



# **The Norse Shaman: Ancient Spiritual Practices of the Northern Tradition**

*Evelyn C. Rysdyk*

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An experiential guide to the wisdom preserved in Europe's far north

- Includes shamanic journeys to connect with deities and your ancestral shamans
- Provides step-by-step instructions to prepare for and conduct a seiðr ceremony
- Draws on archaeological evidence and surviving written records from Iceland
- Reveals the long tradition of female shamans in northern European shamanism

Shamanism is humanity's oldest spiritual tradition. In much of the Western world, the indigenous pre-Christian spiritual practices have been lost. Yet at the northern fringes of Europe, Christianity did not displace the original shamanic practices until the end of the Viking age. Remnants of Norse shamanic spirituality have survived in myths, folk traditions, and written records from Iceland, providing many clues about the ancient European shaman's world, especially when examined in conjunction with other shamanic cultures in northern Eurasia, such as the Sami and the tribes of Siberia.

Reconstructing the shamanic practices of the hunter-gatherers of Scandinavia, Evelyn Rysdyk explores the evolution of Norse shamanism from its earliest female roots to the pre-Christian Viking Age. She explains how to enter *Yggdrasil*, the World Tree, to travel to other realms and provides shamanic journeys to connect with the ancestral shamans of your family tree, including the Norse goddess *Freyja*, the very first shaman. She offers exercises to connect with the ancient goddesses of fate, the Norns, and introduces the overnight wilderness quest of *útisetá* for reconnecting with the powers of nature. She explains the key concepts of *Ørlög* and *Wyrd*--the two most powerful forces that shape human lives--and provides exercises for letting go of harmful behavior patterns and transforming simple knowledge into profound wisdom by connecting with *Óðinn*.

Thoroughly examining the shamanic rituals of *seiðr*, the oracular magic of the Nordic cultures, the author provides step-by-step instructions to prepare for and conduct a *seiðr* ceremony, including creating your own *seiðr* staff and hood, and explores the ancestral use of shamanic songs or *varðlokur* to accompany the ceremony. Woven throughout these exercises, Rysdyk provides archaeological evidence from Neolithic sites supporting the long tradition of venerating wise women, grandmothers, and mothers in ancient cultures and the important role of female shamans at the heart of northern European shamanism. Providing an accessible guide for anyone trying to fulfill their shamanic callings, these powerful rituals can provide personal healing and a clear path for finding our way into a harmonious relationship with the natural world.

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