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Helrunar: A Manual Of Rune Magick



Synopsis

The runes are a pan-European magical language. Its roots lie in the ancient pagan beliefs of our ancestors, who built many thousands of stone circles, long barrows and dolmens throughout ancient Europe. These same symbols and techniques were used by the pagan Celts and Germans. This book is a complete manual of magick based upon arcane symbolism and secret techniques.

Contents: Meaning /Urda /Origins /Futhorc /Magical inscriptions / Memorial stones /Fascism / Titles / Cosmology / Nature / Qabala / Vision / Werdandi / Rune stance / Breathing/ Vowel song / Problems / Tune in / Health? / Divination / Alignments / Sigil sorcery / Seiðr and Seething / Energy /Ida / Rune companion / Sources

Jan Fries lives in Frankfurt near the Taunus Mountains. He is a musician, artist and magician. '...eminently practical and certainly breaks new ground.' - Ronald Hutton (author Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles) Recommended by The Cauldron 'a very meaty read...' PJ in Gippeswic

Preface to the new edition When I went to school, my history teacher told us about the old Germani. In her opinion, the Taunus mountains were populated by a bunch of brawny brawlers who wore horned helmets and small pieces of pelt. They lived in hilltop settlements which were fortified by ringwalls. Barely able to manage agriculture, they had to rely on hunting to fill their stomachs. They lived in shabby huts with mud-plastered walls and when the Romans came, they fought the invaders with crude swords, pointy sticks and by hurling rocks at them... Nowadays, the ringwalls of the Taunus are known as the work of La Tène Celts, who lived on the heights in well organised cities. For this new edition much of the text has been rewritten and updated. A large section on the bronze ages, the Celts, Germani and the later Vikings added. The theme of Wodan and Helja has been elaborated with more detail on pagan Scandinavia. The chapter on magical rune inscriptions has been extended, on Seiðr/seething trances rewritten, the bibliography updated and twelve pages of new illustrations added.

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Customer Reviews

This was the first book I have begun by this author. I had heard that it was strange, and I was told I would likely not enjoy it. So far none of this is true. In fact, I find that I am greatly enjoying this book. So much so that I have started reading another of his simultaneously and again, I am very much enjoying that one as well. So far, Jan is attacking issue after issue with a well researched and very educated form. I have not gotten as far into the book to hit the rune material but based on everything up to this point I am expecting a well researched approach to that as well. Something that lacks greatly when it comes to the runes. If I find that this is not the case I will update this review but felt that the Author deserved an early rating as it may take a while to finish. I will also leave this one piece of advice. If you have any interest in studying the runes or you have been doing so for ANY amount of time I can not stress enough reading "The Rune Primer" by Sweyn Plowright. This is by far, without compromise, the best book on the subject. It's a quick but vital contribution to a subject full of false "facts" and will give you a very important set of tools to take with you when you proceed with your studies. Please, give The Rune Primer a read as well.

For me this book could be the end all. Yet I would recommend some simpler books for beginners just working with the runes. After you have read some others you will find that this one is one of the best. Jan Fries breaks through the dogma and forced patterns that bind most magicians and stifle their creativity. He tells you to find your own way which is just as valid as any of the traditional ways. Gods bless the freethinkers like him who liberate our minds. Jan Fries is one magician who believes that the deities are reflections of the deep mind or our subconscious. Our magic must reflect this. Jan Fries knows his stuff. HE has done the research and yet he is both humble enough and knowledgeable enough to know that what he has printed is subject to change. New research comes about that disproves the old. Many old research techniques are flawed. Science is based on as much faith as religion is with just about as much accuracy. The tastiest part of this book is the man's overview of history. He gives it straight no dogma or ideological constraints. The book covers a broad history of Europe and then goes into several exercises to enhance our magical and spiritual abilities. At the end there is a sort of glossary describing the runes. The description gives us the runes, their meaning, the rune poem statement and the body posture associated with it. Jan Fries is

a believer in ecstatic dancing to reach gnosis and his approach is very Chaos Magick. Early man survived some pretty tough vicissitudes in ice age Europe. They were nomadic and forced to hunt large animals. They lived in small family units. Homo Habilis was a lot more advanced than they were given credit for. They hunted in packs, had tools and were well organized. After the Ice Age many of the power animals went further north. There were some people who followed them and others who stayed behind. Those who stayed behind became more sedentary agriculturalists. Neanderthals came about or were existing along side them for several hundred to maybe thousands of years. The Neanderthals had burial rights and were aware of or had the concept of the soul. Caves seem to have been used for religious purposes. Several drawings indicate Shamanistic behavior. Later on came the Cro-Magnon who is said to have wiped out the Neanderthal. Of course new research is showing that they lived side by side and maybe even interbred with each other. The Cromagnon had a lot to learn about survival from the Neanderthal. Religion went through many changes. The Early men believed in power animals and totems. Later on they would believe in Gods. The Norse gods went through changes. For example Odin the all father to the Vikings started out as Wotan a storm god. He would later evolve into a god of ecstatic trance. Tyr the one handed God who subdued Fenris started out as a bisexual or dual sexual god named Tuisto who bore Mannus. Later he would evolve into a male. Odin's original wife was Freya as the myths evolved. His wife would change to Hela and then finally to Frigga. Hela was an underworld Goddess who was charged with running the world of the dead. History is not so clear cut as to who were the Celts and who were the Germanic tribes. There was no real unified religion among the groups and many customs were similar between the Celts and Germans. It is speculated that they came from Indo-European tribes that originated in Central Europe. For the invading Romans it was hard to tell the two apart. More Germans tended to be concentrated in the north and the further north you went the more isolated and independent they became. The techniques covered in the books go over divination, using runes for magic, chanting and body postures. There is a lot of interdisciplinary input to this as the author pulls from Ceremonial Magic techniques, Chaos magick techniques and far eastern meditation techniques. For the intermediate to advanced practitioner you will find this book a worthy addition to your library. The end got a little bit slow but other than that this book is an awesome read.

I initially read the 1989 version of this book. I liked it so much that I had to obtain this book all over again. The first half of the new revised version is basically historical and archeological. I think it is cool how the author traveled around and has hand drawn all the artifacts he has come across. He

really put a lot of time into this. The latter half goes into detail about the specifics about the runes

Finding different ways to organize and present material is always an adventure. Fries sets up his book using the three Norns: Urðr for historical information, Verðandi for practical information, and Skuld with specific Rune information. It's a nice way of breaking things down. In the introduction Fries makes it clear that this is his understandings and experiences and that he does not want anyone to blindly believe in my interpretations. I ask you to examine them critically and to explore with an open mind in the joy of self discovery (11). Works for me. While there are plenty of good books on the Runes, Helrunar stands out in that it gives a wide-breadth of information, offers many beautiful pictures and drawings, and gives the reader a fluid introduction to what others have said while adding in many insights and practical exercises that help the reader embody and understand the Runes from the inside out. For instance, Fries talks about connecting with nature, of experiencing life as the ancients did in order to truly connect with the natural forces that the Runes represent, channel, and embody (93-94). His history is a little jarring, as he jumps from one subject to another without fully developing the previous thought or offering much of a transition between thoughts. I can say that he sticks to the academic side of history without adding too many hypotheticals. While I liked most of what the author offered, one thing I did not like was his stance on Runic Healing. I am with him when he criticizes the modern new age take on Runic Healing which claims to heal everything from blisters to cancer. Unfortunately, the author goes too far when he claims there to be just one disease that can be directly influenced by rune practice, and that is a very humble affair compared to all the wonder recipes | behold the miracle: How to clear a clogged nose (151). Come on. The Runes are a lot more powerful than that. The main thrust of the author's work revolves around the physical/mental energies of the Runes. The prevailing way he goes about this is through trance work: Seiðr. One way he taps into the Runic energies is through postures and intonations. I like the fact that he mentions some of the energetic experiences that can happen: twitching, swaying, pulsing, hopping, sweating, tingling, sharp pains, yawning, overloading, belching, and so on. I can attest that all these things can and do happen, especially when the body hasn't fully been prepared for an increase in energy flow. While Fries history of the Runes offer a few tidbits of useful information, it's mostly redundant if you've already read a little about their evolution. For those that are new to the Runes, it's a decent, well-rounded look at some of the contextual information needed to fully appreciate where the Runes have come from and how they play a part in the bigger picture in Germanic history. Even going so far as to touch in with how the

Nazis misappropriated them. Some of Fries influences are Feng Shui, geomancy, Druidism, psychology, Yoga, fairy tales, Sagas and Eddas, modern Egyptian magical techniques, shamanism, Kabbalah, Daoism, history, Reich, Chia, Spare, Crowley, Grant, Regardie, Fortune, and Bertiaux to name a few. For those looking strictly for a Rune book, this is not it. Fries gathers together a wealth of information from a wide range of topics, not all of which are relevant to the Runes. I do believe this is a good book to read if you wish to gain a particular fusionist approach to the Runes. I would say about 30 to 40% of the book talks about the Runes proper and the rest talks about esoteric matters in general. The fact that most of these matters are helpful in deepening and expanding one's relationship with the Runes and gaining more from them should not be dismissed. As for Fries's Rune dictionary, he veers away from giving lists of correspondences and instead offers etymological roots and associations to each Rune. Some associations are pretty cool. After which he offers the three Rune poems and the mudras and postures for each. While I will not say this is a necessary read for aspiring Runeologists, I will say it is definitely a worthy read that has some valuable information and insights not found in other sources.

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