
This impressive volume makes an important contribution to the understanding of occult concepts in the nineteenth century, their origins, and their influence on modern culture. In the introduction, Pokorny, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Vienna, and Winter, Professor
of Religious Studies at the University of Graz, point to the need for a scholarly examination of occult currents, which they deem an important aspect of both European and non-European religious history. They present the “guiding theme” of the collection, which is based on the “triad of mesmerism, occultism, and yoga.” They thus follow up the groundbreaking scholarship of Karl Baier (b. 1954), to whom this volume is dedicated. The subsequent 17 chapters are divided into four sections, beginning with thorough examinations of various aspects of “Mesmerism” (Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Maren Sziede, Júlia Gyimesi, Dominic S. Zoehrer). Thereafter, in “Occultism in America and Europe,” various occult/esoteric currents are presented with different theoretical perspectives (Jens Schlieter, Olav Hammer, Marco Pasi, John Patrick Deveney, Pokorny, Per Faxneld). “Occultism in Global Perspective” extends the discussion to global developments (Winter, Mriganka Mukhopadhyay, Almut-Barbara Renger, Hans Gerald Hödl). The last section is devoted to the question of the connection between “Occultism and Modern Yoga” and shows by means of individual case studies the influence of nineteenth-century occultism on the development of modern yoga (Keith Edward Cantú, Magdalena Kraler, Marlis Lami). The volume represents a compilation of highly original scholarship, being a valuable and muchrecommended addition to the study of occultism and esotericism.

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