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Book Reviews -- Monographic Musings

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demand for a system-wide publishing infrastructure that can support the creation of new journals, the coordination and publication of research presented at UC-sponsored conferences, and the continued publication of the monograph within a rapidly shifting academic publishing environment. These are kinds of opportunities we offer the UC community. We also represent, as an open access publisher, a compelling publishing option for faculty, research units and publishing programs that seek to reach newly defined, cross-disciplinary scholarly communities and scholars in developing nations who may not have access to licensed content. And finally, we provide a single platform for the dissemination of scholarship throughout its lifecycle, from a scholar's earliest working papers to the final, formal publication of his or her research. It turns out that there are a great many folks out there who need just these kinds of services. Indeed, business is booming in the eScholarship offices these days, now that we've learned how to articulate the value of what we bring to the table.

GT: *There has been much discussion within our community about emerging university-as-publisher models. How do the eScholarship activities fit into that discussion?*

CM: As I mentioned previously, UC PubS brings together the strengths of UC Press and eScholarship to create a sort of next-generation university publisher for our clients. Within the California Digital Library, we take very seriously our role as an open access publishing services provider for the University of California. The university-as-publisher initiative, while necessarily engaged in the economics of the publishing marketplace, also represents the opportunity to partner with our faculty by sustaining the infrastructure necessary to support scholarly inquiry, research, and publication. eScholarship works in concert with the rest of the CDL and with UC Press to make available exactly that kind of infrastructure. UC invests an enormous amount of resources in the production of knowledge. It seems only appropriate that it would seek to enable the broadest and most accessible dissemination of that knowledge, from its earliest iteration as a working paper along a continuum to the final, finished publication. Our work represents one arm of that effort to support knowledge production and provide innovative and compelling opportunities for the UC academic community to take control of the scholarly research and publishing lifecycle.

GT: *What does the future hold for eScholarship?*

CM: In the short term, we're just trying to keep up with demand for our services that we've generated with this campaign! Longer term, we have high hopes for eScholarship's next phase, which we expect will include streaming media publishing services; integrated conference services, from proposals to the proceedings volume; integration of content with citation management tools; and the continued growth of our robust journal publishing program (30 journals and rapidly increasing!) 🌱

Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Column Editor's Note: *Did you know that February is **Library Lovers' Month**? How refreshing that during this second month of the year, when the winter holidays have come to a close and the New Year's confetti has been swept away, there is a celebration to remind us of the gem that exists for all of us: the Library. Of course, the Library — with a capital "L" — is used here to describe a location and services; a building and all of the knowledge kept within its walls; bricks and bytes; information and people providing access to that information; the Library in all of its many forms: public, school, academic, archives, law, government, et cetera. Long live the Library!*

*What other than library love would inspire **Tatyana Eckstrand** to compile **The Librarian's Book of Quotes**, a delightful gift book for your library-loving friends? And where else but in a library would you be able to explore shamanism in-depth? **ATG** reviewer and library friend **Lawrence Simms** shares his evaluation of **Gary Edson's Shamanism: A Cross-Cultural Study of Beliefs and Practices**. Many thanks to **Dr. Simms** for his valued and valuable contribution.*

Happy Library Lovers' Month, and happy reading, everyone! — DV

Eckstrand, Tatyana. *The Librarian's Book of Quotes*. Chicago: ALA, 2009. 978-0-8389-0988-1. 128 pages. \$22.00.

Reviewed by **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston)

The back cover of **Tatyana Eckstrand's The Librarian's Book of Quotes** boasts that it is the "perfect gift for information professionals and lovers of libraries." While the perfect gift is quite a claim, **Eckstrand's** little volume (it measures 5.5" by 6.5") is, indeed, a nice one to have for personal reference or to give to that special-librarian-someone. The quotes are not arranged by topic, though they do possess a nice "flow." **Eckstrand** includes a biographical dictionary as well as a brief list of sources.

I certainly cannot claim to have studied **ALA's** entire catalog, but the **ALA Editions** that cross my desk are usually guidebooks or handbooks, or they explore strategies regarding a given domain of librarianship (for example, marketing or collection development). **The Librarian's Book of Quotes** is different, however. It does not offer tips or best practices, nor does it provide organizational plans or program samples. **Eckstrand** does not rally around a particular cause, overtly attempt to sway your opinion about libraries and librarians, or even wax philosophical about information and knowledge. Something magical happens, though, when reading the 200 (or so) passages: you are reminded of the gravitational pull that libraries have on people. Like a good smack

on the head, the quotations jog your memory and allow you to recall why librarians do the things that they do — and you might find your inner-librarian-philosopher awakened.

In her introduction, **Eckstrand** explains that **The Librarian's Book of Quotes** is a collection of pearls that rekindled the spark for her at a time when her love for the profession was waning. It is somewhat surprising, then, and also refreshing, that a few of the quotes cast libraries and librarians in a less-than-brilliant (although certainly not a negative) light. And even though I found myself disagreeing with a few of the anecdotes, is there not a better compliment to a book's ability to provoke thought than some minor dissonance with the text?

I would love to see a second volume in **Eckstrand's** collection, perhaps including references to libraries and librarians in popular culture, and/or libraries and librarians in humor. Without a doubt, such a volume should include one of my favorite library-related quotations:

He's like Super Librarian, y'know?
Everyone forgets, Willow, that knowledge is the ultimate weapon.

— from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Edson, Gary. *Shamanism: A Cross-Cultural Study of Beliefs and Practices*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009. 978-0-7864-3409-1. 295 pages. \$95.00.

Reviewed by **Lawrence J. Simms** (Associate Professor of Classical Studies, Emeritus, College of Charleston)

Shamanism is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon dating back to the infancy of the human psyche. Among the earliest human attempts at graphic representation are figures that may well depict shamanic activity. Any serious study of this phenomenon

will incorporate material from a variety of disciplines. Unfortunately, over the past few decades New Age enthusiasts have tried to exploit the shamanic tradition for their own characteristically idiosyncratic purposes with

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the inevitable dilution and distortion that the desire to popularize begets.


Gary Edson's *Shamanism: A Cross-Cultural Study of Beliefs and Practices* provides a welcome antidote — a scholarly treatment of a subject critical for understanding the evolution of human psychology. The author brings to his subject a solid background both as an academic and a museum director. His prior related publication, *Masks and Masking: Faces of Tradition and Belief Worldwide* (McFarland, 2005) already dealt with a common accoutrement of shamanic ritual. The broader study of shamanism may be seen as a natural sequel to that earlier volume.

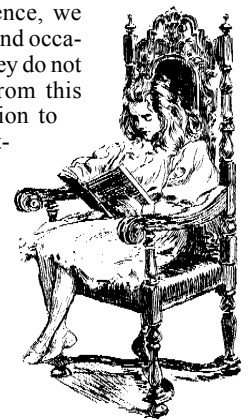
In a book of 295 pages, divided into eleven chapters, **Edson** has covered all the more important aspects of shamanism in the requisite detail with a minimum of resort to technical jargon. His research is based on abundant scholarly resources, duly noted, as well as on extensive “direct field observation” in locations as far-flung as Korea, Ecuador, Taiwan, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Russia and Mongolia. His bibliography serves the reader as a comprehensive check-list of publications on shamanism and related disciplines available in English. In his preface the author tells us that his book does “not presume to present a systematic study of the vast world of shamanism” nor does it “attempt to describe all the varied aspects of the spirit world.” What it does provide is “a level of insight into humanity’s attempt to understand and control the forces of nature, and many of

the shamanistic practices associated with those activities.” In so doing, he engages in a thought-provoking investigation into the need of our prehistoric ancestors for psychic equilibrium in face of the unknown and the threatening, as he indicates at the end of his preface: “this book is about people and the means they developed to deal with socially, culturally and environmentally challenging occurrences that influenced their lives.”

In chapter one we are given a general characterization of shamanism, including the various roles played by the shaman in the community. Essential to the exposition of any such phenomenon as this, the word “shaman” is analyzed etymologically, thus laying the foundation for a clearer understanding of the original concept. Subsequent chapters deal with the primordial beliefs underlying shamanic practice, the power that the shaman was believed to possess, based on his or her secret knowledge and contact with the world of spirits, the element of magic, the symbolism and artistic representation associated with shamanism, shamanic rituals and the state of transformation achieved by the practitioner through altered levels of consciousness and the various methods by which this transformation is effected, the shaman’s powers of divination and healing (two primary aspects of his or her service to the community), and the function of dreams as a form of divine intervention and an avenue to the supramundane. In the final chapter, “Transcendental Shamanism,” the author summarizes many of the more significant points of the foregoing discussion. Throughout he elucidates the particular facet of his subject under consideration with specific examples of shamanic practice

and beliefs drawn from a variety of traditions and contexts. Not bad for a book that makes no claim “to present a systematic study of the vast world of shamanism”!

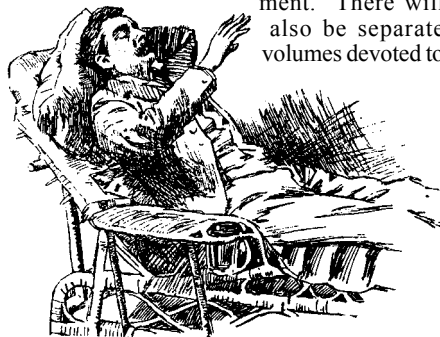
A major feature of this book is the visual component: 143 illustrations, consisting of 49 plates and photographs, most of shamans, often in ritual attire and sometimes engaged in ritual performance, as well as 94 drawings executed by the author and based on models listed at the back of the book, depicting an array of ritual objects, especially the seemingly endless variety of masks associated with the world of the shaman. All illustrations, liberally distributed throughout the text and coordinated with it, are accompanied by explanatory captions, many fairly detailed. Eighteen pages of endnotes and thirteen pages of bibliography, plus a comprehensive index, round out the book which is well-bound with an attractive cover, as is customary with **McFarland and Company**. As the art of proofreading fades more and more into obsolescence, we are not surprised to find occasional “typos,” but they do not in general detract from this up-to-date introduction to a large and complicated subject. This book belongs in libraries both academic and public. Its presence will help to counteract some of the nonsense which may perhaps be found alongside it. 



From the Reference Desk

by **Tom Gilson** (Head, Reference Services, Addlestone Library, College of Charleston, 66 George Street, Charleston, SC 29401; Phone: 843-953-8014; Fax: 843-953-8019) <gilson@cofc.edu>

Berkshire Publishing is embarking on an ambitious project. The *Encyclopedia of Sustainability* (2010-12: 978-1-933782-01-0, \$999 prepaid) is being release over a three-year period. Plans call for each volume to stand alone as a resource as well as to be an integral part of the set. Individual volumes will focus on the relationship of sustainability to broad themes like business, law, and politics, as well as natural resources and ecosystems management. There will also be separate volumes devoted to



assessing sustainability in China and India, the Americas and Oceania, and Afro-Eurasia.

According to its editor, **Willis Jenkins**, the first volume subtitled *The Spirit of Sustainability* “intends to help readers to identify and begin to explore the moral dimensions of sustainability.” In a wide-ranging collection of articles, he and his contributors offer a “pluralist” and interdisciplinary perspective that may raise as many questions as it answers. These are not easy issues. They are thought provoking and with religion, philosophy and ethics playing a major role in the discussion, there is no abiding consensus.

The volume contains 147 individual essays arranged alphabetically by subject category. Entries range from individual articles on Confucianism and Feminist Thought to those on the Jordan River Project, New Age Spirituality, the Wise Use Movement, Eco-centrism, Stewardship, as well as a variety of indigenous traditions. In each instance, the unifying theme is how these ideas, traditions, and movements

reflect values and ethical concerns related to the sustainability of the natural world. Each article starts with a helpful abstract which is followed by the text of the article. The articles are generally two to three pages in length and each has a solid list of further readings that users will find useful in expanding their research. The articles are scholarly but written in non-technical language accessible to the lay reader.

The Spirit of Sustainability lays a foundation for the *Encyclopedia of Sustainability* grounded in moral and ethical issues and concepts. Some may argue that the set might have first focused on the more practical concerns, like depleted natural resources or the need for ecosystems management. However, given the growing concern about the serious threats posed by issues related to sustainability, *The Spirit of Sustainability* was a good choice. It provides a broad-based but diverse foundation for the *Encyclopedia*, while at the same time, setting the tone for the following volumes.

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