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In Europe, especially South West France, Catalonia and Spain, there remains a deep rooted folk worship of the Goddess as the Black Madonna. **Caitlín Matthews**, with a long passion for the tradition, explores these sacred images.

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Back in 1994, in issue 6 of Sacred Hoop we published an article by **Alan Ereira** about his film about the Kogi people of Colombia. Because of the importance of the message we republish this article here in a new form.

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There is a new film about the Kogi, and an underlining of their crucial message for us, the 'Younger Brother.' Here **Alan Ereira** writes about the deep importance of the Kogi's view of Creation and about the making of the film.

WINDOWS FOR THE SPIRITS 30-36

The founding editor of Sacred Hoop, **Faith Nolton**, is well known for her beautiful paintings inspired by the spirits and shamanism. Here she writes about her work and about the role and nature of sacred art.

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DRUIDRY - A BRITISH SHAMANISM 37-40

In Britain we can learn a lot from the sacred traditions of other cultures, and yet they are not, themselves, born from the land of these islands. **Philip Shallcrass** shares how calling Coyote to a ceremony in England led him to embrace Druidry.

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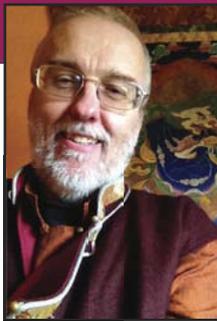
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THE FOUNDING INSPIRATION FOR SACRED HOOP MAGAZINE IN 1993
"Then I was standing on the highest mountain of them all, and around and about me was the whole hoop of the world... I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit and 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)

From the Editor



Welcome to issue 83 of Hoop. I was very pleased to get our first article, a newly-published work by the late great mythologist Joseph Campbell, who gives us an overview of the mythology of the Great Goddess. Caitlín Matthews continues this theme with our next article, writing about the Black Madonna, whose mysterious images can be found in many medieval European churches.

Alan Ereira wrote for us about the Kogi people of Colombia in issue six of Sacred Hoop. At that time he had just made his ground breaking film 'From the Heart of the World' relaying the message the Kogi wanted to give out to the world about the crisis of balance with Mother Earth - Aluna. I decided to re-print that original article in this issue alongside a new article from Alan about a new film that he and the Kogi have made. It's a vital message about the deepening ecological crisis, an essential message for humanity.

The colourful artwork of Faith Nolton, founder editor of Sacred Hoop, is being widely recognised for its power to re-connect us with the sacred deeper reality. As a new retrospective book of her paintings and their creation process is published, she shares how the images come from her relationship with her spirits, and how paintings can hold the energies of blessing and healing.

Although the sacred nature of reality is universal, each locality and tradition has its own ways of giving it flesh. Coyote is an important figure in a lot of Native American sacred traditions, but when Philip Shallcrass experienced a Native American ceremony in England in which the spirit of Coyote was invoked, he felt it didn't sit with the land of Britain - Coyote was not an sacred animal of these islands. So Philip's path led him to druidry, and he is now the Chief of the British Druid Order. He recalls that pivotal moment, and how, in effect, Coyote led him to druidry - which in hindsight seems a very typical Coyote interaction!

My mother was a country girl - from a little Herefordshire village in England. As a child she would tell me ghost stories from her village and she tried hard to enthuse and teach me about plants too - without any great success. But one planty thing I do remember, was that when she was hungry as a child she would eat 'bread and cheese.' The 'bread and cheese' was the country name for the young leaves of the hawthorn tree. I have eaten 'bread and cheese,' picked fresh off a hawthorn, quite a few times - and of course it always reminds me of her. Will Brennan has worked with hawthorn too, very consciously, in the South American tradition of 'la dieta' and in his article he shares a transcendent experience he had, while helped by the spirit of that beautiful tree.

The Kogi call themselves the 'elder brothers' and refer to us - in our less aware state - as the 'younger brothers'. In order to grow up, we need to seek the sacred, the God and Goddess of Creation, as Campbell did, and like those devoted to the Black Madonna in medieval France and Spain do. As we learn together about the sacred laws that connect all things, and appreciate the beauty of the deeper Creation shown in Faith Nolton's paintings, as we continue seeking and honouring our Mother, we need to find our own natural ways wherever we live.

Then perhaps we can see beyond small-mindedness, the petty, blinkered, greedy, ignorant worldview - currently manifesting in the Ukraine as I write this editorial. In order to grow up to be elder brothers ourselves, we need our culture to have a much larger perception of reality... that is, if we don't destroy ourselves first.

Blessings to all Beings
 Nicholas Breeze Wood