



The Philosopher's Secret Fire

Patrick Harpur

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Is there any place for the ancient myths of our ancestors in modern times? Could their shadowy presence in our common imagination be more influential than we realize?

Across the globe many societies still believe in an Otherworld of spirits, gods and daimons, which the West has banished to the unconscious mind and now only visits in dreams. Yet this visionary tradition continues to subvert the rational universe, erupting out of the shadows in times of intense religious and philosophical transition.

In his dazzling history of the imagination, Patrick Harpur links together fields as far apart as Greek philosophy and depth psychology, Renaissance magic and tribal ritual, Romantic poetry and the ecstasy of the shaman, to trace how myths have been used to make sense of the world. He uncovers that tradition which alchemists imagined as a Golden Chain of initiates, who passed their mysterious 'secret fire' down through the ages.

As this inspiring book shows, the secret of this perennial wisdom is of an imaginative insight: a simple way of seeing that re-enchants our existence and restores us to our own true selves.

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