

The Mysterion Dynasty

Roger Wells

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This book reflects one man's determination to share his insights about the way the mind works.

The Mysterion Dynasty by Roger Wells is an ambitious attempt to understand and explain the mind.

Topics are explored in self-described personal “ramblings,” including a letter to a cousin. They range from the impact of music and anger on the brain to thought processes about religion and politics. A winding path through more than five hundred pages includes drawings and diagrams, all part of the book’s ongoing effort to elucidate the mind’s complexity.

Rather than relying on scholarship or research, the book presents completely original material. This approach is said to come out of a sense of responsibility to save others the hard work of making its discoveries.

Throughout multiple interior “books” and parts, brief chapters touch lightly on subjects such as how people enter into conversation, to ways that the thought “monitor” keeps track of the outside world. Many points, including those about the “picture monitor” and “clown” figure of the mind, are continually revisited, though they ultimately remain conceptually fuzzy—a shortcoming that is freely and repeatedly acknowledged.

The work is self-referential, as when a section suggests that the audience will probably require a year to complete the entire book, or when its ideas come with warnings that they may remain unclear, despite constant efforts to clarify them. The text’s continual requests for patience with its redundant material ultimately have the opposite effect.

Some potentially interesting points, such as a discussion about strong musical beats creating a distraction from clear thinking, are never fully developed, even though lengthy sections are devoted to them. Some suggestions—such as that people should try going to sleep for a year at 5 a.m., and then waking every hour between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m.—raise more questions than they answer.

A section with diagrams comes toward the end of the book; its images are the strongest in the work, particularly images of “mimes,” which hold their own against further written elaboration. Other, more simple drawings are swallowed up by layers of additional text, and fail to provide clear visual cues or articulations of previously described concepts.

As a symbol of the challenge of conveying ideas clearly, the book prompts a closer look at the complex thought processes of human beings. Those who persevere through *The Mysterion Dynasty* will value the opportunities it opens for pondering the vast and fast workings of the human mind.

ANDREA HAMMER (June 6, 2017)

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