

THE AUSTRALIAN

Sahaja Newsletter



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Scientists find religion in ancient Aboriginal rock art



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Science Writer

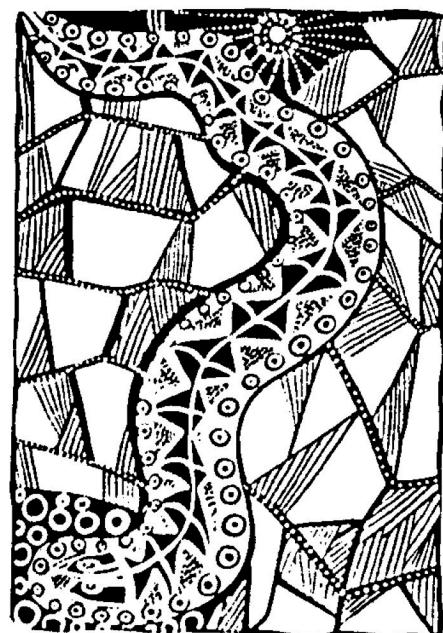
A study of Rainbow Serpents in Arnhem Land rock art has provided the first evidence that Aborigines have the world's oldest religion, Australian and British researchers claim.

The serpent is a sacred symbol of a religious tradition that began 6,000 years ago and still continues, they say.

"We have a major creation being regarded as extremely important for four to six millennia," says one of the researchers, Dr Paul Taçon, an anthropologist at the Australian Museum.

"In that sense the major component of this spiritual belief system is much older than the major components of religions and spiritual belief systems found elsewhere in the world."

Hinduism emerged about 3,500 years ago in India and Judaism in the Middle East nearly 4,000 years ago.



Pendants & Cards:

Esme Reynolds and Helen Southwell have available pendants and cards with Shri Mataji's photograph.

ATTENTION

All yogis are welcome to take home food after the puja however could you bring your own container as Burwood's supply has been depleted lately. Could any containers taken at last puja be returned promptly especially those large pots.

Navartri Puja 1996

The weekend of celebration of the Devi began with arrival of the Sahaja Yogis from the four quarters of Her world.

Since Shri Ganesha Puja Italy had experienced torrential rains and rather than dust the hanger was seated open a bed of mud surrounded by streams of water flowing around the hanger. Water had managed to seep into the hanger itself raising the expectation of fun times for those who would be making it their home for the next few days.

The Russians as one of the host countries together with the Swiss, Polish and UK Yogis had erected a wall of wood and tarpaulin at the open end of the hanger to help reduce the degree of exposure to the elements. They also hired large heating units which pumped hot air into the hanger to help keep us warm at night. To a large extent their efforts were met with success, inside temperatures experienced being much warmer than at Shri Ganesha Puja.

Navartri was to be final Puja celebrated at Cabella for the year. Yogis from many countries were in attendance, around 1000 Yogis would attend. By Saturday afternoon many had arrived filling the hotels, flats, pizza houses and draining the village of its supply of Cappuccino and Gelato. Many took advantage of the effects of the recent rains by soaking their feet in the swollen waters of the river.

During the afternoon the Swiss organised a Havan within the hanger which utilised the occasion of Navartri to offer many well known negative aspects to the warm and purifying embrace of the Holy fire. Afterwards the winding strands of the lunch queues bore testimony to the many Yogis who had assembled for the coming Puja. Every available centimetre of space within the hanger was claimed as sleeping quarters, the floor becoming a patchwork of sleeping bags, mats, luggage and the occasional reclining Yogi enjoying the soothing embrace of Mother Earth.

The traditional Saturday evening concert began around 8:00 pm and was graced with the presence of Shri Mataji and Sir CP. The hanger was completely full with Sahaja Yogis including Shri Mataji's two faithful dogs who sat at Her feet during the performance and who were not shy in voicing their approval at various moments throughout the evening. At one point their enthusiasm took them onstage to take part in the play. The members of the audience were unsure if the actors chasing the dogs around the stage was an intended part of the performance or not, but it certainly added an extra dimension to the performance.

The first piece was a Indian dance piece performed by the two Swiss children from the school at Dharamsala. Dr Spiro then introduced Nishat Khan who played a most difficult Raga, one he said most players will not attempt before an audience. It was a performance which captivated us with its virtuosity. Shri Mataji was to say that She has not heard such Sita playing before.

Next we saw a play based upon a story of Leo Tolstoy presented by the Polish Sahaja Yogis. The play related the story of a group of seekers and the malevolent influence of the Orthodox Church. Tolstoy was an active critic of the church and their failure to follow the teachings of Shri Jesus Christ. He was excommunicated for his efforts which more than anything helped establish his popularity in Russia.

2

The next piece was presented by the Swiss Bhajan group mainly comprising Sarita, Sham, Phil, Serge and Saroje. They performed a Indian classical piece, their love of music was clearly reflected by the joy they imparted to the audience. It was a strong and powerful performance and one which Shri Mataji seemed very pleased.

The Yogis of the UK then performed a play showing the battle between the forces of good played by the Yogis, and the those of evil portrayed by the 'little red men'. Derek Lee was both narrator and lead actor as he helped portrayed the three great religions of the world and their deflection away from the central path.

The play ended with the Advent of Sahaja Yoga and a pop song written and performed by Dr Brian Wells who aptly demonstrated that the spirit of Elton John is alive and well in Sahaja Yoga.

The Russians then ended the mornings performance, beginning with a dance performance by the ladies of the Ukraine. Their performance displayed both grace and proficiency and was even more astounding given that they are self-taught.

The last performance was the Russian play presented in the epic traditions of the Russian playwright. The play unfolded over four hours and was accentuated with poetry and dance, video and slide presentation, action scenes as the Devi danced and vanquished the foes of Her Bhaktas.

As the play heralded the first rays of the rising sun we had the opportunity to see many of the members of the Eastern Collectives as they performed before us. Shri Mataji was later to say that in India it is traditional to stay up for nine nights during Navartri so it was good that we all stayed up together for one night. We then retired for a few hours before preparations began for the Puja.

The Day of the Sabbath has now truly become the day of worship for it is on this day the assembled Yogis are privileged to offer Puja with devotion and dedication to Shri Adi Shakti Mataji.

We gathered at 3:00 pm, the Puja began at 7:30pm by which time the assembled Yogis had filled the Puja venue and enjoyed naby hours of Bhajans. Shri Mataji arrived resplendent in red sari and began Her discourse.

She said that the Devi has incarnated 9 times before to destroy the negativity, but now the negativity has returned and it believes that it is has achieved its purpose. One of its effects is that people praise violence, and negative people become heroes even being praised by later generations.

Shri Mataji spoke of Ghengis Khan, who destroyed so many people, many books and much attention has been wasted on him. Once he attacked a Buddhist monastery and killed many peaceful monks. As a result people lost faith in God thinking how could God allow such a thing to happen, but Shri Mataji said that is the way human beings think.

Today however negativity does not remain concealed. These forces are scared because one can see that they have no lasting effect.

Shri Mataji spoke about attention, and awareness or consciousness, and the difference between what you experienced in the past and today. Consciousness is when you become conscious of something, only then does it enter your awareness. Attention is different, when we use say our hands then at that moment our hands enter our awareness. She said that we say we are the absolute Spirit, but how do we know we are that, we say we are the Absolute Spirit because Shri Mataji has told us we are, but we are not conscious of being the Spirit. She said we are the Spirit no doubt, but it must enter our awareness, we have to assume that position.

Shri Mataji went onto to say that one of the powers we have is that we are in touch with reality, the reality of the past, present and future. In the past we know what we were before Sahaja Yoga, in the present we are aware of our Chakras and Nadis which is what we really are, and of the future we can think of what will happen to us, to Sahaja Yoga and to the world. We should expand our vision to think of the wider view.

She said the other way to increase our powers was to increase our 'Shraddha', our pure faith. Faith is not a thought, or something of the mind, it is a spiritual power, the stronger our faith the more powerful we can become.

Shri Mataji went on to say that those who have strong faith within them, whose faith is part of their form are the most established Yogis. Shri Mataji said that She is Adi Shakti, that is what She was, that is what She is and what She will always be. But we were not born realised, we have all achieved something great, never before have so many realised souls gathered before Her.

Shri Mataji said that it is Navartri and all the demons are back on the Earth again, but they can never harm us on the outside, they represent the forces of darkness. In Mahamaya without darkness how would we know the light.

Shri Mataji concluded Her discourse by saying that as Yogis on this day we should commit to destroying the demons which are within ourselves, which are our obstacles.

As Navartri was a time of war, within this age there is also a war, but a war fought with peace. No one will ask us to take a sword and fight, but on the inside there is a war, a war of love and we are the peaceful warriors.

Diwali Puja Saturday 9th November

Diwali Puja in Sydney will be held next Saturday 9th November at 6:00pm sharp at Burwood ashram. The puja roster is as follows:

Setting up: Lewisham, Croydon Park

Cooking: Roseville, East Lindfield, Gordon

Washing up: Hornsby, Mt Colah, Mt Kuringai, Katoomba

Dismantling: Haberfield, Brunswick Ave Strathfield

2 Nov
1996 4

INDIA TOUR

The following message was received this week from the India Tour Committee in London:

"*Shri Mataji has passed on some new instructions regarding India Tour.*

1. *Due to increased costs, the Ganapatipule Seminar will now cost £600.*
2. *For Indians who have married abroad and are returning to India for the first time the tour is half price. Also, for children aged 5-16 the tour is half price (both short tour and full tour).*
3. *No one will be allowed to pay for the tour in India. Shri Mataji indicated that country leaders are responsible for making sure all payments, even late payments, are sent via London. No foreign currency is to be brought to India to pay for the tour!!*
4. *The numbers of the full tour are alarmingly low, 211 in total.*

It is difficult to clearly convey the disappointment and concern Shri Mataji expressed when She learnt about the full tour numbers.

If the numbers remain so low this year it surely brings into question the possibility of there being future tours (around India).

Please pass on these details to your tour co-ordinator.

With best regards,

*Geoffrey Godfrey
INDIA TOUR COMMITTEE"*

Those going on the short tour have already paid £500. They are being asked to pay an extra £100. We are calling this \$205 (two hundred and five Australian dollars) which should be sent to Peter Brownscombe at 10 Clarence Street, Burwood NSW 2134 by cheque made out to Life Eternal Trust, by Friday 8th November, or be bank transfer due by the same date, for the same amount and in accordance with the procedure already explained to you.

A couple of further points emerged during a conversation I had with Geoffrey Godfrey:

1. The concession Shri Mataji has granted Indians who have married and are living abroad is only available for those going on India Tour for the first time, but it applies to both the long and the short tours. They pay half price. It applies to both men and women. There is no guarantee that it will apply in the same terms in the future.

2. An invitation is extended at anyone who would like to join the full tour. It commences in India on 1st December and concludes on 2nd January. Normally the cut off date for applications is 30th September, but due to the disappointingly low attendance this year, Shri Mataji has graciously extended this. However, the ground fare, 1000 pounds sterling, has to be sent to London before the tour commences.

If you wish to join the full tour, please inform Peter Brownscombe (phone 02 9747 4835, fax 02 9745 4927) urgently. If you haven't yet completed and returned an application form, you should also do this as soon as possible. It will need the endorsement of your state leader.

3. A further concession seems to be permissible this year: those who have difficulty getting to India by 1st December due to work commitments, may join the tour within, say, the first week. They have to pay the full ground fare. Normally this is not possible.

Geoffrey is hoping to issue the itinerary for the full tour shortly. All that seems to be known at present is that the tour looks like leaving Delhi for Lucknow on 8th December

Michael

VIDEO LIBRARY - Request for Help

This is an important Notice concerning one of our most vital and important resources - the Video Library. A small and dedicated team of Yogis headed by Markus have devoted a considerable amount of time and effort to maintaining the integrity of the library. It is because of their efforts that the collective at large can borrow and enjoy Videos of Shri Mataji.

The Video Library represents a visual and spoken record of Shri Mataji and represents an invaluable resource to us all. It is in all our interest to help ensure its ongoing viability and integrity. To enable this to happen the Video Library team needs assistance, so we are asking people to volunteer and to help manage the library on a regular basis. Without assistance we will have to see if the library can continue in its present form.

It has been noted that over time the stock of videos is being depleted. Over time the videos can tend to make their way from the library and not to return. To rectify this situation we performing a Stocktake of all the Videos.

Lending will cease for a period of weeks and we are asking every Sahaja Yogi to look within their homes and Ashrams for any videos which should be in the Library and return them no questions asked.

Also if you have videos of Shri Mataji which you may feel should be in the Library so that the collective may enjoy the privilege of watching then please approach the Video Library.

We seek your assistance in this most important matter.

Classes at Burwood Girls' High School

In October Hari Gaikwad and Joanna Shrivastava conducted a series of programs for a year nine class at Burwood Girls High School over a period of three weeks.

This week the organising teacher contacted Hari to thank them very much for doing programs, saying how much the children had enjoyed it, and that they had got a lot out of it. She also said that the school was going to put it in the school curriculum next year.

Other choices this year had been Power Walking and Tai Chi. Apparently the students who did these courses were jealous of those who had chosen the Sahaja Meditation course (and were all enjoying themselves so much). They were also not impressed that they had to pay for these two courses when Sahaja Yoga was free of charge.

Another school Camperdown High School has also expressed interest and something may be starting there shortly.