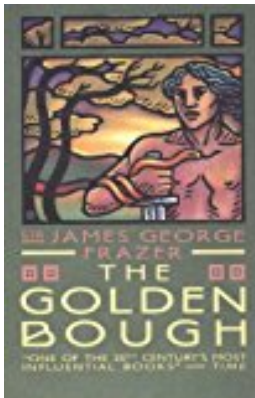


[PDF] The Golden Bough

James George Frazer - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: The Golden Bough
Author: James George Frazer
Released: 1995-12-01
Language:
Pages: 880
ISBN: 0684826305
ISBN13: 978-0684826301
ASIN: 0684826305

[**CLICK HERE FOR DOWNLOAD**](#)

pdf, mobi, epub, azw, kindle

Description:

Before Joseph Campbell became the world's most famous practitioner of comparative mythology, there was Sir James George Frazer. *The Golden Bough* was originally published in two volumes in 1890, but Frazer became so enamored of his topic that over the next few decades he expanded the work sixfold, then in 1922 cut it all down to a single thick edition suitable for mass distribution. The thesis on the origins of magic and religion that it elaborates "will be long and laborious," Frazer warns readers, "but may possess something of the charm of a voyage of discovery, in which we shall visit many strange lands, with strange foreign peoples, and still stranger customs." Chief among those customs--at least as the book is remembered in the popular imagination--is the sacrificial killing of god-kings to ensure bountiful harvests, which Frazer traces through several cultures,

including in his elaborations the myths of Adonis, Osiris, and Balder.

While highly influential in its day, *The Golden Bough* has come under harsh critical scrutiny in subsequent decades, with many of its descriptions of regional folklore and legends deemed less than reliable. Furthermore, much of its tone is rooted in a philosophy of social Darwinism--sheer cultural imperialism, really--that finds its most explicit form in Frazer's rhetorical question: "If in the most backward state of human society now known to us we find magic thus conspicuously present and religion conspicuously absent, may we not reasonably conjecture that the civilised races of the world have also at some period of their history passed through a similar intellectual phase?" (The truly civilized races, he goes on to say later, though not particularly loudly, are the ones whose minds evolve beyond religious belief to embrace the rational structures of scientific thought.) Frazer was much too genteel to state plainly that "primitive" races believe in magic because they are too stupid and backwards to know any better; instead he remarks that "a savage hardly conceives the distinction commonly drawn by more advanced peoples between the natural and the supernatural." And he certainly was not about to make explicit the logical extension of his theories--"that Christian legend, dogma, and ritual" (to quote Robert Graves's summation of Frazer in *The White Goddess*) "are the refinement of a great body of primitive and barbarous beliefs." Whatever modern readers have come to think of the book, however, its historical significance and the eloquence with which Frazer attempts to develop what one might call a unifying theory of anthropology cannot be denied. -
-Ron Hogan

Review *Nature* One of the greatest books. -- *Review*

- Title: The Golden Bough
 - Author: James George Frazer
 - Released: 1995-12-01
 - Language:
 - Pages: 880
 - ISBN: 0684826305
 - ISBN13: 978-0684826301
 - ASIN: 0684826305
-