



The Ancient Witch Traditions of Italy : pages 40-43

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The trickster is an important character in all the world's ancient traditions. **Heather O'Brien** looks at their role in Dark Age and Medieval Europe and beyond to our modern age.

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How do we establish a real and grounded shamanic lineage in the West? **Kenn Day** looks at the problem and at how such lineages happen in traditional cultures and makes some pointers.

THE JOURNEY IN TO DEATH 27-33

We all will die, and every culture has different rituals and rites for this process. In the 1920s **Marion H. Duncan** was in pre-Chinese-invaded Tibet, and writes about what he saw there.

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When the Vikings invaded Ireland, they brought the runes and the sacred tree Yggdrasil; but the Irish had their own sacred tree and ogham script, and cultures met, as **Elisa M. Gray** explains.

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In Southern Italy there is an ancient pre-Roman form of female magic and witchcraft which still survives. Known as the Janare, **Massimiliano Palmesano** introduces us to the tradition.

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The magical material silk was first used for precious objects around 9,000 years ago. **Nicholas Breeze Wood** looks at some of the sacred uses it is put to in Shamanism and Buddhism.

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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)



The Role of the Trickster in European Folklore : pages 12-21

From the Editor



So, here we are, another year, and the pandemic still evolves, a very good wakeup call to the fact that we cannot do things as normal and that there have to be some major changes. I hope you are doing OK and life has not been too difficult.

Life is a tricky thing, the only certainty - so they say - are 'death and taxes', but I would add another to that list - 'change' as nothing is permanent, except change of course..

But change is a chance for growth - 'what does not kill you makes you stronger' another saying goes. Certainly change enables us to step into being bigger people, with more awareness and maturity, and those change points - where everything seems to fall apart and dissolve - are natural 'rites of passage' which many cultures formalise.

So our first article is about the cultural 'rite of passage' we are currently in now, thanks to a tiny virus - which, if we collected every single virus pathogen in the world together, would not actually fill a coffee cup - yes folks, something that small in the scale of things has done all this.

It won't be the only 'rite of passage' our culture has to face, and humanity has faced many in the past (and some would no doubt say has not matured very well through them either).

It's tricky; and that is why there are tricksters in every single cultural cosmology in the world, as the trickster stands outside of the culture and reflects back upon it, so we can see it - hopefully - in a clearer way. That is just what our little virus friend is doing for us, holding up a mirror to us.

So, we need shamans; we need witches; we need tricksters and clowns; we need all those who can help our culture gain a deeper understanding of the great cosmic dance it - and all of us as individuals within it - are being asked to move to at this time. We all need help to be reminded and know that all will change, that death and taxes and change will come to us all and all that is around us, and it will happen all in the most perfect way.

Blessings to all Beings
 Nicholas Breeze Wood