



The Gift of the Sacred Pipe

Vera Louise Drysdale

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This book is an illustrated edition of Black Elk's account of the seven sacred rites of the Oglala Sioux. Vividly portraying the arrival of the White Buffalo Woman on the Plains, the paintings and charcoals by Vera Louise Drysdale highlight dramatic elements of the ancient rituals she imparted, and they show everyday objects that were sanctified in the Sioux cosmology.

The sacred pipe is the central instrument in the holy rites of the Sioux people. The White Buffalo Woman appeared on the Plains to give the pipe to the Sioux so that they might "send their voices" to Wakan-Tanka, the Great Spirit. She related the seven rites of the pipe: the keeping of the soul, the rite of purification, crying for a vision, the Sun Dance, the making of relatives, preparation for womanhood, and the throwing of the ball that symbolizes the earth and gives strength to future generations.

In this volume the rituals are condensed, but the continuity of Joseph Epes Brown's text is preserved. The original text, as given by Black Elk, was recorded in 1947; in 1953 the University of Oklahoma Press published it as *The Sacred Pipe*.

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