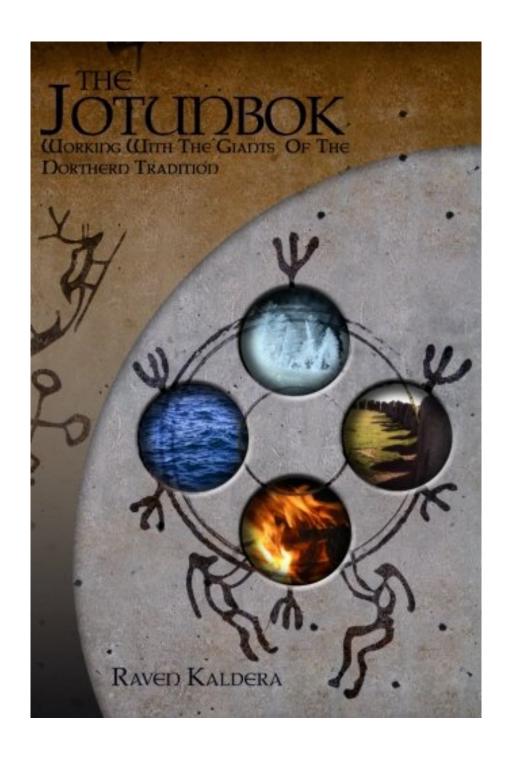


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The Gods of the Northern Tradition--the religion of the ancient Norse/Germanic/Anglo-Saxon peoples--have been rediscovered in growing numbers in the past years, as have the elves and dwarves that inhabit the Nine Worlds of the Cosmic Tree along with them. However, few have written about the Giants of those worlds and the Gods who number among them--Loki, Hela, Fenris, the World Serpent, and others--until now. The Jotunbok--the first book in the Northern-Tradition Shamanism series--is a collection of the wisdom, ways and tales of the Giants and their Gods, told by those who revere and work with them.

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11 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

For those who want to know about the Jotun

By Mike

This is a well written and researched book on the Jotuns of Norse legends. This is book is not for people who think that the Edda's provide a complete picture of Norse religion.

42 of 50 people found the following review helpful.

Where scholarship stops, this begins

By Linda Demissy

If you've pored over the Prose Edda and Poetic Edda like me for hours, trying to glean tidbits of information on the Norse gods, goddesses, Aesir, Vanir, Alfar, Svartalfar, Jotuns, etc. you've probably gotten frustrated by the small amount of lore that survived. And getting lost in scholarly interpretations doesn't necessarily get you closer to the truth. It's like having North-American scholars poring over anecdotal reports of kangaroo sightings, instead of just going to Australia to study them.

Now, either the gods are real, or they aren't. If they aren't, then you can make up anything you like, because it really doesn't matter. But if they're real, then how did the ancients get their stories in the first place? From the gods themselves!

Certainly, you should do your homework first, and read all available sources, BEFORE you go annoy a celebrity to interview them... but in the end, the primary source is the gods themselves. That's what I've tried to do myself, but it takes a while to develop a personal relationship, to the point where you can ask questions, and it takes good seership skills to be able to *hear* those answers.

Raven apparently came to the same conclusion, and he's found out much from his main deity, Hela. If he had done only that, this would be a great book on Hela. But he went a step further, and collected the information from many spirit workers who have had relations with these beings. It would have taken me many lifetimes to get the relationships necessary to get the information in this book, and quite frankly, a number of them probably wouldn't have been interested in giving me the time of day. The book is full of great information on beings that are barely covered in the written sources, and even when they are, they're treated as the bad guys in what amounts to a cosmic p*ssing contest.

Personally, I like and am interested in the Aesir, the Vanir AND the Jotun (Etin, Giant) gods, as well as the other races of the 9 worlds. There are other books that cover spirit retrieved information about the Aesir and Vanir (though not as well as Raven's I think), but so far, there were none on the Jotuns, so I'm very grateful to Raven for this work.

I really like his description of the three kinds of gods in the first part of the book. It really helps put them in a perspective where no one has to be the bad guy. In a nutshell, the Aesir are the gods of civilization, the Vanir are tamed nature gods (agriculture), and the Jotuns are gods of wild nature. It only makes sense that they would clash in what each considers "good". A thousand years ago, wild nature was a scary thing. But today, with civilization having almost eradicated wild nature, and upset the balance of the planet with pollution, perhaps we need to pay more attention to what they've got to say.

The only downside:

It's only about Jotuns. Those are the beings Raven has the best relations with, and he knows more people who honor Jotuns than anyone else. Also, the book is a brick, so there really isn't any room for the other pantheons anyway. However, the upside for Aesir and Vanir lovers out there is that you *do* get to hear about them. You just get to hear about them from the Jotun perspective, which complements nicely the Edda versions of the stories (where Aesir and Vanir are shown as the good guys). So this is not really a minus, just a necessary limit on the scope of the book.

In all, this is a very well written book with great information, which is much more juicy to read than many dry scholarly sources. And even if you don't believe the various contributors, it's still full of interesting stories for fans of Norse mythology.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

This Book Has Deepened My Practice

By Sarenth

There were many concepts I had a cursory familiarity with prior to reading this book. However, the Jotun always seemed so hands-off that I found it hard to find information to relate to Them on. I tend to research quite a bit before interacting with new spirits, Deities included, and when this book finally came to me, I was impressed by both the work, and the dedication of the author and contributors to forging and maintaining the relationships within the book. I never worked with the Nine Undines prior to picking up this book; now I have, and will on occasion work with Them as called to. I liked the emphasis on personal relationship-building with the Jotun in the book, in that the work was a good guide, but the person reading actually had to do the work for the benefits the guidance might bring. This is something that very few books actually state

out-loud, and that I think through this requirement, the book requires positive growth from the reader.

This book challenges, indeed, requires you to grow in order to get anything out of it. I found this book an excellent challenge, and I recommend it to any who walk in the Northern Tradition, especially Northern Tradition Shamanism, alongside the other books in the series.

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