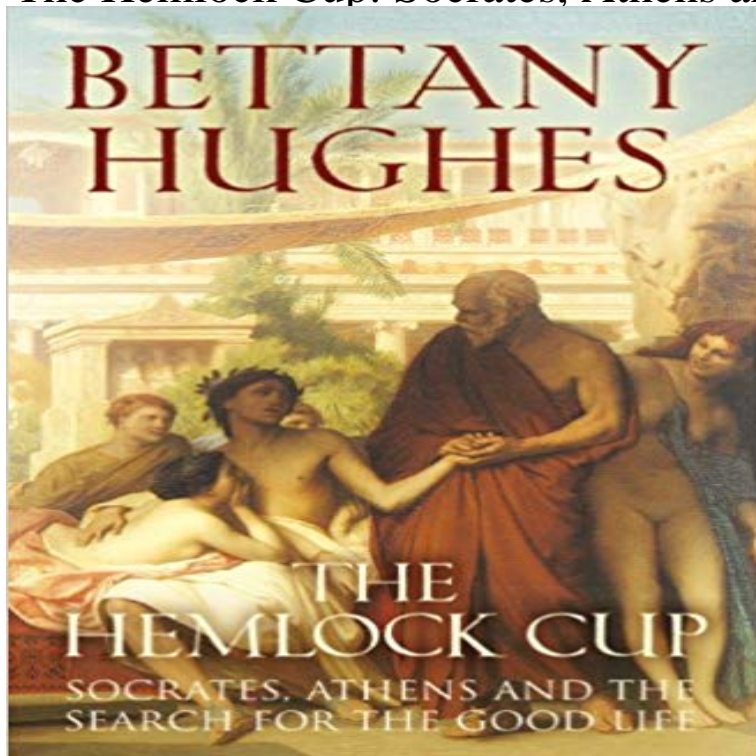


The Hemlock Cup: Socrates, Athens and the Search for the Good Life



We think the way we do because Socrates thought the way he did. His aphorism The unexamined life is not worth living may have originated twenty-five centuries ago, but it is a founding principle of modern life. For seventy years Socrates was a vigorous citizen of Golden Age Athens, philosophising in the squares and public arenas rather than in the courts of kings, before his beloved city turned on him, condemning him to death by poison. Socrates lived in and contributed to a city that nurtured key ingredients of contemporary civilisation - democracy, liberty, science, drama, rational thought - yet, as he wrote almost nothing down, he himself is an enigmatic figure. In *The Hemlock Cup*, acclaimed historian Bettany Hughes gives Socrates the biography he deserves, painstakingly piecing together Socrates' life and using fresh evidence to get closer to the man who asked how should we live? - a question as relevant now as it has ever been.

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