

## **Universal Truth in Diverse Dances**

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*Sacred Dance Journal – Volume 42-2 2000*

In my travels, I have been fortunate to view dances from various cultures. Usually they were presented in an “entertainment” setting. Yes, if you were willing to search beneath the surface, it was possible to see “sacred” roots in every dance. My overwhelming reaction toward my fellow tourists was one of pity, for they saw merely a colorful display of quaint customs. What they had failed to see was, that we had received privileged glimpses of actual worship experiences.

In Australia, the aborigines still dance their traditional creation story of Dream Time accompanied by the didgeridoo.

In New Zealand, the Maori dance their story of when the Supreme God LO came over the land of the Long White Cloud and breathed life in the first woman.

In Bali, we were told of the necessity of the dancer to properly prepare one’s spirit by uniting with Creation, before being able to “Dance on Fire” without burning the feet.

In China, I saw citizens carrying the “Still Point Within” while doing their T’ai Chi exercises in a busy hotel lobby or shopping mall.

In Germany, the Maypole dance announces spring by supplication for a bountiful crop. The Oktoberfest is a thankful celebration for the harvest.

In South America, where Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay converge in the awesome thundering Iguassu Falls, the dances demonstrate the great power yet liquidity of the forces of nature.

In Hawaii, there is deep respect for its geographical position surrounded by water, and the mystical power of volcanoes. These forces appear in their dances where the swaying hips suggest movement of ocean waves, while undulating hands tell stories from ancient times.

At home, in California, I recall the Hopi Indian who introduced his dance by telling the ancient story of the one who was looking for a suitable gift to offer the Great Spirit. After considering his drum, rattle, horse, bow and arrow, he gained insight into knowing that the only true gift was himself – “The Hopi gives the Hopi.”

As I survey my travels, I ask, “What common theme emerges in the dances of these cultures?” It occurs to me that they express a simple appreciation of wonder in God’s creation, with a keen sense of what place each person occupies in the One grand scheme. I question if perhaps we, in

our sophisticated western technological culture, have lost sight of this wonder? One Creator + one Earth + one People, is the universal truth which is celebrated in diverse dances.