



Cleansing the Doors of Perception: The Religious Significance of Entheogenic Plants and Chemicals

Huston Smith

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Here is a fascinating inquiry into the religious significance of consciousness-magnifying substances by Huston Smith, author of *THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS* and a leading thinker of our time. In *CLEANSING THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION*, Smith's historical knowledge and personal experience combine with his literacy in the cognitive sciences to produce the only comprehensive book that has been written for the general public on the mysterious relation between the entheogens, consciousness, and faith. Psychoactive plants have long served as spiritual catalysts, from the Eleusinian Mysteries of ancient Greece to the Native American Church and from India's sacred soma to the religious practices emerging from the Amazonian rainforests. In this book, Smith takes us into the heart of modernity's struggle to align historical evidence with what we now know about brain chemistry. His friendships with Aldous Huxley, Timothy Leary (while Leary was at Harvard), Gordon Wasson (who cracked the 2000-year-old secret of India's soma plant), and Albert Hofmann (the discoverer of LSD) have made him eye-witness to much of the twentieth century's work in this area. *Cleansing the Doors of Perception* (the title pays tribute to Huxley's *THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION* and to Blake's original use of the phrase) is a deeply serious and learned inquiry into a topic of enduring importance.

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