



The Naga Spirits and Shamanism : pages 6-15

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The nagas are serpent spirits, which are important in sacred traditions all over the world. **Bhola Banstola** explains about their role and importance within the shamanism of Nepal.

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The Machi medicine women of Chile are famous for drumming while standing on top of a *rehue*, a sacred ladder to the spirits. **Rafael Videla Eissmann** introduces their traditions.

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Do we really have previous lives? Are our past lives connected to our current one? **Itzhak Beery** shares the story of a healing, which seems to have its roots in medieval Europe.

DREAMERS DANCERS AND SINGERS 28-35

The Piante peoples of the South Western part of the USA have a long tradition of being taught by spirits in their dreams and gaining their spiritual and healing power from them.

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From the Editor



We seemingly live in an increasing topsy-turvy world, where upside down and back to front is the new right-side up and right way round.

When I first started working with Native American medicine teachers, such as Sun Bear, Hyemeyohsts Storm and Wallace Black Elk - getting on for forty years ago now - they would tell us about the coming 'Earth Changes.'

They taught that western civilisation was doomed to fall, because we had messed up the environment so badly, and therefore things would not be so easy for us in the future.

Since then, I and my friends have been waiting for it to happen, doing what we could to prepare and learn sacred ways as a storehouse for when things get rough. And over those nearly forty years, I and my friends have watched the slow changes that have taken place, like an afternoon gradually changes to an evening.

This issue starts with teachings about the importance of the nagas, and ends with the Ghost Dance. In other words, we begin with the importance of living a good life and showing respect to the spirits of the environment, who will wreak havoc upon us if we disrespect them, and we end with the warning that - in the worlds of John Lame Deer 'The earth 'would roll up like a carpet with all the white man's ugly things - the stinking new animals, sheep and pigs, the fences, the telegraph poles, the mines and factories. Underneath would be the wonderful old-new world as it had been before the white fat-takers came.'

I put it to you that as a culture we have lost ourselves. We do not know where the 'sacred centre' is any more, and we do not collectively stand in that centre, in a respectful way for all beings anymore. And that loss of centre has big consequences.

We need a new dream, we need a new connection to Sacred Life, Grandmother Earth and the spirits again, and we need to be prepared for the Rolling Up, which in my eyes seems to be gaining a pace all around.

So, I ask myself, how I am going to stock and supply my 'storeroom of the sacred' for the more than likely hard times to come? And I invite you to ponder on the same question yourself.

Blessings to all Beings
Nicholas Breeze Wood

WALKING WITH NATURAL COMPASSION . . . 36-39

According to the Algonquin people, soul binds everything in the environment together, but if there is not enough soul, people walk around with no soul. **Richard Brown**

ROLLING UP THE WORLD 40-49

The Ghost Dance movement speaks to us today just as it did when it was formed at the end of the C19th. The late Lakota Holyman **John Fire Lame Deer** shares stories about it.

WE CIRCLE AROUND 50

A brief history of the Ghost Dance, a Native American movement where the spirits of the dead were expected to come back and the materialist world of the settlers was to be blown away.

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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)