



Tigers and Shamanism in Siberia : pages 6-15

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THE FOUNDING INSPIRATION FOR SACRED HOOP MAGAZINE IN 1993

"Then I was standing on the highest mountain of them all, and around and about me was the whole hoop of the world... I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit and the shapes of all shapes as they must live together like one being. And I saw that the Sacred Hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight and in the centre grew one almighty flowering tree to shelter all the children of one Mother and one Father, and I saw that it was holy."

(From the vision of Nicholas Black Elk Lakota Holy Man: 1863 - 1950)



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From the Editor



Welcome to the 110th issue of Sacred Hoop Magazine, which I very much hope you enjoy and get benefit from.

As you look around the world right now, it might seem very easy for you to find signs which appear to indicate that a lot of people have 'lost the plot,' whether you think those people are politicians, or conspiracy theorists, or media companies, or another group that seems to be way out of kilter, or - in most likelihood - all of them.

We seem to live in a time of increasing desperate confusion, where many people do not know quite what - or who - to believe; and in that sort of climate it is even more important to keep our 'body and soul' together, and cultivate being grounded, sensible, aware, alert and focused.

And so in this issue, we have several articles about ways to establish a daily practice, and maintain and increase our personal power, our windhorse. We include some ways to remove a little of the toxicity from our lives so as to help keep ourselves in balance, and suggest ways to ask the spirits to help us in our important problem solving.

We also venture to South Eastern Siberia and meet the Ulchi, a people who say their actual ancestors are tigers, and that tigers still come around and take brides and husbands from within the people. Tigers are close to this culture, and for them, the tiger spirits help their most powerful shamans. And we take a trip back to pre-Chinese Invasion Tibet too, in order to see how healings and exorcisms were performed in a provincial town there, around a century ago, in a different world.

Spirituality is no use whatsoever if it does not change your life, and give you tools and techniques to help you - as one of my old Native American medicine teachers, Sun Bear, used to say: "If your philosophy does not grow corn, I don't want to know about it." But growing corn takes hard work and time, we have to till the fields, we have to water and weed, and we have to learn to identify what is corn and what is a weed, as well as learn how to harvest at the right time and store and use the grain properly.

Oh what times, what times ... and breathe, and tend your corn.

Blessings to all Beings
Nicholas Breeze Wood