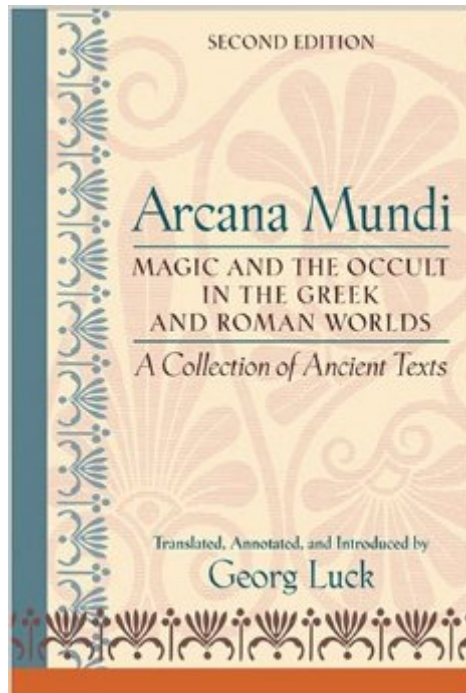


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Arcana Mundi: Magic And The Occult In The Greek And Roman Worlds: A Collection Of Ancient Texts



Synopsis

Magic, miracles, daemonology, divination, astrology, and alchemy were the *arcana mundi*, the "secrets of the universe," of the ancient Greeks and Romans. In this path-breaking collection of Greek and Roman writings on magic and the occult, Georg Luck provides a comprehensive sourcebook and introduction to magic as it was practiced by witches and sorcerers, magi and astrologers, in the Greek and Roman worlds. In this new edition, Luck has gathered and translated 130 ancient texts dating from the eighth century BCE through the fourth century CE. Thoroughly revised, this volume offers several new elements: a comprehensive general introduction, an epilogue discussing the persistence of ancient magic into the early Christian and Byzantine eras, and an appendix on the use of mind-altering substances in occult practices. Also added is an extensive glossary of Greek and Latin magical terms. In *Arcana Mundi* Georg Luck presents a fascinating and at times startling alternative vision of the ancient world. "For a long time it was fashionable to ignore the darker and, to us, perhaps, uncomfortable aspects of everyday life in Greece and Rome," Luck has written. "But we can no longer idealize the Greeks with their 'artistic genius' and the Romans with their 'sober realism.' Magic and witchcraft, the fear of demons and ghosts, the wish to manipulate invisible powers—all of this was very much a part of their lives."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Arcana Mundi by Georg Luck is a valuable collection of primary resources for accounts and practices of the occult and witchcraft. Any pagan wanting primary source material should look here

first. A+!

Arcana Mundi: Magic And The Occult In The Greek And Roman Worlds: A Collection Of Ancient Texts appears in a new edition, translating a hundred thirty ancient texts dating from the 8th century through the 4th century. It's been revised to offer several new elements, from a general introduction to an epilogue on ancient magic's appearance in early Christian and Byzantine eras. Add notes on mind-altering substances in occult practices and a detailed glossary of Greek and Latin magical terms and you have quite a different, enhanced version of the original, deserving of ongoing recommendation.

This is a fantastic book for both the Classicist or modern reader. From a researcher's point of view it's an incredible wealth of knowledge. Luck delves into all the expected categories and even some less often discussed. If you are researching such topics in the ancient world this is the book you need to start with. I guarantee you will refer back to it countless times. It will give you comprehensive starting points and ideas. If these subjects are of interest to you and you are simply looking for a book to inform, this will do quite well. While its information is central and clearly stated it also gives you the avenues to pursue further study of certain topics. It's full of factual, organized and interesting details pertaining to all matters of ancient magic, occult and religion. I recommend this to any classicist, researcher, historian or general knowledge seeker!

This work contains a tremendous collection of texts relating to magic in the Greek and Roman worlds. The source material offers a great deal of food for thought and is quite helpful in more advanced areas of classical studies, in particular the connection between magic and religion. The analysis could be better in places, but this is first and foremost a collection of ancient texts, not a treatise on the topic. Therefore, my advice to most readers is to treat the analysis with a fair bit of skepticism but pay close attention to the content of the source material.

"Paganism" has usually been portrayed and perceived as some primitive hodge-podge of superstitions. The picture changes when one realizes that these beliefs were parts of a widespread, formally organized, religion. This book points to that fact, while revealing "secrets" compiled from Classical and historical sources. Good stuff.

Very dry and academic. It was not what I expected so I returned it for a refund which the seller

promptly acted upon.

This is an excellent book to read if you love history and antiquity. A must read

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