, for these are no usual occurrences which induce the Indians to an enlightenment. A life long Tagore scooped out of the verses of the Upanishads and the speeches of Buddha as he said himself. Also it is clearly visible that he uses Christian mindset. This is not unusual for Indian thinkers. Much of his book is from notes of lectures, which he held in Bengali in front of his students. The texts contain much self-evident wisdom about man and world, which possibly was new to an Indian student in the first half of the 20th century so as for example in the first chapter about the relationship between the individual being and the universe. Meanwhile we have established sciences dealing with ecological issues. Tagore is meaning the analogy in the realm of spirit. But he also should have realized that India, the "continent of spirituality", suffered centuries long slavery under foreign powers, famine, epidemics and poverty. Exactly his proclaimed visibility of spiritual development presents the Indian sub-continent in an unfavourable light! It is just the opposite! Significantly Tagore equals his thinking with that of India. Herein he is wrong. He is overdrawing much in his idealism, for example when he stresses the wise handling of the Indians with their forests, which the colonizers of Northern America missed allegedly. He seems to oversee that India deforested all its territory, except a few inaccessible stretches (already in the times of Tagore). The protection of nature and environment is not an invention of the Indians, rather of the West! He also oversees that in all times there were only a very few people in India who really retreated for contemplations from society to become an eremite or wise man. He instead entertains the legend, that the Indian man is more interested in spirituality than the western man. The momentary economic boom of India, the comprehensible run of an ever broader middle class for welfare, which is welfare of western brand, is showing, what always drives the people mostly. At least he is admitting Jesus of Nazareth a flash of truth. Truth is for Tagore an Indian invention. And what is this truth? The world-soul and the individual soul are one, the individual soul must comprehend this and then she will draw the right conclusion and influence the surrounding positively. That is the old Brahmin teaching, enriched with ethical mindset which to a major part grew out of Christianity (Tagore is wise enough to understand that the old Brahmin teaching is not complete and needs somehow something which he found in the Christian teachings) and simple truths like as for example: our desires are responsible for limiting the reach of our self-awareness, for hindering the widening of our consciousness and for causing sin which keeps us far away from God and engender disharmony and arrogant pride. Or, which is for a Hindu an astonishing knowledge: "sin is not simply an action, but a life-attitude, taking for certain that our goal is in the finite, that our Self is the last meaning!" Sometimes you believe to hear a missionary preaching. As such a one Tagore understands himself. Love is not a topic in Brahmanism, neither in Hinduism outside the Bhakti-mythology it is more than to be defined as a Oneness with God. For Tagore instead love is a big deal. "Therefore I want to repeat that we do not see man correctly if we do not love him." A great sentence if we recognize that Hinduism is not about loving man. It is all about self-realization, self-redemption, the Self that dissolves in the whole. Tagore is also prophetic when he says: "It is by progress of the natural sciences that the wholeness of the world and our Oneness with it becomes clearer for our spirit." Tagore is a big friend of man. That is spoken out with many of his words. The evil in man seems not to exist really. He is speaking about love, joy, beauty, harmony. Good reading! But there is a lot which is not thoroughly contemplated and sometimes half-truths are more problematic than easily recognized untruths. So far Sadhana (with emphasis on the first a) is a work that should not be read without a critical mind. Typical for Hinduism is that the redemption, as promised by Tagore, is a nebulous becoming one with an impersonal world-soul; the dropping into an ocean of same like finally cleansed individual souls, in the end the extinction of any individual existence. Whereas Christians believe in a blissful continuation of life, the Hindus believe in a blissful extinction. Somebody who wants to get accustomed to Indian thinking will find good impulses in this book. But then he has to know that Tagore is a thinker who syncretically absorbed all schools of thought that were available to him, to polish them with Indian mindset and pass it off as Indian thinking. A better start would be the reading of (the most important) Upanishads and a (shortened) version of the Baghavad Gita. Tagore's teaching could be regarded as a preliminary end of a development, which should not be silent about the fact that exactly the thinking in India was very strongly fertilized by non-Indian

ideas. Tagore is worth reading. If you only want to read one book of him, read this one.

KurzbeschreibungHardPress Classic Books SeriesKurzbeschreibungHardPress Classic Books SeriesSynopsis Perhaps it is well for me to explain that the subject-matter of the papers published in this book has not been philosophically treated, nor has it been approached from the scholar's point of view. The writer has been brought up in a family where texts of the Upanishads are used in daily worship; and he has had before him the example of his father, who lived his long life in the closest communion with God, while not neglecting his duties to the world, or allowing his keen interest in all human affairs to suffer any abatement. So in these papers, it may be hoped, western readers will have an opportunity of coming into touch with the ancient spirit of India as revealed in our sacred texts and manifested in the life of to-day.