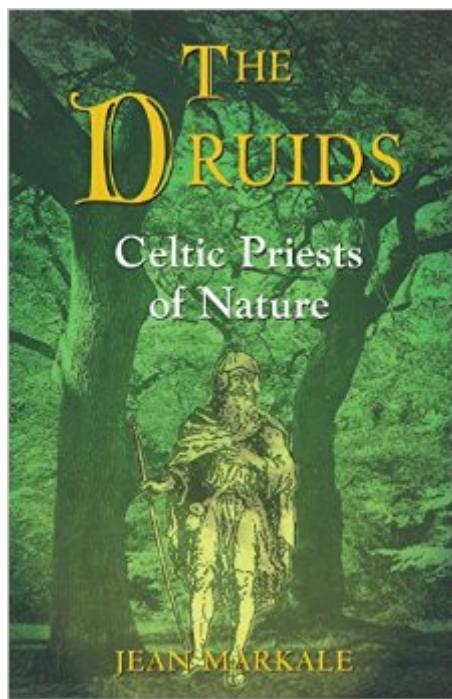


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The Druids: Celtic Priests Of Nature



Synopsis

A comprehensive and revealing look at the druids and their fundamental role in Celtic society that dispels many of the misconceptions about these important religious figures and their doctrine. Written by the world's leading authority on Celtic culture Druidism was one of the greatest and most exalting adventures of the human spirit, attempting to reconcile the unreconcilable, the individual and the collective, creator and created, good and evil, day and night, past and future, and life and death. Because of the oral nature of Celtic civilization our understanding of its spiritual truths and rituals is necessarily incomplete. Yet evidence exists that can provide the modern reader with a better understanding of the doctrine that took druidic apprentices 20 years to learn in the remote forests of the British Isles and Gaul. Using the descriptions of the druids and their beliefs provided by the historians and chroniclers of classic antiquity--as well as those recorded by the insular Celts themselves when compelled, under Christianity's influence, to utilize writing to preserve their ancestral traditions--Jean Markale painstakingly pieces together all that is known for certain about them. The druids were more than simply the priests of the Celtic people; their influence extended to all aspects of Celtic life. The Druids covers everything concerning the Celtic religious domain, intellectual speculations, cultural or magical practices, various beliefs, and the so-called profane sciences that have come down from the Celtic priesthood.

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Customer Reviews

Jean Markale's book "The Druids: Celtic Priests of Nature" must be read several times to grasp all

that it says. This is not in any way because the book is poorly written - on the contrary it is very well written, and contains so much information that it must be read several times just to begin to grasp the depth of its content. Markale begins by looking at the history of the druid's name throughout history, where both Greek and Latin historians recognized that druids were knowledgeable of the secrets of nature ~ they were much more than mere magicians. Furthermore he shows a link between druids and the disciples of Pythagoras. (Though it is quite unlikely that the druids had any direct contact with Pythagoras himself.) We see the role of druids in society. Often serving as judges, counselors and advisors to kings, and peacemakers between nations; the role of peacemaker in no way prevented the druids from participating in combat if there was a need to do so. The druids are contrasted with the revealed religions of Islam and Christianity. Without disparaging the great revealed religions, Markale clearly shows that druidry and all the texts that belong to it are well worthy of interest and study. The great knowledge and power of the druids naturally leads to the question: Where did the druids come from? Markale explains the common misconception that the druids were the builders of the megalithic monuments (such as Stonehenge). We then see good evidence (in "The Battle of Mag Tured) that druidry was studied by the mysterious 'Tuatha de Danann'. It is said that "The Tuatha de Danann were in the Isles of the North of the World, learning science, magic druidism, sorcery and wisdom, and they surpassed all the sages in the pagan arts.

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