

Ancient Wisdoms

Gayle Redfern

(January 2010)

Softcover \$10.90 (241pp)

978-1-4490-5760-2

As the earth enters an astrological time known as the Photon Band, *Ancient Wisdoms* attempts to connect the wisdom of ancient cultures to today's problems. "It becomes difficult to change current lifestyles after closing their door on past and ancient wisdom," author Gayle Redfern writes. "Following the lessons of the Ancients helps us understand the present. Our ancestors knew many of the secrets that we share today." Redfern, who has a lifelong interest in spirituality and holds degrees in psychology and holistic health, has also written *Within and Beyond*, which she references often.

In an effort to combine astrological, mystical, and scientific information concerning various cultures and religions, Redfern delves into the social structures of a variety of cultures old and new. She provides brief profiles of cultures including the Aztecs and Mayans, Native American tribes, and Hawai'ians. She discusses the difficulties cultures have faced in preserving their culture. About the Seminole Indians, she writes, "Today, Seminole natives have no record, either written or oral, as to when their teachings originated, but they knew their beliefs, customs, and values were important and must be retained."

Redfern writes that the greatest insights can be gained from cultures throughout history that have followed the "Rules of Life," which, according to her, include compassion, honor, humility, and equality. These rules are similar to the Lakota Sioux's ten guidelines, and they comprise the topics addressed in the discussion of each culture. Taking care of Mother Earth is of prime importance, as is living an honorable life that is supportive of the environment, all creatures, and our fellow man. Each culture makes reference to a Creator and the need to honor him or her with humility and love.

Short chapters are devoted to such topics as mysterious connections, orthodox beliefs, and the continents and inhabitants. The author doesn't provide any substantive answers, but she does cause readers to mull over questions they may have otherwise avoided. Redfern emphasizes the spiritual, as well as moral and civic responsibilities that guided ancient cultures because she perceives a lack of these elements in today's world.

With its references to shamans, channeling, spirit friends, and astrology, the book may not attract students of science or traditional religion. At the same time, it may not carry the weight and depth to add anything to an understanding of such spiritual phenomena.

In only 241 pages, the author covers world mysteries, global problems, and ancient cultures. Overall, the book touches only briefly on information that is more fully covered in other popular and academic sources. For example, Judaism is covered in a mere seventy-two words. The author has taken on an ambitious project but disappoints by attempting to cover too much in such a short book. Nevertheless, although more authoritative sources of similar information exist, readers interested in spirituality, ancient cultures, and the connection with today's world problems may find this a good introduction.

(March 23, 2010)

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