



The Norns in Old Norse Mythology

Karen Bek-Pedersen

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The nornir or norns were a group of female supernatural beings closely related to ideas about fate in Old Norse tradition. Karen Bek-Pedersen provides a thorough understanding of the role played by norns and other beings like them in the relevant sources. Although they are well known, even to people who have only a superficial knowledge of Old Norse mythology, this is the first detailed discussion of the norns to be published amongst the literature dealing with Old Norse beliefs. Surprisingly little has been written specifically about the norns. Although often mentioned in scholarship treating Old Norse culture, the norns are all too often dealt with in overly superficial ways. The research presented in this book goes much deeper in order to properly understand the nature and role of the norns in the Old Norse world view. The conclusions reached by the author overturn a number of stereotypical conceptions that have long dominated our understanding of these beings. The book has a natural focus on Old Norse culture and is especially relevant to those interested in or studying Old Norse culture and tradition. However, comparative material from Celtic, Anglo-Saxon and Classical traditions is also employed and the book is therefore of interest also to those with a broader interest in European mythologies.

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