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THE SHAMANESS



NOTES
OF SHAMANS



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The Shamaness. Notes of Shamans

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Аннотация

НЕЗАКОННОЕ ПОТРЕБЛЕНИЕ НАРКОТИЧЕСКИХ СРЕДСТВ, ПСИХОТРОПНЫХ ВЕЩЕСТВ, ИХ АНАЛОГОВ ПРИЧИНЯЕТ ВРЕД ЗДОРОВЬЮ, ИХ НЕЗАКОННЫЙ ОБОРОТ ЗАПРЕЩЕН И ВЛЕЧЕТ УСТАНОВЛЕННУЮ ЗАКОНОДАТЕЛЬСТВОМ ОТВЕТСТВЕННОСТЬ. This book was written by practicing shamans Vladislav and Svetlana Golenetskii, authors of the following works on shamanism: The Shaman's Bible, Amulets, Places of Power and Places of Evil, Practices of Spiritual Growth, Lessons in Shamanic Mastery, Encyclopedia of Shamanic Rituals, What the Shaman Said, Unconventional Shamanic Tools: Tarot, Runes, Dowsing Rods, and Pendulum, and Shamans of Love and Light.

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The Shamaness

Notes of Shamans

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Svetlana and Vladislav Golenetskii

AFTERWORD

I originally wanted to call this book *Scrawls of a Tipsy Shaman*. But many friends who read the manuscript said:

“That title’s too frivolous. Call it, without false modesty, *The Shaman’s Bible*.”

To me, that felt even more presumptuous. Although, in the end, the word “bible” simply means “book” in Greek and originally had no connection to sacred scriptures.

In this book, I’ve tried to share my fifty years of experience with shamanic practices in an engaging way.

My main goal is to offer readers a reasonably coherent picture of the shamanic worldview. Perhaps it will deter some from walking the shamanic path, or, conversely, strengthen others’ resolve to do so.

Shamanism remains the most widespread and primordial religion on Earth, the root from which all others have sprung.

Countless prophets and saints of various religions – foretelling the future, healing the sick, influencing the weather – were doing what is everyday practice for many modern shamans.

The Christian idea of a triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – stems from the core shamanic concept of the human soul existing simultaneously in three worlds: the Lower, the Middle, and the Upper.

In Buddhism, the idea of karmic rebirth, and the very

possibility of a soul incarnating in an animal or plant, is also deeply rooted in shamanism. But while a Buddhist's main goal in the Middle World is "enlightenment," a shaman strives for the opposite: "darkening." This means gaining the ability to descend into the dark lower worlds to help souls that are lost or have accidentally fallen there.

In essence, one of Jesus's central deeds – freeing the souls of sinners from hell – is something an ordinary shaman might do several times a day.

To ordinary mortals, the worlds a shaman inhabits are elusive and multifaceted. Each shaman enters them through a facet open only to him, and sees only what the Creator Spirit intends specifically for him.

This subjective experience is difficult to convey using the coarse, primitive languages of our Middle World. Much of this book's meaning lies between the lines, so don't be surprised by the thought-forms that arise as you read it.

Don't rush through it all at once. Read a few pages each night before sleep, and put the book down if something becomes unclear or particularly strikes you. What is left unsaid, you may see in your dreams and understand upon waking.

Let us try, together, to peer into the shaman's mirrors and the realms that lie beyond them.

PART I. SHAMANS OF THE THREE WORLDS

Chapter 1. How to Become a Shaman

If you've already figured out *why* you want to become a shaman, then the question of *how* might seem beside the point. It's like happiness: if you want to be happy, then be happy. If you want to be a shaman, then be one, for Heaven's sake – the ways of the Creator Spirit are inscrutable, and He has granted you free will.

That said, I haven't met many happy shamans. And among shamans of the Lower Worlds – never.

Neo-shamans, on the other hand, are everywhere. Cheerful boys and girls joyfully dancing to the beat of drums and the twang of jaw harps. They frolic without a care, after smoking some choice herbs or nibbling on fly agarics, liberally pouring sacrificial vodka and milk into the fire and down their own throats, all while discussing the form and essence of their new hobby with an air of great profundity. This can go on for quite a while – until the first “shamanic illness,” the first accidental tumble into the Lower World, or the first encounter with genuine spirits.

It's at this point that the first great winnowing of would-be shamans occurs. Some wind up in psychiatric wards or drug rehab clinics. Others break their necks trying to fly out a window on a drum or "shape-shifting" into a three-eyed raven. The least impressionable simply give it up for good. But a fourth group sets out on the traditional path: they start looking for a teacher. And more often than not, they find one immediately, somewhere on the vast expanses of the internet – not deep in the Arctic Circle, but in the nearest city, sometimes right on the next street over.

This mentor is usually an elderly neo-shaman or shamaness, claiming to be a seventh- or tenth-generation practitioner (depending on their level of modesty), and sometimes owning anywhere from five to ten staffs and drums. Quite often, they're former Communist Party or trade union functionaries who've studied with famous gurus or voodoo priests somewhere in India or Africa, and who've also taken courses at a psychology faculty or some spy school. For a modest fee, or sometimes even for free, these teachers are willing to spend years initiating you into the shamanic craft and preparing you for some grand ceremony of initiation – imposing only a few restrictions "exclusively for your spiritual growth."

These restrictions can be utterly absurd: avoiding genetically modified foods, or "not eating anything that runs away" (only things that sit still and wait to be cut down or uprooted). They may include eating grain sprouted in melted snow, drinking your own urine, or consuming the guru's sacred excrement.

Many are even instructed to “live on air” – sacred *prana*, *qi* energy, or “the grace of the Holy Spirit.” Strangely enough, this often helps cure various physical and mental ailments.

You might be made to sit for hours in lotus position before a white wall with a black dot painted on it, staring at it without blinking until it starts racing up and down the wall like a cockroach. And if the dot leaves the plane of the wall entirely – well, then you’ve truly achieved enlightenment and a shamanic perception of the world.

Some form of self-mortification is almost always required: listening to the guru drone on for hours, standing on nails, walking on hot coals, wearing chains, or dousing yourself with ice water in the dead of winter.

Your freedom of consciousness will be steadily hemmed in by a fog of incomprehensible, illogical rules and prohibitions. There’s the obligatory kissing of dirty hands and ritual objects, rules about wearing or not wearing clothes, shoes, and headgear, the proper use of two or three fingers (*mudras*), strict regulation of your sex life, and – most importantly – divesting yourself of all movable and immovable property for the good of the community, the salvation of your own soul, and, naturally, “all humanity.”

Eventually, the student may realize that he’s heard or read all this somewhere before. But by then, breaking free from the clutches of this new local religious egregore, or the regional sect that’s become his home, is beyond him. In the end, it always

comes to the same thing: burial outside the cemetery fence, a stint in a psychiatric hospital, a return to the fold of traditional churches, or yet another search for a new guru who's closer to the "heavenly teachers" or some "cosmic mind."

This cycle can repeat itself many times. Success will only come when the seeker stops going in circles, calms down, and finally gives up the search altogether.

Then, out of the blue, as if from nowhere, the one who is meant for him will appear – the one he walked past many times without ever noticing. The one who will open the paths to other worlds and give him spirit-helpers. This will be a Shaman of the Middle World.

Chapter 2. Shamans of the Middle World

A Shaman of the Middle World typically doesn't advertise what he does. He doesn't perform miracles in public, doesn't preach to build his own religious following, and doesn't collect tribute from devoted disciples.

Shamans of the Middle World are usually “pure practitioners,” with no pretensions to greatness. They are people who have – whether suddenly or as a long-expected awakening – discovered the “divine gift” within themselves: so-called extrasensory abilities. Using ancient rituals and spirit helpers, Shamans of the Middle World quietly help all those in need with personal problems – health issues, family troubles, business challenges, and social difficulties.

They are the same familiar healers, magicians, sorcerers, and witches, but they work with ancient shamanic tools and techniques. They may follow various religions and cults, be clergy or not, and may or may not recognize the pagan origins of the rituals they perform. What unites them is a different way of seeing the world around us and the possibilities of transforming it.

They understand that for hundreds of thousands of years, people have used the same shamanic rituals – merely dressing them up in the fine garments of religion.

Take the relatively young religions, for example. Exorcism,

blessing water and washing with it, the “consumption of the Lord’s body and blood” in Christian communion – these are classic shamanic rituals.

The sacrificial bonfires have simply been replaced by the more convenient candle, the wooden staff and clay cup exchanged for gold. But if you look closely – all the shamanic attributes have been preserved.

To this day, pagan worship of mummified human remains still flourishes. And instead of people, they now slaughter chickens or sheep. Though, of course, the essence of sacrifice remains unchanged, for in many of those sacrificial animals, human souls have been reincarnated.

In our time, the conscious turn of many practitioners toward shamanism is explained quite prosaically – mainly by the more tolerant attitude of the authorities and society toward this kind of magic. Everyone has grown weary of the intrusive advertising from TV prophets, psychics, miracle healers, and voodoo priests. Shamans, by contrast, are seen as something from folklore, something native and quaintly Russian.

In many regions of Russia, shamans are officially permitted to practice at institutes studying local culture. They are granted state lands for new and old shrines, and substantial budget funds are allocated for large-scale traditional pagan festivals.

From time to time, legislators try to bring the activities of psychics under control in order to start collecting taxes from them. But shamans are left almost untouched – for some reason,

the popular notion has taken root that “a real shaman doesn’t take money.”

It seems illogical, doesn’t it? If he truly doesn’t take money, then what does he live on? What happens to the huge amount of food, milk, and vodka that people bring, without a second thought, as payment for his services? And how does he afford pants, shoes, and the supplies used in his rituals? Yet there it is – we “love” our shamans and witches, we care about their well-being, and so we bring them slabs of bacon, baskets of eggs, and bottles of homemade moonshine...

At any rate, a shaman’s chances of being arrested by the police, burned at the stake, or having a grenade tossed through his window are considerably lower than, say, those of your average sorcerer or witch.

What’s more, every well-known Shaman of the Middle World has carved out his own social niche – a circle of well-disposed people with a sufficiently high level of spiritual development and material well-being.

Shamans of the Middle World generally don’t work with the underprivileged. And yet they always have a steady stream of clients from that very environment, because word of mouth is always more effective than any paid advertising.

As time goes on, professional Shamans of the Middle World usually find they no longer need to summon a horde of spirit helpers or make actual journeys to the Upper and Lower Worlds in order to successfully solve the problems brought to them.

To be sure, the rules of the game still require an imitation of traditional ritual – beating the drum, falling into a trance. But the real work is done directly with the client’s soul, as they strive to transform the large “smudge” of its projection in the Middle World into a neat “assemblage point.”

Often it’s enough simply to “heal” or “warm” the soul a little, to restore its lost connections with the ancestral egregore, and to re-establish a dialogue between the client’s conscious and subconscious mind and the spirits of their forebears.

Shamans of the Middle World rarely take on many students. But they can gauge the extent of your superpowers and their potential for growth. And if they deem it worthwhile, they may – usually late in life and for a considerable sum – agree to teach you their craft.

After apprenticing with your newfound teacher for a while, you’ll learn many useful things. In time, you may even become a fairly successful Shaman of the Middle World yourself, or perhaps even a Shaman of the Upper World.

Chapter 3. Shamans of the Upper World

In the life of every successful Shaman of the Middle World, a moment arrives when he must work not only with his client's body and soul, but also with their ancestral egregore – the souls of their ancestors. And this is nearly impossible without calling upon the spirits of the upper worlds.

At this crossroads, many shamans turn away from the opportunities unfolding before them. They are unwilling to take responsibility for the destinies not merely of individuals, but of entire families, even entire nations. They have the wisdom not to tempt fate – not to meddle with their own destiny or the fates of those they love. A single glance into the mirror-crystals of the Upper World is enough; they immediately erect barriers and filters to keep themselves safely within the bounds of the Middle World.

When particularly persistent and ambitious clients start demanding the impossible from Shamans of the Middle World, the latter send them packing – off to the shamans of the higher worlds.

Shamans of the Upper World are people who have already worked off their karma for several incarnations to come. They have sampled virtually everything life has to offer, and as a result, they've lost nearly all interest in the earthly goods and values that preoccupy the rest of us in the Middle World.

What gives them satisfaction is the opportunity to meddle, almost with impunity, in the affairs of celestial beings – and to selflessly aid countless people, not only in their current incarnation but in future ones, and even in past lives.

They converse easily with spirits known in Christianity as angels and archangels, with souls both repentant (*kayannye*) and unrepentant (*nepri kayannye*), with the various denizens of all the upper worlds, and with the Creator Spirit Himself.

Yet they are utterly without pride. They nearly always conceal their knowledge and abilities. It would never cross their minds to proclaim themselves divinely chosen priests, interpreters of the gods' will, dispensers of absolution for every conceivable sin and transgression.

You might recognize a Shaman of the Upper World by a certain “enlightened” look in their eyes, a kind of grace that radiates from them, and a faint, almost imperceptible ionized scent of free spirit. Also by their eloquent silence and a barely noticeable smile playing at the corners of their mouth.

They effortlessly bring harmony to whatever space they occupy. Simply by being present, they infuse the Middle World with peace and a quiet benevolence.

If you ever find yourself in the same room with such a person, you'll feel an inexplicable warmth that seems to cradle your soul, a profound tranquility, a sudden surge of vital energy, and the vanishing of long-tormenting thoughts or pains.

In Buddhism, they'd be called “enlightened.” They themselves

would never use that word.

On the surface, the work of Shamans of the Upper World bears no resemblance to the rituals of their Middle or Lower World counterparts. There are no frantic drumbeats, no piercing throat-singing, no leaping or dancing, no laying on of hands or reiki. They don't fall into trances or cast "talking stones." They may speak of using "virtual drums," but you'll see nothing of the sort – only feel the healing power of their gaze, their breath, their thought.

They don't offer sacrifices to the spirits of the Lower World or negotiate with the spirits of the Middle World. They simply command them.

Shamans of the Upper World rarely take on students. How could they teach what ordinary people cannot see or feel?

At most, they can point the way – toward something that may descend upon you only after years of exhausting labor for the benefit of others.

They never help indiscriminately. They are acutely aware of the intricate weave of events we call fate, and of what might be termed "divine providence" – all within the framework of free will granted to every soul by the Creator.

So don't go looking for teachers among Shamans of the Upper World. Perhaps they'll find you on their own.

And if they don't – don't despair. You're sure to meet Shamans of the Lower World. There are plenty more of them.

Chapter 4. Shamans of the Lower World

Becoming a Shaman of the Lower World by choice is practically impossible. Not only must you have at least five generations of shamans in your ancestry, but you must also be chosen as a disciple by one of the Supreme Shamans, with that choice approved by the council of elders of the pagan community.

Of course, you can bypass tradition. Visiting Mongolian shamans or American neo-shamans will happily teach you the craft for a modest fee, following their own abbreviated program. They'll even conduct some sort of "initiation ceremony." And you can get the most beautiful diplomas, complete with all kinds of stamps and signatures, right online!

But no ritual will work without the essential element – without the body being vaccinated, so to speak, with "shamanic illness." Only shamanic illness confers immunity against the dangers that await Shamans of the Lower World during their out-of-body journeys.

It's also worth remembering: if you start working in the lower worlds "without a license," you risk conflict with the shamans already active in those "territories." This is something that "visiting teachers" usually neglect to mention.

For some reason, there's a popular notion that "the taiga is common, boundless – hunt wherever you please." Not so.

The entire taiga has long been divided into hunting grounds, crisscrossed by hunting trails. No self-respecting hunter or shaman would trespass on another's territory. The same applies to the Lower World, where everything on the subtle plane was apportioned ages ago. Only the Supreme Shamans know where a "vacant spot" has appeared or is about to appear.

But very often, the choice is made not by the Supreme Shamans or the council of elders, but by the spirits of the Lower World themselves.

This happens when a person's soul suddenly has its assemblage point "smeared into a blot" due to an accidental knotting or snapping of its life-threads in the Middle World, causing it to drop, for a time, below the level assigned to it in this incarnation, into the lower worlds.

Sometimes perfectly ordinary-looking people are suddenly knocked off their karmic course – by a lightning strike, a high-voltage wire, an accidental overdose, a stray bullet, an unexpected accident, or a careless scalpel. In a state of clinical death, a soul burdened with heavy karma may sink several levels into the Lower World. The more sins, the lower it goes.

Shamans of the Lower World can raise a soul back to its assemblage point, but only with the help of their spirit-helpers. If the physical body doesn't survive, the "raised" and "reassembled" soul often becomes, for a time, one of the shaman's own helpers, given another chance to atone for its deeds before its next incarnation.

You should understand, then, that if you become a disciple of a Shaman of the Lower World, you'll be working with his helper spirits – souls whose own karmic histories are often far from spotless. They don't serve the shaman; they cooperate with him in their own interests. Shamans of the Lower World don't control spirits – they negotiate with them.

There are many paths into the Lower World, but returning is always burdensome, the shaman weighed down by a swarm of malignant spirits that have attached themselves like leeches. As he ascends, they drop off one by one at the boundaries of the lower worlds, but the especially tenacious ones sometimes slip through into the Middle World. That's why most Shamans of the Lower World prefer not to dive too deep – they might never surface.

Even an ordinary person, one who never travels to the lower worlds, can pick up such clinging spirits – at a cemetery, for instance. In the old days, there was always a chapel at the cemetery gate where you could go in and cleanse yourself. Not anymore.

Most people, of course, get rid of demons with the help of clergy or Shamans of the Middle and Upper Worlds. But a few fall under the influence of the Lower World spirits that have settled in them. They begin to work off not only their own karma, but the karma of these internal squatters, wondering at their strange new habits and the misfortunes suddenly befalling them.

Sometimes disciples of Shamans of the Lower World manage to strike a bargain with these helper spirits and carve out their own place under the Black Sun. They no longer need the permission of the Supreme Shamans or the council of elders. They become “independent” shamans of the Lower World.

Don’t be afraid of them. For my part, I find talking with Shamans of the Lower World even more enjoyable than with those of the Middle or even the Upper World. With the latter, everything is clear: they’ve earned their “divine gift.” But with Shamans of the Lower World, it’s another story. Their “gift” is often far from divine.

It’s always fascinating when seemingly ordinary people, who’ve never read esoteric books, describe in vivid, homespun language what they’ve seen during their journeys through the lower worlds. They tell astonishing tales not only of their own past incarnations on this planet and others, but of the incarnations of the many souls they’ve encountered.

Shamans of the Lower World almost always work with the socially vulnerable. They are precisely the ones who most often “don’t take money” – they work for “whatever you can give,” or even for free (“the devil pays”). And to them come people possessed by demons of alcoholism, drug addiction, and gluttony. Shamans of the Lower World and their spirit-helpers accept everyone, for like attracts like.

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