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Runes And Magic



Synopsis

Originally published in 1986, based on the author's 1984 doctoral dissertation, this volume has become the leading academic study of the topic of rune-magic. When originally released only 250 copies of this work were printed in a prohibitively expensive edition. This new revised and updated version allows more readers to discover the revolutionary contents of this book which presents a comprehensive history and theory of the concept of magic in connection with the ancient Germanic runes. It also catalogs, categorizes and analyzes the many magical formulas used by the most ancient rune-masters and shows how these formulas were utilized within the traditional Germanic cultural frame of reference. No matter what your level of interest is in the runes, this is the most in-depth text you will find. This is the third edition of this masterpiece, with numerous corrections.

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Customer Reviews

Stephen Flowers studied Germanic and Celtic philology and religious history at the University of Texas at Austin and in Goettingen, West Germany. He received his Ph.D. in 1984 in Germanic Languages and Medieval Studies with a dissertation entitled "Runes and Magic".

This is a very solid book by Dr. Flowers. I highly recommend it to anyone who is interested in the subject the book is dedicated to. As Dr. Flowers points out perhaps rather indirectly - a lot of interpretations provided to us by those who have dared to unlock this treasure chest are open to conjecture as there are no rules and regulations as to how exactly a runic formula is supposed to be

concocted. Well, perhaps there are, but if we have to judge based upon the material evidence, it is like differentiating the grains of sand or blades of grass..In any case, Dr. Flowers was able to describe and even categorize as many grains of sands as possible within this book, and they seem to be falling within the categories of the ones that have more or less clear operative function and the ones that are not so clear. What makes some runic formulas operative besides the power of the rune-master is also not very clear, as well as whether it is the carver of the runes, or some other special person who has injected the runes with that operative power. Often times the phraseology is very vague or codified, or too poetic to allow for concrete conclusions. It ranges from obscure one-worded ones, to very long ones. Some of which have a reference to subtle powers of the cosmos, while others just telegrams to whoever or whatever.To conclude, I must say that we are dealing with a very special and specialized tradition of its own. Its beginnings are shrouded in mystery, at least until now. Its original language is also a mystery in itself as we are dealing with different epochs, and different permutations of the same languages. This seems to be outside of the scope of what scientists can explain, while the runes are still being practiced. Well, I guess that is why a mystery is what it is.

A solid historical and academic review of runology has a definite place when so much in the marketplace is trivial, inaccurate, and self-interested. Flowers provides this with a wealth of information, references, and conclusions in a field that is making a timely and appropriate resurgence; although this would be of interest only to the serious student and dedicated runologist. For those who know Flowers as Edred Thorsson, this work gives an appreciation of the depth of his background and appreciation of the field; it also helps to put his later works into a clearer context and on a solid foundation.

Great solid academic treaties on the runes and tradition. Excellent reference material and insight into the roots of where we have most of our knowledge about the tradition. Shame it's lacking practical materials but definitely worth having for deeper understanding of the background and history of the Runes.

This is one of my go to books on Runology, the other would be Runic Amulets and Magic Objects by Mees & Macleod.

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