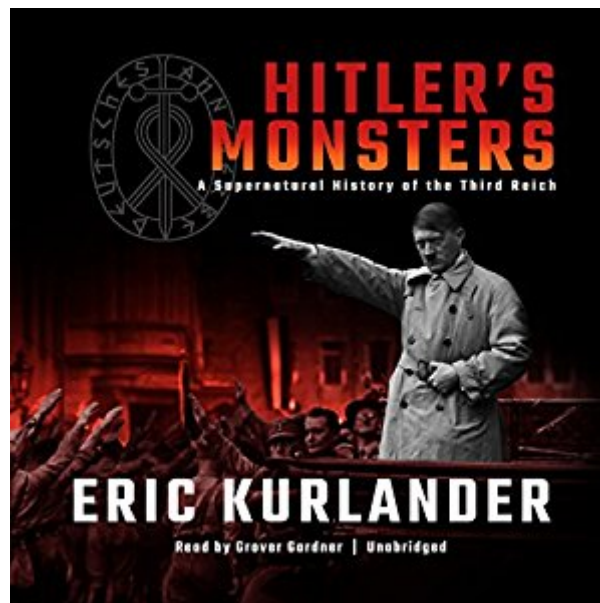




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Hitler's Monsters: A Supernatural History Of The Third Reich



Synopsis

The Nazi fascination with the occult is legendary, yet today it is often dismissed as Himmler's personal obsession or wildly overstated for its novelty. Preposterous though it was, however, supernatural thinking was inextricable from the Nazi project. The regime enlisted astrology and the paranormal, paganism, Indo-Aryan mythology, witchcraft, miracle weapons, and the lost kingdom of Atlantis in reimagining German politics and society and recasting German science and religion. In this eye-opening history, Eric Kurlander reveals how the Third Reich's relationship to the supernatural was far from straightforward. Even as popular occultism and superstition were intermittently rooted out, suppressed, and outlawed, the Nazis drew upon a wide variety of occult practices and esoteric sciences to gain power, shape propaganda and policy, and pursue their dreams of racial utopia and empire.

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Customer Reviews

Before I continue with my review you must understand that this is a SCHOLARLY handling of the subject matter. For me it is a five star resource but I also have a Masters Degree in a related field and can appreciate the detail that Dr. Eric Kurlander, Professor of History at Stetson University, has put into this milestone of a book. I call it a milestone of a book because although many articles have been written here and there concerning Hitler and the Third Reich's involvement in Occultism, Paganism, and the Greek Mythological basis of the White Aryan struggle/war for supremacy, I have never seen it all pulled together so comprehensively as in this work. If you are looking for half baked

conspiracy theories and a book that reads like a tabloid, you have come to the wrong place. If you are looking for light and entertaining reading, you won't find it here. However, if you are able to read a scholarly book you will learn a lot. Everything here is very well documented. Professor Kurlander has enough references and notes to fill about a third of the book. These references can lead you in whatever direction you wish to go on this topic but I am sure that you will find your answers and perhaps become intrigued with new questions right in these pages. I learned a lot in "Hitler's Monsters" and if you are serious about the topic, you will learn a lot as well.

The most incredible fact about this book is that it is all true. It reads like science fiction or (like Orwell's 1984) as a work of dystopian literature. One has to keep reminding oneself that, no, this isn't fiction or even speculation: it's actually history. The horror, the absurdity, the convergence of fantastical beliefs, and the coincidence that similarly-minded lunatics would be in the same place, at the same time, and in positions of power all combine to make the reading of these events difficult to grasp as "reality." The fact that these same lunatics had a sort of diabolical brilliance and were almost able to pull off a complete change in the world order adds another level to the distress and denial one almost feels with each page turn. As this is a subject that, for some reason, I am simultaneously attracted to and repelled by, there is much here that I had been exposed to in books, articles, and documentaries over the years. There is a certain power to the images of those orderly, fire-lit rallies, the massive architecture, the synchronized marches, the feeling of unstoppable destiny so well reprised in the Star Wars renditions of the Empire. But I hadn't been aware of how long the miasma of the supernatural, fantastical, and occult beliefs had affected German popular thought. In my mind, it had more to do with the rise of Nazism and its manipulation of obscure cultural folklore and occult beliefs. While I may have underestimated the power and the length of time that these and other influences had to work on the national psyche, I think the author may have underplayed the effect that defeat, humiliation, poverty, hyperinflation, and other national psychological traumas may have opened the way for this sort of primitive magical thinking on the general population. On the subject of the Holocaust, I tend to come away with the belief that it would have happened with or without the supernatural climate, the pseudo-science, or the concept of racial purity. I also find it confusing that the movement was so anti-Semitic when referring to Jews yet not when accepting Arabs. I suppose it's irrational on my part to expect any of this to make sense and it's not as if this was the only inconsistency. I've read the pre-publication galley which lacked an index.

An index would have been extremely helpful in going back and forth to connect the dots. Names, places, events, etc. tend to get confused (especially when dealing with another language) and you lose the context or the sequence or the sense of whether you've read this before. It has an extensive bibliography which ranges from other academic treatises to YouTube videos so, once I don't feel as burned-out by the subject as I do right now, I have many more avenues to explore. The book is highly academic and way over my head on many levels. I lack more than a basic orientation on the many trains of religious thought that contributed to this Aryan mish-mash of doctrines (such as Hinduism, Brahminism, Islam, Shintoism and many more); I have only the most basic background on the folklore and mysticism of German tradition. I also had not heard of many of the trains of thought that fall under what the author refers to as "border science" which was a part of not only German but European/colonial thought. I am forced to take at face value that, indeed, these worked together, blended, overlapped, and contributed to the extent the author speculates because I can't argue otherwise. Still, at times, it seems a bit of a stretch. But now that I have finished (at least for now), I've come away with the frightening confirmation that collective delusion can blind the masses and eradicate traces of humanity, conscience, or analytic thought. It is even more frightening to realize that there are modern parallels to this mentality in which people focus on what they want to believe and justify their prejudices by the sheer number of others who share it. Granted, the extent to which the Nazis took it in a supposedly cultured and enlightened society is going to be hard to match. But, if we look, we can see irrational rallies, salutes, marches, slogans, and political and religious fervors reduced to fanaticism both here and abroad. We have to accept the unpalatable truth that, if it happened in Germany, it can happen anywhere.

Between 1935 to 1966 Heinrich Himmler has charged a special task force, named the SS Witches Division, to collect archival material throughout Central Europe. Himmler and the SD believed that researching Judeo-Christian attempts to wipe out German religion in the Middle Ages would provide insights into combatting Jewish and Christian attempts to undermine the Third Reich. The SS witch researchers came to the conclusion, later on, that witches were the guardians of German faith and natural healers from the oldest German sagas. The persecution of these witches was the proof that the Teutonic women were burnt in a Catholic-Jewish Inquisition plot against the Ur-German past and culture, or: the volkisch German culture and blood. This is only one short example of Professor's Eric Kurlander's superb book about the insane and occult world which dominated the Third Reich.

throughout its short history. The criminal Nazi regime has also employed astrology, the paranormal, mythology, paganism, miracle weapons and lost kingdoms in reimagining German politics, culture, science and religion. The book comes in three chronological parts composed of three chapters each. One traces the role of supernatural thinking in the Nazi Party from its intellectual antecedents in the late nineteenth century through the seizure of power in 1933. Part Two is about the role of the supernatural thinking during the first six years of the Third Reich. The last part is about the supernatural and World War Two. The purpose of the book is to show how occult practices were used by the Nazis to gain power, shape propaganda, and pursue their dreams of a racial utopian empire, although in the course of its six-year history, occultism and superstition were rooted out, suppressed and outlawed. There are chapters on astrologers, magicians, parapsychology, biodynamic agriculture, radiesthesia and natural healing and the use of the World Ice Theory, which was used to explain how the human race and the Aryans evolved from ancient gods and not from apes, thus making Himmler employ much effort to sponsor this theory as a state science. Hess has employed a personal astrologer before flying to Scotland, while Dr Ernst Schafer's services and research were used in order to investigate the Indo-German Aryan origins of Buddhism. Goebbels employed Nostradamus prophecies to show and prove that the Reich would be victorious in the end and the navy used pendula to predict where British ships could be found. Because Jews and other peoples were considered vampires and demons, they had to be exterminated. Thus, the Nazi astrologer Alexander Centgraf accused the Jews of "demonic sexuality" aimed at annihilating the Aryan race. It was at this point in time, at the beginning of 1942, where the road to the Holocaust was paved and speeded up. Here there was a melange of racial hygiene, folklore and mythology which were the basis of the destruction of Jews, gypsies and other inferior peoples, such as the Slavs. The last part of the book discusses the role played by the Werewolves, who were supposed to guard the Reich and protect it from its enemies. These Werewolves could, according to the perverted Nazi thinking, change from humans into animals, in the same way that Siegfried has done. Goebbels even created his own "Radio Werewolf" station, in which many broadcasts started with the sound of a wolf howling and a song by a woman named Lily. In short, the Werewolf was considered the good monster in Ur-Germanic folklore, compared to the Slavo-Jewish vampire. Although the Nazi supernatural imaginary did not disappear overnight, its racist and imperialist elements receded in the final months of the war. Eric Kurlander shows, in this brilliant and original book, how the Third Reich was more monstrous than commonly supposed. Although not an easy read, I believe that this book will become a classic in a very short time.

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