



Hermes the thief;: The evolution of a myth

Norman Oliver Brown

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Hermes is a vital and complex figure in Greek mythology?trickster and culture hero, divine child and patron of stealthy action, master of magic words, seducer and whisperer. Shepherd, artisan, herald, musician, athlete, merchant?who is this tricky shape-shifter, confronting us at every turn?

In this classic, prescient work (first published in 1947 and foreshadowing all subsequent work greeting the return of the gods), Brown asks: Is Hermes the Thief the prototype from which, by extension and analogy, the Trickster was derived? Alternatively, is the notion of trickery the fundamental idea and theft merely a specific manifestation of it?

This thoughtful study will be of interest to anyone wishing a fresh view of an important, often misunderstood, character of Greek mythology.

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