Who is Hermes Trismegistus?
And how did he influence Modern Witchcraft?

Detail from the late 15th c. marble-inlay floor mosaic from the Duomo, Siena.
Heron Michelle

- Chapter 2: Hermetic Foundations in my book: Elemental Witchcraft (Llewellyn 2021)
- Find me at HeronMichelle.com
- My book and all magickal materials are available from my store: http://thesojo.com
This Workshop (attempts to) answer...

- Who is this fellow Hermes Trismegistus?
- What does Hermetic Philosophy teach?
- How does the Pymander cosmology address all gender possibilities within Divinity?
- Where do the "Seven Hermetic Principles" actually come from?
- How did this Egyptian philosophy find its way into British Wicca?
- What modern occult practices were derived from Hermetic philosophy?
Who is Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus?

Is he something like a pagan/occult bodhisattva? Like Buddha or Jesus?
Sage, God, or both?

Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus is a legendary figure from ancient Egypt, possibly 2100 BCE.

A sage of superhuman stature, like Odysseus or Hercules. Teacher, prophet, inventor of the technologies of civilization: Astrology, Magic, alchemy.

Trismegistus translates as “thrice-greatest,” a common Egyptian epithet for their god Thoth: Ibis-headed God of knowledge, magic, writing and the moon.

Philosophers in Alexandria, being both Egyptian by heritage, and educated in Greek philosophy, conflated Thoth with the Greek God Hermes, and by his Roman name, Mercury.
Hermes Trismegistus was a mortal Egyptian priest who received a vision from the Divine Source of the Cosmos, achieving gnosis (oneness with Divinity).

Magical Papyri addresses him as ruler of the world, revered as omniscient.

“As king of all knowledge and father and teacher of all; he instructed Isis and Osiris, the gods of civilization. Yet he was mortal: it is stressed that when he died, he ascended to the heavens and became the like-named Mercury... He was the cognitive link between the transcendent God and his creation.”

Secret History, Florian Ebeling page 27

...he became the god Thoth, founding his Temple as its first priest, to preserve the mysteries, continuing to guide humans towards gnosis.
Two Classes of Hermetic Texts

Philosophical-theological Hermetica:
- Corpus Hermeticum (100–400 ce)
- Asclepius (200–300 ce)
- Nag Hammadi Library: The Ogdoad Reveals the Ennead (fourth Century ce)

Technical Hermetica:
- Astrological: Book on the 36 Decans (100 bce)
- Magical: Papyri Graecae Magicae (200–400 ce)
- Medical: Cyranidë (100–400 ce)
- Alchemical: Mentioned by earliest well-known alchemist, Zosimus of Panopolis late 3rd–early 4th Century ce, The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismestus (800 ce)
Hermes Trismegistus is credited as the source of a collection of 18 texts, or tractates, which together make up a body of work known as the Corpus Hermeticum. The first book is a cosmological story called The Pymander (Poimandres).

Written in Alexandria Egypt, around the 2nd and 3rd Centuries CE by many pupils and teachers, who credited them to Hermes, as was the common practice of the time.

Foundational writings and teachings of a philosophy known as Hermeticism.

Similar to other ancient scriptures from that region like the Torah, Bible, or Koran, and are of a relatively similar age.
At the end of the Pymander Cosmology, Hermes is given the mission to teach others what he learned during his vision and Gnosis.

He was only to teach people worthy and prepared to receive this knowledge.

Thus the tradition of the mystery school was born.

It was long assumed that these were the magickal mysteries being safe-guarded by the legendarily powerful and advanced Egyptian Priests of Thoth.
Origins and Development of Hermetic Philosophy

- Alexander the Great invaded Egypt in 332 BCE, bringing Greek culture and religion with him. He built the name-sake city of Alexandria, where the great library stood. Here the Greek philosophical schools mingled with the robust Egyptian culture and created a renowned center of learning. Intellectuals from all over the ancient world came together in debate.

- After Rome conquered Egypt in 30 BCE, Hermetic philosophy developed in Alexandria over the first three centuries of the common era. This coincides with the introduction and development of early Christianity. The Roman Empire officially Christianized in 325 CE.

- By 391 CE religious riots broke out and the Serapeum which was the remaining temple of the old Library of Alexandria, was destroyed. Many books attributed to Hermes Trismegistus are known to have been destroyed in that fire.

- Heresy against the Christian doctrine meant a death sentence. Many of the Hermetic Philosophers migrated east into pre-Islamic Persia (modern-day Iran and Iraq) where they guardedly continued their studies.
Hermetic Alchemy Emerges In Persia

In Persia the occult arts and sciences of Astrology, Alchemy, Qabala/Kabalah evolved over the centuries.

The word “alchemy” was formed due to the Greek word for Egypt being Khem, or Khemet, which meant “The Black Land.” This described the dark, fertile soil left by the flooding of the Nile.

Knowledge of the Egyptian sciences were called Khemia, or The Black Art, by the Greeks.

After the Egyptian Hermeticists migrated into Persia, the Arabic prefix Al- (the) was added, the word Al-khemia came to be roughly translated as “The Black Arts of Egypt.” Later the spelling shifted to what we know now as Alchemy.

Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi (865-925 AD) was a Persian polymath, physician, alchemist, philosopher and scholar. Illustration from Vies Des Savants Illustrates, Savants Du Moyen-Age by Louis Figuier, 1883.
Philosophy or Religion?

Alexandrian scholars instructed in the natural Greek Philosophies sought to dismiss the old dogmatic and orthodox interpretations of Greece, and seek “god” through their own philosophic religion.

The Hermetic philosophy that emerged is an example of a syncretic, second-generation “pagan” religion.

Comparison: Buddhism diverges from a basis in Hindu polytheism, in the same way that Hermeticism diverges from a basis in the classical Hellenic/Egyptian polytheism.

Focus shifts to the philosophy and practices of personal improvement, rather than the religious worship of deities.

Both revere the human teacher of that Gnosis of “God”, without defaulting to a worship of that teacher.

In *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus*, Florian Ebeling described the many philosophical influences of Hermeticism as:

“Both the figure and writings of Hermes Trismegistus were the product of the syncretic, Hellenistic philosophy of nature, which itself was a conglomeration of Aristotelian, Platonic, Stoic, and Pythagorean doctrines, interspersed with motifs from Egyptian mythology, and themes of Jewish and Iranian origin.”

Hermetic Alchemy in Western Europe

- 800 CE alchemy began to migrate into Western Europe with the entry of Islamic populations.
- 1460. Cosimo D'Medici in Italy receives from the monk Leonardo of Pistoia a codex with 14 treatises of Hermes Trismegistus.
- Scholar Marsilo Ficino is commissioned to translate them into Latin.
- The availability of the complete Corpus Hermeticum in Latin took off like wildfire across Renaissance Europe, spawning many more works in the fields of astrology, alchemy, medicine, and magick.
- This is also what kicked off the Alchemical search for ways to “turn lead into gold” and make the “Philosopher’s Stone” for immortality.
Did Hermes teach Moses, Plato and Pythagorus?

Because Augustine (4th Century) had assumed that Hermes was a contemporary of Moses, and a 2nd C. BCE Jewish writer Artapanus imagined that Moses and Hermes were the same person, Ficino took for granted that Hermes was a contemporary of Moses, and the literal author of the writings.

Since Moses was raised in Egypt as a prince, it was assumed the Temple priests of Thoth taught the Hermetic Mysteries to him.

This is why in the Renaissance, Hermes was considered a founding father of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and the inspiration of earliest Greek Philosophers through to Plato, elevating Platonic philosophy to equal authority as the Hebrew Prophets. (The Way of Hermes, p. 81)

For a while the study of Hermetic Alchemy was socially acceptable by Christian scholars such as Sir Isaac Newton, who wrote more than a million words on Alchemy.
1614 - Isaac Casaubon, Swiss Calvinist Philosopher, publishes *De rebus sacris et ecclesiasticis exercitationes XVI* with his proof that the Corpus Hermeticum could not have been written down earlier than the first Century CE.

Therefore they had nothing to do with Moses

Did NOT predate or found Judeo-Christian religions OR Platonic Philosophy.

Rather, classical “pagan” Greek philosophies influenced the Hermetic writings.

Then, the general fascination with Hermetic writings lost their popularity and acceptability.
Hermetics goes underground in the mystery schools such as the Rosicrucians, Theosophy, and Freemasonry, among others.

Hermetic philosophy was taught by French Kabbalist and Magus Eliphas Levi in his book Transcendental Magic, including the symbolic image of Baphomet to represent the Hermetic and alchemical ideals.

These occult traditions in turn influenced the teachings of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

The Golden Dawn initiated the infamous British occultist, Aleister Crowley, in 1905. (Crowley believed he was the reincarnation of Levi.)
Crowley led the Ordo Templi Orientis (Order of the Temple of the East) at the turn of the 20th Century.

Crowley built upon those Hermetic teachings, and later founded his own magickal tradition known as Thelema.

Crowley spent significant time and study back in Egypt, and returned much of the magickal imagery and practices back to their roots in ancient pagan sciences from Greece and Egypt.

Crowley and Lady Frieda Harris codified these Hermetic occult mysteries in their Thoth Tarot Deck, which mirror the Qabala Tree of Life.
1908: William Walker Atkinson published *The Kybalion: A Hermetic Philosophy* under the pen name "Three Initiates"

*The Kybalion* syncretized Hermeticism with the New Thought philosophies, Transcendentalism, the emerging field of Psychology and discoveries in subatomic physics.

Outlined 7 Hermetic Principles, derived from Hermetic texts, summarized for a 19th C. audience. Principles of Mentalism, Correspondence, Vibration, Polarity, Rhythm, Cause and Effect, Gender.

*Kybalion* is highly influential within many "New Age" spiritual paths to follow:

- *Science of Mind* by Ernest Holmes
- *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne
- Doreen Virtue's *Divine Magic: The Seven Sacred Secrets of Manifestation*
Nag Hammadi

1945: Near Nag Hammadi, in Egypt, is found a treasure trove of Coptic Gnostic texts, with a much better preserved version of parts of Hermetic Asclepius.

Five Hermetica were found in a Sahidic dialect, two had never been seen before [Ebeling p.11].

These stoked the fires of interest once more, and shed much additional light into our understanding of The Hermetic texts in historical context.
How did Hermetics get into Wicca and Witchcraft?

- Any Occultist in Europe after the Renaissance were inevitably involved in Western Esoteric Philosophies, of one form or another, and those included Hermetic ideas. All the founders of Wicca and Witchcraft tended to be well-studied occultists.

- In the late 1940's, Aleister Crowley granted an Englishman named Gerald Gardner a charter for the O.T.O.

- Gardner is also known to have been a member of the Freemasons, and was associated with the Rosicrucian Theater - all were built upon Hermetic Philosophy. He syncretized what he'd gathered from his various influences, studies in anthropology and folk magick, and his personal initiations in British Witchcraft.

- 1950's-1960's: Gardner's syncretism of Witchcraft and Western Esoterism came to be known by many as Gardnerian Wicca.
How did Hermetics get into Wicca and Witchcraft?

Throughout the ensuing 70 years, "Wicca," inspired hundreds of traditions throughout the world, who inherited the ideas and ritual structures of Hermetic occultism.

In 1990, the "official witch of Salem," Laurie Cabot, included the 7 Hermetic principles of The Kybalion in her book *Power of the Witch*.

Her student, Christopher Penczak, taught this Hermetic-influenced Witchcraft through his *Temple of Witchcraft* series of books in the 2000's.

Which is how it came my attention, and they are included in my book *Elemental Witchcraft* (2021)
What does Hermetics Teach?

The Pymander: A Cosmology
The Pymander, is like a "Genesis" story describing the creation of the Divine cosmos.

Hermes Trismegistus was said to be meditating one day when he was given a vision of the creation by the Divine Source, who is introduced by the name "Poimandres [Pymander] the Mind of the Universe."

The Pymander shows Hermes a narrated vision of the method by which the cosmos came into form by speaking "the Word." "Reason" was the word as translated by Manly P. Hall in his work *The Secret Teachings of All Ages.*
In Hall's version of the story, Pymander appears in the form of a Great Dragon, the personification of Universal Life.

Hermes "beheld a figure, terrible and awe-inspiring. It was the Great Dragon, with wings stretching across the sky and light streaming in all directions from its body."

Hermes asks the Great Dragon to "disclose the nature of the universe and the constitution of the gods," and then Pymander's form changed into a "glorious pulsating Radiance. This Light was the spiritual nature of the Great Dragon itself."
Polarity of Goddess and God

Pymander shows him how the first movements of creation established a polarity.

From the chaos, there was an upward movement of light, elemental fire, and air, which later comes to have a distinctly masculine vibe.

Then there is a “downward moving darkness ... a twisting and enfolding motion,” of elemental water, and earth that later has a distinctly feminine vibe.

As they separate, Hermes hears an “inarticulate cry” from the light and a “mournful echo” from the darkness as if it pained them to be divided.
Spirit in Three Generations

Three stratifications of this creative force. Source, Nous, and Universal Man are spoken of in generational terms, as though they are grandparent, child, and grandchild.

The Source, described as “hermaphroditic” containing all genders, brought forth the Supreme Mind called Nous (pronounced like noose) who is also all-gendered.

Nous (Divine Mind) is the creator of the physical cosmos. Establishes the seven celestial spheres that govern destiny and sets into motion the never-ending cycles of nature.

Nous then wills the seven celestial spheres to create all the animals of earth from the four elements. Animals are referred to as “beings without speech.”

Nous the Creator brings forth another all-gendered deity in their own image, “Universal Man”, who is then granted all the powers of creation.
Father Sky and Mother Nature?

- Being a Witch, I equate the creative force called Universal Man with the Neopagan archetype of Father Sky, of light, air, and fire, but with the understanding that this being actually contained all potential gender.

- “Downward moving nature” of darkness, water, and earth, I find the familiar pagan archetype of “Mother” Nature.

- I'll paraphrase the next passage of the Pymanter creation story, substituting the modern Neopagan lingo.
A Neo-pagan paraphrasing....

Book 1:14. Father Sky then looks down from the realms of Spirit, through the harmony of the cosmos governed by the celestial spheres, and he shows to Mother Nature his energetic form. Upon seeing his beauty and power, Mother Nature “smiles with love.” She recognizes Father Sky from his reflection in her waters, and from the shadow he casts upon her earth. When Father Sky beheld Mother Earth, he recognized her as “a similar form to his own” and he fell in love with her, wishing to dwell with her in the middle realm.

With the ease and speed of thought, Father Sky descends through the celestial spheres, and is cast into a “form without speech.” Mother Nature arches to enfold him “wrapped him in her clasp, and they were mingled in one; for they were in love with one another.” His light, fire and air become wrapped within her darkness, waters and earth. In Divine Love they conjoined as the Two Who Move as One, as the Great God/dess, from whom all blessedness flows.

15–16. From their union, seven archetypal humans are born, each cast according to the powers of the seven celestial spheres. Humanity has dual existence as both matter and spirit, both immortal with Divine Mind’s power of creation, and mortal with carnal desire for union. Having passed through the spheres of the heavens to dwell on Earth, humanity is subject to the mechanisms of celestial destiny.

17. The creation of those seven happened like this: when the female earth and her potent waters, when met with his fire she brought forth fruit. “… and from the ether nature received the breath and produced the bodies” in the God/dess image. They were “beyond gender and sublime.”

18. At the end of the cycle, and at the beginning of the ages, the first seven hermaphroditic humans were “parted asunder” into individual forms as male and female sexes. Divine Mind spoke to them the Holy Word: make love and multiply, recognize you are also endowed with my Divine Mind and therefore immortal and powerful; physical desire brings mortality; live so that you may come to “know all things that are.”

19. Through divine providence, all of nature made love, and the harmony of the cosmos brought forth generations of all life. Through many reincarnated lives, they came to know all things taught through the destiny of the spheres. Those who recognized their own Divine Mind, eventually shed their mortal bodies, and ascended back through the seven spheres, returning to their Source beyond the fixed stars. Those lost in the material illusion of separateness, repeated their suffering through the fear of death.
Yin-Yang Symbolism

- Symbolism like the yin and yang
- She saw the God reflected in her waters. He saw the Goddess in his own image.
- The Two Who Move as One—each recognized the opposite within themselves!
- Creation began with the Goddess and God differentiating from a single source to establish a scale of polarity, then falling in love.
- They were then reunited in love, giving nature and all beings within it a dual existence as both matter and spirit, with a full range of mental gender.
- Nature is empowered by their Divine Love to keep evolving through ongoing creation.
When Father Sky descends to join Mother Nature, the translation says he took “a form without speech,” which is the same phrasing used for the creation of animals in the previous passage.

This nods to the Wiccan mythos of the divine masculine appearing on Earth with animal form, as the Horned God, consort of the Goddess.

Hermetic correlation to Pan, Greek god of nature, fertility, flocks, and herds, half male with horns, legs, and ears of a goat, who is carnal and lusty.

Pan’s father is the Greek god Hermes. Pan is the root word meaning “all.” Pan also being the root word of panentheism, “all in God.”
Seven Celestial Spheres = Astrology

Poetic, not literal.

The material earth is symbolized as being the core of a nested series of celestial spheres, with each layer being governed by one of the seven wandering gods or stars.

Book 3:2 "The vault of heaven appeared in seven circles, and the gods appeared in the form of stars with all their constellations, and heaven with the gods was complete in every detail. The universe was encompassed by air and sustained on its circular course by divine spirit." (The Way of Hermes, page 30)

Book 3:3: "Each god sent forth by his own power what had been appointed to him. There came into being four-footed animals, reptiles, fish and fowl; all prolific seed, and herb and the shoot of every flower. These had within themselves the seed of regeneration...Through their own wonder-working course the gods sent forth every soul clothed in flesh, so that men should survey heaven, the paths of the heavenly gods, the works of God and the activity of nature..." (The Way of Hermes page 30)

Book 3:4 "...So men began to live and understand the destiny assigned to them by the course of the the circling gods..." (The Way of Hermes page 31)

These ‘stars’ or ‘gods’ are the other bodies within the our solar system: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn.
Seven Celestial Spheres = Astrology

- From our perspective, these wandering gods/planets move in spiraling patterns against the background of the fixed outer stars.
- Divided into 12 equal sections as a sign of the zodiac. Regulating the flow of the four elemental powers
- Each acted like a die or a mold, which casts into form the area of life and consciousness they govern.
- one of the seven areas of consciousness, an arena of life
- archetypes of divinity
- a chakra of the energy body
- aspects of health
- day of week
- color in the spectrum
- note in an octave
God/dess: the Two Who Move as One

God and Goddess merged into a single being who had all of their powers.

- The Source’s Divine Spirit
- Nous’s Divine Mind
- Universal Man’s powers of creation, thought (air) and will (fire)
- Mother Nature’s physical body (earth) and emotion (water).
- An all-gendered, multiform, panentheistic God/dess of nature was the result.
- Alchemists call the three-parts of our being: Mercury (spirit), Sulphur (soul) and Salt (material body.)
- Because everything in creation emerged through the Celestial Spheres, everything has a three-part nature, and is governed by astrology.

Then, God/dess brought forth the seven archetypical, “hermaphroditic” or all-gendered, humans - One each with the power of a celestial spheres, and classical planet... sun, moon, mercury, mars, venus, jupiter, saturn.

“The Rosicrucian Order” by John Augustus Knapp (1853-1938) - Public Domain
As above, so below; As below, so above.

So each moment of creation reflects a unique, and cyclical pattern. The same cycles repeat infinitely throughout this mechanism: Macrocosm to microcosm.

Each layer's pattern mirrors all the rest of the layer's patterns, and the same cyclical movements are evident in the physical plane, as well as the non-material aspects of the mental and spiritual planes. (Hermes' Three World Model.)

Thus, the Hermetic axiom states: As above, so below; As below, so above.

Divinity is within the mechanism, as the mechanism. Astrology reflects the Divine Order at a scale which is large and physical enough for us to see from earth...and learn to read.
Three-Part Being: Salt, Sulphur, Mercury

As Divinity descends through the celestial spheres to become any kind of new matter it is cast into multiform being with a destiny.

Laboratory alchemy separates and refines the salt (body), mercury (spirit) and sulphur (soul) of material things to increase the spiritual potency for healing and magick.

Essential oils are the Soul, Alcohol fermentations are the "Spirits."
Reincarnation and the Sacred Cycle

Everything in existence therefore has a "natal chart" which describes at a macro level what purpose divinity is here to accomplish while in that form.

We take our turns being everything, before we began our journey through being everyone.

Never ending cycle of birth (cardinal), maturity (fixed), and decline into death, transmuting into rebirth as something else. (mutable.)

The Great Work: The Path of Return to Spirit.

Each spirit performs an individual task, but ultimately we are all contributing knowledge and growth within ONE divinity. Separateness is the illusion; we are all ONE divinity walking each other home.
From astrology, systems of understanding the lessons of life and Divine Love along our path of Return to Spirit have been symbolically codified into the Hermetic Qabala Tree of Life.

From Qabala, each possible experience along that crooked path of evolution is symbolized within the Tarot Cards.
Hermeticism is present in Witchcraft that includes:

- Four elemental energies of earth, water, fire and air, are called from cardinal directions in an energetic circle...
- Know the Elemental Beings and their Sovereigns as Gnome - Ghob
  Sylph - Peralda
  Salamander - Djinn
  Undine - Necksa
Hermeticism is present in Witchcraft that includes:

- Celebrate the cycles of the sun, moon, and the astrology of the classical planets
Hermeticism is present in Witchcraft that includes:

- Planetary powers and spiritual attributes are sought within allies of plants, bone, and stone
- Essential oils, tinctures, alcoholic spirits, herbal preparations are used...
Hermeticism is present in Witchcraft that includes:

- Tarot symbolism
- the Qabala tree of life
- three world model of mind, body, and spirit or heavens, underworld, middle world
Hermeticism is present in Witchcraft that includes:

- Visualizing a desired magickal outcome
- Forming a succinct intention into words
- Speaking those words of creation with power...
Hermeticism is present in Witchcraft that includes:

- Based in Divine Love of a Goddess and God within nature
- Recognizes the full range of gender within all beings, regardless of their sex.
- Inclusive of all beings, recognizing their inherent worth and dignity.
- Recognizes all forms of consensual sex among adults as sacred.
Questions? More info!

- HeronMichelle.com for all my social media links
- My book is available at http://thesojo.com
- Blog series at Patheos Pagan: Witch on Fire
  “Foundations of Modern Witchcraft.”
  https://witchonfire.net
- Book Signing outside of DeKalb room Saturday
  2:00-3:30
Resources


Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Occult Syncretism

- Based upon a paradigm of poetry, not to be taken literally.
- Through metaphor and correlation, the patterns reveal the occult mysteries. Repeating patterns found in nature, thought, and culture provide "arrows" that point in the direction of a deeper, more universal truth.
- Eclectic and syncretic.
- Spiritual paradox is a mystery to be understood, not denied.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Three-World Model

• The cosmos is multiform: Spirit, Soul, Body

• Everything exists simultaneously within the Spiritual Plane, Mental Plane, and Physical Plane, which each have seven layers.

• Humans can access the nonphysical realms using spiritual and magickal techniques that shift their conscious awareness into their spiritual and mental interconnections.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Panentheism

- Divinity is personified as the Great God/dess in cooperation, who are both immanent within nature and have transcendent consciousness.

- Therefore, the universe is infinitely diverse yet unified within God/dess.

- This panentheism recognizes a multiplicity of divinity, honoring all cultural faces and names of the gods.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Magick and Speech

• "As Above, so below; As below, so above." The material realm (below) and spiritual and mental realms (above) are mirrors of each other and remain in equilibrium.

• Therefore, what happens on a spiritual level will eventually be mirrored in the material. Flip that and what happens in the material will impact the spiritual, allowing for change through sympathetic magick.

• If the cosmos was created by Divine Mind (nous) speaking the Word (reason) into existence, then our greatest power is our command of language. All beings with sentience who have the powers of speech are therefore co-creators within the Divine Mind.

• Hence, Witchcraft includes magick spells, chants, charms, and affirmations that are both written and spoken aloud.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Interconnection

There is unity within the cosmos, with sympathy and interconnection throughout our threefold being within the spiritual, mental, and physical realms.

Separateness is the illusion created by the material world, but all is alive and united within an eternal God/dess.

This interconnection is reflected by the Threefold Law of Return, which warns that the energies we direct outward, whether they be beneficial or baneful, will also return to affect our threefold Self, ultimately impacting our own thoughts, emotions, and physical condition as well.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Blessèdness

- **God/dess** came into being by falling in love and merging as the Two Who Move as One.

- Their Divine Love manifests as humanity in their image. Therefore, all humans exist because of Divine Love, are made from Divine Love, with the existential purpose to explore all the facets of loving interconnection, no exclusions, no value rankings. All humans have a blessed nature with inherent capacity for benevolence and cooperation.

- The potential for “evil” emerges from fear and fear-driven choices to take baneful actions that impede the natural flow of Divine Love through nature’s cycles.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Orthopraxy

- Spiritual growth is achieved through aspiration and engaging in spiritual practices.

- Encourages spiritual curiosity through diverse study of texts and learning from wise teachers, but ultimately requires personal devotional and magickal engagement to experience God/dess firsthand.

- Therefore, initiation into the mysteries is attained through a direct connection between the Witch and God/dess.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

The Great Work of Magick

- Engages in the Great Work of Magick as an intentional process through which we evolve in awareness of our manifest divinity toward eventual reunification with our Source.

- Our spirits incarnate in the physical realm to learn and grow through diversity so that when we return to our Source, we add a complex wisdom of what it means to exist.

- Through self-improvement, we aid the evolution of humanity as a whole.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Immortality and Reincarnation

- Everything and everyone has an immortal spirit.

- Change is a universal constant, but spirit never perishes. Both life and death are merely perceptions, trading forms within God/dess.

- Humanity’s evolution through the Great Work takes many lifetimes.

- Our destiny, as governed by the seven celestial spheres, guides our exploration through the patterns of astrological movements and the lessons they impart.

- The sacred mission of each lifetime is revealed by the pattern of the cosmos through which we are cast at the moment of our birth and first drawn breath.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Free Will and Personal Sovereignty

- Through free will, Witches claim sovereignty over their own lives and take responsibility for their choices, thoughts, emotions, and actions.

- Witches take up benevolent stewardship of nature and society within their sphere of influence.

- This maxim is expressed in the last line of the “Rede of the Wiccae” poem, as “an it harm none, do what ye will.”
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Wholeness and Sexual Liberation

- Hermetic cosmology establishes a divine spectrum of gender in balance, with all material beings containing a unique blending of feminine and masculine divinity.
- We are all whole and complete within the Two Who Move as One.
- All forms of responsible sex among consenting adults are considered to be sacred expressions of Divine Love.
- In contrast to classical Hermeticism, Witches consider our bodies to be holy vessels of divinity, bestowed as a blessing, and we exalt the healthy enjoyment of incarnate life as an act of devotion.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Natural Religion

Hermeticism seeks connection to God/dess through the cycles of nature.

To reveal the divine mysteries, Witches celebrate the cycles of birth, death, and rebirth on all levels of reality.

The yearly celebration cycle is called the Wheel of the Year, with auspicious timing based upon astrology and earth’s movement relative to the outer stars of the zodiac.

The wheel includes eight seasonal tides of the sun called sabbats and thirteen monthly tides of the moon called esbats.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Balance of the Pentacle Path

- Witchcraft ritual practices bring balance between the polarities as they manifest on spiritual, mental, emotional, will, and physical levels.

- Creating equilibrium is pivotal to empowerment and growth; therefore, Hermetic Witches embrace both light and shadow along all phases of the birth, death, rebirth cycle.
Tenets of Hermetic Modern Witchcraft

Cooperative Culture

An application of the tenets of Hermetic Witchcraft and the tools of Divine Love granted through the balance of God/dess are used to rebuild a society of cooperation and equality for the purposes of peace, fulfillment, and abundance of all their progeny in harmony with the natural order.