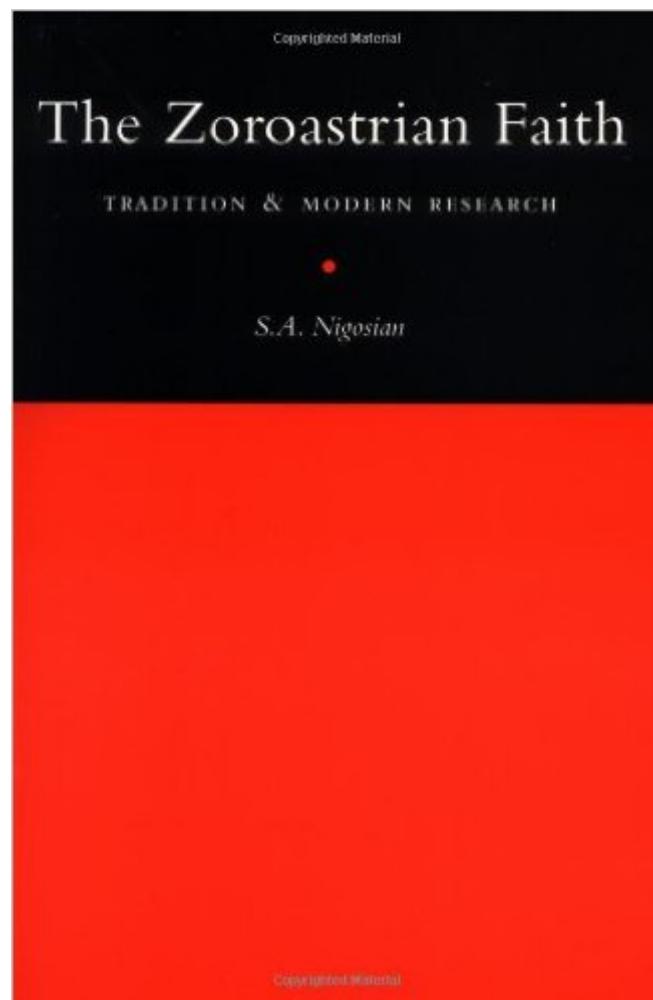


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The Zoroastrian Faith: Tradition And Modern Research



Synopsis

The Zoroastrian Faith is organized around five themes: an account of Zoroaster's life and work; discussion of the development and spread of Zoroastrianism from its beginnings to the present; description of the sacred writings and religious documents of the faith; an analysis of the basic Zoroastrian beliefs and their influence on Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; and a description of the prescribed observances. In this historical and analytical study, S.A. Nigosian cuts through these problems to present a concise, systematic survey of Zoroastrianism. This book will intrigue scholars and general readers alike. A glossary and bibliography are provided as aids for further study.

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Customer Reviews

If you know nothing about Zoroastrianism and are looking for a basic understanding of this unique faith then start with this book. It is concise clear and covers all major points of the faith quickly and accurately. The five chapters cover Zoroaster, history, scripture, teachings and observances. The scripture section contains outtakes from not only the fragments that we have of the Avesta but also lesser known and extremely difficult to find religious texts such as the Denkard. If you want to know about Zoroastrianism this is the place to start.

This is an excellent description of the Zoroastrian faith. It begins with Zoroaster himself, dating his lifetime most probably and providing a compelling history of the man who ultimately had a tremendous influence on Western culture far greater than he could ever imagine. I believe it safe to

say that he had more influence than Jesus himself, given the fact that the Zoroastrian world-view was subsequently adopted by a large contingent of ancient Jews, including Jesus, and ultimately spread around the world by Christianity and Islam. The history of the faith itself is then presented, along with key scriptures, teachings, and rituals. This book is excellent and truly fascinating reading. The Zoroastrian faith was far ahead of its time and represented an incredible philosophical advance in the ancient world that would have been completely foreign to most of the world's inhabitants but very familiar to you and I. The attractiveness of its beliefs could not be opposed even by the strictness of the Judaic world-view. In a remarkable way, Christianity and Islam represent the triumph of Zoroastrian ideas, and I found myself strangely saddened that this religion is near extinction. There is an inspiring grandeur to this faith as presented here. The book is well written, absolutely fascinating, balanced, and a quick read. I recommend it highly.

Over all a fast easy read about the life & general teachings of Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) & his religion's influence on today's monotheistic faiths. S.A. Nigosian goes to great length to get the exact information from many varied sources, which at times either reveals too much information in short paragraphs or causes certain vagueness. For example the dates of Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) are from 6000 BC from some Greek sources to appox. 650-600 BC. Other problem is that I never saw such a fast rendering of the history of ancient Iran in so few pages. At times a short paragraph per King or Kingdom. Maybe a chart or map would of help to clarify this information. In another area S.A. Nigosian uses the baptism rites of the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church as an example of the Zoroastrian rite without ever revealing the Zoroastrian rite itself. Could it be that most other religious history books cut too many corners & round off the information? Maybe to write the whole truth will always reveal the imperfections of history. Other than that the book was a pure delight going through the general practices, festivals, & calendar events of ancient & modern Zoroastrianism. There are no photographs or visual information in this book that could help reveal certain clothing or life styles of the Zoroastrian faith. In fact I did meet a Parsi (a modern Zoroastrian from Bombay India) at a Jews for Jesus table at Cal State Fullerton California around the mid 1980's & saw his shirt that contain the chords to store his good & evil deeds, but I still would like to see a photograph of a fire temple & the rites performed. In other words I had a few problems with the style of the book, mostly due to lack of visual information, but its well worth the price if your looking for a grand overview of Zoroastrianism.

While I am hardly an expert enough on Zoroastrian to evaluate the veracity of everything S.A.

Nigosian says here about Zoroastrianism, I know enough about the religion from others scholars to say that Nigosian's short book is certainly "in the right ball park." For a short book, there is an immense amount of detail about the origins, history, and evolution of the Zoroastrian religion, as well as substantial excerpts of its scriptures, and commentary on its rites, rituals, and beliefs. I think, if you are interested in a scholarly portrayal of the religion, Nigosian's short work seems to be a reliable and interesting source.

This book requires a higher level of reading comprehension. During my BA degree, it seemed to difficult. After completing my master's, it was understandable and not so daunting. It is, after all, a research book written by a professor. Now on to the contents of the book: I especially loved this book because it focused on only Zoroastrianism and only referred to Christianity or Judaism as a source of references, maybe just a few times. I did not know much about this religion, but after having read the book, I understand the key tenets and philosophies of the teachings. The book also provides extensive historical detail which play a key in understanding. After reading this book, I am able to talk to others about this religion as I have a good base, and I am ready to take the next step in ordering another book, maybe the Avesta itself or the prayer book, to delve deeper into Zoroastrian understanding. I will always keep my "The Zoroastrian Faith" book handy as my reference source! I highly recommend this book. This book took me 5 days to read, I just couldn't put it down once I got into it!

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