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This would augur the fulfillment of the Harmonic Convergence. But to attain to this condition by 2012 means that a calendar change must be enacted. This is the purpose of the Great Calendar Change of 2004, the natural sequel to the Harmonic Convergence Global Peace Meditation of 1987. Should such an eventuality succeed, it would also signal the successful conclusion of the biosphere–noosphere transition and the imminent advent of the psychozoic era, the era of the spiritualization of the biosphere.

Jose Argüelles

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- See also: Celestine Prophecy; Earth Mysteries; Maya Religion (Central America); Maya Spirituality (Guatemala Highlands); New Age; Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre.

SP Harmony in Native North American Spiritual Traditions

Few who witnessed the first Earth Day in 1971 have forgotten its most memorable symbolic moment: a television commercial in which an American Indian warrior paddled his canoe to the bank of a river and walked to a nearby highway, congested with traffic. As he watched this desecration, a single tear rolled down his cheek and the voice-over narration intoned: "People start pollution; people can stop it." While this public service ad – recently named one of the top fifty commercials of all time – communicated an admirable message, it also disseminated a stereotype of American Indians as romantic ecologists or, according to some scholars, "ecologically noble savages" (Redford 1991: 46–8). This positive stereotype has generated endless discussion about whether indigen-

ous peoples have actually lived in *harmony* with nature or whether they, too, have irresponsibly destroyed their own environments. Framing the debate in these terms perpetuates an insidiously false dichotomy, however: either American Indians must embrace "harmony," which connotes a mystical bond with nature and the absence of conflict, or they fall prey to an extractive colonialism similar to that practiced by Euro-Americans. What this binary opposition erases is how American Indians themselves have perceived their relationship to the land, and how it has been articulated in native intellectual and spiritual traditions.

Many stories in these traditions suggest that the complex act of treaty-making more accurately portrays the connection of American Indians to the Earth. Legally, a treaty conjures such synonyms as "covenant," "contract," as well as "commitment." It denotes an agreement that two or more parties enter into entailing mutual responsibilities and obligations. A construct for understanding the relationship between American Indians and the land, the treaty describes a process undertaken by native peoples to understand our ethical and ceremonial commitments to the world in which we live. Precisely what these commitments are and how they have been broken will become clearer in the light of oral traditions about them. If, as Tlingit scholar Nora Marks Dauenhauer has observed, origin stories are by nature theoretical, then stories about the origins of covenant provide a starting point for elucidating this concept.

An old Cherokee story, for example, tells of the time when animals, fishes, insects, plants and humans lived with each other in peace and friendship. The human population increased beyond sustainable numbers, however, and they began to crowd and crush their other-than-human partners out of carelessness and contempt. Even worse, humans invented weapons such as the blowgun and the spear that allowed them to kill animals indiscriminately. In response, every species of animal called a council of their own kind and each decided that they would invent a disease inflicting pain and death upon their victimizers. The deer sent rheumatism to every hunter who killed one of them unless he respectfully asked forgiveness for this offense. The fish sent nightmares about eating decayed food. Eventually, the animals and insects devised so many new afflictions that if their inventiveness had not faltered, not one human would have survived. When the plants, who were friendly to humans, heard what had happened they determined to help by furnishing a cure for each human disease. Although this story concerns the origins of Cherokee medicine, it also thematizes the struggle to achieve a precarious balance (one might even say "harmony") among many forms of life with diverse needs. It addresses the responsibilities that we all must assume toward each other, and presents the complicated negotiations of covenant as a model for

the relationship between humans and the rest of creation. It is a story about harmony that is filled with conflict.

Or consider a tale from the other side of the continent: that of Moldy Head, a young Tlingit boy, who rejects the dried salmon his mother gives him because it is moldy. This behavior offends the salmon people, who capture him one day when he drowns in the Klukshu River. During the time that he spends in their watery world, the young boy learns about salmon culture and even participates in their annual spawning migration – presented in more than one version as “going to break that war house – that’s people’s fishtrap” (Kitty Smith in Cruikshank 1990: 209). His mother recognizes a necklace worn by one of the migrating salmon as the one belonging to her son, and she has “Moldy Head” restored to human form. Because of his learned empathy with the salmon, the boy becomes a medicine person specializing in maintaining a respectful relationship between his people and the salmon. As Tlingit elder Mrs. Angela Sidney notes: “That’s how they know about fish. That’s why kids are told not to insult fish” (Sidney in Cruikshank 1990: 78). Once again, the term harmony seems a reductive way of talking about the multifaceted and often agonistic forging of respectful relationships between humans and other forms of life. The story of Moldy Head teaches listeners that learning to see life from other angles – as well as making mistakes – constitutes a crucial component of living in harmony with nature.

Narratives whose theme is the intermarriage between humans and animals also bear directly upon what constitutes a proper “marriage” or covenant between American Indians and Mother Earth. In the Anishnabe story of “Clothed-in-Fur,” a human by the same name sits in the wigwam of his beaver wife and fantasizes about eating his sister-in-law. His father-in-law, Old Beaver, allows him to eat her. When the man disposes of her remains in a proper and respectful way, his sister-in-law returns alive to her family. Some other humans who desire to hunt and “eat” offer the beaver a pipe through the door of their wigwam. They smoke it and then return it to the humans. In the morning, the people came to hunt “and all [the beavers] gave themselves up to be killed . . . And in the evening they all returned alive” (Overholt and Callicott 1982: 71). Yet another would-be hunter boasts about his capacity to take beaver without any help – a human arrogance that deeply angers Old Beaver. Not surprisingly, this hunter’s quest fails. The Anishnabe story of Clothed-in-Fur depicts further elements of the covenant between humans, animals and the Earth. In exchange for humans fulfilling their obligations toward their furred companions, the beavers willingly sacrifice themselves for the good of humans. Respectful attitudes and reciprocal obligations not only exist as necessary conditions of this covenant, but also embody a sustainable ethics allowing both beavers and humans to “return alive,” that is, to survive.

Generalizations about the diverse native cultures inhabiting North America should always be made with caution. However, these Cherokee, Tlingit and Anishnabe stories articulate an insight central to most native spiritual traditions: the connection between humans and Mother Earth resembles the protracted and often contentious negotiations of treaty-making rather than the static symbiosis of harmony. Perhaps in this sense, transforming harmony into harmonizing would more accurately represent the teachings of our stories. According to Santa Clara Pueblo scholar Gregory Cajete,

harmonizing involves the integration of mind, body, and spirit through a dynamic and complex set of activities. For Native people, living in harmonious and sustainable relationship with the land was a sacred responsibility, tempered with the realization that the neglect of this responsibility would bring dire results and retribution from the Earth . . . These people considered ahead of time the possibility that resources might fail and worked out practical and spiritual ways to ensure life (Cajete in Overholt and Callicott 1982: 212–13).

If humans and all our relations are to meet the environmental challenges facing the twenty-first century, we must develop more nurturing models for maintaining the bond among all life forms and the Earth. Native storytelling traditions distill experience gained over hundreds, if not thousands, of years and offer crucial perspectives on this process. They tell us that “harmony” is fragile and can only be achieved by making a daily commitment on its behalf. They tell us that, unless we honor the treaties among humans, animals, and the land, no environmental or spiritual transformation of our world is possible. They tell us that unless we manifest the proper respect and an ethic of reciprocity in all aspects of our lives, it will be Mother Earth – and not the first warrior of Earth Day – who weeps.

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See also: Indians as "First Ecologists"; Mother Earth; Noble Savage and the "Ecologically Noble" Savage; Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

Harner, Michael – and the Foundation for Shamanic Studies

Michael (James) Harner is among the most prominent authorities in the neo-shamanic field. He became involved in the debate about the authenticity of the works of his friend, Carlos Castaneda. In 1963, Harner earned his Ph.D. in anthropology (University of California, Berkeley) and worked as professor at Columbia, Yale, Berkeley, and at the New School for Social Research in New York. In 1959, he led a research project on behalf of the American Museum of Natural History to study the Conibo Indians of the Peruvian Amazon basin. During this – and later – fieldwork, Harner was introduced to shamanic rituals involving the "entheogenic" vine *ayahuasca*. These experiences changed his attitude toward shamanism. According to his account, Harner was not only an academic authority, but also succeeded in being considered a prospective "master shaman" by native specialists.

After extensive research both "in the field" and through literature, Harner elaborated what he felt to be the cross-cultural common denominators of shamanism. These he referred to as *core shamanism*, which he describes as a spiritual technique instead of a religious concept. Employing rhythmic instruments – mostly a large frame drum or rattle – a slightly altered state of consciousness is induced (not necessarily a "trance"), which allows the practitioner to focus his or her attention to non-ordinary realities. In this state the shaman journeys into the lower or upper worlds in order to meet spiritual entities like power animals and spirit helpers. Submitting as an apprentice to the spirits, the shaman can then ask for help or advice in order to heal herself/himself, other people, animals, plants, or places. The relationship between shaman and spirits is further strengthened by ritual activities like dancing and singing, or through power objects that bring immaterial power into visible form.

In 1979 a kind of social formation took place when Harner and others founded the "Center for Shamanic Studies." Having resigned his professorship, Harner renamed this non-profit organization in 1987 as the "Foundation for Shamanic Studies." Subsequently, a

global network was established in order to secure the quality of the core shamanism techniques, to facilitate grassroots networking, and to distribute literature, music, and shamanic paraphernalia. The constitutional aims of the "Foundation" are threefold: preservation of shamanic cultures and wisdom around the world; study of the original shamanic peoples and their traditions; and teaching shamanic knowledge for the benefit of our planet. This last objective has been especially controversial because the Foundation offers scholarships to natives to regain their own shamanic heritage ("Urgent Tribal Assistance"). Critics regard this as a sincere act of colonial suppression, whereas natives who work as certified "counselors" for the "Harner method" – like the Lakota Carol Proudfoot Edgar – embrace the Foundation's techniques as a crosscultural shamanic tradition.

With branches on most continents, the "Foundation for Shamanic Studies" can be described as an institutionalization of the Harner method. Several other groups have adopted it as a model. The foundation organizes workshops, and it also encourages participants to gather into drumming groups, where the skills learned through the workshops are practiced and shared. With the growth of Harner's workshops – seventy participants or more is not exceptional – fierce debates arose concerning the commercial aspect of his work. Critics from outside charge Harner with having appropriated native traditions for personal profit, while participants frequently express their disappointment about the workshops' sterile or impersonal atmosphere. This might have to do with Harner's description of shamanism as a mere "technique"; others (particularly Harner's former colleague Jonathan Horwitz) stress the animistic aspect and talk of shamanism as "sacred work."

There are two kinds of courses. In the basic courses (mostly three days), participants learn the fundamental techniques of shamanism, especially shamanic journeying and how to contact spiritual helpers and power animals for problem-solving advice. The entities found are then blown into the client's chest or forehead. Although these basic techniques are essential for any kind of shamanic work, training in their application and the chance to increase one's own spiritual abilities are only possible in the various advanced courses. Here, participants learn to retrieve soul-parts that are considered to have been lost through trauma, etc. (in fact, those techniques closely resemble certain psychotherapies [e.g., working with the "Inner Child"]). On other occasions bodily, mental, or spiritual illnesses are "sucked out" of the client.

The accompaniment of dying persons before and after death (i.e., helping the soul traveling into the realm of the dead and communicating with the departed) also is an important field of neo-shamanic practice. In addition, affinities with deep ecology have been increasingly drawn since the early 1990s. This work, which is often called