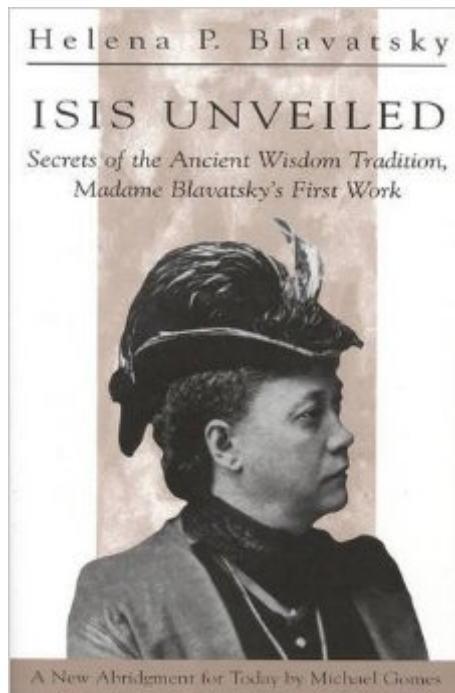


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Isis Unveiled: Secrets Of The Ancient Wisdom Tradition, Madame Blavatsky's First Work



Synopsis

Creating a sensation when it was first published in 1877, the first major work by the young Russian noblewoman who would found the Theosophical Society devoted 1200 pages to the mysteries of ancient and modern science and theology. This new edition abridged by Theosophical scholar Michael Gomes breathes fresh life into this classic of Western esoteric thinking. Stripped of its lengthy quotations from other writers and its repetitious commentary, Isis Unveiled is revealed to be a clear and readable exploration of the universal truths of the Ancient Wisdom Tradition by one of the most remarkable women of modern times.

Book Information

Paperback: 291 pages

Publisher: Quest Books; Abridged edition (November 25, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0835607291

ISBN-13: 978-0835607292

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (119 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #133,683 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > New Age & Spirituality > Theosophy](#)

Customer Reviews

I recommend this edition of "Isis Unveiled" as it has detailed endnotes from the editor that situate key textual references within their nineteenth century context. This edition also has an important historical introduction by its editor Boris de Zirkoff. That being said, it is important to note that these two volumes, purported to be dictated or inspired by disincarnate and incarnate personalities, contain a stunning wealth of historical, mythical, philosophical, and semi-scientific material. Blavatsky wrote the text to resurrect what she called the "Ancient Wisdom" during a period of scientific materialism on the one side and spiritualism, with its claims about the life of the dead, on the other. She wished to situate her theosophical perspective within an older Platonic tradition that would give due place to matter (an inferior but quite real position) and yet to the power of spirit to shape and transform matter. Her fight with Darwin did not entail a simple rejection, but rather left the field of physical evolution to him (and Wallace), while making room for a prior (temporally and ontologically) involution in which spirit encased itself more and more in matter. In her view, we have

reached the deepest level of involution and are now on the cusp of a return back toward the light of spirit from which we have come. She posited an emanationist Platonic cosmology but one that tried, not always successfully, to honor the science of the nineteenth century. Yet she was also a master polemicist and took on the Christian theology of her time, with special hatred reserved for the missionaries working in India.

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