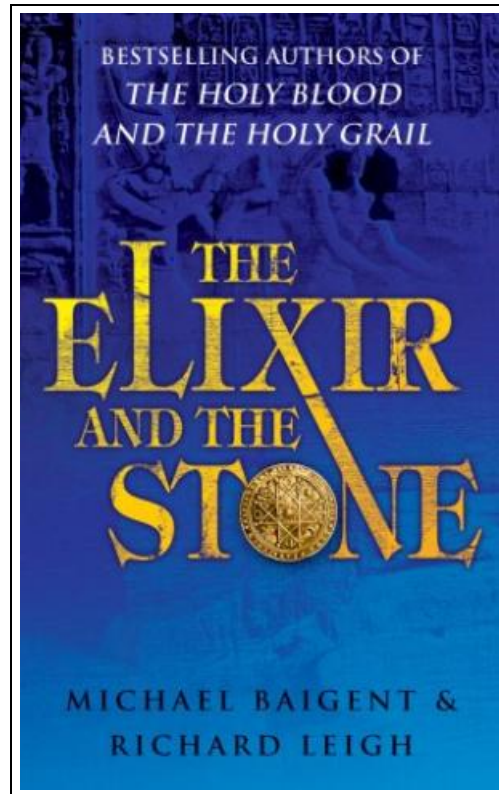


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THE ELIXIR AND THE STONE: THE TRADITION OF MAGIC AND ALCHEMY



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Cornerstone. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The Elixir and the Stone: The Tradition of Magic and Alchemy, Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, Since the seventeenth century, science has been contending with philosophy, organised religion and the arts for domination over Western civilisation and society. By the middle of the twentieth century, the battle appeared to be won; scientific rationalism and scepticism were triumphant. Yet in the last few decades a strong and potent counter-current has emerged. One manifestation of this has been the so-called occult revival. In "The Elixir and the Stone", Baigent and Leigh argue that this occult revival - and indeed the entire revolution in attitudes which has taken place recently - owes a profound debt to Hermeticism, a body of esoteric teaching, which flourished in Alexandria two thousand years ago and which then went underground. The authors trace the history of this intriguing and all-encompassing philosophy - which has much in common with contemporary holistic thought - charting its origin in the Egyptian mysteries, and demonstrating how it continued to exercise enormous influence through the magicians and magic of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Many remarkable characters feature in the narrative, including the Franciscan friar Roger Bacon and the Elizabethan magus John Dee; prototype of Shakespeare's "Prospero" in "The Tempest", but the central figure that emerges is that of Faust himself - one of the defining myths of Western civilisation. "The Elixir and the Stone" is a remarkably rich and ambitious book that adds up to a little short of an alternative history of the intellectual world. Perhaps for the first time, it puts into their true context those shadowy alchemists and magicians who have haunted the imaginations of people for centuries. Moreover, it offers a way of looking at the world that is in one...



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