

Westerners are) before they come to study Theosophy, then after they find the inner meaning of their own faith they will reject the dogmatic aspects of their original religion. They then become what could be called a Christian Theosophist, and would no longer be in harmony with whatever branch of dogmatic Christianity they originally claimed to be. From a Western religious definition, this makes Theosophy a competing religion.

In H. P. B.'s time the pendulum of public understanding was in a different place. There was no Western popularization of the Bahai faith or a Unitarian Universalist Church, and the nuances of Buddhism were still being introduced (mostly by Theosophists); in fact, the definition of religion at that time was more accurately synonymous with the word dogma. However, now there are many non-dogmatic faiths in public view. The West is moving forward, and in no small way in thanks to the efforts of the Theosophical Society.

One modern public definition of religion is as follows: "A set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs."

The only part of that definition not applying to Theosophy is in regards to devotional observances, and that seems to be flexible in this context. Of course, this is just one definition. And this article is not suggesting that "non-dogmatic religion" is a perfect term fit to define Theosophy, but neither is the word "philosophy" because no philosophy has built within its teachings doctrines on Cosmogony or Anthropogenesis. It is more accurate to say there is no word yet in the English language that could acceptably define what Theosophy is to the public understanding. But the Theosophical Society should not be so wary of being defined as a religion when it is done so; there is no reason to fear it, because by some more modern definitions it is accurate.

Theosophy has been accused of being a "pseudo-religion" by its attackers, and ironically that seems to now be a closer term describing it than the one it gives itself. Blavatsky said, "Now Religion, *per se*, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only *all* MEN, but also *all* BEINGS and all