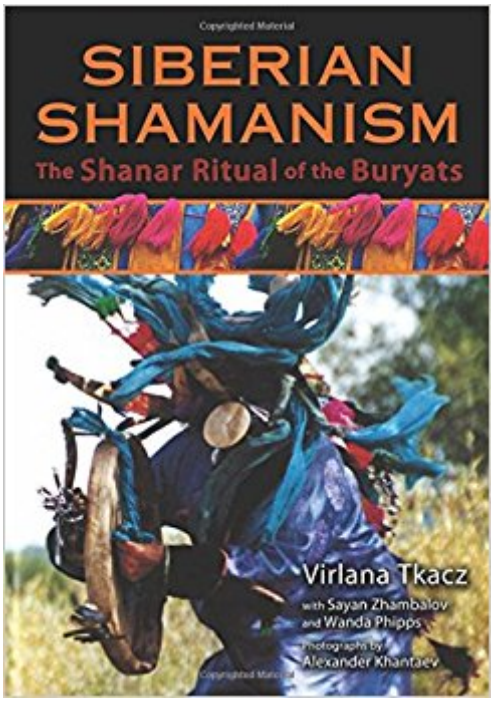
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Siberian Shamanism: The Shanar Ritual Of The Buryats



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Synopsis

An intimate account of an ancient shamanic ritual of Siberia Ã¢â ¬Â¢ Illustrated with vivid, full-color photographs throughout Ã¢â ¬Â¢ Details the many preparations and ritual objects as well as the struggles of the shamans to complete the ceremony successfully Near the radiant blue waters of Lake Baikal, in the lands where Mongolia, Siberia, and China meet, live the Buryats, an indigenous people little known to the Western world. After seventy years of religious persecution by the Soviet government, they can now pursue their traditional spiritual practices, a unique blend of Tibetan Buddhism and shamanism. There are two distinct shamanic paths in the Buryat tradition: Black shamanism, which draws power from the earth, and White shamanism, which draws power from the sky. In the Buryat Aga region, Black and White shamans conduct rituals together, for the Buryats believe that they are the children of the Swan Mother, descendants of heaven who can unite both sides in harmony. Providing an intimate account of one of the BuryatsÃ¢â ¬â„¢ most important shamanic rituals, this book documents a complete Shanar, the ceremony in which a new shaman first contacts his ancestral spirits and receives his power. Through dozens of full-color photographs, the authors detail the preparations of the sacred grounds, ritual objects, and colorful costumes, including the orgay, or shamanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s horns, and vividly illustrate the dynamic motions of the shamans as the spirits enter them. Readers experience the intensity of ancient ritual as the initiate struggles through the rites, encountering unexpected resistance from the spirit world, and the elder shamans uncover ancient grievances that must be addressed before the Shanar can be completed successfully. Interwoven with beautiful translations of Buryat ceremonial songs and chants, this unprecedented view of one of the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s oldest shamanic traditions allows readers to witness extraordinary forces at work in a ritual that culminates in a cleansing blessing from the heavens themselves.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“. . . we see that shamans are ordinary people with extraordinary perception of the world. The same can be said for the book itself. . . . This most certainly is no ordinary book. It is unique, in some respects more experience than narrative, a place where form and content merge, where the story becomes the message and the message is the reason for telling the story.Ã¢â ¬Â• (John Perkins, author of the New York Times Bestseller Confessions of an Economic Hit Man)Ã¢â ¬Å“This glimpse of Buryat culture does not aim to be comprehensive, but it will be fascinating to those interested in Eastern religions and anthropology. Of particular note are the hundreds of full-color photographs that grace the handsomely produced volume; there's also a useful glossary.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Publishers Weekly)Ã¢â ¬Å“. . . fascinating book. . . . With coauthors Zhambalov, a Buryat actor, and Phipps, an African American poet, (Tkacz) gives a vivid and detailed look into this ritual and, more generally, into this rarely discussed culture. . . .This book provides enough information about the culture to place the ritual in context, but it is not meant to be a scholarly treatment of the Buryat culture. The 175 accompanying photographs by fashion photographer Alexander Khantaev are beautiful and convey a sense of color that is not typically associated with this region.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Library Journal)

Virlana Tkacz, the recipient of two Fulbright Fellowships, is director of the Yara Arts Group in New York. Since 1996 she has worked with Buryat artists to create theater pieces based on Buryat stories, poetry, and songs. Sayan Zhambalov is a Buryat writer, actor, and singer. He performed with the Yara Arts Group and heads Uragsha, a traditional music ensemble that has performed at the World Music Institute in New York. Wanda Phipps is a poet, translator, and founding member of the Yara Arts Group. A recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Poetry Fellowship, her work has appeared in more than a hundred literary journals and anthologies.

This was an amazing and eye-opening book into the world of Siberian Shamanism. This isn't a "how-to" book for those interested and called to Shamanism, but rather a powerful story of the Shanar Ritual. The Shanar Ritual is a ritual to help a shaman become initiated. This story is

touching, powerful, and thought-provoking. I recommend it to all interested in Shamanism, especially Siberian Shamanism. It would be a great gift for those who have been called and are young on their path of becoming a Shaman. Great book!

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