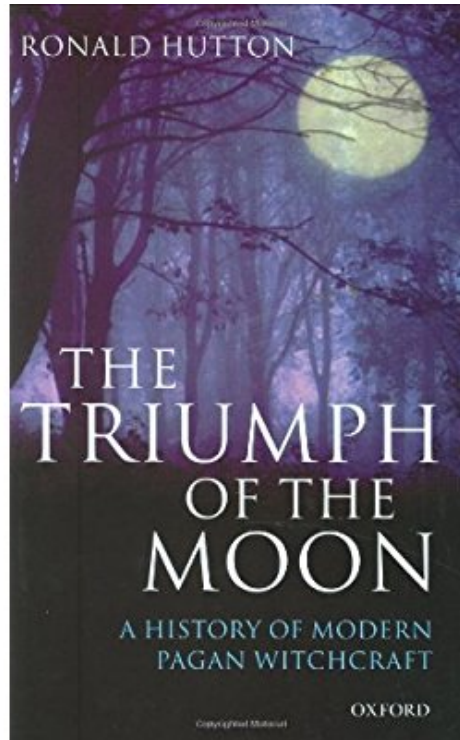


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Synopsis :

From Publishers Weekly This spirited, amusing and immensely informative history of paganism in 19th- and 20th-century Britain centers on Wicca, the system of witchcraft Gerald B. Gardner introduced to a startled public in the 1950s. The book's first half takes the reader on a breakneck tour of Victorian and Edwardian culture, demonstrating that Wiccan belief and practice owe much to the scholars, novelists and poets who resurrected Pan and the Goddess, crafting romantic visions of a pre-Christian past. The second half proceeds at a more leisurely pace, detailing the development of British witchcraft over the past 50 years among Gardner's followers, critics and rivals. In this meticulously researched book, Hutton modestly demolishes myths perpetuated by both pagans and their hostile critics and maintains an attitude that is at once skeptical and ultimately sympathetic. He displays astounding breadth, with literary references ranging from Keats to Mary Daly, and peppers his work with insightful portraits of characters such as Madam Blavatsky, Aleister Crowley, D.H. Lawrence, Dion Fortune, Alex Sanders, Starhawk and the obscure 19th-century wonder-worker and wart-healer known as Cunning Murrell. In a field generally characterized by polemical or apologetic historiography, Hutton's exceptional work is by far the most scholarly, comprehensive and judicious analysis of the subject yet published. It will remain the standard for many years to come. (Feb.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. Read more Review 'This work ... makes for excellent reading. Hutton's extensive scholarship allows him to make and clarify connections between people and movements in recent centuries.' Northern Earth, No.83. 'Hutton uses his historical skills to tease apart some of the themes in this popular rural romanticism, and to locate their purely modern origin.' T. M. Luhmann, TLS 'Fascinating' The Times 'Hutton's book is excellent ...' T. M. Luhmann, TLS 'The Triumph of the Moon, which is densely argued and heavily annotated, leaves little doubt that the history which modern occultism has constructed for itself is bunk ... It all makes for riveting reading and, despite Hutton's demolition of the supposed lineage of witchcraft, I am tempted after reading his book to become a witch myself.' Robert Irwin, The Independent 11/12/99 'Hutton has synthesised a huge body of sources, and woven together a fascinating narrative with supreme skill. The reader is sure to be gripped by the wonderful cast of characters that he assembles... Hutton shows us that paganism is a matter of interest not only for the classicist and archaeologist, but for the modern historian as well. In doing so his Triumph of the Moon proves to be a triumph of cultural history.' Owen Davies, History Today Vol.50 No.3 'he shows a bracing and candid scepticism about the architects of pagan witchcraft belief in the past ... he shows energetic rigour when exposing the fallacies and fantasies suffusing paganism's canonical texts ... has a very interesting story to tell.' Marina Warner The Times 'A brilliant insight into the history of modern witchcraft by the author of the classic study of Paganism. Very readable and well researched.' Kindred Spirit, Issue 50, Spring 2000 Read more See all Editorial Reviews