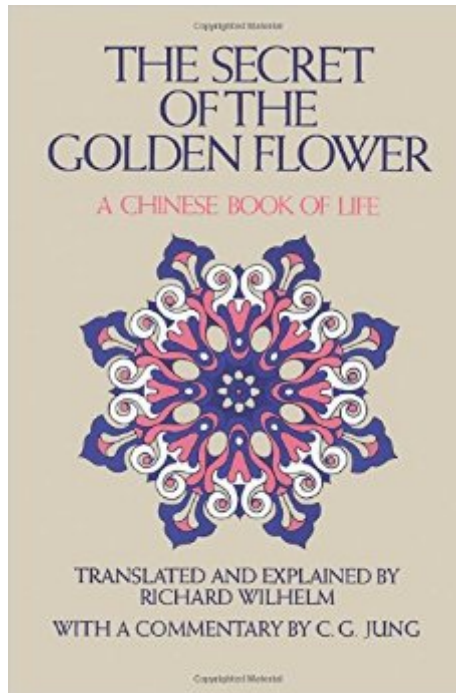


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The Secret Of The Golden Flower: A Chinese Book Of Life



Synopsis

The ancient Taoist text that forms the central part of this book was discovered by Wilhelm, who recognized it as essentially a practical guide to the integration of personality. Foreword and Appendix by Carl Jung; illustrations. Translated by Cary F. Baynes. A Helen and Kurt Wolff Book

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A very interesting and meaningful book to say the least. And like Jung, gratitude must be given Richard Wilhelm for his insight in the East and translation of the text. A manual written symbolically for the practice of meditation, where thoughts are reduced to the square inch between the eyes, the eye lids half closed, eyes centered near the tip of the nose, the heart rate next to nothing in quietude, controlled breath of a circular motion that becomes quiet. The "white light" so spoken in Buddhist terms and various states of consciousness are related. However, this is far more than a mere meditation manual, but symbols which convey non-intellectual ideas, that is, non-Western rationalism, and yet significant and advanced in both its teaching and applications. Ultimately for myself, it is Jung's commentary that my Western mind needed to interpret the text itself and the subsequent interpretations. I am moved in profundity on Jung's analysis that man's consciousness advances non-rationally, but psychically. Where the advancement cannot be spoken or written of in intellectual terms but rather can be done so in symbols. In this, Jung expounds on the idea that symbols convey advanced images that relate to the psyche and can never be proved intellectually or rationally. This is where images, as in Mandalas, come in. Images and symbols speak what

words cannot. They are of a higher conscious level awareness, a psychological advancement. None of this is rationally or mathematically equated, none, nor can it be linguistically conveyed. Humans can only point, using symbols and images, they can not expound, explain and reason on such.

The main text of this book "Secret of Gold Flower" deals with both an age old meditative practice and a supportive theory in the Taoist tradition. Carl Jung's commentary basically dealt only with theory part and interpreted as similar in concepts to his individuation process (the development of the self as similar to development of the golden flower). It adds credibility to both sides: Taoist practice gained western academic respectability whereas Jung's concepts of collective unconscious and archetype gained supportive evidence from an old high-culture. It is interesting to note that whereas Wilhelm was a Taoist practitioner who had brought himself full-scale into Taoist yoga, Jung on the other hand advised against western people taking up such practice! On the practice side, the choice of texts is excellent: "Secret of Golder Flower" deals with the leading role of "human nature" (collective unconscious) in Taoist meditation with full supportive theory, whereas "Hui Ming Jing" deals with the procedural details of the practice itself (a combination of Taoist and Buddhist practice, the author himself a Buddhist monk of Zen tradition). Though an English translation might not be able to present and differentiate finer points that can only be understood if one can read the Chinese language, one benefit is that a translation can do away with some unnecessary mystical elements (for example in the book symbols from I-Ching are replaced by alphabets) that often times leads would-be practitioners into unnecessary maze. Though I have to complain that more of the Hui Ming Jing had not been translated (included) for a more complete manual for practice reference.

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