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Explore the Essential Teachings of the Ancients Serving as a theological basis for major world religions such as Christianity and Islam, the Hermetica has had an influence on Western culture that cannot be overstated. The collection of Greek texts attributed to some to the legendary Hellenistic god Hermes Trismegistus (literally, Hermes the thrice great) in second-century Alexandria is said to represent the divine philosophical and mystical practices of the pharaohs of Ancient Egypt (around 3000 BCE). In this creative, approachable introduction to the central ideas and essential teachings of the Hermetica, authors Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy offer a profoundly inspiring gateway to understanding and appreciating the profound wisdom of the ancients. Following an enlightening historical overview of the material contained in the massive Corpus Hermeticum, Freke and Gandy present a diverse sampling of Hermetic thought with extracts of Hermes's beautiful, poetic writings on topics including creation, the cosmos, human culture, prophecies, the Zodiac, incarnation of the soul, death, and immortality, and others. Along with each free-verse extract, the authors provide helpful commentary that explains the original text and places it in context for modern readers. An invaluable resource for initiates in Hermetic studies or anyone seeking a deeper understanding of human spirituality, mysticism, and consciousness, this book belongs on the bookshelves of any who seek a greater awareness of humanity's place in the cosmos. Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy are also the celebrated authors of *The Jesus Mysteries*, *Jesus and the Lost Gospels*, and *The Laughing Jesus*, as well as many other books on world spirituality. Ask the publishers to restore access to 500,000+ books. The Hermetica is the first easily accessible translation of the forgotten Egyptian classic that inspired some of the world's greatest artists, scientists, and philosophers, including Blake, Newton, Raleigh, Milton, Shelley, Shakespeare, Botticelli, Kepler, da Vinci, and Jung. Influencing the Egyptians, Greeks, and much of Western thought, this work is credited to Hermes, an ancient Egyptian sage who lived around 3000 B.C. and so revered that he was granted the title "Trismegistus" meaning "Thrice-great." Providing a fascinating mystical introduction to the philosophy of ancient Egypt that has influenced and shaped our world for five millennia, The Hermetica is a book for anyone interested in this lasting civilization or in the knowledge of sacred traditions. All download options have the same file, and should be safe to use. That said, always be cautious when downloading files from the internet, especially from sites external to Anna's Archive. For example, be sure to keep your devices updated. Help out the community by reporting the quality of this file! 0) A "file MD5" is a hash that gets computed from the file contents, and is reasonably unique based on that content. All shadow libraries that we have indexed on here primarily use MD5s to identify files. A file might appear in multiple shadow libraries. For information about the file that you have compiled, see the Datasets page. For information about this particular file, check out its JSON file. Live/debug JSON version. Live/debug page: THE HERMETICA The Lost Wisdom of the Pharaohs Tim Freke & Peter Gandy To the memory of Giordano Bruno, 1548-1600 Mundi Nihil Pulcherrimum The World is a Beautiful Nothing TIM FREKE is a spiritual pioneer whose works has touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. He is the author of more than 30 books, which have been translated into 15 languages, including a top 6 Amazon 'Surprise Bestseller' and Daily Telegraph 'Book of the Year'. Tim has spent his life exploring world spirituality and is able to guide others to a direct experience of the awakened state. He presents life-transforming retreats, experiential seminars and entertaining evenings of standup philosophy throughout the world and online. To watch free videos of Tim, find out about forthcoming events and subscribe to his inspirational 'WAKE UP CALL' newsletter, visit Peter Gandy an M.A. in classical civilisation and is an internationally respected authority on the ancient Pagan Mysteries and early Christianity. Cover art by Danni Evans - Copyright © 1997 by Timothy Freke. All rights reserved worldwide. No part of this publication may be replicated, redistributed, or given away in any form, without the prior written consent of the author/publisher or the terms referred to you herein. TABLE OF CONTENTS TITLE PAGE THE LAST WORDS OF THRIC-E-GREAT HERMES INTRODUCTION I. THE PROPHECIES OF HERMES II. THE INITIATION OF HERMES III. THE BEING OF ATUM IV. CONTEMPLATE CREATON V. THE LIVING COSMOS VI. THE CIRCLE OF TIME VII. THE GODS VIII. THE HIERARCHY OF CREATION IX. THE CREATION OF HUMANKIND X. THE BIRTH OF HUMAN CULTURE XI. MAN IS A MARVEL XII. THE ZODIAC AND DESTINY XIII. THE UNIVERSAL AND THE PARTICULAR XIV. INCARNATION AND THE SOUL XV. DEATH AND IMMORALITY XVI. IGNORANCE OF THE SOUL XVII. KNOWLEDGE OF ATUM XVIII. REBIRTH XIX. SECRET TEACHINGS XX. IN PRAISE OF ATUM SOURCES FOR TEXT OTHER BOOKS BY TIM FREKE & PETER GANDY THE LAST WORDS OF THRIC-E-GREAT HERMES 'Wise words, although written by my decayed hand, remain imperishable through time; imbued with the medicine of immortality by the All-Master. Be unseen and undiscovered by all those who will come and go, wandering the wastelands of life. Be hidden, until an older heaven births human beings who are worthy of your wisdom.' Having sounded this prayer over the works of his hands, Hermes was received into the sanctuary of eternity. INTRODUCTION A FORGOTTEN SPIRITUAL CLASSIC The Hermetica is a collection of writings attributed to Thoth — a mythical ancient Egyptian sage whose wisdom is said to have transformed him into a god. Thoth, who was venerated in Egypt from at least 3000 BCE, is credited with the invention of sacred hieroglyphic writing, and his figure, portrayed as a scribe with the head of an ibis, can be seen in many temples and tombs. He is the dispatcher of divine messages and recorder of all human deeds. In the Great Hall of Judgment, the after-life court of the god Osiris, Thoth would establish whether the deceased had acquired spiritual knowledge and purity, and so deserved a place in the heavens. Thoth was said to have revealed to the Egyptians all knowledge on astronomy, architecture, geometry, medicine and religion, and was believed by the ancient Greeks to be the architect of the pyramids. The Greeks, who were in awe of the knowledge and spirituality of the Egyptians, identified Thoth with their own god Hermes, the messenger of the gods and quidler of souls in the realm of the dead. To distinguish the Egyptian Hermes from their own, they gave him the title 'Trismegistus', meaning 'Thrice-Great', to honour his sublime wisdom. The books attributed to him became collectively known as the 'Hermetica'. Although largely unknown today, the writings attributed to Hermes/Hoth have been immensely important in the history of Western thought. They profoundly influenced the Greeks and, through their rediscovery in fifteenth-century Florence, helped to inspire the 'Renaissance' which gave birth to our modern age. The list of people who have acknowledged a debt to the Hermetica reads like a 'Who's Who' of the greatest philosophers, scientists and artists that the West has produced — Leonardo da Vinci, Durer, Botticelli, Roger Bacon, Paracelsus, Thomas More, William Blake, Kepler, Copernicus, Isaac Newton, Sir Walter Raleigh, Milton, Ben Johnson, Daniel Defoe, Shelley and his wife Mary, Victor Hugo and Carl Jung. It heavily influenced Shakespeare, John Donne, John Dee and all the poet-philosophers who surrounded the court of Queen Elizabeth I, as well as the founding scientists of the Royal Society in London, and even the leaders who inspired the Protestant Reformation in Europe. The list is endless, with the Hermetica's influence reaching well beyond the frontiers of Europe. Islamic mystics and philosophers also trace their inspiration back to Thrice-Great Hermes, and the esoteric tradition of the Jews equated him with their mysterious prophet Enoch. The Hermetica is a cornerstone of Western culture. In substance and importance it is equal to well-known Eastern scriptures like the Upanishads, the Dhammapada and the Tao Te Ching. Yet, unlike these texts which are now readily available and widely read, the works of Hermes have been lost under the dead weight of academic translations, Christian prejudice and occult obscurities. Until now, no simplified rendering of these writings has been available to the general reader. All previous versions in the English language are very dense, impenetrable, and loaded down with notes and subtext that make them difficult to digest. This new version, however, makes this ancient wisdom more easily accessible. It presents carefully selected extracts of the Hermetic texts, linked together into a narrative and rendered into easily understood English. What emerges is an inspiring and illuminating taste of a forgotten classic. THE HISTORY OF THE HERMETICA The early origins of the Hermetica are shrouded in mystery, but the evidence suggests it is a direct descendant of the ancient philosophy of the Egyptians. However, the handful of surviving works attributed to Hermes are not written in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, but in Greek, Latin and Coptic. They were collated in the city of Alexandria in Egypt during the second and third centuries CE. Here the Hermetic philosophy helped inspire some of the greatest intellectual achievements of the ancient world. Alexandria was a great centre of learning, surpassing even Athens. Its founder, Alexander the Great, had conquered and united Greece, Persia, Egypt and India into one vast empire. Cultures that had grown up more or less independently were brought together, and there was no bigger melting pot than Alexandria. Into this new 'Universal City' (Gk. *cosmos-polis*), poured men and women of every race and nation. Greeks, Jews, Egyptians, Babylonians, Phoenicians and even Buddhists from India associated together in relative peace. The Alexandrians were renowned for their thirst for knowledge, and under the enlightened Greek ruler Ptolemy I a library and museum were founded where human beings first systematically collected the wisdom of the world. At its height, the library of Alexandria housed some half a million scrolls. These included the works of Euclid, Archimedes and the astronomer Ptolemy, who dominated the spheres of geometry, mathematics and geography respectively until well into the Middle Ages. It contained the research of Aristarchus of Samos, who had shown that the Earth is one of the planets orbiting the sun, and Eratosthenes, who had calculated the circumference of the Earth to within a few per cent. Scientists of the library knew about the precession of the equinoxes and that the moon was responsible for the rhythm of the tides. Alexandria was also rich in esoteric knowledge — Pythagorism, Chaldean oracles, Greek myths, Platonic and Stoic philosophy, Judaism, Christianity, the Greek Mystery Schools, Zoroastrianism, astrology, alchemy, Buddhism and of course the ancient Egyptian religion were all practised, studied, compared and discussed. The golden age of Alexandria came to an end with the birth of the intolerant Christian 'Holy' Roman Empire. Despite the sophistication and cultural achievements of the ancients, the Christians referred to them dismissively as 'Pagans', which means 'country-dwellers'. In 415 CE Hypatia, one of the last great scientists and Pagan philosophers working at the library of Alexandria, was seized by a mob of Christians, who removed her flesh with scallop shells and burned her remains. Their leader, Bishop Cyril, was later canonised St Cyril. The great library was finally destroyed as so much Pagan superstition, and this wealth of knowledge was scattered to the four winds. The Christian Roman Emperor Theodosius closed pagan temples across the empire and began the previously unknown phenomenon of bookburning. For the West, the fifth century ushered in the thousand-year period appropriately known as the Dark Ages. THE HERMETICA AND ISLAM History shows that wherever the works of Hermes have been studied and venerated, civilisation has flourished. Pagan scholars and sages fled to the newly emerging Arab culture, taking their knowledge and the Hermetic writings with them. Two hundred years later, the Muslims created an empire whose learning and scientific achievements were undiscovered. By the beginning of the ninth century, the great university was established in the House of Wisdom in Baghdad, called the 'House of the Seven Sciences'. The scholars of the House of Wisdom were dispersed across the Islamic world, and the works of Hermes were studied and translated into Arabic. The Hermetica became the sole inspiration for an important new genre of Islamic philosophy, and the holy book of unorthodox religious sects such as the Sabaeans. We would never have heard of the mysterious Sabaeans had they not come into conflict with their religious authorities of the time. Several centuries after the death of the founder, Muhammad, Islam was beginning to succumb to the same desire for orthodoxy that had arisen in the Christian West. Heretics were to be rooted out, if necessary with violence. In 830 CE a powerful Caliph was born, and he was determined to stamp out the heresies of the mysterious Sabaeans. We would never have heard of the mysterious Sabaeans had they not come into conflict with their religious authorities of the time. Several centuries after the death of the founder, Muhammad, Islam was beginning to succumb to the same desire for orthodoxy that had arisen in the Christian West. Heretics were to be rooted out, if necessary with violence. 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