

The Cosmic Serpent

Jeremy Narby

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The Cosmic Serpent is a great personal adventure story, a fascinating study of anthropology and ethnopharmacology, and, most important, a truly revolutionary look at how knowledge and consciousness may come into being. For ten years, Jeremy Narby explored Amazonian rain forests, the libraries of Europe, and some of the world's most arcane scientific journals, following strange clues, unsuppressible intuitions, and extraordinary coincidences. He collected evidence and researched the seemingly impossible possibility that specific knowledge might somehow be transferred through DNA, the genetic information at the heart of each cell of all living beings, to a drug-prepared consciousness. The beginning of Narby's explorations lay with the Peruvian Indians, who claim that their knowledge of chemical interactions-now scientifically confirmed-has its origins in plant-induced hallucinations and that during these experiences they gain information that could not be acquired by methods of trial and error. Narby demonstrates that indigenous and ancient peoples have known for millennia-and even have drawn-the double helix structure, something conventional science discovered only in 1953. He also suggests that DNA, and the life it codes for at the cellular level, are "minded." In a first-person narrative of scientific discovery that opens new perspectives on biology, the knowledge of indigenous peoples, anthropology, and the limits of rationalism, The Cosmic Serpent reveals how startlingly different the world around us appears when we open our minds to it.



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