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Marsilio Ficino

[North Atlantic Books](#) **Marsilio Ficino was one of the most influential humanist philosophers of the early Italian Renaissance. Though an ordained priest, he was also a practicing astrologer and magician whose daunting life's work was to reconcile religious faith with philosophical reason — which included integrating pagan magical practice with Christianity. In a lengthy introduction, editor Angela Voss puts Ficino's achievement in context as a complete re-visioning of traditional astrological practice and the beginning of a humanistic and psychological approach that prefigured contemporary holistic approaches to astrology as therapy.**

John Dee

Essential Readings

[North Atlantic Books](#) **Although revered in his own time, John Dee (1527-1608) was until recently regarded as an isolated crank on the margins of Tudor history. This anthology of Dee's writings illustrates his diverse interests and his central position in the history of Renaissance thought and the development of Western Magic. Dee's celebrated Preface to Euclid is included along with selections from his Spiritual Diaries and letters to other mystics and royals. In addition to Hermetic and Cabalistic philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, astrology, and navigation are also covered.**

Helena Blavatsky

[North Atlantic Books](#) **At the age of 17, rejecting nineteenth-century materialism, Helena Blavatsky (1831-1891) left her native Russia and traveled through India, Tibet, Egypt, Europe, and the Americas seeking out the sources of ancient wisdom as a key to spiritual truth. In 1875 in New York, she co-founded the Theosophical Society for the study of occult traditions. Many popular ideas of rediscovered ancient wisdom, including reincarnation and karma, trace their origin to Helena Blavatsky and Theosophy. This anthology includes material on her life and travels, as well as excerpts from her major works.**

The Western Esoteric Traditions

A Historical Introduction

[Oxford University Press](#) **Western esotericism has now emerged as an academic study in its own right, combining spirituality with an empirical observation of the natural world while also relating the humanity to the universe through a harmonious celestial order. This introduction to the Western esoteric traditions offers a concise overview of their historical development. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke explores these traditions, from their roots in Hermeticism, Neo-Platonism, and Gnosticism in the early Christian era up to their reverberations in today's scientific paradigms. While the study of Western esotericism is usually confined to the history of ideas, Goodrick-Clarke examines the phenomenon much more broadly. He demonstrates that, far from being a strictly intellectual movement, the spread of esotericism owes a great deal to geopolitics and globalization. In Hellenistic culture, for example, the empire of Alexander the Great, which stretched across Egypt and Western Asia to provinces in India, facilitated a mixing of Eastern and Western cultures. As the Greeks absorbed ideas from Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, and Persia, they gave rise to the first esoteric movements. From the late sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, post-Reformation spirituality found expression in theosophy, Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry. Similarly, in the modern era, dissatisfaction with the hegemony of science in Western culture and a lack of faith in traditional Christianity led thinkers like Madame Blavatsky to look East for spiritual inspiration. Goodrick-Clarke further examines Modern esoteric thought in the light of new scientific and medical paradigms along with the analytical psychology of Carl Gustav Jung. This book traces the complete history of these movements and is the definitive account of Western esotericism.**

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Jacob Boehme

"This anthology serves as an introduction to Boehme's thought and will bring readers deeper into his philosophy. Part One gives biography and context of Boehme's writings and their influence on later scientists, alchemical researchers and poets. Part Two contains selections from Boehme's works grappling with his main themes including the birth of God and the vindication of His goodness. Of particular interest are a number of letters from Boehme which have never appeared previously in English."--BOOK JACKET.

The Planets Within

The Astrological Psychology of Marsilio Ficino

[SteinerBooks](#) **The Planets Within asks us to return to antiquity with new eyes. It centers on one of the most psychological movements of the prescientific age--Renaissance Italy, where a group of "inner Columbuses" charted territories that still give us today a much-needed sense of who we are and where we have come from, and the right routes to take toward fertile and unexplored places. Chief among these masters of the interior life was Marsilio Ficino, presiding genius of the Florentine Academy, who taught that all things exist in soul and must be lived in its light. This study of Ficino broadens and deepens our understanding of psyche, for Ficino was a doctor of soul, and his insights teach us the care and nurture of soul. Moore takes as his guide Ficino's own fundamental tool--imagination. Respecting the integrity and autonomy of images, The Planets Within unfolds a poetics of soul in a kind of dialogue between the laconic remarks of Ficino and the need to give these remarks a life and context for our day.**

Seeing with Different Eyes

Essays in Astrology and Divination

[Cambridge Scholars Publishing](#) **Seeing with Different Eyes: Essays in Astrology and Divination** represents the cutting-edge of contemporary thought and research on divination. The thirteen authors come from a variety of academic disciplines, ranging from anthropology and classics to English literature and religious studies, and all address the question of divination, astrology and oracles in a spirit of critical but sympathetic inquiry. The emphasis is on a participatory and reflexive approach which is firmly post-positivist, seeking to understand the divinatory act on its own terms within widely varying contexts - ancient Greek and Chaldean philosophy and theurgy, Theravada Buddhism, Biblical studies, Elizabethan Hermeticism, Jacobean drama, Heideggerian philosophy, Medieval scholasticism, 19th century occultism, contemporary Guatemalan divination and Western medical practice. The authors are all teachers or researchers in the area of divination and symbolism, which is a new disciplinary focus developing at the University of Kent, Canterbury under the aegis of the MA programme in the Cultural Study of Cosmology and Divination. The essays in this volume originally contributed to an international conference of the same name held there in April 2006.

Meditations on the Soul

Selected Letters of Marsilio Ficino

The problems that taxed the minds of people during the Renaissance were much the same as those confronting us today. In their perplexity, many deep-thinking people sought the advice of Marsilio Ficino (1433-99), the leader of the Platonic Academy in Florence, a magnet for the most brilliant scholars of 15th-century Europe. In devoting his life to the study and translation of the great dialogues of Plato and the Neoplatonists, Ficino and his colleagues were midwives to the birth of the modern world. Ficino was fearless in expressing what he knew to be true. Covering the widest range of topics, his letters offer a profound glimpse into the soul of the Renaissance.

Hermes in the Academy

Ten Years' Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam

[Amsterdam University Press](#) "Hermes in the Academy" commemorates the tenth anniversary of the Center for History of Hermetic Philosophy and related Currents (GHF) at the University of Amsterdam. The center devotes itself to the study of Western esotericism, which includes topics such as Hermetic philosophy, Christian kabbalah and occultism. This volume shows how, over the past ten years, the GHF has developed into the leading international center for research and teaching in this domain.

A Companion to the Premodern Apocalypse

[BRILL](#) **A Companion to the Premodern Apocalypse** offers a range of essays regarding apocalyptic expectations and apprehensions from antiquity to early modernity.

Art in the Age of Emergence (2nd Edition)

[Cambridge Scholars Publishing](#) This book delivers sensible emergent aesthetics, explaining the processes that happen in human minds when we share ideas as works of art, skewering the orthodoxies of contemporary art with pragmatic wisdom about why representational art thrives in the new millennium. Art in the Age of Emergence has captured the imaginations of thinkers and artists alike. This is an indispensable read for those who want to understand representational art in the 21st Century.

The Arabic Influences on Early Modern Occult Philosophy

[Springer](#) Investigating the impact of Arabic medieval astrological and magical theories on early modern occult philosophy, this book argues that they provided a naturalistic explanation of astral influences and magical efficacy based on Aristotelian notions of causality.

Western Sufism

Origins and Development, 833-1968

[Oxford University Press](#) Western Sufism is sometimes dismissed as a relatively recent "new age" phenomenon, but in this book Mark Sedgwick argues that it has deep roots, both in the Muslim world and in the West. In fact, although the first significant Western Sufi organization was not established until 1915, the first Western discussion of Sufism was printed in 1480, and Western interest in Sufi thought goes back to the thirteenth century. Sedgwick starts with the earliest origins of Western Sufism in late antique Neoplatonism and early Arab philosophy, and traces later origins in repeated intercultural transfers from the Muslim world to the West, in the thought of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment, and in the intellectual and religious ferment of the nineteenth century. He then follows the development of organized Sufism in the West from 1915 until 1968, the year in which the first Western Sufi order based on purely Islamic models was founded. Western Sufism shows the influence of these origins, of thought both familiar and less familiar: Neoplatonic emanationism, perennialism, pantheism, universalism, and esotericism. Western Sufism is the product not of the new age but of Islam, the ancient world, and centuries of Western religious and intellectual history. Using sources from antiquity to the internet, Sedgwick demonstrates that the phenomenon of Western Sufism draws on centuries of intercultural transfers and is part of a long-established relationship between Western thought and Islam.

A History of Light

The Idea of Photography

[Bloomsbury Publishing](#) When was photography invented, in 1826 with the first permanent photograph? If we depart from the technologically oriented accounts and consider photography as a philosophical discourse an alternative history appears, one which examines the human impulse to reconstruct the photographic or "the evoking of light". Its significance throughout the history of ideas is explored via the Platonic Dialogues, Iamblichus' theurgic writings, and Marsilio Ficino's texts. This alternative history is not a replacement of other narratives of photographic history but rather offers a way of rethinking photography's ontological instability.

Magic in Western Culture

From Antiquity to the Enlightenment

[Cambridge University Press](#) The story of the beliefs and practices called 'magic' starts in ancient Iran, Greece, and Rome, before entering its crucial Christian phase in the Middle Ages. Centering on the Renaissance and Marsilio Ficino, this richly illustrated and groundbreaking book treats magic as a classical tradition with foundations that were distinctly philosophical.

Piero's Light

[Simon and Schuster](#) In the tradition of *The Sverve* and *Galileo's Daughter*, *Piero's Light* reveals how art, religion and science came together at the dawn of the modern world in the paintings of one remarkable artist. An innovative painter in the early generation of Renaissance artists, Piero della Francesca was also an expert on religious topics and a mathematician who wanted to use perspective and geometry to make painting a "true science." Although only sixteen of Piero's works survive, few art historians doubt his importance in the Renaissance. A 1992 conference of international experts meeting at the National Gallery of Art deemed Piero, "One of the most highly regarded painters of the early Renaissance, and one of the most respected artists of all time." In recent years, the quest for Piero has continued among intrepid scholars, and *Piero's Light* uncovers the life of this remarkable artistic revolutionary and enduring legacy of the Italian Renaissance.

Diane di Prima

Visionary Poetics and the Hidden Religions

[Bloomsbury Publishing USA](#) Diane di Prima: *Visionary Poetics and the Hidden Religions* reveals how central di Prima was in the discovery, articulation and dissemination of the major themes of the Beat and hippie countercultures from the fifties to the present. Di Prima (1934--) was at the center of literary, artistic, and musical culture in New York City. She also was at the energetic fulcrum of the Beat movement and, with Leroi Jones (Amiri Baraka), edited *The Floating Bear* (1961-69), a central publication of the period to which William S. Burroughs, Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, Charles Olson, and Frank O'Hara contributed. Di Prima was also a pioneer in her challenges to conventional assumptions regarding love, sexuality, marriage, and the role of women. David Stephen Calonne charts the life work of di Prima through close readings of her poetry, prose, and autobiographical writings, exploring her thorough immersion in world spiritual traditions and how these studies informed both the form and content of her oeuvre. Di Prima's engagement in what she would call "the hidden religions" can be divided into several phases: her years at Swarthmore College and in New York; her move to San Francisco and immersion in Zen; her researches into the I Ching, Paracelsus, John Dee, Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, alchemy, Tarot, and Kabbalah of the mid-sixties; and her later interest in Tibetan Buddhism. Diane di Prima: *Visionary Poetics and the Hidden Religions* is the first monograph devoted to a writer of genius whose prolific work is notable for its stylistic variety, wit and humor, struggle for social justice, and philosophical depth.

Controversial New Religions

[Oxford University Press \(UK\)](#) In terms of public opinion, new religious movements are considered controversial for a variety of reasons ranging from how they speak, dress, and eat, to the way they think and their sense of community. Their social organization often runs counter to popular expectations by experimenting with communal living (or strict individualism), alternative leadership roles (or flat network structures), unusual economic dispositions, and new political and ethical values. As a result the general public views new religions with a mixture of curiosity, amusement, and anxiety, sustained by lavish media emphasis on oddness and tragedy rather than familiarity and lived experience. This updated and revised second edition of *Controversial New Religions* offers a scholarly, dispassionate look at those groups that have generated the most attention, including some very well-known classical groups like The Family, Unification Church, Scientology, and Jim Jones' People's Temple; some relative newcomers such as the Kabbalah Centre, the Order of the Solar Temple, Branch Davidians, Heaven's Gate, and the Falun Gong; and some interesting cases like contemporary Satanism, the Raelians, Black nationalism, and various Pagan groups. Written by established scholars as well as younger experts in the field, each essay combines an overview of the history and beliefs of each organization or movement with original and insightful analysis. By presenting decades of scholarly work on new religious movements in an accessible form, this book will be an invaluable resource for all those who seek a view of new religions that is deeper than what can be found in sensationalistic media stories.

Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism

[Oxford University Press](#) Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr offer the first comprehensive examination of one of the twentieth century's most distinctive occult iconoclasts, Aleister Crowley (1875-1947), one of the most influential thinkers in contemporary western esotericism.

Ficino and Fantasy

Imagination in Renaissance Art and Theory from Botticelli to Michelangelo

[BRILL](#) Did the Florentine philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433-99) influence the art of his time? This book starts with an exploration of Ficino's views on the imagination and discusses whether, how and why these ideas may have been received in Italian Renaissance works of art.

The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus

Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times

[Cornell University Press](#) "Perhaps Hermeticism has fascinated so many people precisely because it has made it possible to produce many analogies and relationships to various traditions: to Platonism in its many varieties, to Stoicism, to Gnostic ideas, and even to certain Aristotelian doctrines. The Gnostic, the esoteric, the Platonist, or the deist has each been able to find something familiar in the writings. One just had to have a penchant for remote antiquity, for the idea of a Golden Age, in order for Hermeticism, with its aura of an ancient Egyptian revelation, to have enjoyed such outstanding success."—from the Introduction *Hermes Trismegistus*, "thrice-great Hermes," emerged from the amalgamation of the wisdom gods Hermes and Thoth and is one of the most enigmatic figures of intellectual history. Since antiquity, the legendary "wise Egyptian" has been considered the creator of several mystical and magical writings on such topics as alchemy, astrology, medicine, and the transcendence of God. Philosophers of the Renaissance celebrated Hermes Trismegistus as the founder of philosophy, Freemasons called him their forefather, and Enlightenment thinkers championed religious tolerance in his name. To this day, Hermes Trismegistus is one of the central figures of the occult—his name is synonymous with the esoteric. In this scholarly yet accessible introduction to the history of Hermeticism and its mythical founder, Florian Ebeling provides a concise overview of the *Corpus Hermeticum* and other writings attributed to Hermes. He traces the impact of Christian and Muslim versions of the figure in medieval Europe, the power of Hermeticism and Paracelsian belief in Renaissance thought, the relationship to Pietism and to Freemasonry in early modern Europe, and the relationship to esotericism and semiotics in the modern world.

Solomon's Secret Arts

The Occult in the Age of Enlightenment

[Yale University Press](#) *DIVDIV* The late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are known as the Age of Enlightenment, a time of science and reason. But in this illuminating book, Paul Monod reveals the surprising extent to which Newton, Boyle, Locke, and other giants of rational thought and empiricism also embraced the spiritual, the magical, and the occult. *DIVDIV* Although public acceptance of occult and magical practices waxed and waned during this period they survived underground, experiencing a considerable revival in the mid-eighteenth century with the rise of new antiestablishment religious denominations. The occult spilled over into politics with the radicalism of the French Revolution and into literature in early Romanticism. Even when official disapproval was at its strongest, the evidence points to a growing audience for occult publications as well as to subversive popular enthusiasm. Ultimately, finds Monod, the occult was not discarded in favor of "reason" but was incorporated into new forms of learning. In that sense, the occult is part of the modern world, not simply a relic of an unenlightened past, and is still with us today. *DIVDIV*

Start Now!

A Book of Soul and Spiritual Exercises : Meditation Instructions, Meditations, Exercises, Verses for Living a Spiritual Year, Prayers for the Dead & Other Practices for Beginning and Experienced Practitioners

[SteinerBooks](#) *Start Now!* offers an extensive and representative sample of Steiner's spiritual instructions and meditative practices, including meditation instructions; mantric verses; daily, weekly and monthly practices for the development of soul qualities; karmic exercises and meditations for working with the dead, the angelic hierarchies and our guardian angel.

The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft in the West

From Antiquity to the Present

[Cambridge University Press](#) This book presents twenty chapters by experts in their fields, providing a thorough and interdisciplinary overview of the theory and practice of magic in the West. Its chronological scope extends from the Ancient Near East to twenty-first-century North America; its objects of analysis range from Persian curse tablets to US neo-paganism. For comparative purposes, the volume includes chapters on developments in the Jewish and Muslim worlds, evaluated not simply for what they contributed at various points to European notions of magic, but also as models of alternative development in ancient Mediterranean legacy. Similarly, the volume highlights the transformative and challenging encounters of Europeans with non-Europeans, regarding the practice of magic in both early modern colonization and more recent decolonization.

A History of Western Astrology Volume II

The Medieval and Modern Worlds

[Bloomsbury Publishing](#) Astrology is a major feature of contemporary popular culture. Recent research indicates that 99% of adults in the modern west know their birth sign. In the modern west astrology thrives as part of our culture despite being a pre-Christian, pre-scientific world-view. Medieval and Renaissance Europe marked the high water mark for astrology. It was a subject of high theological speculation, was used to advise kings and popes, and to arrange any activity from the beginning of battles to the most auspicious time to have one's hair cut. Nicholas Campion examines the foundation of modern astrology in the medieval and Renaissance worlds. Spanning the period between the collapse of classical astrology in the fifth century and the rise of popular astrology on the web in the twentieth, Campion challenges the historical convention that astrology flourished only between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries. Concluding with a discussion of astrology's popularity and appeal in the twenty-first century, Campion asks whether it should be seen as an integral part of modernity or as an element of the post-modern world.

The Occult World

[Routledge](#) This volume presents students and scholars with a comprehensive overview of the fascinating world of the occult. It explores the history of Western occultism, from ancient and medieval sources via the Renaissance, right up to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and contemporary occultism. Written by a distinguished team of contributors, the essays consider key figures, beliefs and practices as well as popular culture.

Singing to the Lyre in Renaissance Italy

Memory, Performance, and Oral Poetry

[Cambridge University Press](#) The first comprehensive study of the dominant form of solo singing in Renaissance Italy prior to the mid-sixteenth century.

Against the Modern World

Traditionalism and the Secret Intellectual History of the Twentieth Century

[Oxford University Press](#) *Against the Modern World* is the first history of Traditionalism, an important yet surprisingly little-known twentieth-century anti-modern movement. Comprising a number of often secret but sometimes very influential religious groups in the West and in the Islamic world, it affected mainstream and radical politics in Europe and the development of the field of religious studies in the United States, touching the lives of many individuals. French writer Rene Guenon rejected modernity as a dark age and sought to reconstruct the Perennial Philosophy - the central truths behind all the major world religions. Guenon stressed the urgent need for the West's remaining spiritual and intellectual elite to find personal and collective salvation in the surviving vestiges of ancient religious traditions. A number of disenchanted intellectuals responded to his call. In Europe, America, and the Islamic world, Traditionalists founded institutes, Sufi brotherhoods, Masonic lodges, and secret societies. Some attempted unsuccessfully to guide Fascism and Nazism along Traditionalist lines; others later participated in political terror in Italy. Traditionalist ideas were the ideological cement for the alliance of anti-democratic forces in post-Soviet Russia, and in the Islamic world entered the debate about the relationship between Islam and modernity. Although its appeal in the West was ultimately limited, Traditionalism has wielded enormous influence in religious studies, through the work of such Traditionalists as Ananda Coomaraswamy, Huston Smith, Mircea Eliade, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

Innovation in Esotericism from the Renaissance to the Present

[Springer Nature](#) This collection explores the role of innovation in understanding the history of esotericism. It illustrates how innovation is a mechanism of negotiation whereby an idea is either produced against, or adapted from, an older set of concepts in order to respond to a present context. Featuring contributions from distinguished scholars of esotericism, it covers many different fields and themes including magic, alchemy, Rosicrucianism, Theosophy, Tarot, apocalypticism and eschatology, Mesmerism, occultism, prophecy, and mysticism.

Plato's Persona

Marsilio Ficino, Renaissance Humanism, and Platonic Traditions

[University of Pennsylvania Press](#) In 1484, humanist philosopher and theologian Marsilio Ficino published the first complete Latin translation of Plato's extant works. *Plato's Persona* is the first book to undertake a synthetic study of Ficino's interpretation of the Platonic corpus.

The Passion Of The Western Mind

Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View

[Random House](#) *The Passion of the Western Mind* is a complete guide to Western civilisation and the philosophical ideas that have shaped our world view. From Plato to Hegel, from Augustine to Nietzsche, from Copernicus to Freud, Richard Tarnas described profound philosophical concepts simply, but without simplifying them. Ten years in the making, *The Passion of the Western Mind* was hailed as an instant classic on publication. In it, Tarnas provides a compelling account of the evolution of the Western mind and its changing conception of reality. Advances on several fronts - in philosophy, psychology, religious studies and the history of science - have shed new light on this remarkable evolution and Tarnas draws together these advances to set forth a new perspective for understanding out culture's intellectual and spiritual history. The result is a complete liberal education in a single volume.

The Emergence of a Scientific Culture

Science and the Shaping of Modernity 1210-1685

[Clarendon Press](#) Why did science emerge in the West and how did scientific values come to be regarded as the yardstick for all other forms of knowledge? Stephen Gaukroger shows just how bitterly the cognitive and cultural standing of science was contested in its early development. Rejecting the traditional picture of secularization, he argues that science in the seventeenth century emerged not in opposition to religion but rather was in many respects driven by it. Moreover, science did not present a unified picture of nature but was an unstable field of different, often locally successful but just as often incompatible, programmes. To complicate matters, much depended on attempts to reshape the persona of the natural philosopher, and distinctive new notions of objectivity and impartiality were imported into natural philosophy, changing its character radically by redefining the qualities of its practitioners. The West's sense of itself, its relation to its past, and its sense of its future, have been profoundly altered since the seventeenth century, as cognitive values generally have gradually come to be shaped around scientific ones. Science has not merely brought a new set of such values to the task of understanding the world and our place in it, but rather has completely transformed the task, redefining the goals of enquiry. This distinctive feature of the development of a scientific culture in the West marks it out from other scientifically productive cultures. In *The Emergence of a Scientific Culture*, Stephen Gaukroger offers a detailed and comprehensive account of the formative stages of this development—and one which challenges the received wisdom that science was seen to be self-evidently the correct path to knowledge and that the benefits of science were immediately obvious to the disinterested observer.

Three Books on Life

[Mrts](#)

The Archidoxes of Magic

[Literary Licensing, LLC](#) This Is A New Release Of The Original 1920 Edition.

Esotericism, Religion, and Nature

[New Cultures Press](#) In this groundbreaking collection, leading scholars in this emerging field explore how nature can be understood in a wide range of esoteric religious contexts. Included here are articles on subjects ranging from alchemy and panpsychism to music, Appalachian folk magic, and new religions. *Esotericism, Religion, and Nature* illuminates the way that nature is understood by figures and in traditions that historically have not always been recognized or well understood. Taken together, these articles shed new light on the connections between humanity, nature, and religion. Authors include Joscelyn Godwin, Wouter Hanegraaff, Lee Irwin, Richard Smoley, Arthur Versluis, M. E. Warlick, and many others. The second in a series of volumes on Western esotericism, this book emerged from international academic conferences held by the Association for the Study of Esotericism (www.aseweb.org). Edited by Arthur Versluis, Claire Fanger, Lee Irwin, and Melinda Phillips

The Quest For Hermes Trismegistus

[Floris Books](#) From the sands of Alexandria via the Renaissance palaces of the Medicis, to our own times, this spiritual adventure story traces the profound influence of Hermes Trismegistus -- the 'thrice-great one', as he was often called -- on the western mind. For centuries his name ranked among the most illustrious of the ancient world. Considered by some a contemporary of Moses and a forerunner of Christ, this almost mythical figure arose in fourth century BC Alexandria, from a fusion of the Egyptian god Thoth and the Greek god Hermes. Master of magic, writing, science, and philosophy, Hermes was thought to have walked with gods and be the source of the divine wisdom granted to man at the dawn of time. Gary Lachman has written many books exploring ancient traditions for the modern mind. In *The Quest for Hermes Trismegistus*, he brings to life the mysterious character of this great spiritual guide, exposing the many theories and stories surrounding him, and revitalizing his teachings for the modern world. Through centuries of wars, conquests and religious persecutions, the fragile pages of the teachings of Hermes Trismegistus have still survived. This is a book for all thinkers and enquirers who want to recover that lost knowledge and awaken a shift in human consciousness.

Emanuel Swedenborg

Essential Readings

[North Atlantic Books](#) Best known for his focus on the intuitive force within, Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) also anticipated major modern discoveries in mineralogy, psychology, and anatomy. In this succinct and readable collection, Stanley expertly brings the most significant writings from Swedenborg's oeuvre together, showing readers a man who created a hieroglyphic language, reimagined the Genesis story, influenced Blake, Balzac, Strindberg, and Yeats, and authored a number of anonymous works that put the Swedish clergy of his day on high alert. This is the fourth title in the Western Esoteric Masters Series from North Atlantic Books.

Robert Fludd

Essential Readings

[North Atlantic Books](#) Renaissance man, Elizabethan philosopher, and scholar Robert Fludd sought to integrate the whole of human knowledge within a divine and hierarchically ordered cosmology. After completing his education at Oxford University, he journeyed throughout Europe seeking the knowledge of mystics, scientists, musicians, physicians, and alchemists, leading to the publication of many historically influential works on science, medicine, and philosophy.

Picatrix

A Medieval Treatise on Astral Magic

[Penn State Press](#) A manual for constructing talismans, mixing magical compounds, summoning planetary spirits, and determining astrological conditions, *Picatrix* is a cornerstone of Western esotericism. It offers important insights not only into occult practices and beliefs but also into the transmission of magical ideas from antiquity to the present. Dan Attrell and David Porreca's English translation opens the world of this vital medieval treatise to modern-day scholars and lay readers. The original text, *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, was compiled in Arabic from over two hundred sources in the latter half of the tenth century. It was translated into Castilian Spanish in the mid-thirteenth century, and shortly thereafter into Latin. Based on David Pingree's edition of the Latin text, this translation captures the spirit of *Picatrix*'s role in the European tradition. In the world of *Picatrix*, we see a seamless integration of practical magic, earnest piety, and traditional philosophy. The detailed introduction considers the text's reception through multiple iterations and includes an enlightening statistical breakdown of the rituals described in the book. Framed by extensive research on the ancient and medieval context that gave rise to the Latin version of the text, this translation of *Picatrix* will be an indispensable volume for students and scholars of the history of science, magic, and religion and will fascinate anyone interested in the occult.