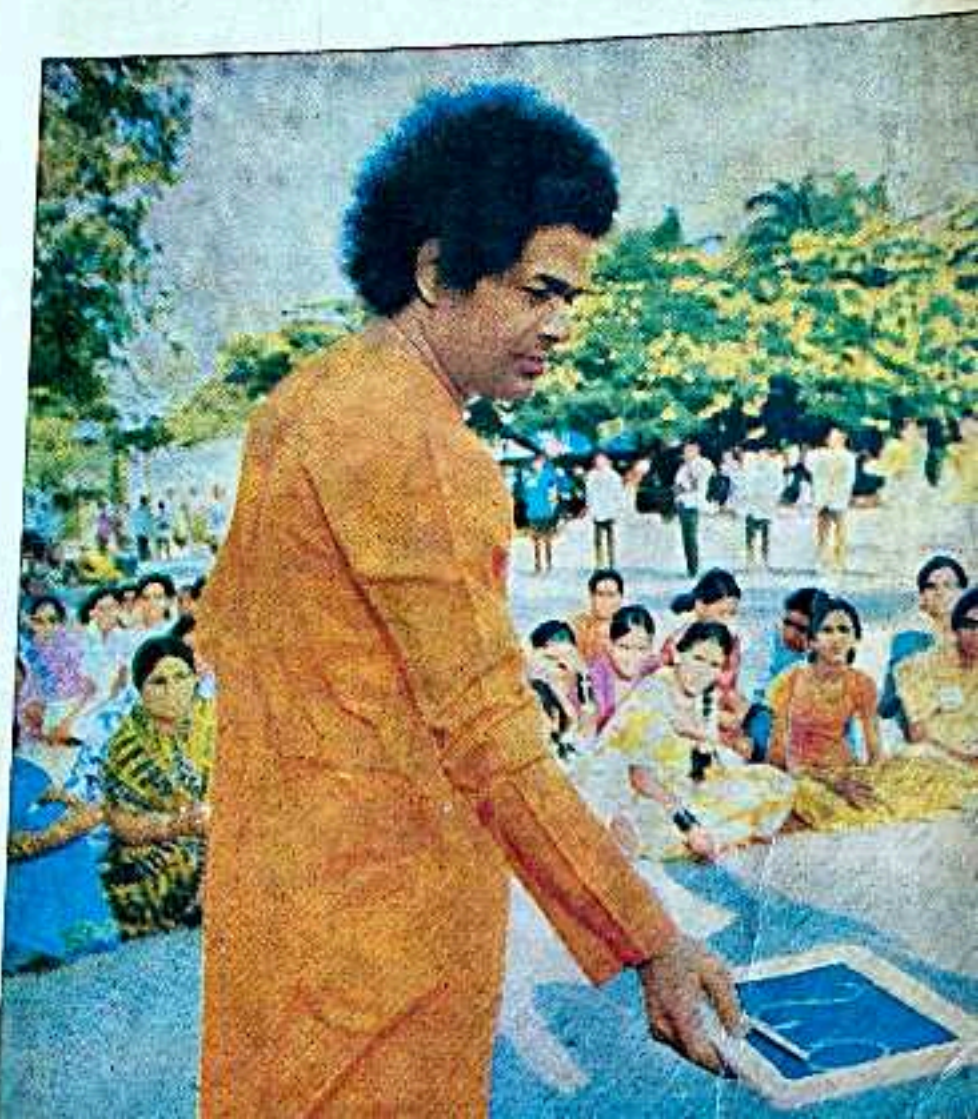


Sai Baba

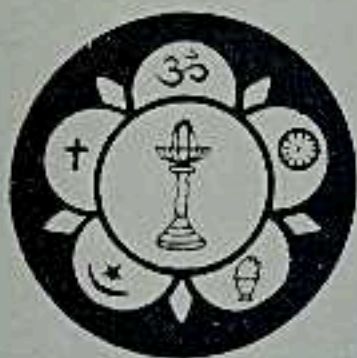
AND HIS MESSAGE

Edited by

DR S P RUHELA • DR DUANE ROBINSON



SAI BABA
AND HIS MESSAGE
A Challenge to Behavioural Sciences



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PREFACE

Rolland Robertson, editor of *Sociology of Religion* (Penguin, 1969), in his Introduction, has observed that "one of the most intriguing intellectual phenomena in the mid-twentieth century is the widespread interest in religion at a time when there is also extensive agreement that religious belief, as traditionally understood, has markedly declined in its *intrinsic* significance for most members of modern societies."

The importance of religion in generating and storing values and beliefs related to the meaning, purpose, and significance of man's life, as was studied by classical sociologists like Emile Durkheim of France and Max Weber of Germany, is again being studied in modern times. Modern sociologists view the study of religion as part of a general study of culture and knowledge. They are committed to a distinctive and wide-ranging perspective derived from within their own discipline, and to that extent they are able to ask questions which relate to all religions on a comparative basis or to distill out social features of one or a group of religious beliefs and the social processes by which and through which beliefs are maintained and expressed. Unlike the religious sociologist, the sociologist of religion seeks to illuminate the relationships between religion and other aspects of a society, such as its economics, politics, or science.

The editors of this volume are not religious sociologists. They also are not sociologists of religion of any considerable standing. They are sociologists whose interests range from institutional change, education, culture, science and knowledge to religion, folk-lore and mythology. In this volume they have included a number of articles in which are discussed a most surprising pheno-

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Sai Baba

The subject of this volume is **Sai Baba**, an incarnation of God in human form, whose declared mission is "to reconstruct the ancient highway to God."

Born in November 1926 in a tiny village in Andhra Pradesh, He demonstrated extraordinary powers even as a child. Today His wide influence and numerous miracles defy all explanation.

The contributors to this unique study of **Sai Baba** are sociologists, historians, psychologists, and psychiatrists who realize that **Baba's** unique spiritual presence poses a challenge to scientists and philosophers to develop new tools to understand a higher order of things.

Also included are reports of several devotees of **Sai Baba** who have repeatedly witnessed His mysteries and miracles, and who have benefited both materially and spiritually from them.

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