



## THIS ISSUE: IN THE BEGINNING — ANCIENT ROOTS OF PAGAN CULTURE

### IN PRAISE OF THE MAMMOTH

There hasn't been a living mammoth for thousands of years, yet we remember their majesty, passed down to us in art and legend. Today, the word "mammoth" transports our minds back to the time of our ancestors. Is it any wonder that a primal shiver of excitement races down our spines?

*By Elizabeth Barrette, artwork by Suzanne Cheryl Gardner . . . 20*

### A MILLENNIA WITHOUT WAR? PERHAPS, IF THE GODDESS IS AFOOT

While getting my master's in archaeology, I had read many who insisted that the human species is violent by nature. My new reading in Goddess studies allowed me to think that it might be possible for humans to live in long-term peace. But by the mid-1990s I began to hear criticism of these works and of the ancient Goddess-society peace records from my old discipline, archaeology. Was *Pax Minoica* still a viable concept or not? I just had to know for myself.

*By Jeri Studebaker, artwork by Suzanne Cheryl Gardner . . . 26*



### ANCIENT ARCHETYPES OF THE JOMON

The Minoans were not the only matriarchal Neolithic culture. Since the discovery of the Jomon community in 1994, the Japanese archaeological establishment reported for the first time that Jomon people were not poor, primitive, and barbarous but were, in fact, prosperous, culturally advanced, and peaceful.

*Article and artwork by Katherine Reimer . . . 29*

### THE SACRED HERSTORY OF CLAY

Female statues made in stone or clay, such as the *Willendorf* Earth Mother or the *Dolni Vestonice* statues show a reverence for the earth as the Divine Mother. Archaeologists believe the oldest kiln was in the home of a Paleolithic shaman who produced, then fired, figures of women and beasts. These figures were the predominant images in Paleolithic sculpture and personified the continuity of the species and invoked the survival of the race.

*By Christine Davis, artwork by Suzanne Cheryl Gardner . . . 34*

### THE DILEMMA OF THE DYING GOD

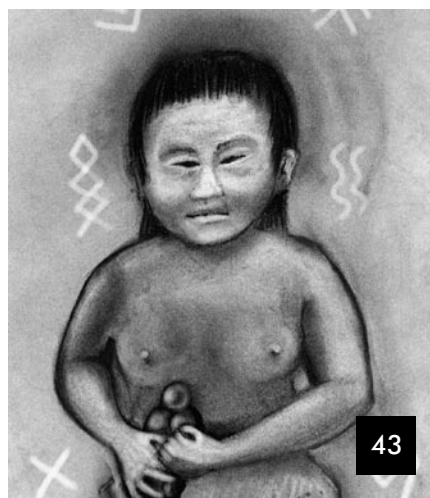
One of Neo-Paganism's favorite myths is of the God who dies and rises with the grain and sun, whose union with the Goddess fertilizes Nature. But ask most historians today about the "dying and rising god" and they'll tell you that it is just a construct imposed upon the evidence and not an ancient myth at all. But if the Dying God does not arise from ancient myth, then where does it come from? And why does it have so much power?

*By Archer, artwork by Suzanne Cheryl Gardner . . . 37*

### REMEMBER THE MOTHERS: MATRILINEAL SOCIETIES PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Connections still survive to societies that held the Earth and its inhabitants in higher regard; we should pay attention to what they offer. We can start by tossing out assumptions of Western thought such as our views of traditional gender roles: the male/female dichotomy is often unimportant in these societies.

*By Joan Robinson Blumit, artwork by Suzanne Cheryl Gardner . . . 43*





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## FEATURES

### LETTING GO IN FRENCH POLYNESIA

I went to French Polynesia for two weeks to practice the art and to try to improve my skills at relaxing. But you already see my problem in my words – *practice, try, improve* – all terms associated with work, not play.

*By Jeff Rasley, artwork by Suzanne Cheryl Gardner ... 49*

### CREATING A PAGAN BOOKSHELF: PART II, CONTEMPORARY CLASSICS

In our first installment of The Pagan Bookshelf, we voted on our favorite “classic” Pagan books – titles published by 1988. This time around, we’ve chosen our favorite books from the last fifteen years.

*Edited by Carl McColman, artwork by Christine Beetow ... 51*

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### ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

Suzanne Cheryl Gardner creates “Empowerment Paintings” on commission embodying personal symbols to inspire and empower individuals, families or groups. Find out more about her work or buy prints, cards, and more at her website [www.suzannesart.com](http://www.suzannesart.com).