

I IN OUTLINE

# TÜRK ŞAMANLIĞI

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- 3- *Time. Within Time*, Yazıcı, Baku, 1993
- 4- *Tales About Ali Shir Nevai*, Yazıcı, Baku, 1994
- 5- *The Wife of Shah Abbas*, Yazıcı, 1996
- 6- *Hoca Ahmed Yesevi and Some Problems of Folk Sufism*, Ağrıdağ, Baku, 1997
- 7- *Korkut Ata. From Mythology to Reality: Dede Korkut*, Karam, Ankara, 2003
- 8- *Köroğlu. From Shamans to Lovers, From Alps to Erenes*, Akçağ, Ankara, 2003
- 9- *History of the Turkish Language. (The Turkish Language from Past to Present)*, Ankara, 2003
- 10- *Turkish Shamanic Texts. Legends and Memorates*, Piramit, Ankara, 2004
- 11- *An Introduction to Mythology*, Karam, Çorum, 2005
- 12- *The Etymology of Turkish Tribal Names in the Religious-Mythological System of the Moon Cult*, 3ok, Ankara, 2005

and over 100 articles (in books, peer-reviewed journals, encyclopaedias) are available. He has been working at Gaziantep University since late 1999. He is married and has three children.



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## FOREWORD

Priests speak with God, and God speaks with Shamans.

(From records once taken by an anonymous painter in a cave in America)

Anthropologists, ethnologists, historians of religion, cultural historians, sociologists, etc. of recent times use the term Shamanism in a very broad sense, learning about primitive cultural elements such as magic, sorcery, natural healing, etc., and mysticism as Shamanism and Shamanic elements, thereby overloading the concept of Shamanism and going beyond its scope. The reason for all this is that insufficient attention has been paid to Shamanic texts and Shamanic hymns.

One of the main reasons for evaluating shamanism within a general framework is learning about shamanism second-hand. However, it is not possible to learn this practical system, which is as complex as it is syncretic, in a populist manner. Shamanism, with all its main features, presents a unique phenomenon in the context of geographical and ethnic structure. Therefore, the only way to obtain accurate and proper information is to give primary importance to Shamanic texts and ethnographic data that can reveal the internal structure of Shamanism.

It is possible to evaluate the phenomenon of shamanism as a distinct scientific discipline, based on the existing literature, with its errors and truths, its scientificity and populism. Indeed, although writings on shamans and shamanism do not follow a specific discipline, they have at least revealed the existence and debatable nature of this phenomenon. In recent times, those who have studied shamanism...

The emergence of shamans in America, Europe, Altai and Siberia also confirms that the element of shamanism is in search of a discipline.

In recent years, with the emergence of post-Shamanism, books written by Western scholars on Shamanism have been translated into Turkish and published, revealing new findings about Shamanism. However, as is well known, the Western world, which prefers to generalise, gives the impression of creating a universal Shamanic culture. However, Shamanism, which has permeated everything from the hunter-gatherer Altaic Turkic tribes to the Turkic peoples who established great empires on the steppes, has not been defined, and its main characteristics, religious-ritual aspects, internal structure, function, thought system, and philosophical dimension have not been revealed.

Although attempts are made to instil this belief in readers, there is no such thing as pure Shamanism. Although it draws its origins from esoteric knowledge, Shamanism has taken on new characteristics based on geographical conditions and ethnic structures, acquiring a different dimension throughout history. The greatest mistake in the works of Western scholars, which focus solely on Shamanism and have been translated into Turkish and become bestsellers, is that they attach excessive meaning to this concept and disregard its ethnic characteristics. Pure shamanism may seem appealing, at least temporarily, to Turkish readers who are caught up in the current trend of nostalgia for the past and who believe that if a Western scholar wrote it, it must be good, scientific, and true. However, those seeking the truth will see that most of these works (except for M. Eliade, M. Harner, etc.) do not go beyond populism and realise that they have very little to do with their own culture.

In this respect, shamanism is neither magic or sorcery in its simplified form, nor a means of treatment, nor a religion. For there are sorcerers and magicians who deal in magic and sorcery; there are herbalists, whom the Western world calls "medecin-man," who treat with traditional methods and have systematised this; there are priests, priests, and mullahs who preside over cults and rituals. The shaman does not fully assume the role of any of these. The shaman is someone who calls people to live in harmony with nature, prevents the destruction of living, spiritual nature, heals the afflicted (just like the herbalist), speaks with the mouth of spirits (just like the sorcerer), and conducts rituals (just like the religious official); he resembles no one, and no one resembles him.

Even within Shamanism emerging in a geographical region, differences exist. Indeed, Siberian and Far Eastern Shamanism, despite all their similarities, exhibit fundamental differences: It is therefore clear how frivolous and unscientific it is to discuss Turkish Shamanism by relying on scientific books written based on data from American, Australian or African Shamanism, which had no contact whatsoever with the Turks. Today, bi-



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Christianity, as practised today, differs greatly in Europe and Africa, in the West and in the East, just as Turkish Shamanism differs greatly from the Shamanism of its close neighbours.

The aim of this book is to partially curb the rapidly increasing number of uninformed and ignorant writings on Shamanism in recent times and to provide information on Turkish Shamanism using primary sources. Shamanism is neither an extremely complex phenomenon nor merely a healing system. The only way to understand this phenomenon is through science, and this science comes from the information provided by the Shamans themselves. However, like all members of secret teachings, Shamans do not readily reveal their secret knowledge. Like all secret teachings, the Shamanic teaching is hidden in symbols and signs, so it is impossible for any scientist to fully understand the Shaman and the Shamanic world.

To summarise, this book was written based on 1) the legends told about Shamans, memorates, and the prayers and chants of Shamans, and 2) thousands of scholarly books and articles written about Shamanism. The historical process, the environment of practice, the social structure, and the anthropological phenomenon were examined together. An attempt was made to reveal the philosophical-ontological and social epistemological foundations of Shamanism.

## INTRODUCTION

SHAMANISM has been researched and examined both in general and in its separate aspects. It is almost impossible to examine all the sources related to shamanism. Shamanism, which is the subject of research for ethnologists, anthropologists, folklorists (ethnographers), philosophers, doctors, psychologists, folk literature experts, and fine artists, has been studied primarily based on non-shamanic data, i.e., writings about shamanism and shamanic accessories. In recent times, historians of religion have also joined this research endeavour.

Although it has been researched in terms of materials, articles and books, Turkish Shamanism has not been examined in a systematic manner aimed at revealing the fundamental elements of Shamanism.

This work will address Turkish Shamanism as a whole, examining the shaman's inner world, techniques, and folklore, highlighting the originality of Turkish Shamanism along with all its similar aspects.

A. İnân's proficiency in Eastern Turkish and Russian enabled him to make good use of the sources is quite valuable, at least for that period, but appears insufficient in the theoretical context of the works of today's Western scholars.

in a theoretical context. Unfortunately, the limited sources that A. İnân was able to access have unfortunately not been advanced in subsequent research. The next generation of Turkish scholars, not knowing Russian, referred to A. İnân rather than the original source, which has hindered rather than advanced the research.

A. İnân's book, *Shamanism in History and Today*, does not refer to Shamanism (although this term is not entirely accurate either. The most accurate term to use should be Shamanism), but rather to the mythology, Shaman beliefs, and superstitions surrounding Shamanism that are  
The most accurate term to use should be Shamanism.) but rather the mythology found in Shamanic sayings and prayers, Shamanic beliefs, beliefs surrounding Shamanism, and Shamanic accessories. The status of Shamans, the main cultural and religious factors in Shaman selection, Shamanic

Q.'s secret science, trance techniques, practical applications, way of thinking, the interaction of shamanism, treatment methods, and the philosophy of shamanism are outside the scope of this research. The characteristic feature of shamanism, such as the role of older beliefs in shaping Turkish shamanistic views, has also been left untouched.

These matters have remained as such. In short, neither in A. İnönü's work nor in the works of other scholars has Turkish Shamanism been systematically addressed.

scholars' works. Thus, Turkish Shamanism has remained an unsolved problem.

Here, it is necessary to specifically note two valuable articles by S. Buluç related to shamanism. In his articles entitled *Shaman and Shamanism*, Buluç has been able to present this subject in a general way, drawing on the works of both Western and Russian researchers. Although S. Buluç's two articles on this subject aim to fill a theoretical void, they remain incomplete as they do not address the internal structure of Shamanism, at least in broad terms. At the request of the Great Atatürk, Y. Z. Yörük's two-volume unpublished work, *History of Turkish Religions and Sects*, completed in 1932, provides extensive information on Shamanism in the first part of the first volume.<sup>2</sup> Although this is a valuable assessment from the perspective of the sociology of religion, it is characterised by limited sources and misinterpretations of many aspects of the Shamanism system. Other articles and papers that fail to reveal the phenomenological existence of Turkish Shamanism are not worth mentioning.

Examining Turkish Shamanism, a phenomenal phenomenon, at the level of new methods and methodological approaches offered by contemporary science is one of the most essential issues. Another essential issue is that it is impossible to proceed without addressing the Shaman legends and Shaman prayers, which are the sole and authentic source of Turkish Shamanism. Therefore, elements such as the Shamanic worldview, the Shamanic element, the religious belief system, etc., which we describe as Shamanic phenomenology, have preserved their existence not only in Shamanic rituals and Shamanic mythology, but also in what we might call Shamanic folklore, such as legends, memorates, and poetic prayers. By drawing on these two indispensable sources, we can examine Turkish Shamanism in general in terms of two main elements:

1- The essence of Shamanism, which constitutes the core of Shamanism and can be called the inner side of Shamanism: the call, Shamanic illness, the Shaman's fragmentation and consumption, mental opening, ecstasy, training, the Shaman's esoteric knowledge, in a word, the phenomena and designs that realise the process of being endowed with Shamanic status, or the philosophy of the Shamanic world.

<sup>1</sup> Buluç S., "The Creation and End of the World According to the Altai Turks", *Ülkü*, xvii, issue 102, Ankara, 1941; Buluç S., "Shamanism", *Türk Amacı*, I, issues 1-6, II, issue 8, İstanbul, 1942, 1943; Buluç S., "On the Origin and Development of Shamanism", *Faculty of Literature Journal of Turkish Language and Literature*, II, No. 3-4, İstanbul, 1948

<sup>2</sup> Yörük Y. Z., *Turkish Religions Before Islam, Shamanism*, Ankara, 2005

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2- Shamanic symbols that could be called the external aspect of Shamanism: costume, drum, mallet, shaman's hat, prayers, legends, etc., or the reflection of esoteric knowledge in symbols, the emergence of Shamanism, types of Shamans, etc.

The internal structure or internal formation of Turkish Shamanism plays a key role in demonstrating the national characteristics of Shamanism. Trance, drums, mallets, clothing, etc. exhibit more universality. Examining and studying each of these elements separately does not provide comprehensive information about Turkish Shamanism. Examining these interconnected elements as a whole will provide complete information about what Turkish Shamanism is. The emergence of Shamanism and the environment in which Shamanism is practised are phenomena that complete the phenomenology of Shamanism. For this reason, the book consists of seventeen chapters divided into two main sections.



FIRST BOOK

THE STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL  
ASPECTS OF THE TRANSITION TO  
SHAMANIC STATUS! OR THE INTERNAL  
STRUCTURE OF SHAMANISM

FIRST CHAPTER  
THE TURKISH SHAMANIC SYSTEM

1. 1. Shamanism from the Perspective of Turkish Culture

Shamanism, which assumed the administrative and guiding functions of the ideological and socio-cultural sphere prior to Islam, was a philosophical and practical movement encompassing all aspects of Turkish culture. Over time, the Turks accepted it.

Religions (Manichaeism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam) have not been able to erase shamanic elements

from Turkish consciousness and Turkish culture.<sup>2</sup> Shamanism has managed to survive in one way or another by adapting to the new cultural environment. Persecution and prohibitions<sup>3</sup> have forced shamanic elements into the background of the new religions, where they form the basis of traditional Turkish beliefs and are known in religious literature as superstitions.

In all its aspects, shamanism constitutes not only the belief system of the ancient Turks, but also their philosophy. However, it is not correct to attribute our entire belief system to shamanism. Shamanism, if anything, shaped beliefs

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<sup>1</sup> The term Shamanism is also used in scientific literature. Although there is no difference in content between Shamanism and Shamanism, the term Shamanism may be considered more appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> Elements associated with shamanism: Becoming a shaman, the functions of the shaman, death and resurrection, shaman burial.

<sup>3</sup> These have been preserved through transformation in fairy tales, epics, and other genres of folk literature. After Islam, the Shamanic worldview is evident in almost all layers of Turkish Sufism, from receiving a share, undergoing hardship, being accepted into the order, enduring hardship, being released from hardship, and the cult of the saint, to the formation of folk Sufism. On this subject, see: Bayat F., Hoca Ahmet Yesevi ve Halk Sufizminin Bazı Problemleri (Hoca Ahmet Yesevi and Some Problems of Folk Sufism), Baku, 1997; Bayat F. "Anadolu Halk Sufizminin Oluşmasında Şamanlığın Rolü" (The Role of Shamanism in the Formation of Anatolian Folk Sufism), Proceedings of the International Congress on Anatolian Beliefs, 23-28 October 2000, Ürgüp/Nevşehir, Ankara, 2001; Bayat F. "The Synthesis of Eren=İren in Turkish Culture", Yol 10, March-April 2001

<sup>3</sup> Christian missionaries had Turkish shamans arrested by Russian authorities in the 18th and 19th centuries, sometimes even

They would have them executed. Islam also rejected the old beliefs of nomadic societies for a long time, labelling them as heresy, and the authorities always looked down on these people. However, despite this, the Altaic-Sayan Turks, Siberian Turks, Mongol-Buryats, Tungus, and other peoples always respected the shamans, considering them superior to the priests of man-made religions. For example, an ordinary Mongolian summarised the difference between Shamanism and Lamaism as follows: Shamans tell us about the things of life, while lamas only preach to us about things that remind us of death. (Ro-ux J. P., *La Mort Chez les Peuples Altaïques Anciens et Médiévaux*, Paris, 1963, p. 22)

It has been shaped in a manner consistent with its philosophical and practical system. Ancient Turkish philosophy was also shaped on the basis of the esoteric knowledge of the Shamans. However it is regrettably impossible to accept Z. Gökalp's peculiar assessment of this philosophy:

*"Since 'magic' was revered in ancient religions, the theory of that time gave rise to 'rational philosophy', while Shamanism gave rise to 'Sharia philosophy'. There were two philosophical systems among the ancient Turks, one originating from 'religion' and the other from 'magic'."*<sup>4</sup>

One of the most characteristic features of the shamanic worldview is that nature and society are not separate from each other, but form a whole. For this reason, shamanism can be described as a "nature religion" in its entirety. Shamanic philosophy is also linked to natural phenomena and supernatural beings. According to Shamanic philosophy, there is an eternal, primordial balance between the universe and our world, between the macrocosm and the microcosm. The disruption of this balance leads to disaster

The primary duty of the shaman, equipped with all occult sciences and experiences, is to preserve this balance and order. This characteristic calls the candidate to the role of shaman.

In the shamanic illness sent by the spirits, in the ritual death realised through the dismemberment of the body, in the idea of the forgiveness of torments through the death of relatives, in the shaman's sacred tree, in the animal mother who is the shaman's guardian, it manifests in the rebirth of the shaman's spirit and its training in the shaman tree. The shaman is a mediator between nature and society, materiality and spirituality, the real world and the other world, society and spirits, like an individual. He is the one who lives cosmic knowledge and conveys it to people. He is not the one who looks, but the one who sees.

The shaman understood the great power of solitude and therefore distanced himself from society. As understood from shamanic legends, shamans are generally people who have tried to live outside society, in secluded places, rather than in places where society is densely populated. Even if the shaman is within society, he is alone. The shaman, who sees himself as one of the beings of the other world during the time of the shamanic ceremony and brings the other world into his own world, is still alone.

The shaman is a person who is not visible to the eye, but is described as belonging to the other world of spirits.

He is a representative of the Shamanism system, which understands the language of beings, acts as an interpreter to facilitate communication through , and conveys the secret knowledge stored in the cosmic memory—accumulated over millennia and now facing oblivion—to society through cryptic symbols. Therefore, the Shaman is:

- 1) The representative of the other world in this world, the source of forgotten secret knowledge,

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<sup>4</sup> Gökalp Z., History of Turkish Civilisation, Istanbul, 1976, p. 121

<sup>5</sup> This is almost identical to the ascetic stage in Sufism.

2) It is the mediator that conveys sacred knowledge or mutual desires (what spirits desire from humans, and what humans desire from spirits).

Thus, the primary functions of the shaman are to see, understand, and convey. The shaman, who performs these three functions, is an individual with a special status in society. Furthermore, the shaman is responsible not only for the physical health of the community but also for its spiritual world.

It is known that the element of being a shaman lies at the heart of certain beliefs of the Turks regarding shamanism. First of all, it should be noted that the shaman has a different personality from all other members of the community in all respects.

This difference stems from what we call the rite of passage to Shaman status. Emerging from being an ordinary person and acquiring a new status, the Shaman is the one who organises the community's world of beliefs and images, acts as an intermediary between the other world and the experienced world, and conveys all this to the masses using his own unique method. Along with all his other duties, the Shaman's primary mission is to introduce the community to secret knowledge and maintain the balance between the macrocosm and the microcosm. In addition to this, the Shaman has other functions:

- 1- Healing the sick,
- 2- Guiding the soul of the deceased to the other world,
- 3- Treating infertility,
- 4- Ensuring a bountiful harvest,
- 5- Fortune telling to predict the future,
- 6- Cleansing the house of evil spirits,
- 7- Performing certain religious ceremonies such as sacrificing animals (the most important sacrifices are those offered to Bay Ülgen and Erlik Han).
- 8- Organising seasonal rituals (e.g., the Isiah ritual, the autumn ritual, etc.),
- 9- Driving away spirits that harm cattle and horses,
- 10- To provide information about lost items, etc.

In addition, shamans have also been the leaders of certain cultural ceremonies. For example, functions such as house building and purification ceremonies for irrigation channels were performed after the shaman's initiation. However, there are also certain beliefs and ceremonies that are not included in the shaman's functions. Sacrificial ceremonies offered to the Sky God and the spirits of ancestors are among the religious practices in which the shaman does not participate.

Shamanism is regarded as a primitive religion or religious-magical practice in some Asian, African and American communities. In some societies, Shamanism continues to exist as a practical action that fulfils magical or occult needs alongside religious systems. In this case, the existing literature on Shamanism



we encounter two ideas. The vast majority of scholars working on the problem of shamanism, as well as former Soviet scholars (Mikaylovskiy, Haruzin, Potapov, Alekseev, etc.), accept shamanism as the original religion of the Turks.

The idea that the world's peoples arrived at monotheism by passing through several religious systems, such as animism, fetishism, totemism, etc., is understood from the history of religions. Ethnographers, historians of religion, folklorists, and sociologists have denied the characteristic feature of Turkish culture by assuming that the Turks also passed through a polytheistic stage to reach their present state. These scholars accept Shamanism as a religion based on the following characteristics:

- 1- The existence of a Shamanic worldview,
- 2- The existence of cosmogonic conceptions in Shamanism,
- 3- The existence of ceremonies and rituals specific to shamans,
- 4- The existence of shamanic folklore,
- 5- The special status of the shaman in society, etc.

It should be noted that these characteristics also serve to prove that shamanism is not a religion.

Shamanism, known by this name in the diverse belief systems of Siberia, occupies a special place. Shamanism has undergone a transformation within the context of the mythological beliefs of Turkic tribes and has adapted ancient rites of passage into adulthood according to its own rules. Therefore, it is reasonable to evaluate Shamanism as a rational approach that unites and synthesises beliefs.

There are also those who view Shamanism not as a religion but as a type of cult that encompasses the religious sentiments of North Asian communities and governs otherworldly beings. (For example, V. Jochelson, V. Bogoras, etc.) This second group of scholars. Some scholars (M. Eliade, J. P. Roux, H. Tanyu, O. Turan, <sup>1</sup> Kafesoğlu, S. Buluç etc.), particularly M. Eliade, considering that all of the shaman's ceremonies take place during a state of ecstasy, refer to shamanism as a technique of trance.

From a historical perspective, it has been noted by scholars that shamanism exhibits a structure containing designs predating animism and animistic

. In particular, E. Tylor's theory on animism, which posits that all visible beings have spirits, Tylor believed that the concept of spirits emerged through dreams, and that humans that another spirit, independent of the human body, also existed.<sup>6</sup> O

Shamanism is a unique interpretation of ancient knowledge based on practical application, which has played a significant role in the emergence of the phenomenology of religion.

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<sup>6</sup> See Taylor E., *Pervobitnaya Kultura*, Moscow, 1989

Due to the broad scope of the shaman's functions and the religious nature of some of them, the ancient Turks considered shamanism to be their religion. Here, the worldview, the shaman's cosmogonic conceptions, special ceremonies, shamanic symbols, shamanic folklore, the shaman's status in society, etc. have helped to evaluate shamanism as a religion. Shamanism is related to religion, but it is not a religion; it is related to medicine, but it is not medicine; Shamanism is related to fine arts and folklore, but it does not coincide with them in all respects. Shamanism, which bears similarities and affinities with various cultural products, is a special accumulation of culture and a new phenomenon that does not correspond to religion, folklore, or medicine. Furthermore, the shaman is not the sole performer and director of all religious ceremonies and religious life.

The shaman is a medium who possesses unique practices and special techniques to perform these practices (trance states, acting, illusion, etc.) and who performs certain rituals, generally able to command entities characterised as evil spirits. They possess a personality that is well-versed in human psychology and acts with the freedom of an expert on the sources of fear and belief, respect and joy. Unlike clergy (priests, monks, mullahs, lamas), shamans use ecstatic techniques to establish a sincere relationship with spirits. In some respects, it could be said that Shamans bargain more with spirits.

R. Wolsh, distinguishing Shamans from other similar individuals, wrote the following: Clergymen also perform rituals. Herbalists heal, but they rarely enter a state of ecstasy. Mediums can transport themselves to another realm, but they generally do not undertake cosmic journeys. Although Tibetan Buddhists can travel in a state of ecstasy, this is not their primary goal. The spiritually ill can also alter their state of consciousness and encounter spirits, but this occurs in an unwanted state of sacrifice. For this reason, the same author defined the shaman as a cosmic traveller and emphasised that nowhere else does cosmic travel play such an important role as in shamanism.

Today, it has been established that Shamanism is not a religion, but rather an ecstatic system based on practical beliefs with religious and social functions, responding to social demand and lacking religious doctrine. In this context, Shamans do not form a class that performs and manages religious cults like priests, as they engage in individual activities.

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<sup>7</sup> Revunenkova E. V., *The Peoples of Malaysia and Western Indonesia*, Moscow, 1980, p. 243

<sup>8</sup> Wolsh R., *The Spirit of Islam*, Moscow, 1996, pp. 21-22

<sup>9</sup> Wolsh R., op cit pp. 143-154

It is clear that Shamanism adopted many elements from the ancient Turkic religion of Gök Tanrı, almost becoming the practical implementation that defined the external aspects of this religion. However, as R. Wolsh also writes, there are three defining characteristics of Shamanism:

- 1- Shamans can enter another state of consciousness at will.
- 2- In this state, they feel as if they are travelling to another realm.
- 3- From this journey, they gained knowledge and strength, but also their own  
their fellow tribesmen.

Shamanism, not being a religion, cannot be subjected to a closed system. It is a phenomenon that has spread and permeated all layers of the social worldview. Shamanism is more of a way of life, a way of perceiving nature.

In the shamanistic worldview of the Turks, humans are not depicted as creatures superior to nature. Like other living beings, and even more so, subject to the will of the spirits that exist in nature and encompass the invisible realm. In this context, the elements included in the shaman's sphere of activity can be listed as follows, taking into account V. Basilov's findings:

- a- The shaman performs all his functions through the agency of helper spirits.
- b- Unlike seers and other religious servants, the shaman possesses a personality chosen and recreated by spirits.
- c- The shaman can travel through the universe (in the sky, underground) through his helper spirits, which is called the shaman's cosmic journey.
- d- The shaman can communicate with spirits in a state of ecstasy, and this communication occurs at the shaman's will

Shamanism, which formed the cornerstones of pre-Islamic culture, is a system and was widespread among the Turks, particularly the Altaic-Sayan and Siberian Turks, where it has survived and developed further. and developed further. Particularly in the region described as Siberia, other forms of shamanism existed alongside Turkish shamanism, and over time, there was a strong interaction between these systems. While the dominant elements retained their distinctiveness, many elements exhibited a common structure.

<sup>10</sup> Wolsh R., op. cit., p. 20

<sup>11</sup> Basilov V. N., "What is Shamanism?", *Ethnographic Review*, No:5, 1997, pp. 11-12

According to popular belief, Shamans are the descendants of Shamans

- a) ancestral shamans,
- b) Earth-Water spirits,
- c) Sky spirits,
- d) and from evil spirits known as albıs (abaasıl) and azal.

With all their similarities, albeit to a lesser extent, the Altay-Sayan and Yakut Shamans—

There is a difference between the two elements. Indeed, among the Shors and Kumands, tribes of the Altai region, the Shaman is appointed by Ülgen to protect people from the evil of Erlik. In these tribes, Shamanism is passed on to the child through both the paternal and maternal lines. According to Yakut Shaman sources, Shamanism is passed on through the paternal line from father to son or from grandfather to grandson.

grandfather to grandson. The object passed down through the paternal line is the Emeget of the deceased shaman, which is passed on to the candidate who will become the next shaman. 12 However, from the memoirs compiled by G. Ksenofontov, we also see that

the candidate who will become a shaman. 12 However, from the memoirs compiled by G. Ksenofontov, we also see that shamanism is passed down through the maternal line. 13 Thus, in the context of the hereditary nature of the shaman's role, the Altaic-Sayan and Yakut shamanic traditions are similar.

There is no difference in this regard. The attire worn by Turkish shamans, which is also very similar to that of Mongol shamans, is noteworthy. Furthermore, Turkish shamans resemble the shamans of the Native Americans of North America. This can be clearly seen in the three images provided below:

Based on ethnographic data from regions where Turkish Shamanism is still practised, it is possible to say that Shaman selection generally occurs in three ways:

1- Shamanism passed down through lineage. It can be passed down through the paternal line as well as the maternal line.

In this case, one or more members of the family are Shamans, and the Shaman may select someone from their own lineage for the role of Shaman. 2- A person whose ancestors were not Shamans is selected for the role of Shaman by the spirits.

3- The individual's choice to follow the path of Shamanism and the long journey required to learn the secrets of the Shaman.

Naturally, in Turkish culture, the element of shamanism, which is passed down through the bloodline and called upon by the spirit of the ancestors, has been more widely accepted and is present in shamanic folklore.

<sup>12</sup> See Seroşevskiy V. L., Yakuti. Opyt Etnograficheskogo Issledovaniya, T. I, St. Petersburg, 1896, p. 625; Hudyakov I. A., Kratkoe opisanie Verkhovanskogo Okruga, Leningrad, 1969, p. 308; Gurviç I. S., Kultura Severnykh Yakutov-Olenevodov. On the Question of the Late Stages of the Formation of the Yakut People, Moscow, 1977, p. 216.

<sup>13</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., Legends and Tales about Shamans among the Yakuts, Buryats and Tungus, Irkutsk, 1928, p. 18-19

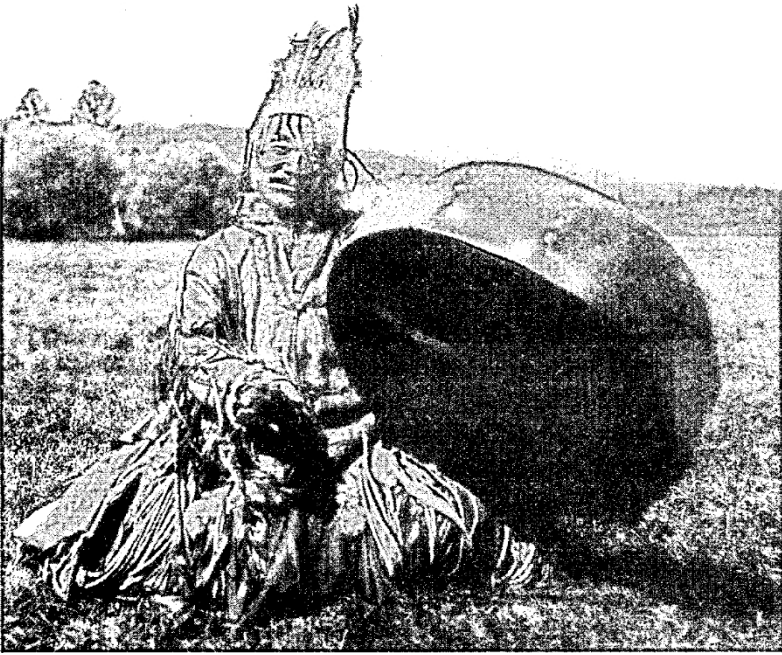


Figure 1. Photograph of the Soyot Shaman from the early 20th century.

The feathers on his headdress are reminiscent of the North American Native American tribe, the Shomoni. (From Hoppal's Book)

Image 2. A depiction of a Mongol shaman from Friedrich Ratzel's ethnography book.

The shaman's robe features dangling cords, feathers, and a "rattle" attached to it. (From Hoppal's Book)





have established a special place. On the other hand, according to Shamanist thought, noble Shamans are known as the most powerful Shamans. This situation is similar in the shamanism of the Siberian peoples. Indeed, as A. Smolyak also writes,<sup>14</sup> in Nanay and Ulchi shamans, shamanism is passed down from grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunt, and in very few cases from father or mother. Different situations may apply in other shamanic cultures. However, when it comes to Turkish shamanism, all three paths to becoming a shaman converge at one point: the general code for becoming a shaman is an illness marked by spiritual depression, crises, and seizures.

The shaman is a natural-born poet, composer, singer, musician, dancer, and actor. He is a person who strives to influence the patient with the power of poetic language through his extraordinary power of imagination, for spirits love beautiful words. Harmani,



Figure 3. An Abakan Tatar shaman conversing with the spirits gathered inside the ceremonial drum

<sup>14</sup> Smolyak A. V., *Shaman: Personality, Function, Worldview (the peoples of the Lower Amur)*, Moscow, 1991, p. 34

Rhythmic words are interpreted as if the shaman were enchanting the spirits. In fact, it is the spirits that excite the shaman and make him recite rhythmic poems. The shaman is the performer who speaks and sings through the mouth of the spirits. Accordingly, the Yakuts call the shaman's recitation *kuturar*, meaning "spoken by the spirits." Shamans even converse with the spirits they gather inside their drums.

Communication with spirits becomes easier through song, dance, and music. In this case, as M. Harner also wrote, two characteristic features of the shaman emerge:

- 1- The shaman's relationship with spirits.
- 2- A relationship with a hidden reality. This is a relationship with a reality that is closed to ordinary people.

In shamanic mythology, the tripartite division of the universe and the hierarchical level of spirits prove that this system originated from the Sky God religion. In fact, it can be said that shamanism is the practical side of the Sky God religion. As is well known, shamans are not practitioners of the Sky God cult, nor do they participate in sacrificial ceremonies offered to the Sky God. Just as women and children are forbidden from entering these sacred ceremonies, shamans are also forbidden from entering them.

cult and do not participate in the sacrificial ceremonies offered to the Sky God. Just as women and children are forbidden from entering this sacred ceremony, Shamans are also forbidden from participating in it. The relationship between Shamanism and the Sky God religion is a special subject of research, but unfortunately, it has not attracted the attention of scientists to date.

As in other religious systems, it is possible to see both the inner (esoteric) and outer (public) aspects of Shamanism. For thousands of years, the philosophical foundations and ritual practices of Shamanism have been taught orally by master Shamans to their disciples. It is also known that Shamans embraced the secret mysteries of this art through dreams and spiritual states. The main reason for this is that the realities of the Shaman (characterised by the multi-layered nature of Shamanism) do not lend themselves to rational explanation. The existence of secret knowledge is consistent with the fact that shamanic journeys have always been frightening and unobservable. Therefore, such journeys have always required great spiritual strength, physical health, and moral purity.<sup>16</sup>

To summarise this section, it must also be said that the shaman is an extraordinary being. The shaman is the representative of the shamanism system, which believes in what it does and gives a realistic order and image to otherworldly beings. By perceiving this reality in this or another way, society participates in the phenomenon of shamanism.

Thus, the perception of healing and miracles through the lens of reality also establishes a truth-based relationship and communication between society and the shaman.

a relationship and communication based on reality between society and the shaman.

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<sup>15</sup> Harner M., *The Way of the Shaman*, New York, 1982, p. 25

<sup>16</sup> See Anjiganov, L. V., "Sacred Foundations of the Ethnic Culture of the Khakass," [www.gov.khakassia.ru/hist/index9.htm](http://www.gov.khakassia.ru/hist/index9.htm)

Thus, within the context of the relationship between humans and spirits, the shaman's function is as follows:

Shaman ? receiver ? carrier ? practitioner

1'                      1'                      1'  
spirits?humans?society

## 1. 2. Shamanic Phenomenology in the Context of Passage Rites

Ritual is a means of reminding the community of the cosmic knowledge that is being lost through symbols and signs. On the other hand, rituals are a special institution that programmes the behavioural rules of society. Generally, there are two types of rites: 1) agricultural rites, 2) rites of passage or calendar rites. We see these rites taking place in a series of ceremonies and festivals: sacrifices, calendar festivals, celebrations, etc.

Transition rites, in a general sense:

- a) Eliminate the individual's current status,
- b) Changes the status they are in. <sup>17</sup>

We encounter a more expanded form of this formula in E. Novik. According to E. Novik, the individual is placed in a dual situation in the rite of passage:

1- Bringing Ferdin into a new situation, that is, giving him a new status.

2- The inclusion of the individual in a particular group, that is, the acquisition of new value.

Rites of passage form a series of concepts grouped into three blocks. The first of these is initiation, the second is temporary death, and the last is transformation or rebirth. In rites of passage, the predetermined cosmic creation myth takes the form of a show, play, or theatre, and society experiences the existence and creative power of the supreme God in an aesthetic way. This also carries the meaning of transferring sacred and secret knowledge to new generations.

The purpose of rites of passage is to prepare the candidate for a new life by completely freeing them from the rules and behavioural systems of their previous social status. In rites of passage related to the shaman acquiring a new status, the candidate displays a passive state. Indeed, the candidate's desires and wishes are reduced to nothing, and the entire process proves that he is passive rather than active. The transition to a new status gives the impression of being forced.

<sup>17</sup> See Ternier B., *Simvol i Ritual*, Moscow, 1983, p. 232

<sup>18</sup> Novik E. S., *Obryad i Folklor v Sibirskom Shamanizme*, Moscow, 1984, p. 163

all the functions performed suggest the humiliation of the candidate, who, while passive, is also subjected to a degree of torture and humiliation.

The shamans' ritual of sacrifice is a cosmic act (the myth of the first creation and formation) performed to resolve the existing conflict. For this reason, it is performed in a special place and with special people.

In the context of passage rites, shamanic rituals go through three stages:

Stage O encompasses the selection of the shaman or, as it is called in shamanic literature, the rituals related to the calling.

1. Stage 2: These are known as the rites performed by an elderly and experienced shaman in connection with the candidate's training.

Stage 3

2. Stage III involves rites related to the making of the shaman's costume and the animation of the drum.

The rites of passage to Shaman status resemble the rites of initiation in all respects. The most common rites of passage to initiation or adulthood

is observed in all primitive communities. In particular, in almost all societies, the initiation rite for the newcomers group involves three stages:

- a- The candidate's separation from the community,
- b- Education limited by waiting, and
- c- Transition to the new status.

These stages are generally observed in almost all geographical regions of Turkish Shamanism. This confirms that knowledge, or in other words, profound change, is transmitted gradually within the context of oral culture and ritual in esoteric teachings.

Taking the above into consideration, it is possible to determine that the rite of passage to Shaman status encompasses the following stages, based on the information provided by Turkish Shamanic texts (legends, memorat, prayers-chants, and accompanying folkloric, historical, and artistic information):

- call
- illness
- marginalisation from society
- physical test
- mental awakening
- education
- transformation into a new being
- Return to society

SECOND SECTION  
THE ROLE OF THE SHAMAN

The most distinctive feature of Turkish Shamanism is the code described as the calling to the role of Shaman. The calling is the main element of Shamanism in all its functional aspects and exhibits both universal and national characteristics. Indeed, in this context, comparing Turkish Shamanism with the shamanic systems of its neighbours, such as the Buryats, Mongols, Tungus, etc., allows us to identify universal codes and national codes.

Based on ethnographic literature, we can characterise the phenomenon of being called to duty, which is at the beginning of the process of becoming a shaman among the Turks, in general terms as follows:

1- The art of shamanism, like nobility, is passed down through the bloodline: from father to son, to a son, daughter or grandchild. However, this transition is not mechanical but is carried out through a call. In this context, the fact that the transition of lineage takes place in the context of a call is reminiscent of the culture of blacksmithing.

2- In order to become a shaman, the shaman must undergo training (this can also be called education).

There is a family tree (Shaman tree) from which the Shaman receives his training.

3- Ancestral Shamans must select candidates to continue the path of Shamanism among the spirits of the underworld. This is called the "Shaman sickness," which is a form of calling the candidate.

4- During the illness process, the candidate must avoid sin, and those who serve the candidate must be pure. At this stage, there are many prohibitions to prevent sins.

5- The candidate is taken to a distant place—the forest, the underworld, the top of a mountain, an unknown place—where their head is cut off, their body is dismembered, their flesh is eaten by disease-causing spirits, their body is rebuilt, and they are revived for the task of shamanism, which is called "dying and being revived".

6- The process of a Shaman teaching the art of Shamanism to an islander is the stage of initiation.

The most important of these stages is the idea that selection for shamanism takes place in the form of a call and that this call is regarded as a tax. However, ethnographic data confirms and establishes that the shamanic tax exists as if it were an independent phenomenon and that the shaman is merely its temporary bearer and enforcer.

The call, which is the fundamental principle of shamanism, is called *tös pasyat* (spirit descends) among the Teleuts,

*tös basıp-yat* among the Altaians, *panp-çat* among the Shors, and *tös pasçıt* among the Kumandins. In short, as the name of the process suggests, the eternal, primordial *töz/tös* holds the essential place in the call, or the concept of *töz/tös* stands at the beginning of this phenomenon.

The call code means 'chosen'.<sup>2</sup> The Chukchi people of Northern Siberia—

They refer to the stage of the candidate's preparation for the call or shamanism as the period when they gather shamanic powers. However, like their neighbours, the Yakut shamans, the Chukchi shamans also receive their dues through dreams. The call has a distinct character, involving torment, pain, and coercion. It is impossible to refuse the call sent by the ancestor shaman or the spirits of the underworld. In shamanism, this is considered fate and destiny. Therefore, refusing or rejecting the call is equivalent to going mad, becoming crippled, or dying. In short, the call is a physical and spiritual test for the candidate, and the chosen candidate must accept the call.

It is also worth noting that the call is not made at random.

The talents for this art are hidden within the person called to the role of shaman from birth. For example, it is noticeable that the person called to the role of shaman has physical characteristics that differ from others. Two physical differences that we do not encounter in ordinary people stand out in such individuals:

- 1- A special hole in the body called *oybon*.
- 2- A special place in the abdomen called *ideli*.

According to A. Popov's findings, *oybon*, a type of hole covered with skin, is where the shaman inserts sharp tools such as knives, daggers, and swords, but not his own...

<sup>1</sup> For further reading on this topic, see the following literature: Drenkova N. P. "The Perception of the Shamanic Gift in the Views of the Turetski Tribes," *Sbomik Muzeya Antropologi i Etnografi*, vol. 9, 1930; Popov A. A. "The Reception of 'Shamanic Dara' among the Vilyuysh Yakuts", *Works of the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR Academy of Sciences*, vol. 2, 1947; Basilov V. N. *Selected Spiritual Texts*, Moscow, 1984

<sup>2</sup> See Verbitskiy V., *The Altaians*, Tomsk, 1870, pp. 62-63; Drenkova N. P., "Materials on Shamanism" *u Teleutov*", vol. 10, Moscow-Leningrad, 1949, p. 109; Satlaev F. A., *Kumandints. Historical and Ethnographic Sketch of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries*, Gorno-Altaysk, 1974, p. 155

It is a special body part used to demonstrate his ability to cause no harm. The presence of such a hole indicates that the Shaman is not a charlatan, but truly possesses the ability to pierce his body with sharp instruments. There may be more than one Oybo, located in different parts of the body, especially in the abdomen.

Kieli is a special place in the abdomen that serves as a repository, where the shaman draws the evil spirit that has infected the patient with his mouth. Shamans with kieli are considered very talented. Indeed, over time, the shaman collects the spirits of disease there and then expels them.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, the call is also given to people who are weak, sick, quiet, thoughtful, and have strange movements and attitudes. This reinforces the two physical characteristics of the chosen person mentioned above. Furthermore, the chosen candidate must also possess a certain psychological trait, although Shaman folklore provides no information on this matter. This is because the Shaman acquires all mental and psychological privileges during his training.

The proof that the ancestor Shaman's bird-shaped spirit passes to the child in the womb and that the Shaman's destiny is inevitable is the psychological explanation for the selection. In Shamanic literature, the spirits of future Shamans, which end in leaf-like forms on the branches of the soul or spirit tree called "Iyık Mas", descend over time into the wombs of pregnant women. The spirit descending from the tree enters the body of the baby who will become a Shaman while still in its mother's womb. Therefore, selection is a destiny and begins in the womb before the Shaman's arrival in the world. Since the womb is connected to the other world, the future shaman and the other realm are initially linked. This connection is renewed during the shaman's training period in the lodge and takes on a new dimension.

The blessing that comes from the other world is established in the same way as the shaman, in the place from whence it came.

It revolves around this. In the shamanic worldview, cosmic unity persists as the real world and the otherworld complement each other.

As can be seen from all these prerequisites, the ability to be a shaman is innate in the chosen ones. The ability to be a shaman is a phenomenon aimed at preserving a great cultural heritage and the secret science of society. The philosophical dimension of this ability is based on shamans perceiving this gift given to them not as a reward but as a burden. Society also views the shamanic duty as a heavy burden. For this reason, the call to duty is not accepted voluntarily but is imposed by force, and naturally, shamanism transitions from an active structure to a passive one. Society views the shaman as a condemned person, called to compulsory service. Almost all researchers have shown that the shamanic duty is accepted with great turmoil and despair, starting from the call.

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<sup>3</sup> Popov A. A., *Poluchenie "Shamanskogo Dara"*, pp. 289-290

<sup>4</sup> For further information, see Bogoraz V. G., *"K Psikologi Şamanstva u Narodov Severo-Vostochnoy Azi"*,

We can see that shamans are not chosen at random; before the call begins, the candidate often has prophetic dreams and withdraws from society. These can be considered preliminary signs before being called to the role of shaman. The calling begins between the ages of three and five for the best shamans, between the ages of five and nine for medium-level shamans, and between the ages of 12 and 18 for weak shamans. After this, physical and psychological changes, upheavals and torments begin. Contemporary Turkish shamans who practise shamanism also confirm the age range of the calling.

In ethnographic literature, the call to shamanism occurs between the ages of 6 and 50, sometimes earlier. In this case, it is seen that there is no specific age limit for shamanism, which indicates that the call is a special circumstance. In any case, it is seen that the call to the shamanic role generally coincides with the period of sexual maturation, that is, between the ages of 20 and 25. However, there are also those who are called to Shamanism later in life. Shamans who become Shamans at an older age are generally not as powerful. In addition to all this, there are also those who learn Shamanism without being called, and according to general belief, they also fall into the category of less powerful Shamans.

Central Asian Shamans, known as *perihan*, *falbin*, *baksı/bakşı*, receive their calling not from ancestral Shaman spirits, evil spirits or essences, as in the case of Altai and Yakut Shamans, but from jinn and fairies created by Muslim mythology. However, there is also a calling in Central Asian Shamanism. The formation of the Central Asian shamanic types, the *baksı*, *falbin*, and *perihan*, is influenced by...

The role of jinn, or spirits as they came to be known later, is evident. This phenomenon refers to the replacement of subterranean spirits after Islam: the spirits known as *körmes* among the Altai-Sayan Turks, *abaası* or *ayna* among the Yakuts, or *adza* as the Uryanhay Shamans called them, being replaced by jinn. The fairy engages in sexual intercourse with the chosen candidate for this task.

It seems that the sexual relationship is presented as an event equivalent to fragmentation.

However, in the collected legends, apart from this sexual intercourse, it is not explained how the fairies make the candidate a shaman. In fact, the sexual intercourse between fairies and the chosen candidate, seen among Central Asian Shamans, also exists in Far Siberia. As L. Sternberg writes, the main motive for selection is the spirits' sexual love for the chosen candidate. According to this scientist, the call is for the candidate to be in a sexual relationship while asleep.

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Ethnographic Reviews, Vol. 35, No. 1-2, Moscow, 1910, pp. 12-13; Haruzin H., "O Noydah u Severnıh i Drevnıh Loparey", *Ethnographic Reviews*, No. 1, 1899, p. 49; Anuchin V. I., "Shamanism among the Yenisei Ostiaks," *Collection of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography*, Vol. 2, issue 2, 1914, p. 24; Sternberg L. Ya., "Electivity in Religion", *Ethnography*, Book 3, Moscow, 1927

<sup>5</sup> Notes taken from conversations with Yakut shaman Okkan in 1993 and Altay female shaman Nadya in 2000.

Notes taken from these conversations.

<sup>6</sup> Suhareva O. A., "The Role of Demonology and Shamanism among the Plains Tajiks", *Muslim Beliefs and Rituals in Central Asia*, Moscow, 1975, p. 47



is given when he imagines it. He associates the candidate's fainting spells with the spirits insisting that the candidate become a shaman.<sup>7</sup>

It appears that under the influence of Islam, the spirits of the Shamans have transformed into fairies.

In fact, the spirits that Central Asian Shamans call upon for help during their kamlik period, which in Central Asia is called *kuçmak* or *göçyürme* - a term derived from the word *göç*, meaning to migrate, to transfer one's spirit to another dimension - are also fairies. s \_Shaman status, although it appears in different variants, the existence of the myth of death and resurrection is an indisputable factor. It is worth noting that

According to the beliefs of the Shamans, there are Shamans who experience ritual dismemberment and death,

only those Shamans who are weak and deal with very minor matters.

Furthermore, every powerful shaman must have undergone ritual dismemberment and consumption; this belief is unique to Turkish shamanism. Selection, one of the most distinctive features of shamanism, distinguishes the shaman from other clergy.

Although rare, there are also Shamans who become Shamans of their own volition. However, exceptions

do not break the rules, and a shaman cannot become a shaman without being called, that is, without being chosen for a new task. Selection is the foundation of becoming a shaman and the essential element of the rite of passage. Indeed, M. Eliade also identifies two ways of becoming a Siberian shaman:

- 1- The hereditary transmission of the shamanic profession (passing from father to son)
- 2- It is a spontaneous inner calling or selection.<sup>9</sup>

In Turkish shaman legends, we see both of these aspects of this profession. However, there is very little inner calling from oneself. In both cases, there is selection. Hereditary shamanism is known only as shamanism passed down through the bloodline, and here too, selection is a prerequisite. The shamanic calling is given by the ancestral shaman to someone from his own lineage, naturally to someone who is talented or to someone else in whose lineage there is a shaman. The Altaians also make a wooden representation of the ancestor shaman who gives the "ve' rgi".

Both types of candidates (those from a lineage of Shamans and those from a lineage without Shamans)

do not voluntarily comply with the call of the spirits, but they must comply with the call even if it is compulsory, otherwise death is inevitable.

According to the Black Shaman belief, generally speaking, it is the spirits of the underworld who send the call to become a Shaman. In A. Popov's research, we see that this call is made by the spirits of the upper, middle and underworld. Spirits are born to be Shamans

<sup>7</sup> Sternberg L. Ya., *Izbrannichestvo v Religii*, pp. 5; 12

<sup>8</sup> Basilov V. N., Niyazkılıçev K., "Erejtiki Şamanstva u Türkmen Çovdurov", *Domusulmanskie Ve-rovaniya i Obryadı v Sredney Azi*, Moscow, 1975, p. 124

<sup>9</sup> Eliade M., *Shamanism. Principles/Techniques of Ecstasy*, Ankara, 1999, p. 31

<sup>10</sup> Popov A. A., *The Acquisition of the "Shamanic Gift"*, p. 283

The three spirits of a child born with the destiny of being chosen or a shaman are called: *salgın kut* – the spirit of the air, *buor kut* – the spirit of the earth, and *ie kut* – the mother spirit. After these spirits are called, the child does not die, but only experiences a mild illness

. This illness signifies the beginning of the call. According to ethnographic information, *kut* carries the meaning of life force rather than soul. Indeed, all field studies confirm that the three do not kill the person but only make them ill is confirmed by all field studies.

According to ethnographic information, the main *kut*, *ie kut*, is located at the back of the person's head, the earth *kut*, *buor kut*, is located in the body, and the air *kut*, *salgın kut*, is located on the back. According to one piece of information, the *abaasilar* only steal the *salgın kut* and *buor kut* from the candidate.

Figure 4. Wooden depiction of a shaman in Tuva in the late 19th century



<sup>11</sup> See Komilov, I., "The Initiation Rite of the Kuznets and Kiday. How Shamans Are Made", *Izvestiya Vostočno-Sibirskogo Otdeleniya Ruskogo Geografičeskogo Obščestva*, Vol. 39, 1908, p. 82

Thus, based on primary sources related to the phenomenon of shamanism, it is possible to divide the spirits that send the call into two parts:

A- The luminous spirits of the sky, mountain spirits, or the evil spirits of the underworld ken-select someone from the community to serve as a shaman for their purposes.

B- The spirit of the ancestral Shaman chooses someone from their own lineage for the role of Shaman.

This selection is a call related to the hereditary shamanic element.

The call and the experiences during the call are known in scientific literature as shamanic illness, and this process continues until fragmentation and renewal.

THIRD SECTION  
SHAMANIC ILLNESS (INITIATION) FROM A  
CULTURAL-ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

31. Towards a Unique Understanding of  
Illness from a Spiritual Illness Approach

The CALL process continues with the shaman becoming ill and experiencing physical suffering. In other words, this unique illness, known as shamanic illness, indicates that the call has been transmitted and that the candidate has fallen ill for the spirits. The only evidence that distinguishes these two phenomena from each other is the search for preliminary signs in the call, while the shaman's illness involves psychological and, to some extent, physical illnesses ( trials) that lead to fragmentation and renewal.

In short, the phenomenon of becoming a shaman is fundamentally based on shamanic illness. Like a phenomenon, the main characteristics that distinguish shamanism from other secret and open teachings are shamanic illness and, subsequently, the "dismemberment" of the candidate's body and its "devouring" by spirits that are sources of illness and evil. This illness exhibits a different condition from known physical and psychological illnesses because it involves a special phenomenon. For this reason, the illness that results in becoming a shaman has been established in scientific literature as shamanic illness.

Shaman sickness is the first and fundamental sign of being chosen as a shaman. An examination of shaman legends and sayings shows that no shaman willingly accepts the selection. According to V. Verbitskiy, who provided some of the earliest information about Altai shaman beliefs, sometimes the candidate may refuse the shamanic role. However, as mentioned above, this refusal comes at a very high price for the shaman candidate. Candidates who refuse the selection either go mad, become disabled, or die in agony. Candidates who refuse the role of shaman emphasise that the spirits have failed to achieve their goal by saying "elektizi puzulgan" (his movement, his intention has been disrupted), as if they had won a victory. and dies.<sup>1</sup> As understood, there is no cure for Shaman disease. From the disease

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<sup>1</sup> Verbitskiy V. i. Altayskie Inorodtsi, Moscow, 1893, p. 63

to escape the disease by entering into a dispute with the spirits can be dangerous for both the candidate and the elderly shaman summoned to diagnose the illness. Recovery is only possible by submitting to the ka-

by submitting completely — accepting to become a shaman and performing shamanic rituals. All this proves once again that shamanic illness is a special kind of illness.

However, in some shamanic traditions, it has been observed that the shaman's tax is reclaimed by the community. According to the Hakas shamanic tradition, the community can judge evil and harmful shamans and deprive them of their shamanic abilities. To do this, they draw a black cross on the shaman's forehead with charcoal and weaken their power by making them pass through an iron ring.<sup>2</sup>

In the literature on the study of shamanism, shamanic illness has been evaluated from different perspectives:

- 1- Some scientists describe the shaman as a patient suffering from a type of hysteria or a mental disorder called arctic hysteria.
- 2- Some view this illness as temporary nervous exhaustion.
- 3- Shamanic illness is not actually madness, but rather a type of illness that facilitates the transition to a new status.

The shaman's northern illness, known as *menerik* or *emeryaçen*, is based on information provided by travellers who have journeyed to Siberia. Indeed, A. Ohlmarks, V. Priklonskiy, V. Troščanskiy, V. Bogo-ras, V. Jochelson, D. Zelenin, etc. The fact that they refer to shamanic illness as a type of mental illness observed among peoples living in the northern regions, or arctic hysteria, is also based on the information provided by travellers, and the results of their observations. According to the information provided, this illness is not only seen in shamans but also in the indigenous peoples, as a mental-neurological illness. S. Buluç summarised the views of scientists on Arctic hysteria as follows:

Meanwhile, based on what has been described, there is a striking similarity between the epidemic neurological diseases that afflicted women known as *meryak*, and *menerik*, and the nervous fits experienced by shaman candidates when they were called to their profession. women, and the nervous seizures experienced by shaman candidates when called to their profession. It is certain that the harsh climate and living conditions in the Arctic region cause certain nervous disorders, and it is believed that the long nights spent in deep seclusion, the severe cold, and finally the endless landscapes of complete desolation and monotony are the main factors in these disorders. In addition to these, housing shortages, food shortages, especially the complete or partial lack of vitamins necessary for the normal functioning of the nervous system, which are found mainly in plant-based foods.

<sup>2</sup> Sagalaev A. M., Oktyabrskaya I. V., *Traditional Worldview of the Tjurks of Southern Siberia, Sign and Ritual*, Novosibirsk, 1990, p. 87

When combined with certain unfavourable conditions such as the absence of these elements, 'Arctic hysteria' emerges in this region as a near-universal nervous disorder. On the other hand, Czaplicka, who dismisses the term 'Arctic hysteria' and the associated mental disorder, seeking instead to explain primitive hysteria through the mental and physical nature and biological constitution of the Mongol peoples, is countered by Ohlmarks, who emphasises the following two points in particular:

- 1- The ancient Central Asian peoples who settled in the Arctic region developed certain psychological resistances over time against the harsh conditions of the severe nature that causes hysteria, whereas peoples who migrated here later for various reasons were severely affected by 'Arctic hysteria'.
- 2- 'Arctic hysteria' symptoms have also been observed among the Russian, Finnish and Scandinavian peoples who settled in the Arctic region later. also exhibited symptoms of 'Arctic hysteria'.

According to A. Ohlmarks, the peoples living in the Arctic region were not born there. According to modern ethnology, even the oldest peoples there, who originally lived in Central Asia, were later forced to migrate towards the northern borders for historical and social reasons. The peoples arriving from the south were forced to engage in a difficult struggle for survival in their new homeland. Under the pressure of the harsh conditions there, the people, who were becoming mentally exhausted, eventually tried to save themselves through certain hysterical-like reactions. These behaviours became so widespread that they eventually led to divination and the healing of certain illnesses in a completely unique way, and began to take on an increasingly regular place in cultural life.

This situation was the main factor in the emergence of Shamanism. Thanks to Shamanism, which arose under these conditions, the people, who were helpless in the face of any disaster or hardship, found solace through the words of the Shaman, the people, who were helpless in the face of any disaster or hardship, tried to console themselves by receiving comforting news from the mouth of the Shaman, who communicated with spirits during the ritual. For this reason, the role of the Shaman in the northern polar regions was not only important but also necessary and beneficial.

Some scientists believe that the shaman has developed a self-induced neurotic-hysterical character.<sup>4</sup> It is particularly noteworthy that shamanic-type illnesses are observed in all people who collect taxes: blacksmiths, doctors, midwives, poets, beggars, lovers, fortune tellers, etc.

is observed in all people who collect taxes: blacksmiths, physicians, midwives, poets, singers, fortune tellers, etc. These individuals, who recite poetry or prayers in the language of spirits, convey cosmic knowledge to society in symbolic language, heal, and foretell the future, should not be categorised as ill

but rather as an ethno-psychological cultural phenomenon.

<sup>3</sup> For further information, see Buluç S., "Shamanism", *Türk Amacı I*, issue 1-6, 1942

<sup>4</sup> See Tokarev S. A., *Panniye Formı Religi İlh Razvitiye*, Moscow, 1964, p. 294

Alongside early Russian and Soviet researchers who described shamanic illness as hysteria, epilepsy, instability, irritability, schizophrenia, or madness, the idea that the shaman is not actually mad but rather suffers from a type of illness that facilitates the transition to a new status has gained prominence in scientific literature. According to V. Haritonov, the shaman is not ill; the process of shamanism itself is the illness. The person who is to become a shaman forces a certain part of the brain to work in such a way that it inevitably leads to the emergence of a psychological or physical illness.

There are also those who argue that the shaman is not ill, but rather a patient who heals through his own power. Indeed, according to M. Eliade's assessment, disability, nervous disorders, an inner calling, or heredity are, if anything, external manifestations of a "preference" or a "selection." All the trance events and experiences that determine the "calling" of the person who will become a shaman reveal the traditional elements and pattern of an initiation ceremony: suffering - death and resurrection. From this perspective, any "calling-illness" can take on the role of initiation, because the suffering caused by the illness corresponds to the torment endured during initiation.<sup>7</sup> Naturally, the shaman is not only distinguished from an ordinary psychic patient by being struck by spirits, but also by entering into contact with the spirits during trance, summoning them, sending them back, in a word, compelling the spirits to serve.

It is particularly worth noting regarding shamanic illness that the shaman's psychic-hysterical state is, on the one hand, the development of these extraordinary phenomena within him throughout his life, starting from the early days of shamanism, and on the other hand, the perception of this mental illness as a shamanic tax and the shaman's

It is related to not resisting it. In fact, as G. Ksenofontov also wrote, shamanism is a cult of madness.<sup>9</sup> However, this madness is not an illness, but a tax.

Considering all that has been written and the shamanic legends, shamanic illness is, in essence, the shaman becoming mystically ill in order to find his own world. As scientists have written, this is neither hysteria nor a nervous disorder, because Central Asian shamans do almost exactly the same things as Siberian shamans. Therefore, the spirits choose them to become shamans.

<sup>5</sup> See Bogoraz V. G., *K Psychology of Shamanism*, pp. 5-6; Zelenin D. K., *The Cult of Ongon in Siberia*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1936, p. 363; Direnkov N. P., "The Perception of Shamanic Gift According to the Views of Turets Tribes", *Collection of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography*, Vol. 9, 1930; Ksenofontov G. V., *The Cult of Sumas-shestviya in Ural-Altai Shamanism. (On the Question of the Dying and Resurrecting God)*, Irkutsk, 1929

<sup>6</sup> Haritonova V. I., "The Chosen Ones of the Spirits", "The Accepted Ones of the Kalduns", "The Initiated Ones": The Acquisition of Magical-Mystical Properties, Knowledge, Habits", *Ethnographic Reviews*, No. 5, 1997, p. 18

<sup>7</sup> Eliade M., *Shamanism*, pp. 47, 52, 55-56

<sup>8</sup> Tokarev S. A., *The Form of Religion*, Moscow, 1990, p. 282

<sup>9</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *The Cult of Sumas-shestviya*,

The candidate "falls ill" for future duties. During the sacrifice ritual, the healing session, and fortune-telling, the shaman enters a trance, screams, utters disjointed phrases, faints, etc. All of this is the shaman reliving the spiritual states he experienced during his death and resurrection and initiation into the mystery.

On the other hand, what the shaman does is much more than the performance of a sick man; it is conscious

It is the attitude and actions of a capable person who has been trained and adapted to establish contact with otherworldly beings. Indeed, if this were not the case, the shaman would not be able to successfully complete any ink ritual he began.

It is possible to prove with additional information that shaman sickness is not a real illness of the type of arctic hysteria or manic illness, but rather a special state sent by the spirits to the candidate chosen for the role of shaman. Indeed, in Altai, with the suppression and elimination of shamanism by Russian missionaries and Lama religious figures,

, shamanism was suppressed and eliminated, and shaman sickness also disappeared.

If, as claimed, this were a spiritual or regionally specific illness, it would not have disappeared with the demise of shamanism. Therefore, as we have stated, this is a mystical illness peculiar to the shaman.

Shamanic literature contains information that Shamanic illness begins at the age of nine or seven. It is also known that this illness can last from three to seven years.<sup>12</sup> In Altai Shamanism, it is known that the illness can occur between the ages of seven and sixty-two. This age can vary between fifteen and eighteen in some regions. Becoming a shaman candidate before reaching the age of BülÖğ actually shows that they have committed no sins and that shamans are chosen from among pure people. For this reason, they consider shamans to be people with pure bones.

In shamanic literature, this refers to the man knowing and understanding the woman, and the woman knowing and understanding the man.

This period is called the initiation period. According to belief, during the shamanic illness, candidates must avoid anything that could lead to sin and transgression. In the shaman initiation ceremony, the kahulü is taken as the basis for new members of the shamanic art. Naturally, the prohibition on eating certain foods, asceticism, and cleanliness, which are determined by the shaman, aim to protect the shaman's body from defilement and evil. On the other hand, prohibitions on the profane world (the outside world) aim to protect the shaman's body from defilement and evil.

, abstinence, and cleanliness are imposed by the shaman, with the aim of protecting the shaman's body from contamination and evil. On the other hand, the prohibitions also aim to reduce the negative influence of the profane world (the external world, which is closed to spiritual development).

According to Altai Shamanism literature, when all efforts by the candidate's relatives to diagnose and cure the Shaman's illness have failed, they invite an elderly and experienced Shaman to assess the situation. The elderly Shaman, the candidate,

<sup>10</sup> In a treatment session we observed in 1988 in the city of Bukhara, Uzbekistan, the actions of the female fal-bin (shaman) closely resembled those of an artist or expert.

<sup>11</sup> Alekseev N. A., *Shamanism Among the Indigenous Peoples of Siberia*, Novosibirsk, 1984, p. 108

<sup>12</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism. Selected Works*, Yakutsk, 1992, p. 42



He says that the only way to cure the suffering caused by shamanism is to accept becoming a shaman, and he begins to teach the candidate the ways of shamanism.

Although shamanic illness is a specialised condition, it has certain symptoms, one of which is fainting, loss of consciousness, foaming at the mouth, screaming, mumbling incoherently, etc. The collected memoirs on shamanic illness also demonstrate this. In shamanism, calling upon an elderly shaman to diagnose the illness constitutes a ritual in itself. In fact, the elderly shaman is responsible for preparing the candidate for his future duties. For example, A. Anohin's account of an Altai shaman, recorded in 13 writings, is significant in terms of its generality:

"The shamans find Boltoyu unconscious among his relatives. His body was purple and stiff, like a dead body. Foam was coming from his mouth. The men cut his chest open

They placed a drum on top of him and began beating it with a mallet. After about two hours, he came to his senses and began to chant."<sup>14</sup>

According to the information provided by I. Hlopina, in both the Shors and the Chelkans, a candidate afflicted with shamanic illness turns to an elderly shaman to identify the spirit causing him suffering. After the elderly shaman identifies the tormenting spirit, he tells the candidate when they will become a shaman and how many drums they will use throughout their life. An interesting point here is that the Chelkans take one of the iron hooks from the drum of their deceased shamans

and keep it in a dark corner of the barn. According to belief, the ancestor shaman passes into the soul of one of his newly born relatives, and thus a new shaman emerges.

According to shamanic discourse, during the period of illness, the candidate falls under the control of spirits. The illness process is actually regarded as a rebirth. The fact that true maturity is found in solitude, away from people, leads to the conclusion that this maturity can only be attained through suffering. As H. Ostermann also noted, only deprivation and suffering can open the doors to the secret world hidden from others.<sup>16</sup> Thus, we see that the main condition determining shamanic illness is withdrawal from society. Indeed, as seen in Shaman legends, candidates afflicted with Shaman sickness are eager to escape society and be alone; they leave home at night and go somewhere, and when they return home in the morning, they cannot remember where they were.<sup>17</sup> Cold, hunger, torment, this loneliness—

<sup>13</sup> Anohin A. V., "Materiali po Şamanstvu u Altaytsev", Sbornik Muzeya Antropologij i Etnografij, T. 4, vıp. 2, 1924, p. 122

<sup>14</sup> This phenomenon is the shamanic variant of the lover who, in love epics, drinks the cup of intoxication (takes the buta) and is revived by the saz.

<sup>15</sup> See Hlopina, I. D., "Traces of Mythology in the Traditional Religious Beliefs of the Shors," *Ethnography of the Peoples of Altai and Western Siberia*, Novosibirsk, 1978, p. 78

<sup>16</sup> Wolsh R., *The Spirit of Shamanism*, Moscow, 1996, p. 61

<sup>17</sup> See *Shaman Legends and Sayings*, Edited by E. Bayat and C. Memmedov, Baku, 1993, p. 32

In short, the main conditions that must be met to open the future shaman's inner world and help him establish contact with spirits can be characterised as isolation from society, cold, hunger, suffering, and hardship.

Islam has eliminated it, but it remains in a residual form in Central Asia.

In shamanism, we also encounter shaman sickness as a form of calling and selection. Particularly among the Tajiks, who adopted shamanism from their Turkish neighbours, the shamanism of the candidate

It is noteworthy that an elderly female shaman performs a ritual to cure the shamanic illness and prepare the candidate for their new role.<sup>19</sup> This is an example of how female shamans still hold their positions in society.

Shamanic illness can last from several months to several years. The illness

(the candidate's ancestors or relatives who have become Shamans, the head

The spirit, mountain or water spirit (sometimes Ülgen or Erlik, etc.), promises to remove the illness from the candidate as a reward for accepting the shamanic role. The illness brings with it rites of passage such as marginalisation, examination, transformation into a new being, and returning to society as a new person. In other words, in the case of shamanic illness, the candidate faces a tripartite ritual involving (1) marginalisation, (2) temporary death, and (3) transformation.

### 3. 2. The Candidate's Marginalisation and Trial Process

Shamanic illness constitutes the separation part of the rite of passage. This rite of passage is performed by the shaman's marginalisation or exclusion from society. This process is described extensively in shamanic legends and memorates.<sup>20</sup> The ritual exclusion of the shaman candidate from society, either voluntarily or by their relatives, is known as ritual exclusion. The basis of this exclusion is to keep the person, who will become a separate entity, away from the concerns and influence of society, to push them into solitude so that they may become acquainted with cosmic knowledge, and to allow them to feel the power that solitude brings. Solitude is the acceleration of thought and the illumination of darkness; it is the ability to answer questions of the inner world. In short, solitude is the discovery of the candidate.

<sup>18</sup> In accordance with the Sufi concept of "From the People to God, From God to the People," the Sufi withdraws into seclusion, just as he detaches himself from all worldly pleasures until he reaches God. Sometimes they live alone on a mountain top, sometimes they shut themselves away in a cave, or, as in the case of Ahmet Yesevi, they undergo asceticism in a well. Or, in certain orders, they attempt to complete their asceticism in small, narrow cells prepared for this purpose, without communicating with anyone, without eating or sleeping, usually within a period of forty days.

<sup>19</sup> See Suhareva O. A. *Perejiti Demonologi*, p. 59

<sup>20</sup> See Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts. Legends and Memorata*, Ankara, 2004, pp. 72-113

The main purpose of isolation or withdrawal from society is to ensure that the shaman is alone with the spirits, to carry out the process described in shamanic literature as temporary death without the intervention of others, especially unclean people, in short, the profane. In this way, the candidate,

He is completely and permanently freed from the ties that bind him to the world. The exclusion from society encountered in the rites of passage, during which all secret knowledge is transmitted, has acquired a distinct characteristic in Turkish Shamanism. Indeed, the Egyptian priests were also confined to seclusion under the supervision of the high priest. However, the Shaman candidate is forcibly excluded from society by himself or his relatives.<sup>21</sup> This is why married women and men are forbidden to approach the Shaman candidate during his illness (the process of his flesh being torn apart and eaten). This is because, unlike all other teachings, in Shamanism, it is not the experienced, knowledgeable man of the community who presides over the rite of passage, but the invisible spirits of the realm of secret mysteries.

Those who "preside" over the ritual of isolation and dismemberment are generally the spirits of deceased shamans who are relatives of the initiate. The ritual death of the initiate generally lasts between three and seven days. During this time, the future shaman lies like a corpse in the right corner of the house or in a place away from people, without eating or drinking anything. He is served by a young man who has committed no sins and has just entered puberty. One of the taboos practised during this process is to undergo the transition without eating anything, known as the trial.

In the shamanic legends of the Siberian Turks, particularly the Telengits, spirits beat the man who is to become a shaman, tie his hands and arms, tear his chest and stomach, deter him from sexual relations, allow him little sleep, and make him fast

22. Semantically, this is not only found in the initiation ceremony of the Alevi-Bektashi and Tahtacı communities

initiation ceremony, but also very close to the formation of the dervish in Central Asian orders (especially in Yesevism). (For example, in the Alevi-Bektashis, the adept's fasts, sleeping with his companion's wife on a

on a mattress, undergoing ascetic practices, etc.)<sup>23</sup> All these prohibitions are taboos established to impart secret knowledge and are also observed in ancient civilisations.

<sup>21</sup> This ritual of withdrawal from society closely resembles the practice of Turkish dervishes retreating to underground wells (as in the case of Hoca Ahmet Yesevi), cells or caves to undergo 40 days of asceticism. Turkish folk Sufism, which transformed the act of casting off the burdens of the world into asceticism, clothed the ritual of withdrawal or expulsion it had adopted from Shamanism in an Islamic guise.

<sup>22</sup> Direnkova N. P., Poluçeniyeye Şamanskogo Dara, pp. 282-283

<sup>23</sup> See Gölpinarlı A., Menakıb-ı Hacı Bektaş Veli, İstanbul, 1958; Yörükcan Y. Z., Anadolu'da Aleviler ve Tahtacılar, Ankara, 1998

In some Shamanic traditions, when the candidate's body is dismembered and eaten, we encounter the belief that the candidate's body is elsewhere, outside the home. This attitude, which is actually considered a withdrawal from society, is performed by the candidate himself with the display of spirits. They lay the candidate on top of a freshly peeled black tree. During this process, no one is allowed to see the patient. An unmarried girl or an unmarried male relative is sent to his side to serve the candidate during the process of being cut up and eaten. They lie unconscious for four or five days: foam comes from the candidate's mouth, their body turns purple like that of a beaten person, they lose the ability to speak, and they lie there half-dead, breathing with difficulty.

The shaman candidate is given nothing to eat, only water called "black water" to drink, and no living creature is allowed near the area where the candidate lies during the ritual death period, in order to test their physical fitness and willpower.

Another important matter is the candidate's ritual dismemberment, cooking, and consumption. The time is when the body remains at home as if dead and is laid naked on a freshly stripped black pine tree (in variants, black pine, white pine, poplar, etc.).

The shaman's laying naked on the freshly stripped tree during the dismemberment process is an initiation (second birth) ritual, symbolising the psychological rebirth of the candidate from the womb.<sup>26</sup> Birth order

nakedness corresponds to the stripping of the candidate, while the clean male or female relatives who serve him correspond to midwives. As M. Eliade also states, "To reach a form of existence at the highest level

a form of existence, it is necessary to repeat pregnancy and birth; however, these are repeated symbolically in the form of a ritual."<sup>27</sup>

The philosophy of nakedness in Turkish Shamanism is only seen in the process of dismemberment. Candidates who attain Shaman status subsequently wear special Shaman clothing. However, the Siberian Tatar Shaman Çiçek-Ay and the Ulçi female Shaman are seen to perform naked kamlik or meditation. This also shows that the philosophy of nudity, although not well understood by monotheistic religions, is considered bad.

<sup>24</sup> Drenkov N. P., *The Study of the Shamanic Gift*, pp. 273-274

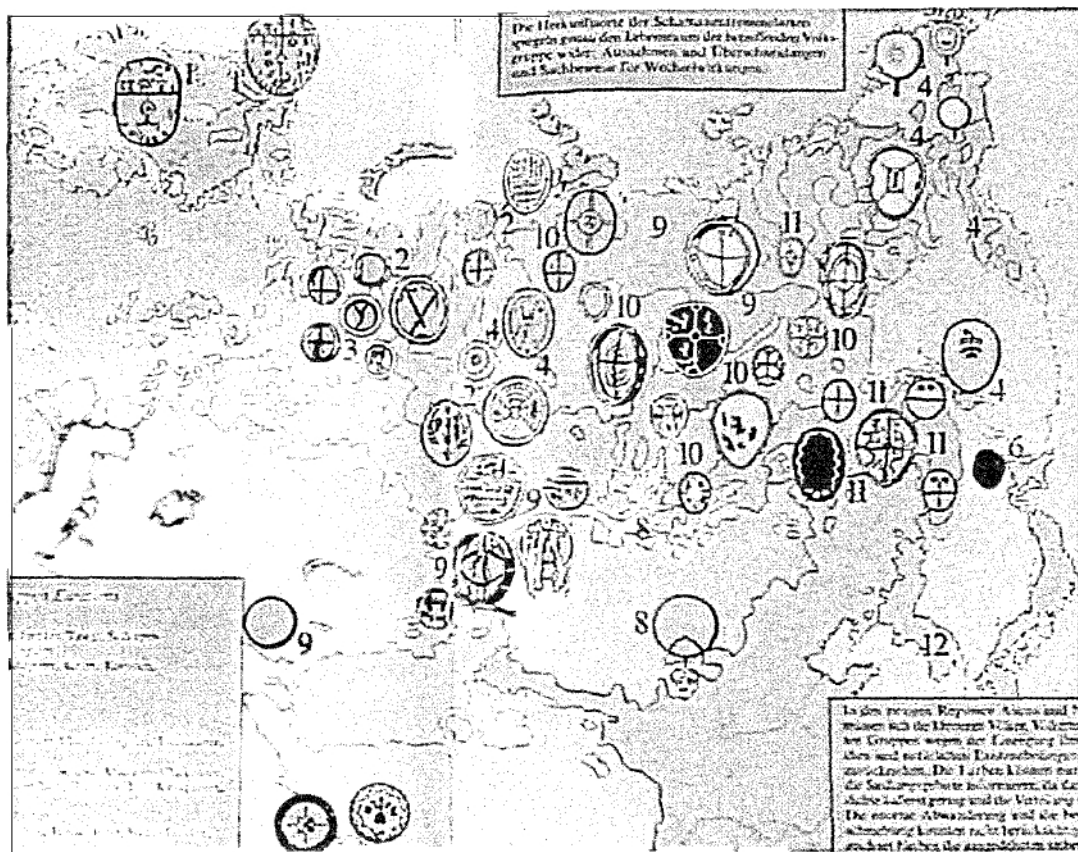
<sup>25</sup> In Azerbaijan, it is a love epic; in Turkey, a folk tale; in Central Asia, a lyrical-romantic epic or *ğaşıkname*. The hero who has drunk bade resembles the shaman candidate's *h:ili*- is very similar. Additionally, the statement by the elder or an old man, "Do not let anyone approach this boy, keep him pure," is the aesthetic form of Shamanism in Sufi civilisation.

<sup>26</sup> This ritual resembles the initiation ceremony in Bektashism. According to this initiation ceremony, the initiate brought before Dede Baba is laid on the ground and covered with a white cloth. The ceremony is performed with prayers

and the initiate stands up and kisses the Dede Baba's hand. The initiation ritual signifies that the initiate has died (by being covered with a white cloth) and been reborn into a new life (by throwing off the white cloth and standing up). In Bektashism, the white cloth has taken the place of the peeled tree.

<sup>27</sup> Eliade M., *The Characteristics of Myths*, Istanbul, 2001, p. 109

<sup>28</sup> See Dikson O., *Shamanic Healing*, Moscow, 2004, photographs provided in the book.



The regions where Schamo is located.

Horito, Mhi dly Hoppal. *Schamo nen* und \*c homonismus, PahlocE, A upsbupr, J 994, KJi o>b ndan atl nmistr.

Although it is considered immoral and is not well received by society, it is nevertheless preserved to some extent in the Far East.

The fact that the shaman is isolated from society during the period of illness, known as the shaman's dismemberment and consumption, shows that the shaman undergoes a ritual death alone (the roles of those who serve him during this process are limited to bringing him water) without any external influence.

FOURTH SECTION  
THE MYTH OF DEATH AND  
RESURRECTION

4. 1. Ritual Death (Transformation)  
= Rebirth (Return to Society)

According to Ezeli's philosophical belief, the universe is not only a living and sacred entity interconnected with itself, but also highly meaningful and multi-layered. In other words, according to all esoteric teachings, including Shamanism, the material universe is not the only existing, visible space. There is another space where the mind and spirit reside, another type of existence that cannot be seen with the eyes. These realms form a hierarchy, a sequence or a dichotomous division: material mind, material realm, abstract world, body, spirit, coarse, subtle, conscious, unconscious. Esoteric knowledge has proven that the mind and science are powerless to comprehend all of this. The shaman's ritual death is a code used to perceive phenomena beyond the mind.

The shaman's experience of ritual death and resurrection is the sole means of transporting him from the material world inhabited by ordinary people to the otherworld. The shaman uses this means to learn about a world that is invisible, incomprehensible to the mind, and unvalidated by science. In this sense, gaining a new status can be evaluated philosophically as gaining freedom in time and space. By reviving the dead or those abandoned to death, the shaman turns back time and, by going to the other realm where spirits live, experiences two realms simultaneously.

Dying and being resurrected is the main theme, the main line of becoming a shaman. To learn shamanic psychology, it is important to know how dying and being resurrected occurs in the process of becoming a shaman. No shaman can become a shaman without being born a second time.<sup>1</sup> It is even said that some shamans are born or will be born a third time. The famous Yakut shaman Aadca Oyuna was born a third time among the Tungus as Kısı!-

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<sup>1</sup> This is the same as the Sufi concept of dying before death, and closely resembles the Alevi-Bektashi belief that "He who is not born twice cannot attain the secret of truth."

was born with the name Tay-Udagan.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the initiation of death and resurrection is to instil in the individual the feeling of "dying" in order to be "born" into a new life through a series of symbolic actions and physical acts. The naming of this esoteric initiation as death and resurrection is also related to the second or third birth. This phenomenon is not reincarnation. Indeed, the shaman is resurrected in his own body and cannot find life in another body. This rule generally applies more to Turkish shamanism.

The suffering endured in dying and being reborn takes on a new meaning in the Shaman's worldview.

Hunger, suffering, and loneliness are, at best, factors that prepare the candidate for ritual death. Ritual death is the shaman's possession of the sacred sciences of the community, that is, his attainment of the secret. In fact, the secret of the formula "one is not made a shaman, one is born a shaman" lies here. The shaman's illness is also given to those born as shamans. The candidate chosen by the spirits

, the candidate chosen by the spirits through illness possesses the innate abilities to become a shaman. The idea that the process of death and resurrection or the initiation ceremony serves as a catalyst to elevate the human soul to a higher level is related to this. The shaman's process of death and resurrection is the concrete manifestation of this idea.

to a higher level. The shaman's process of dying and being reborn is the concrete manifestation of this idea.

Resurrection is related to the transition to a new status in life (e.g.

the transition from one age group to another known as adulthood in society, admission to youth status or secret societies, etc.), shamans undergo a series of rituals during this time.

They adhere to esoteric principles. The shaman's esoteric initiation, known as death and resurrection, is actually the admission of the "outside, foreign, ignorant and uninformed" candidate into the "inside" – the esoteric institution of the world of Shamanism, thus making them privy to the world of the Shaman, bringing them into the position of servant of Shamanism and allowing them to attain the light of esoteric knowledge. Therefore, death and resurrection is nothing more than the spiritual realisation of the shaman candidate's transition from a lower stage of existence to a higher one.

Since Shamanism is a "religion" of nature, dying and being reborn also reflects nature or the laws of nature. Thus, the shaman's death and resurrection is nothing more than a symbolic variant of nature's death and resurrection. In fact, the shaman who dies and is resurrected is more of a spirit than a living being. Indeed, it is not the shaman's body but his spirit that speaks to spirits, sees them, goes to them, and negotiates with them.

Ritual death is a very powerful experience that causes emotions and feelings to be reorganised in a different way. Internal and external change only occurs at the moment of ritual death

. The Shaman's extemporaneous utterances, which are assonant, rhyming, rhythmic prayer texts, are a reflection of this powerful experience.<sup>3</sup> According to the Shaman's worldview

<sup>2</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism. Selected Works*, p. 65

<sup>3</sup> Turkish folk poets, known by names such as ozan, aşık, bakış, olonhist, kayçı, şeşen, etc., recite their poems extemporaneously during moments of intense emotion. The tax records of these poets mentioned above



transitions from a normal state to that of a chosen individual. It appears that the shaman, who attains a new status through the ritual death process, inhabits both the physical and spiritual realms simultaneously, being a resident of the material world through his body and the spiritual world through his soul. The shaman's

's ability to transport his spirit to another place is related to his special status.

This allows us to perceive the shaman as a new type within Turkish culture. Furthermore, the shaman is only a shaman when performing his duties; in other circumstances, he is a "normal" person like other members of society. This distinguishes the shaman from other esoteric figures cultivated by Turkish culture.

Because the shaman performs the ritual of death, he has acquired knowledge about spirits that have existed since the beginning of time and has seen the source of secret knowledge. This source of knowledge is closed to science and is open to emotions, intuition, and spiritual experiences

Throughout his entire activity, the Shaman benefits from these cosmic insights he has acquired.

and introduces society to cosmos-derived knowledge through the rituals he conducts.

From what has been said so far, we can draw the following conclusion. The initiation ceremony, which symbolises ritual death and marks the transition to the status of shaman known as death and resurrection, can be briefly characterised as follows:

- 1) Initiation (ritual death) is the transition from the seven realms to the world of spirits. Let us denote this with

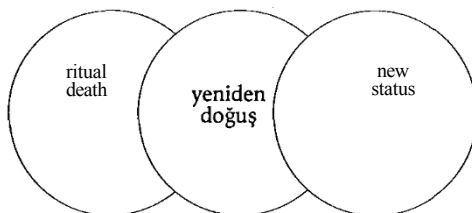
Let us denote this as A.

- 2) The transition from the normal (natural) state to the 7 chosen (extraordinary) state. Let us mark this as B.

- 3)  $A. + B. = C.$  (New status)

Through the initiation of death and resurrection, the shaman candidate enters a higher spiritual state, reaching a superior, designed universe. From this perspective, ritual death, in its deepest sense, is the candidate's transcendence beyond all conditional circumstances in their external life, obtaining a "passport" to the mysterious, enigmatic world of the universe.

If we transform these three characteristic features (death, birth, new status) into a schema, we can represent the ritual death process or dying and being reborn, which symbolises rebirth as a Shaman, as follows:




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These also correspond to the selection of the shaman. For further information, see Bayat F. "Mehebbet (Love) Epics", Studies on Azerbaijani Oral Folk Literature, 9 Books, Baku, 2000

Finally, it can be said that death and resurrection is one of the indispensable conditions for transition to a new status in all ancient cultures. Primitive societies- In this respect, it resembles the rite of passage into adulthood. Indeed, coming of age is regularly carried out in three stages: the candidate's exclusion from society, a period of waiting and training, and transition to the new status. Upon completion of these stages, the candidate is accepted among the adults, experiencing a fundamental change both in their existential regime and in their social position. To summarise briefly, as seen in the previous sections, the shaman candidate must go through these three stages and ultimately break free from their previous social status and , it appears that the shaman candidate's death and resurrection is almost identical to the initiation rite. , it appears that dying and being reborn is almost identical to the rite of passage. Furthermore, the passive state of the shaman candidate is also similar to the rite of passage. However, dying and being reborn, which is the crowning achievement of becoming a shaman, also has some different aspects.

The abundance of details and the thoroughness of the shaman's death and resurrection, and most importantly It is distinguished by physical tortures, tremors, and the acquisition of secret knowledge. The main aspect of the process of becoming a shaman is the candidate's rebirth to some degree, that is, passing through death and resurrection to attain a new status and be accepted among the elite of society. After this rebirth, the Shaman acquires secret knowledge and becomes a representative of the spiritual realm. Based on existing shaman legends, sayings, and beliefs, the rebirth process can be categorised as follows:

- 1- The shaman is reborn a second time after physical death and is trained by the spirits.
- 2- The spirits tear the shaman into seven, nine, or ninety-nine pieces, separating the flesh from the bones, cutting off the head and impaling it on a tree. Then they gather the flesh in one place, stick it to the bones with saliva, and revive him by placing the head back on the body.
- 3- The spirits put the man who has paid tribute into a cauldron and boil him, separating his flesh from his bones and eating it. Then they attach new flesh to the bones and revive him.<sup>4</sup> At the heart of all this is the Shamanic concept of death and resurrection.

<sup>4</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Legends and Tales*, pp. 10-12, 15, 18, 20, 23, 33; Anohin V., *Materials on Shamanism*, p. 131; Drenkova N. P., *The Gift of Shamanism*, p. 274; Popov A. A., *On the Gift of Shamanism*, pp. 285-286

#### 4. 2. The Candidate Drinking the Milk of the Spirits (.) and Engaging in Sexual Relations with Them

In all traditional societies, and especially in regions where shamanism exists, anything that may appear erotic or sexual is evaluated by solely a part of life and existence. Sexual relations, the most natural aspect of human life, is influential in the formation of Shamanism as well as in the Shamanic healing system. However, due to the strong opposition of both the Western world and monotheistic religions, healing through sex has become non-existent.

According to the shamanic worldview, the human body is a microcosm of the universe and reflects all energy sources. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the body begins when the candidate enters the shamanic status. During the process of becoming a shaman, it is particularly important for the candidate to engage in sexual intercourse with spirits known as heavenly wives, as female sexual organs symbolise the Mythological Mother and carry mystical meaning.

According to L. Sternberg, who studied Siberian Shamanism, the first element of the Shaman initiation ceremony is the candidate's sexual intercourse with spirits, which is considered to be the candidate receiving mystical knowledge from them. The female Shaman candidate is taken to a secluded place during the Shaman initiation ceremony and calls upon the spirits to enter her womb using her sexual organs. The female shaman candidate is hidden from people until the spirits enter into a sexual relationship with her. Finally, the expected spirit approaches the candidate in her sleep or while awake, in the form of a bird or a young man. The candidate experiences a real orgasm by entering into a relationship with the spirit. According to shamanic tradition, the spirit becomes the candidate's mystical husband, the source of her power and energy.

The depiction of the shaman's mystical husband is fed before the initiation, and the female shaman continues to have sexual relations with her mystical husband throughout her life. In fact, according to shamanic memorations, the shaman also has children with her heavenly husband.

Similarly, the male shaman candidate learns the secrets of shamanism by engaging in sexual relations with spirits designed as women, and thus becomes a shaman. Generally, every shaman has a heavenly wife. However, it is sometimes known that the shaman has several heavenly spouses.

In ethnographic literature, the shaman's death and resurrection is essentially known as dismemberment and renewal. However, becoming a shaman is not limited to dismemberment. One of the oldest ways of becoming a shaman is through sexual intercourse with spirits of the opposite sex. In shamanic literature, this is also referred to as the shaman's heavenly spouse. However, over time, the phenomenon of becoming a shaman through sexual intercourse has been pushed into the background, replaced by the candidate drinking the milk of spirits of the opposite sex.

<sup>5</sup> See Sternberg L., *Die Religion der Giljaken* (ARW), Leipzig, 1905

There are also those who attain Shaman status by marrying spirits or drinking the milk of spirits. Indeed, according to Tuva Shaman legends, it is possible to become a Shaman by suckling the udder of an albis.<sup>6</sup> The motif of drinking milk or suckling the udder, which plays a fundamental role in initiation rites, is also one of the factors that conditions the Shaman's connection with the spirit world. The albis or albastı (abaası in Yakut mythology) that gives milk to the shaman, that nurses him, is, according to some signs, the inverted sign of the Mythological Mother.

The Mythological Mother, with her large breasts, who gives birth and nurses, is embodied in the albis being.

In fact, the shaman's sexual intercourse with these spirits, which signify the Mythological Mother, is to possess the secret energy that existed in the beginning.

As seen in the legends reflecting the rites of initiation, after the shamanic illness, the shaman candidate is suckled by the albis, the evil spirits of the underworld. The albis suckling the candidate carries a ritual-mythological character. In fact, suckling is perceived as accepting the child as one's own and establishing a sexual relationship. After this initiatory event, the candidate who has undergone the ceremony becomes a shaman, establishes a connection with the spirits, sees them, and can talk to them. Suckling the milk of spirits, which are the source of terrible and deadly diseases, means that the shaman is feeding from the source of death. In this respect, the shaman, who suckles the breasts of the albis, the abaas, or the albis, is the one who can cure deadly diseases.

The act of the Albis feeding milk to the Shaman prepares him for a new stage, both physically and psychologically. The Shaman candidate's suckling of the breast is equivalent to the hero suckling the breast of Mother Earth and gaining immortality in the epics. According to some Shaman legends, the mountain spirit suckles the candidate. Since the mountain spirit is often imagined as female, it belongs to the Mythological Mother complex. In some shamanic legends, a woman of unknown origin sits the candidate on her lap, suckles him with her large breasts, and in some cases, after suckling, engages in sexual intercourse with the candidate.

Generally, since the shaman does not voluntarily undergo the ceremony, suckling the breasts of the albis and engaging in sexual intercourse with them is also compulsory. The fact that spirits are depicted as women and play an important role in becoming a shaman once again proves that female shamans played an important role in social organisation at the beginning. Furthermore, the legends and memorates about female shamans also serve to show their place in social life.

<sup>6</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., *Obryadovaya Praktika i Folklor Tuvinskogo Shamanstva*, Novosibirsk, 1987, p.

<sup>7</sup> <sup>19</sup> Popov A. A., *Poluchenie "Shamanskogo Dara"*, p. 287; Basilov V. N., *Izbranniki Duhov*, p. 49; Kenin-

Lopsan M. B., *Ritual Practice*, p. 19

<sup>8</sup> See Bayat E, *Turkish Shamanic Texts*,



Figure 5. The ascension of the powerful female shaman Oçi-Bolo Kedr to the heavens (from Dikson's book)

The connection of the Uryanhay Shamans' lineage to the albısa and the fact that the albısa form a separate lineage in the Shaman initiation rituals, copulate with the candidate, milk their udders into the candidate's tea, thereby nursing the candidate, and that this Shamanic illness is also called albıs, shows that this demonic entity is also a subject of Shamanic literature. The powerful Altai Shamans who collected taxes from the albıs would say, "I am from the lineage of the albıs."

In fact, the shaman describes these albıs as two beautiful women. The shaman states that after engaging in sexual intercourse with these two albıs, the Shaman is brought to the world of the albıs, where the albıs, carrying their breasts over their shoulders to the back, pour yellow-coloured tea from their breasts

<sup>9</sup> Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, pp. 68-69

<sup>10</sup> Bayat F., *op. cit.*, p. 68

They milk the cow and give the milk to the candidate to drink. This is repeated several times, and each time the candidate drinks the milk mixed with tea, along with the albis. Finally, the two beautiful albis who had sexual relations with the candidate also milk their udders into the tea and drink it together with the candidate, the three of them together. After all this, the candidate returns to his own home and becomes a Shaman.

The ritual of mixing milk into tea and drinking it is actually for the candidate to recognise those who drink milk with him

and those whose milk is milked, and to be able to perform shamanic rituals for them. Therefore, whatever it means for the spirits to eat the candidate's flesh, it is similar to the candidate drinking the milk of the albis and having sexual intercourse with them. The candidate, who takes on the role of Shaman from the albis lineage, can perform shamanic rituals for the albis whose milk he drank and with whom he had sexual intercourse, as well as for the albis with whom he drank milk together.

Another important issue here is that after shamanism became a male-dominated profession, the spirit that makes the candidate a shaman is often perceived as female. Indeed, the existence of female entities such as albis, the northern woman, among the Altaic-Sayan Turks; peri among the Central Asian Turks; and finally, the animal mother, which is the second life of Shamans, proves that the origins of Shamanism date back to the matriarchal period. Shamans also perpetuate this phenomenon by occasionally wearing women's clothing or garments similar to those worn by women.

#### 4.3. Ritual Disintegration and

##### The Role and Function of the Blacksmith in the Process of Ritual Disintegration and Renewal

In shamanic literature, regarding ritual death and the rebirth of the candidate the existence of numerous legends and memorates indicates that this phenomenon is hereditary in Shamanism. There is one point that unites all these legends, which are told in different ways and for different purposes. That is the rebirth of the candidate in becoming a Shaman (dying and being reborn) and the role of the blacksmith in this formation. It should also be noted that although numerous studies have been conducted on Shamanism, the subject of the blacksmith cult has either not been addressed at all in the works produced, or only minimally addressed.

In the scientific literature, the ritual death pact, which is considered a second birth, the candidate must first have one or more extra bones in their body in order to become a shaman. The ritual meaning is that, in terms of creation, they are different from ordinary people. The fact that he possesses this quality and was chosen from birth for the role of Shaman This control process aims to reinforce the proof that the shaman is no ordinary person. As mentioned earlier, the shaman is chosen from birth for the role of shamanism, and the oybon, which performs its function through the hole in the body, and the kieli, which plays the role of a repository, are clear evidence of this. Therefore, the candidate's illness and all the torments they endure are the result of destiny and are inevitable.

The candidate, who has lived with this destiny from the beginning, must undergo the special ritual phenomenon of "disintegration" in order to become a shaman. Yakut Shamans call this ritual *etteni* or *etteter*. This term comes from the word *et* (meat) and means to cut, chop, or separate meat into separate pieces. The real Shaman's par-

It is a fact that dismemberment occurred. It is even said that the famous Shamans were dismembered three times.

Although the rite of passage to shamanism lies at the heart of the dismemberment phenomenon, counting the bones is of great importance in the shamanic belief system. According to Teleut shamans

, after cooking the candidate in a special cauldron, the spirits carefully separate the flesh from the bones and count the bones for a long time. If the number of bones is less than the specified amount, the candidate cannot become a shaman and is killed by the spirits. If there are one or more extra bones, then the candidate must become a shaman, whether they want to or not. 12

There are some differences in the beliefs of the Kumandin Shamans regarding bones. According to N. Alekseev, the spirits take the candidate who has contracted Shaman sickness to the

to their patrons. Before being dismembered, the candidate the spirits of the ancestors-

The candidate must choose a drum in the place where he lives. If the candidate chooses the white drum, he is allowed to live. If the candidate chooses the black drum, he is rolled by the spirits to his death.

If the candidate chooses the white drum, then the guardian spirit, who is sent by Ülgen, will tear him apart, separate his flesh from his bones, and begin searching for the excess bone. If the candidate's destiny is to become a

, who will tear him apart, separate his flesh from his bones, and begin searching for the extra bone. If the candidate's destiny is to become a shaman, then the guardian spirit will find the extra bone and unite it with the bone of a deceased ancestor shaman. This union is the integration of the ancestor with the descendant, or in a broader sense, the integration of the ancestor with his own lineage

, which is based on bone kinship. In this way, the lineage renews its existence by connecting itself to the sacred ancestor.

After being cut up and eaten, the head is removed once the excess bone is found. The spirits "chop up" the candidate, separating the flesh from the bones. As a rule during the "cleansing" of the flesh from the bones

, the head is usually "separated" from the body and hung on a pole. The candidate sees how his own body is "cut into pieces", how his "flesh is cooked in a cauldron", "eaten", and "his bones covered with new flesh". Being cooked and eaten symbolises the transition of the profane human into the ranks of the chosen ones in cosmic knowledge. The fact that the same phenomenon is also seen in Turkish folk Sufi narratives should be evaluated as a layering of cultural elements. According to both the Shamanic and Turkish folk Sufi worldviews, rawness codes profanity, while cookedness codes possession of cosmic knowledge.

11 Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism. Selected Works*, p. 102

12 Drenkov N. P., *Materials on Shamanism among the Teleuts*, p. 109

13 Alekseev N. A., *Shamanism Among the Indigenous Peoples of Siberia*, Novosibirsk, 1984, p. 110

14 According to the legends of the Bektashi sect of the Shiite-Alevites, Hacı Bektaş Veli throws Molla Sadeddin into a cauldron and boils him for forty days. Molla melts away in the cauldron. (Shamans also cook in the cauldron of spirits.)

Witnessing the dismemberment of one's own body serves both to enable the shaman to recount the event and to understand which spirit sent which illness, to learn the path to the other world and the spirits there. Furthermore, placing the head in a high place to witness the dismemberment of the body signifies that the shaman perceives the cosmic knowledge he has received with his consciousness open, that is, by seeing and knowing. During the ritual dismemberment process, the candidate's blood and flesh are thrown onto all the places that bring illness and death so that the shaman can protect people from those illnesses and evils.

If the candidate's blood or flesh cannot reach any place or spirit, the shaman cannot perform a ritual on the spirit that sends the disease and cannot go to that place to heal the patient.

In I. Hudyakov's Shamanic legend concerning dismemberment

there are some differences. In the Shamanic beliefs of the Yakuts, the island is torn apart and its flesh is scattered to the wind; Hara Silgılah Begi Duortu is a terrifying underground spirit. This spirit cuts off the head of the future Shaman and impales it on a pole so that snow and rain wash it, and the lightning and wind strengthen it. Once all this has happened

the victim's body lies unconscious in the house. In the next stage, the spirits replace the head, revive the victim, and cast them into the fiery sea. For three days and three nights, the fire burns away the candidate's (place) signs, weaknesses, in short, everything connected to their previous life. Only the candidate's skin and bones remain.

During this process, the candidate's body on the ground appears to be burning in fire, their eyes fill with blood, and their body becomes covered in wounds. Then the spirits pull the candidate out of the fiery sea and throw them into a lake filled with snakes, scorpions, all manner of evil, and deceit

sun'! In this sun'! lake, the shaman candidate's body is rebuilt with snakes, scorpions, lizards, and wolves. In an esoteric sense, snakes, scorpions, wolves, and lizards are the symbolised training of evil spirits.

After this, the spirits take the candidate out of the sun'! lake and hang him upside down by his feet from an iron tree. Three, nine or seven virgin girls recite prayers as they cut the candidate's body with knives and pierce his flesh with needles. The candidate's body on the ground

After a few years, they take the island back to the tree called Oyun Maha, where it was disciplined. Here, they

into darkness. In the darkness known as the blacksmiths' place, the candidate is revived after undergoing certain procedures.

In the shamanic narratives of the Altai-Sayan Turks and Yakuts, the emphasis has shifted to the cutting and eating of meat. The purpose of this ritual of dismemberment is

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Hacı Bektaş boils him again for forty days, reducing him to the size of a small child. (The candidate shrinks in the bird's nest on the Shaman tree, becoming the size of a baby bird.) After boiling him for forty days a third time, Hacı Bektaş restores Molla Sadeddin to his previous state. See Menakibi-Hacı Bektaş Veli Vilayetname. Prepared by A. Gölpinarlı, İstanbul, 1958, p. 62

<sup>15</sup> Hudyakov I. A., *Kratkoe Opisanie Verhoyanskogo Okruga*, Leningrad, 1969, pp. 307-308



It is to grant him a new status by renewing his ancient organs, which signify the candidate's connection to the world.

The "renewal" of internal organs, the "splitting" and "renewal" achieved by "piercing" the nostrils, etc., are observed in Tungus, Buryat, Australia, North and South America, Africa, Indonesia, and other places, as M. Eliade also wrote.<sup>16</sup> This proves that the phenomenon of shamanism is universal, in addition to its regional and ethnic characteristics.

In conclusion, we can say that the shaman's dismemberment and consumption by spirits, his abandonment of his old body burdened with worldly sins, and the covering of his remaining clean bones with new flesh form the basis of the philosophy of transition to another status. After being torn apart and devoured, the Shaman's second birth is not a real birth but a mystical one. M. Perrin gives the following meaning to being torn apart and devoured: "This pain is also a price that the newly chosen Shaman must pay in exchange for undergoing change and gaining abilities."

Central Asian shaman types such as falbin, perihan or bakşılann/baksılann

It is known that the call was sent by jinns and spirits during its formation. However, in Central Asian shamanic legends and memorates, there is no mention of the body being torn apart and eaten. This does not mean that Central Asian shamanism did not believe in the phenomenon of death and resurrection.

Instead of dismemberment, we see the phenomenon occurring between dream and wakefulness, which is the path of the Shamanic gift.

is the path to receiving shamanic abilities, which we see as the essence of the phenomenon given between dream and wakefulness. However, in a Kazakh shamanic legend recounted by N. Drenkova from W. Radloff, it is reported that the shaman was dismembered with forty knives, pierced with forty needles, and then given to the Devil for training.<sup>19</sup> As can be seen, in the early days, dismemberment and rebirth also occurred among Central Asian shamans. With the strengthening of Islam, dismemberment disappeared, and amulets or treatises played an important role in the transition to shaman status.

It should also be noted here that the shaman's dismemberment and consumption is not merely a rite of death and resurrection or temporary death, but also the sacrifice of the shaman's body parts to the spirits. This is a test that a worthy candidate must pass.<sup>20</sup> We can schematically represent this process as follows:

candidate → dismemberment of the body → mental awakening → return as a shaman  
me

<sup>16</sup> Eliade, M., *Shamanism*, pp. 55-93

<sup>17</sup> Perrin M., *Shamanism*, Istanbul, 2001, pp. 39

<sup>18</sup> See Alektorov A. E., "Baksa (Iz Mira Kirgizskih Sueveriy)", *Izvestiya Obshchestva Arheologi*, Istori i Etnografi pri Kazanskom Universitete, T. 16, vip. 1, 1900, p. 32

<sup>19</sup> Drenkov N. P., *The Acquisition of Shamanic Gifts*, p. 275

<sup>20</sup> Novik E. S., *Obryad i Folklore „Siberian Shamanism*, Moscow, 1984, p. 199

After the period of decay and renewal, the reassembly of bones signifies reformation, resurrection, and revival. Indeed, bone is the essential element that enables resurrection and renewed life among nomadic and especially hunter tribes. The belief that the spirit, and also the life force that animates humans, resides in the bones has given bones a special place. Flesh is merely a garment covering the bones and therefore the spirit. However, the candidate whose bones have been washed and whose spirit has been trained in the Shaman tree must naturally also have his flesh renewed. Old flesh is not suitable for covering new bones. Covering the body with new flesh is the Shaman's physical rebirth and psychological renewal. Moreover, the Shaman is resilient with his new body—he does not burn in fire, freeze in cold, catch a chill, sweat in heat, and can dance and sing for hours without tiring, connecting with the spirit world. Psychologically, the Shaman is also capable of responding to all the pressures of the spirits and has the ability to guide people.

Being torn apart and eaten is part of the shaman's secret initiation ceremony, in which he convinces himself that the spirits eating his flesh are materialising. In this transitional state, the shaman has dominion over the spirits that merge with him and materialise through his flesh. Furthermore, the shaman whose flesh is eaten becomes related to the spirits that consume him. We also see in the Oğuzname that the meat of the sacrificial animal or the animal slaughtered for the feast is shared among the members of the tribe. Both the sharing of meat among Shamans and among the Oğuz tribes is the Turkish model of social order and the kinship system. The ritualistic explanation in Shaman mythology of the sacrifice of the body of the first ancestors who created the cosmos is the dismemberment and consumption of the Shaman or the Oğuz tribes' division of the sacrificial animal into pieces and consumption of it according to certain rules.

Legends and memorates about shamans also clearly state that in the act of being dismembered and eaten, a candidate cannot become a shaman if he does not eat the flesh. On the other hand, being cut up and eaten is the counterpart to the shaman finding his helper spirits, learning the character and characteristics of evil spirits, and knowing the secret language. Later, the shaman's descent into the underworld, his ascent to the heavens, and his interaction with various spirits are repetitions of the phenomenon of death and resurrection and being cut up and eaten in the process of becoming a shaman.

The mystical fragmentation and reformation of the body in becoming a shaman closely resembles the initiate's learning of secret knowledge in esoteric teachings: being thrust into darkness, suffering, accessing knowledge of other realms through dreams, etc. The method of acquiring secret knowledge is consistent with the reformation of the initiate in esoteric teaching schools such as those in Egypt and Tibet. This suitability is not merely a matter of similarity but relates to shamanism's place within cosmic knowledge.

The shaman candidate's ritual death essentially takes place in the underworld or in the forest. However, in some of the texts compiled by G. Ksenofontov, we also see that ritual dismemberment and consumption take place in the mountains.<sup>21</sup>

Another important issue in the ritual dismemberment and consumption process is that, according to ethnographic literature, the candidate's close relatives die in numbers equal to the number of bones. In some shaman legends, the number of relatives who die is seven, while in others it is nine (nine sacrifices are required for the eight-holed bone and the severed head).<sup>22</sup> The relatives sacrificed by the spirits give life to the shaman in a manner of speaking. This sacrificial price signifies that the shaman represents the lineage. The lineage or clan, which is a single body, acquires a new status in the shaman's image.

The counting of the bones of the candidate to become a shaman, the gathering and washing of the candidate's bones after being cut up and eaten, and finally the death of his relatives equal to the number of bones, show that the bone paradigm occupies an important place in shamanism. Indeed, the fact that bones, whose esoteric meaning is knowledge, life, spirit, etc., play a prominent role, especially in Turkish Shamanism, gave rise to the belief that the bones of deceased Shamans in ancient times were sacred. In shamanic burials, the body was not buried until the bones were separated from the flesh, repeating the initial process of separating and cleansing the bones from the flesh, which were then purified from the flesh and buried at the final gathering.

After the ritual dismemberment, the process of raising the shaman (also called the shaman's resurrection or revival) takes place.

Having learnt about the separate spirits and their functions, the candidate then undergoes training in the shaman tree. As the shaman's training will be examined in a separate section, it is only possible to say this much here without going into the training itself: fragmentation is part of the training.

According to shamanic legends and memorates, the blacksmith is the manager of the ritual process of dismemberment and rebirth.<sup>23</sup> The blacksmith plays a primary role in the ritual process of death and rebirth. Indeed, in the oldest memorata collected from Yakut Shamans, the blacksmith is the main actor who enables the Shaman candidate to attain his new status. According to this memorata, after his flesh is torn apart and burned in the sea of fire, the Shaman candidate is brought to the side of the Oyun Maha tree and pushed into darkness there. The dark place is the domain of the highly respected blacksmiths (*uus haan tördö*). The blacksmiths place the candidate on the anvil and beat him with a hammer, then wash him with the milk of nine girls and strip him naked. After these procedures, they throw the candidate back onto the earth.<sup>24</sup> For this reason, the shaman does not freeze in the cold or sweat in the heat.

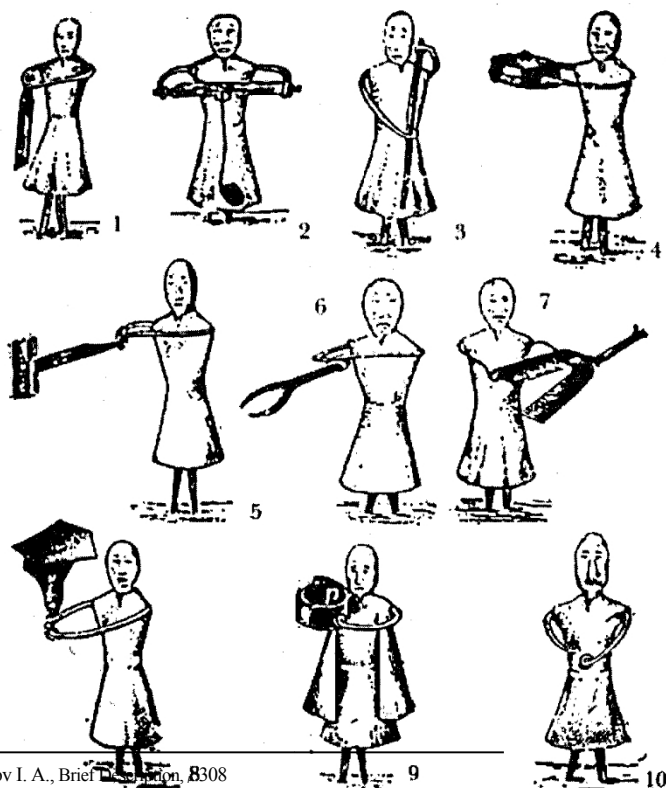
<sup>21</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Hrestes. Shamanism and Christianity*, Irkutsk, 1929, p. 27

<sup>22</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism*, pp. 44-47

<sup>23</sup> Sacred beings who impart professional arts such as poetry, minstrelsy, and fortune-telling (Hz. Ali, Hızır, pir, eren, etc.) represent the blacksmith's transformation into a new civilisation.

The art of blacksmithing is known as the most important art after shamanic art. In fact, according to Yakut belief, the blacksmith is of a higher rank than the shaman. Indeed, it is possible for the blacksmith to harm the shaman, but the shaman cannot harm the blacksmith. Nevertheless, among the Yakuts and Altai-Sayan Turks, where contemporary shamanism is alive, blacksmiths have lost their former importance. More precisely, while the shaman continues to perform his duties, blacksmithing survives mainly in the form of magical and symbolic representations in oral art. The blacksmith cult, passed down from generation to generation, has almost disappeared with the rapid development of technology.

Figure 6. The sky blacksmiths of the Balagan Buryats (from Hangelov)



<sup>24</sup> Hudyakov I. A., *Brief Description*, 8308

<sup>25</sup> See Alekseev N. A., *Traditional Religious Beliefs of the Yakuts in the 19th–Early 20th Centuries*, Novosibirsk, 1975, pp. 103–106

The blacksmith, who was like the shaman's older brother, treated people and predicted the future, but his knowledge was based more on reason and intelligence than on mystical teachings. In this context, the cult of blacksmithing differs from shamanism. Blacksmithing is generally a hereditary art, and the blacksmith ancestor from nine generations ago was endowed with certain extraordinary abilities. The most important of these extraordinary abilities was that spirits feared the blacksmith.

Although the blacksmith and the shaman come from the same lineage, spirits fear the blacksmith. Shamans, however, possess the ability to control spirits. In this respect, the shaman and the blacksmith are distinct. Spirits fear iron, being encircled by iron, and the blacksmith's voice and shouts. This is why Shamans do not perform rituals without wearing iron objects. In a Yakut village, V. Seroşevskiy, because the Shaman took some metal objects out of his iron box and placed them on the ground, the Shaman could not perform the ritual and said, "The spirits do not respond to my call because they fear iron."<sup>26</sup>

Iron and the cult of ironworking, which held a special place in ancient Turkish beliefs, were adopted by Shamanism, and the blacksmith was given an important role in the transition to Shaman status. For this reason, the cult of the blacksmith is seen not only in Turkish Shamanism but also in Buryat and Samoyed Shamanism, which were influenced by Turkish Shamanism. Among the Buryats, the patron of blacksmiths is Hara-Dargahi-Tenggeri (the Blacksmith God). According to belief, all black Shamans are blacksmiths. The Buryats' blacksmith god is also called Boron-Hara-Tenggeri (Black Rain God). This god raised a blacksmith named Hacir. Later, this blacksmith taught blacksmithing to all Shamans.<sup>27</sup> As can be understood from this information, a sign of equality has been placed between blacksmiths and Shamans.

Furthermore, according to the shamanistic beliefs of some Buryat tribes, there are 99 blacksmiths and 77 bellows operators under the command of Hara Maha Tengri, the guardian spirit of blacksmiths. According to another myth, the patron of blacksmiths, Bojintay, and his nine sons are responsible for various objects found in the blacksmith's workshop - fire, air, anvil, coal, hammer, bellows, water. Blacksmithing is completed by Bojintay and his sons.

Among the Tuvans, there were individuals who practised both blacksmithing and shamanism simultaneously, as well as shamans and blacksmiths. Indeed, the Tuvans referred to those who practised both shamanism and blacksmithing as tsarin, while those who practised only shamanism were called ham.<sup>28</sup> A faint trace of this phenomenon remains among the Buryats. According to the beliefs of Buryat Shamans, the power of the Shaman and the blacksmith are equal. Furthermore, as can be understood from the information provided by A. Sagalaev and I. Oktyabrskaya,<sup>29</sup> the Buryats also considered blacksmiths to be

<sup>26</sup> Seroşevskiy V. L., Yakuti, St. Petersburg, 1896, p. 632

<sup>27</sup> Öge! B., Turkish Mythology, vol. I, Ankara, 1989, p. 450

<sup>28</sup> Potapov L. P., Altayskiy Shamanism, Leningrad, 1991, p. 124

<sup>29</sup> Sagalaev A. M., Oktyabrskaya I. V., Traditional Worldview, Sign and Ritual, p. 75

Just like Shamans, they were divided into two groups: white and black smiths. These formed the upper echelons of society and inherited their craft from their ancestors.

The blacksmithing profession emerged when the Turks developed hunting and, to some extent, herding during the Bronze Age, and reached a high level with the establishment of large states on the steppes. In other words, the manufacture of weapons capable of hunting wild animals and protecting domestic animals from wild animals and raids in nature elevated blacksmithing to the upper echelons of the social division of labour. With the emergence of ironworking and blacksmithing, a new era began, ushering in the hunting era, which brought the role of men to the forefront of society.

The significant role played by the blacksmith cult in Turkish shamanism is surrounded by economic, social and cultural conditions. The Turks, a nomadic and warrior people, developed ironworking in ancient times, producing weapons, horses and chariots, and selling them to other tribes. Although iron was not the main source of income in Turkish states such as the Huns, Göktürks, Uighurs, and Karakhanids, it played an important role in the economy. The iron mines and iron foundries located around Lake Baikal and in the Altai, Ural, and Sayan mountains also indicate the significant role of iron in the economic life of the Turks. The ritual of blessing the hunt evolved over a long period, from a kind of magic and prayer performed by the hunters themselves to the emergence of professional shamans who performed this task. As M. Eliade also wrote, blacksmiths were known everywhere as feared and dreaded sorcerers.<sup>30</sup> Although blacksmiths were accorded a special status in Turkish thought, they were not seen as sorcerers, or very rarely, which was probably influenced by the Mongols. Indeed, Buryat shaman legends state that the art of blacksmithing was new to the Mongols and Buryats, and that blacksmithing was taught to them by a nomadic tribe. According to the primitive views of the Mongol peoples on blacksmithing, the blacksmith is a magician. The situation was different among the Göktürks. The occupation, strength, and art of the entire tribe was blacksmithing.<sup>31</sup> The acquisition of advanced warfare technology at that time was also due to the Turks' ability to carry out ironworking well. It is proportional.

The Turks have long assumed that there is a connection between the blacksmith and the shaman. In Turkish thought, blacksmithing has become a symbol of male dominance and military power. Just as spirits transform the shaman's body, the blacksmith shapes iron with fire and water and makes the tools he desires from it. The triad of fire, water, and iron was once protective, purifying,

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<sup>30</sup> Eliade M., *Shamanism*, p. 514

<sup>31</sup> Öge! B., *Turkish Mythology*, vol. 1, p. 66

, the blacksmith, like the shaman, was seen as connected to the other world. The blacksmith is a sacred person who rules over fire and makes weapons from hard iron, shaping the hard metal. The logic that the master who shapes iron can easily turn a shaman candidate into a shaman has given the blacksmith a special place in the status of shamanhood. During the emergence of tribal unions, the blacksmith began to gain respect in society by combining the attributes of a scholar with those of an expert. In Turkish mythological thought, the person who rules over two sacred powers—fire and iron—is also assigned the function of a saviour in another context.

This role of saviour is also seen in the famous Turkish Ergenekon myth. Indeed, Börtöçine is the first blacksmith, the first ruler, the saviour grey wolf who melted the iron mountains and led the Turks out onto the vast steppe. The presence of the meaning of wolf (börte/börü) in the etymology of the name indicates the triad of wolf, magic, and blacksmith. The Ergenekon myth is realised in the presence of the saviour grey wolf, who has taken on the blacksmith's mission of salvation. The relationship between the blacksmith and the grey wolf is as strong as the relationship between the blacksmith and the ruler. The institution of the "sultan blacksmith" was a remnant of the tradition of the sultan, in honour of emerging from Ergenekon, placing a piece of iron heated in the fire on an anvil and striking it with a hammer every year on a specific day, thus imitating the blacksmith.

. The saviour blacksmith was also the nation's shaman and hakan

The art of blacksmithing is confirmed by historical sources as being the ancestral craft of the Turks and having been passed on to the Mongols by the Turks. Indeed, five centuries after the Göktürks, the Mongols, who established a state alongside the Turks, did not know blacksmithing. Men Hung, a general of the Sung dynasty in China who was sent as an envoy to the Mongols during the time of Genghis Khan, wrote in his travelogue *Meng-Ta Pei-lu* that the Mongols did not know how to work metal before Genghis Khan, that they even made their arrowheads from bone, and that iron weapons came to the Mongols from the Uyghur Turks. In Mongolian mythology, ironworking was also a terrifying art reserved for sorcerers.

It is because the strengthening of Shamanism coincides with the emergence of the blacksmith cult or metalworking that blacksmithing, like Shamanism, is observed to be passed down through the bloodline. The similarity between the blacksmith and the Shaman is explained by the fact that blacksmithing is practised by several generations from the same lineage. On the other hand, the blacksmith is seen as the elder brother of the shaman, and in this context, the difference between them is erased, and the function of the blacksmith becomes the same as that of the shaman.

Another important similarity is the consecration of the blacksmith's tools—bellows, anvil, hammer, etc.—and the subsequent prohibition of women touching these tools. Indeed, after the shaman's drum is consecrated, women are also forbidden from touching it.

The blacksmiths' ability to drive away evil spirits, heal, and predict the future makes this cult of the same origin as Shamanism. The impressive role of the blacksmiths' patron, K1day BakS1, in the transition to Shaman status is, in a way, proof that the blacksmithing cult played an important role in the emergence of Shamans.

The fact that the shaman was initiated into the rite of initiation by the blacksmith, who had become a symbol of the patriarchal era, proves once again that the status of shaman was shaped during periods dominated by the patriarchal family structure and that it took on its present form.

As understood from Shamanic literature, the blacksmith cuts off the candidate's head and places it in a cauldron filled with cold water, while placing the chopped-up meat in another boiling cauldron.<sup>32</sup> The expression "putting one's head in cold water," used in our language today to mean reviving someone, or consequently, opening one's mind, is a phrase that has remained from ancient Shamanic ceremonies.

The meat is boiled until it separates from the bones and tendons. The candidate's marrow turns to tea and flows out, the blacksmith collects the bones in one place, and the bones are covered with new meat.

· After joining the candidate's head, the blacksmith removes their eyes and replaces them with others (to open their insight so they can see spirits), then pierces their ears with his fingers and says: From now on, you will understand what plants say.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, just as our ears are closed to divine sounds, they are also deaf to the conversations of the other world. The shaman, with his ears pierced, has become someone who can hear millions of subtle sounds, and whose eyes can see subtle beings. Its philosophy involves hearing, understanding and seeing. The distribution of the meat cooked in the cauldron among the spirits is also among the blacksmith's duties.

In a word, the blacksmith, who is at the top of the hierarchy of spirits, is the director who manages the candidate's becoming a shaman.

The Shamanic phenomenon of death and resurrection, which dominates Middle Eastern mythology, is also observed in the well-known myth of Osiris. Indeed, the main conclusion drawn from this much-researched mythological event is that Isis, who reassembled and revived the fragmented body of Osiris, took on the task of revival, just like the blacksmith. Revival and re-creation occupy an important place in the blacksmith cult.

Although the Altai Shamans consider themselves spiritual sons of Bay Ülgen and the Yakut Shamans consider themselves spiritual sons of Ulu To-yon, the blacksmith plays an important role in their selection and initiation as Shamans. In the Yakut Shamanic texts, the name of the underground spirit, who is considered the god of blacksmiths, is K1-day BakS1 or K1day BakS1 Uus. However, in the traditional beliefs of the Yakuts

<sup>32</sup> Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, p. 103

<sup>33</sup> Bayat F., *op. cit.*, pp. 103-104



it is also known that Elley, who is considered an ancestor, was the first blacksmith, the first potter, and the first founder of the kımız banner, ısıah.

In shamanic literature, he is known as Kıday Baksı, the protector of blacksmiths and the art of blacksmithing. This indicates his high status. Indeed, the title Kıday confirms this. Kıday generally derives from the word kut/kud and encompasses the meanings of spirit and happiness. The second component of Keli-men, ay, is most likely a remnant of the ancient Moon God belief. The word Baksı/Bakşı (bagşı in Mongolian) means teacher, instructor, magician, or physician.

V. Butanaev compares the word Kıday with the Khakas word hı-dat ızı, meaning skilled master, and reports that the Yakuts' Kıday/Kıtay Baksı derives from the same root.<sup>34</sup> Indicative of the blacksmith's high status.

One of them is the blacksmith, known as Tuvalıların dargan (Moğolcada darhan) or us dar-gan, Teleütlerin ustaz, Hakasların temir ızı, and Yakutların us demele-ridir. All of this proves that blacksmith derives from the root us, which in Turkish means master, mind, knowledgeable, etc. In this context, Kıday Baksı Uus could also mean teacher, master, first master, knowledgeable person.

In Yakut mythology, Kıday Baksı is the patron, master, and ancestor of blacksmiths. It is even thought that Kıday Baksı is the leader of one of the communities of spirits living underground. According to some information, Kıday Baksı is also known as the patron, teacher, and ancestor of shamans and rulers. Because he is underground, Kıday Baksı is the guardian of the secret treasure and the source of secret knowledge. In heroic epics, heroes who lose their strength during or after battle descend to his side, lie down on his blacksmith's anvil, and find new strength and power. Furthermore, in Yakut heroic epics (Yakut olonho), the permanent attribute phrase of Kıday Baksı is "ancestor of blacksmiths, rulers, and khans."

According to Yakut shamans, there are several patrons of blacksmithing.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, if the patron of blacksmiths was Kıday Baksı Uus, the others are also patrons of this or other blacksmithing tools. Among the patron deities of blacksmiths are "Ötüye Kısıtık iççite, suge biileeççi uu-hu ongoroççu, salır samaaççı uuhu ongoroççu Tus-tas Toyon" (=The spirit of the hammer, the creator of blacksmiths, the maker of steel and the filler of cauldrons), "Leke Bı-pah Bıdınatın kurduk bıdınaalaah süüsteeh Tyolan Moguruos Toyon" (=The great chieftain with a mole on his forehead), etc.

The fact that Kıday Baksı made all the weapons and clothing of the warriors may be evidence that he also protected his heroes. In Turkish mythology, the blacksmith and the shaman are often the same person. (Börteçine, who led the Turks out of Ergenekon

<sup>34</sup> Butanaev V. Ya., "O Yakutsko-Hakaskih Leksiçeskih Paralelyah", Problemy Rekonstruktsiy i Et-nografii, Novosibirsk, 1984, p. 120

<sup>35</sup> Hudyakov I. A., Brief Description, p. 415

(like.) In fact, the Yakuts believed that the blacksmith and the shaman came from the same nest (in Yakut, *us da oyun bir uyalah*).<sup>36</sup> For this reason, Kıday Baksı sends illness to the candidate he wishes to entrust with the blacksmithing task (this candidate is also of blacksmith lineage). After the candidate, with the shaman's help, sacrifices a black ox to Kıday Baksı, he begins the art of blacksmithing.<sup>37</sup> Like the shaman's illness, the blacksmith's illness is also sent by the spirits as a symbol of selection for the future blacksmith. It is impossible for the candidate chosen as blacksmith to refuse the task, just as in shamanism. Ultimately, in both cultures, there is a passive structure, meaning that both the shaman and the blacksmith are formed by force rather than by their own efforts. Another issue is that, just as in shamanism, blacksmiths can be either male or female. Indeed, in the Shor epic *Ak Tolay*,<sup>38</sup> there are references to female blacksmiths.

In the Karaçay-Balkar belief system, there is a mythological being closely related to Kıday Baksı in terms of both function and name. A legend collected from among the Balkar Turks tells that one day a man finds a golden jug (cup) in the mountains and takes it home. That same night, the man's right side withered, and in a dream, a white-haired old man said to him in a mysterious voice, "I am Kıden, the goldsmith. If you do not want yourself and your relatives to die, put the golden jug back where you found it." The next morning, as soon as the man puts the golden jug back where he found it, he recovers.<sup>39</sup> Both mythological beings are associated with the underworld, both are smiths, and finally, Kıden and Kıday are names derived from the root *kıd/kut*. Among the Kazakhs, who preserve shamanism in this or other ways, the Turks' *ata-ba*. Some beliefs related to the art of blacksmithing and the blacksmith cult remain. According to *azakh* belief, the spirit of *Al* fears the blacksmith: *A. İnan* observed that among the *Argun* and *urğay-Kipçak* tribes of the Kazakhs, a man representing the blacksmith struck iron with a hammer beside the woman in labour. Similarly, the *Kyrgyz* also invite the blacksmith to the *yurt* (home) at the time of birth, and the blacksmith begins to hammer iron so that the birth will be easy. The belief that evil spirits fear iron is also very widespread among other Turkic tribes.

This phenomenon (1) elevates the blacksmith to the level of a birth guardian. Most importantly, it emphasises that the blacksmith, like the shaman (2), can control evil spirits.

In Turkish shamanic conceptions (as well as in Mongolian shamanism), the art of blacksmithing appears to be related to the underworld. In fact, the depiction of *Erlik Hari's* underworld recalls attributes specific to blacksmiths (for example, *Erlik's* palace being made of black iron, the walls surrounding the palace

<sup>36</sup> *İnan A., Articles and Studies, vol 2, Ankara, 1991, p. 231*

<sup>37</sup> *Ksenofontov G. V., Shamanism, pp. 101–102*

<sup>38</sup> *Chudoyakov A. I., Studies of the Shorsky Epic, Kemerovo, 1995, p. 72*

<sup>39</sup> *Curtubayev M. Ç., Ancient Beliefs of the Balkars and Karachays, Nalchik, 1991, p. 21*

<sup>40</sup> *İnan A., Articles, p. 231*

The fact that it is made of black iron, the depiction of Erlik's daughters with iron nails and iron feet, etc., identifies the blacksmith with the underworld.

In the mythological texts of the Altai, Erlik, the ruler of the underworld and the first shaman, is also the first blacksmith and is known as the patron of blacksmiths. In the legends of the Shors, Erlik is also the protector of blacksmiths. Furthermore, Erlik's sons also appear in connection with iron. Indeed, the names of Erlik's sons are interesting in this regard: Temir Kan, Kees Kara (Black Cast Iron), Jalbak Temir Darindu (The One with the Wide Iron Shovel), etc. All of this proves that the spirits of the underworld rule over fire and iron.

According to the beliefs of the Altai-Sayan Turks, Erlik Khan was also the first blacksmith. Erlik's role as the first blacksmith is evident in the creation myth. Erlik creates a hammer, bellows, and an anvil to make people who will serve him in the underworld. He heats the iron. He strikes the anvil with the hammer and from it emerge demons (evil spirits), wild boars, bears, frogs, etc.<sup>41</sup> Of course, the myth shows Erlik's evil, not blacksmithing, because it depicts him turning from good to evil and descending from heaven to the underworld. However, this is sufficient to present this terrifying death spirit of Altai Shamanism as the first creator of the blacksmithing profession. In Turkish mythology, blacksmithing is an art connected to the underworld. It should be noted that in Greek mythology, the workshop of the blacksmith (Hephaistos), son of Zeus, is also underground.

In the shamanic texts of the Teleuts, Kagır Khan is one of the 27 spirits who know the secret of the blacksmithing craft and serves as the gatekeeper at Ülgen's door.<sup>42</sup> This indicates that, regardless of blacksmithing being under the control of the spirits of the underworld, it also falls within the domain of the celestial spirits.

In Yakut Shamanic texts, the patron of blacksmiths and the ruler of the underworld are separate individuals. Although Arsan Duolay is the ruler of the underworld, the independent blacksmiths and, consequently, the patron of the Shamans, Kıday Baksı, is also a powerful spirit of the underworld. Blacksmiths are one of the noble families living underground, and Kıday Baksı is their leader. According to Yakut belief, the spirit (kut) of the man chosen as a Shaman is brought to the underworld and placed in the iron cradle next to Kıday Baksı. Elderly women, known as northern or underworld women, nurse the Shaman candidate for three years before giving him to Kıday Baksı. Kıday Baksı strengthens and trains the spirit (kut) of the good and powerful shaman in the fire.<sup>43</sup> All this demonstrates that blacksmithing has been an art of creation, formation and establishment since its very inception, that is, since its existence. In short, the blacksmith has assumed the role of the god who kills and revives in shaman mythology.

<sup>41</sup> Verbitskiy V. T., *The Altay Peoples*, p. 122

<sup>42</sup> Direnkov N. P., *Materials on Shamanism among the Teleuts*, p. 133

<sup>43</sup> See Sagalayev A. M., *Ural-Altai Mythology. Symbol and Archetype*, Novosibirsk, 1991, p. 49

In some Yakut shaman legends, the blacksmith is replaced by a bird mother with an iron beak, iron claws, and a long tail. In shaman folklore, all bird mothers resemble each other. This mother bird, just like the blacksmith, tears apart the candidate's body and distributes it to the evil spirits that bring illness and death. If the chopped meat is distributed to all the spirits, the shaman succeeds in healing the patient. Then the mother bird reforms the bones with flesh and revives the candidate. As seen in shaman legends, the candidate sees the dismemberment of his body with his own eyes.<sup>44</sup>

The blacksmith and the shaman played significant roles in the organisation of the tribe and tribal federation, which was not limited solely to economic conditions or lifestyle. The blacksmith and shaman duo played important roles in the belief system and the structure based on this system. Indeed, the fact that the title of *tarkan*, the leader of the tribe and later of tribal unions, appears in most sources as "blacksmith *tarkan*" actually indicates that the word *tarkan* meant blacksmith in Old Bulgarian, revealing the prevalence of the blacksmith cult and its important place in the socio-economic structure.

The blacksmith *tarkan* was the leader who held both the worldly and religious administration of the tribe in its early days. Over time, the religious function of the *tarkan* receded into the background, and he retained only the role of leader of the tribal union. Among the Yakuts, the form "darkan" The term "tarkan" used in the text does not refer to the blacksmith himself, but is a title given to his wife. Like the blacksmith, his wife was also considered part of the hidden world and was honoured with the title of *tarkan*. It is known that the blacksmith is also called *darkan* in the *Manas Epic*.<sup>45</sup> *Tarkan*, which is actually a title, became the society's wise man and leader during the transition to the patriarchal era. The title was a product of the subsequent period. Over time, the blacksmith increased in importance in social life, and blacksmith *tarkans* underwent a development in state structure with the title "khan". In fact, according to Z. V. Togan, the Khazar and Göktürk khans came from the old blacksmith *tarhans*, but among the tribes, but rulers who established great states.<sup>46</sup>

Concluding the discussion on the role of the blacksmith cult in the fragmentation of the candidate and the transition to the status of shaman, the following conclusion can be reached: Blacksmith Shamans or blacksmithing and shamanism were initially combined in the division of labour within society, but over time these two professions became separate. However, the myth that the shaman and the blacksmith came from the same nest is known as a hereditary element from the times when these professions formed a unified whole.

as a remnant of times when they formed a whole.

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<sup>44</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism*, pp. 50-51

<sup>45</sup> See: İnan A., *Articles*, p. 231

<sup>46</sup> Togan Z. V., *Introduction to General Turkish History*, Istanbul, 1981, p. 52

The role of the blacksmith in becoming a shaman occupies an important place in the shamanic beliefs of the Yakut and Altai-Sayan Turks. The role of the blacksmith in becoming a shaman has also been established in Central Asian shamanism. Indeed, before attaining Shaman status, Uzbek falbin (Shamans) spend the night in an ancient castle south of Khwarezm to receive the blessing of Prophet David, the patron saint of blacksmiths in Islamic and Christian traditions.<sup>47</sup> According to belief, this castle is where David practised blacksmithing. As with the Yakuts, in Central Asia, not only shamans but also blacksmiths honoured David, regarded him as the patron of their craft, and began their work by saying, "Hazreti Davud Aleyhüsselam" (Peace be upon David).

In short, the blacksmith's main task in the ritual of death and rebirth is to prepare the candidate for the profession of shamanism. Taking into account the information provided in the above sections, shamanism, which is considered to be the acquisition of a new status, can be described as follows:

- 1- Shamanic illness or the candidate's suffering 7 stages of preparation.
- 2- Ritual death (the dismemberment of the body) and the erasure of the past life.
- 3- Resurrection (rebirth process) 7 transition to a new status. The transition process, which is the main element of shamanism, appears as follows:

Code	Illness	Death	Rebirth Emergence as a
Explanation	Preparation stage	Erasure of past lives	shaman

#### 4. 4. Mental Awakening

With the active contribution of the blacksmith, after the shaman is dismembered and reborn, a new life begins that could be called mental awakening. After the process of mental awakening, the shaman becomes the true bearer of the community's mythology and knowledge. All the sacred secret knowledge obtained through ritual becomes the community's tradition, mythology, and objects that adorn the shaman's repertoire. If we perceive mental awakening as a rite of passage, we encounter the following two codes.

Code 1: Renewal through fragmentation  
Rite of Passage .Pathological death and  
resurrection Code: Mental opening

<sup>47</sup> See Basilov V., *Shamanism Among the Peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan*, Moscow, 1992

The second code is present in all Turkish Shamanism. This is the shaman's encounter with the spirits of the underworld and, in most cases, his attainment of the secret of shamanism after being torn apart and eaten by evil spirits. In Yakut shaman legends, the ancestor shaman's ascension to the heavens, passing through seven stops three times and finally reaching the realm of light at the last stop, is a symbolic interpretation of mental enlightenment. The shaman's fragmentation is not always the case. In Yakut shamanic belief, weak and minor shamans are not subjected to bodily fragmentation. However, both minor and major shamans cannot practise this art without mental awakening. The only difference is that mental awakening is stronger in shamans who have been fragmented and re-created.

Mental opening occurs after phenomena such as crisis, fragmentation, and renewal. As

Campbell writes, when properly nourished, the shamanic crisis sharpens and refines the adult's intellect, giving them greater physical endurance and spiritual vitality than the normal members of the community. Crisis, therefore, has the value of transitioning to a higher state.<sup>49</sup> In general, the candidate's acceptance of the role of shaman can be summarised as follows:

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1- Agony = shamanic illness manifested as physical pain, fainting, seeing ghosts, losing consciousness, irritability, nervousness, tremors, etc., which is a period of suffering.

2- Going through hell = accepting the task, undergoing discipline, undergoing training, mental awakening and finally becoming a shaman, serving the community.

It is because the shaman is exposed to mental expansion that he possesses extensive knowledge about the world. However, those with such status are those who can properly evaluate the past, present and future, and most importantly, those who can direct the future. However, the shaman's mental opening is in the context of esoteric knowledge and is not acquired, but given. However, the stronger the mental opening, the more the shaman becomes distant and alienated from society.

In fragmentation and renewal, the piercing of the shaman's ears, the piercing of his body with needles, and the covering of his bones with new flesh are symbols that point to mental expansion. Indeed, the formula "To hear is to know" is the fundamental principle of mental opening. In Central Asian Shamanism, suckling milk from the breasts of fairies or sexual intercourse signify obtaining secret knowledge and the mind reaching a new dimension.

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<sup>48</sup> Shaman Legends, pp. 19–20

<sup>49</sup> Campbell J., *Primitive Mythology*, Ankara, 1992, p. 273

<sup>50</sup> Similarly observed in Turkish Sufi orders.

This means that the Shaman, who has reached a new dimension, possesses extraordinary vision. This is why the Shaman, who performs shamanism with his eyes bound, sees everything with his third eye. "He is blind among people, but he sees other things."<sup>51</sup>

The opening of the eyes and ears, which occupies a significant place in shamanic folklore, is a form of spiritual awakening. The third eye, granted to the shaman by the spirits, assists the shaman in perceiving the otherworld. Indeed, the material world is perceived through the physical eye.

When seen, the shaman's third eye is closed; during the shamanic trance, the shaman's physical eyes close, and the third eye that sees the third eye opens. The shaman's ears, opened by the spirits, also hear the spirits during the trance, understand the rustling of plants and what the birds want to say. The inner hearing opened during the trance, or the shaman's internal sensory organ, is normally closed.

Furthermore, among the Nanai people of Siberia, the shaman's trance ceremony is called *sa-ma niheli*, meaning "the shaman opens, opens his mouth, reads like a shaman," which proves that mental opening is equivalent to attaining shaman status.

The time of fragmentation The shaman counts the names of the bones in a secret language taught to him by the spirits. Another ability the shaman acquires during mental opening is learning the shamanic language, which is a secret language. Only candidates who have undergone the process of mental awakening know the secret language of Shamans and use this secret language throughout their lives during shamanic rituals. In this respect, the Shaman speaks the language of spirits with spirits, plants with plants, birds with birds, and animals with animals. According to the mythological belief of the Shaman, all beings have their own languages, and it is the Shaman's job to know these languages.

's duty is to know these languages. It is clear from shamanic rumours that no one else can know the secret language.

We learn from the shamans themselves that such an attitude, as if one knew this language, would be detrimental to society. Indeed, to prevent a disaster that had struck a village, an elderly villager said, "I know the language of the mountain spirit," cooked the blood, heart, and kidneys of the slaughtered white rams, and placed them on a wooden table. Everyone bowed their heads as they watched the smoke rising from the meat. The elderly villager, who presided over the ritual, began to speak in the language of the mountain spirit: "I offer you the blood and smoke from the meat as a sacrifice. Accept the rams as a sacrifice, help our people, save them from calamity." However, the old man, who did not know the secret language well enough, sacrificed the people of the village to the mountain spirit instead of the rams. Soon after, all the people of the village die.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Sagalaev A. M., Oktyabrskaya I. V., *Traditional Worldview, Sign and Ritual*, p. 102

<sup>52</sup> A. M., Sagalaev, I. V., Oktyabrskaya, *Traditional Worldview, Sign and Ritual*, p. 128

In the philosophy of belief, if a period begins in which new generations forget the secret knowledge of society and, along with it, the sacred names and sacred events, society will be subjected to the attack of ancestors and spirits. To prevent this, those who are aware of the problem prepare someone who can take precautions. That person, according to the common belief of the society, is the Shaman.

#### 4. 5. The Shaman's Technique of Self-Transference - Ecstasy

Mental opening enables the Shaman to reach a state of ecstasy (trance), which is the Shaman's most essential technique. Therefore, the trance technique, also known as ecstasy or rapture, is the most important element that defines the inner world of Shamanism. Individually, the Shaman acquires the trance technique as a result of his own instinctive experiences. The ecstasy technique of shamans, like other forms of ecstasy, has no specific path, rule, or form. It is more accurate to consider the shaman's ecstasy as an individual experience.

Derived from the Greek word *ekstasis*, meaning to be outside or to migrate...

This term, which means 'to trance', belongs to people who can transport their spirit to other worlds. It is a kind of ability to carry the spirit to other worlds, and at the same time, it is a remedy for depression. In this context, the shaman's trance exhibits a different dimension from mystical and prophetic trances. Indeed, during trance, the shaman's spirit ascends to the upper realm and descends to the underworld. The trance state is achieved through long initiatory work. Because the shaman can control his spirit during trance, he can bring his spirit back from one world to another at will.

Scientists identify three types of trance:<sup>53</sup>

- 1- Shamanic trance
- 2- Prophetic trance
- 3- Mystical trance

Only one type of trance is personally valid, meaning that shamans cannot possess mystical trance, just as mystics are unfamiliar with shamanic trance techniques. Shamanic trance differs from prophetic or mystical trance. Indeed, the prophet speaks in the name of God or with the voice of God, while mystical trance manifests the presence of a divine power. In mystical trance, the divine experience or consciousness of God occurs in two ways: emotionally or intuitively. However, trance...

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<sup>53</sup> Wilson J. B., Trance States,

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The psychological response is that, by focusing on any subject, attention is withdrawn from the mind and the nervous system itself is cut off from physical logical input.

Among all trance techniques, the shamanic trance is the oldest known trance and the most effective form of ecstasy. During the trance, the shaman's spirit leaves the body and travels to its origin: the heavens or the underworld. This type of trance is possible after a series of trials and exercises. In the trance process, which is a spiritual experience, the shaman determines where the patient's stolen spirit is, the location of a dead spirit, and the daily transformation. Shamanic trance is an individual experience, even within the shaman himself. However, it exhibits universality in terms of prevalence and trance techniques. The shaman's trance technique has largely not been adopted by religion and has remained specific to shamanism.

When transitioning to another dimension, the shaman enters an altered state of consciousness similar to hypnosis. Throughout this state, known as trance, the shaman completely controls himself. In fact, the Shaman's seemingly uncontrolled movements and speech during ecstasy are the control of uncontrollability. He makes subtle and skilful changes that affect the physical world, captures spirits, controls them, communicates with them, controls beings in the other world, etc. To accomplish all this, the Shaman creates a hypnotic effect on the audience and listeners. With the shaman's help, the audience is abstracted from the real world and journeys into a dreamlike realm. Just as the shaman uses the trance technique to make the desired change with his instinctive power, the audience...

Image 7. 1 A photograph taken in 191 showing a Yakut shaman summoning his helper spirits to enter a trance state (from Hoppal's book).



By inducing the patient into a state of trance through hypnosis, which is a selective method, the shaman achieves a collective trance, so to speak.

Trance is a phenomenon that the shaman achieves only during ritual performances. Thus, the shaman's trance comes from the philosophical dimension of shamanism. Indeed, no shaman who does not enter a trance state can perform shamanism in the other world. It is clear that the shaman's trance state is an experience of consciousness, a display of willpower. The shaman considers the journey he makes in a trance to be contact with spirits or a merging of worlds. Entering the realm of spirits, the shaman actually becomes one of them, that is, he becomes incorporeal, at least temporarily. Healing and knowing the future also begin after the shaman has brought himself to a state of trance.

Image 8. The Tafalar female shaman, spinning while playing the drum, is entering a trance state.



The trance state occurs after the shaman's mental opening and is an important stage in the shamanic journey. Indeed, it can be said that shamanism as a cultural element consists of trance consciousness.

Another noteworthy phenomenon is the shaman's ability to adjust the drum rhythm and dance level to enter a trance state. Indeed, the ability to perform shamanic rituals and the skill of drumming given to the shaman after mental awakening are based on a philosophical foundation. The shaman begins to play the drum in a turtle rhythm to induce trance during the shamanic ritual performed within the circle, which symbolises immortality and a cyclical life. This harmonises the earth's energies, and the shaman completes the circle by travelling from south to west, north, and east, returning to the south. After this, he moves to the tiger rhythm by combining the powers of the sky and the earth and descends in a straight line from the south to the north. To ascend to the sky again, the shaman removes the obstacles on the path, moving from north to west, then east, and back to the south. Meanwhile, the rhythm of the drum is transferred to the fishing bird. The trance begins with the closing of the circle.

This ink and systematic trance technique is the main element that distinguishes the Shaman from mystical trances and prophetic trances.

## 5. 1. The Phenomenon of Passive and Active Shamanism ( )

Being called to the role of SHAMAN and having this ability forcibly accepted by the chosen candidate should be described as passive shamanism. In this case, the shaman is passive rather than active. When Turkish shamanism is considered as a whole, it falls into the category of passive shamanism. In contrast, in the shamanism of the Native Americans, we encounter a different phenomenon, where individuals voluntarily accept the role of shaman or are chosen by the spirits. In this case, the shaman is the agent. Based on scientific literature, we can summarise this form of selection, referred to as active, as follows: To become a shaman, Native Americans retreat to secluded places and fast, eat debilitating foods to conquer their desires, bathe daily, rub fragrant medicines on their bodies, inflict physical pain on themselves, abstain from sexual relations, etc., cleansing themselves both externally and internally.<sup>3</sup> Those who are active shamans of this type are more commonly known as medicine men.

The transition to the status of Shaman, which we describe as passive and active Shamanism, primarily reflects the Shamanic worldview of the Turks and Native Americans. Just as passive calling and compulsory acceptance of duties exist in Native American Shamanism, in Turkish Shamanism there are those who inherit Shamanism through lineage, as well as those who voluntarily learn and embrace it.

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<sup>1</sup> For further information, see Goldenweiser, *Early Civilisation*, London, 1921, p. 216; Sternberg L.Ya., *Izbrannichestvo v Religii*, p. 55; Bogoraz V., "K Voprosu o Grafičeskom Metode Analiza Elementov Etnografi", *Etnografiya*, Kniga 5, Moscow, 1928, p. 9

<sup>2</sup> See Maddah, *The Medecin-man. A Sociological Study of the Character and Evaluation of Shamanism*, New York, 1923, pp. 46–50; Dixon, K., "Some Aspects of the American Shaman", *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 21, 1908, p. 4; Benedict K. F., "The Vision in Plain Culture", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 1922, pp. 2-7

<sup>3</sup> The Native Americans' methods of conquering the self are similar to the Turkish dervishes' method of conquering the self through asceticism.

are remarkably similar.

In active shamanism, there is no fundamental shamanic concept such as fragmentation, renewal, and rebirth. We encounter this type of shamanism in two memoirs compiled by G. Ksenofontov.<sup>4</sup> As can be understood, active shamanism emerged among the Turks during periods when shamanism had weakened. None of the legends about the old Shamans mention the concept of active Shamanism. In fact, as seen in these two accounts, two Yakuts who wanted to become Shamans could not become Shamans in the end. They are forced to content themselves with reciting a few shamanic prayers, acquiring very weak spirits as helpers, and sometimes curing insignificant illnesses. The main reason for this is that, according to the shamanic belief system, the bodies of active shamans must not be dismembered. According to the belief of passive shamanic servants, a shaman who is not fragmented and renewed is a very weak shaman and only deals with very minor matters. This is why Turkish shamanism is passive shamanism.

The transformation of Shamanism into Turkish folk Sufism in the evolution of civilisational elements also sheds light on another issue. The physical hardships endured by the dervish on the path to spiritual perfection in Turkish folk Sufism, his asceticism, his elimination of his own "self" and union with "Him", the fact that the person chosen by the spirits in all cases did not want to become a shaman, and the torment inflicted on him by the spirits, coincide with the information we have obtained from ethnographic literature. The difference lies solely in the transition to the new status being passive and submissive in Shamanism, and active and assertive in folk Sufism. The active nature of the Sufi's transition to the new status is related to the nature of Islamic culture. Similarly, the passivity of the Shaman's initiation ceremony stems from the characteristics of this cultural pact.

In Turkish shamanism, there is also a category of shamans who exhibit a state between passive and active phenomena. According to information provided by A. Popov, these types of shamans, who are not particularly respected by society, are shamans who derive their abilities from spirits called yör/üör and are of no benefit to society. Yör are the spirits of the dead that the earth does not accept, which over time turn into cruel spirits that roam the middle world and make people shamans by giving them *meneriyer* (a kind of nervous disorder) to those they like. Since the body of a shaman who derives his abilities from yör or üör is not torn apart and eaten, it is not subject to change. This is why

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<sup>4</sup> See Ksenofontov G. V., *Legends and Tales*, 1928

<sup>5</sup> See Bayat F., "The Role of Shamanism in the Formation of Anatolian Folk Sufism", *Proceedings of the International Congress on Anatolian Beliefs*, 23-28 October 2000, Ürgüp/Nevşehir, Ankara, 2001

<sup>6</sup> Potanin G. N., *Ocherki Severozapadnoy Mongoli*, vol. 4, St. Petersburg, 1883, p. 57; Katanov N., "The Dialect of the Uryanhaytsev, Abakanskiy Tatar and Karatasov", *Examples of Folk Literature of the Turkic Tribes*, ed. v. Radlov, vol. 9, St. Petersburg, 1907, p. 16; Maynagashov S., "Predstavlenie o Zagrobnom Mire u Turetskikh Plemyon Minusinkogo Kraya", *Zhivaya Starina*, 1915, p. 289; Anokhin V., *Materialy po Shamanstvu*, p. 108

<sup>7</sup> Popov A. A., *The Acquisition of the "Shamanic Gift"*, p. 292

This type of shaman does not have a drum or shamanic clothing. During their shamanic trance, they use a stick called a *calbır*, made of wood. These shamans also do not have *oybon* or *ki-eliler*, and they treat the sick only by jumping over them. Accordingly, they are called Shamans whose healing power is in their feet. However, regardless of the circumstances, Shamans who derive their abilities from the earth also fall under the category of passive Shamanism.

## 5.2. Resignation from the Role of Shaman or Withdrawal of Shamanic Abilities

Passive shamanism is compulsory, so it is almost impossible for the candidate to back out. Since the call is a destiny, it must be fulfilled; otherwise, the candidate will die. However, shamanic memoirs and rumours also report that there is a way to escape the duty or turn down the call.

There is also the matter of the spirits revoking the call to the shamanic role. Based on the information provided by N. Drenkova, it can be said that the candidate chosen for the role may not necessarily become a shaman. When it is time for the spirits to be divided and renewed, if the candidate's bones are counted and the bone that is the sign of shamanism is not found, it is proven that the selection was incorrect, that the spirits were mistaken, and that the candidate cannot become a shaman. However, it is impossible to understand this exceptional mistake by the spirits, who are generally never wrong in their selection. When it is understood that the selection was incorrect, the candidate recovers from the Shaman's illness and returns to his old life.

Another very rare occurrence relates to there being too many bones at the time of being torn apart and eaten. If it is found that there are more bones than necessary, the candidate is sent back without becoming a shaman. This information shows that counting the bones at the time of the candidate's dismemberment and finding that there are (too many) bones is contrary to the essential requirements for becoming a shaman. It is highly probable that this error arose from the collectors' failure to understand the shaman narrative or from the source person's misinformation.

A. Popov describes the revocation of the shamanic office and the weakening of the secret power as follows: The person called to the shamanic office must secretly approach the washing of his deceased close relative, a woman, and touch the ribs of the deceased in a manner invisible to others.<sup>9</sup> When this happens, the spirits revoke the call given to the candidate. Most likely, what is understood from this legend is that the candidate's mundar-

<sup>8</sup> Dyrenkova N. P., *Poluchenie Shamanskogo Dara*, pp. 274-275

<sup>9</sup> Popov A. A., *The Acquisition of the "Shamanic Gift"*, p. 289

! Shamans are grouped into three categories—strong, medium, and weak—and these are grouped into a top-

It is known that they are responsible for solving the current problems of the community. In addition to these three categories, there are also evil Shamans who harm society. These can be powerful or weak. To take back the power of the evil Shamans, they tie their arms and force the woman to pass over their heads.

and force the woman to pass over his head. When this is done, the evil shaman's ability and power are taken away.

When this happens, the evil shaman's abilities and power are taken away. As can be understood from this very rare event, the woman plays an important role in taking back the task, just as she does in turning down the shaman's call. This is proof of how much the patriarchal society's view of women has changed.

It is said that women's belongings are beneficial for the island afflicted by the Shaman disease. Indeed, spirits do not approach the island where women's clothing is placed or where women's belongings are placed under the place where they lie. Furthermore, in Altai folklore, it is seen that women's items can even weaken the most powerful Shaman: During the time of the Oirats' rule in Altai, there was a very powerful Shaman named Toolok. The Mongols could not kill this Shaman. His severed head would immediately return to its place. At that moment, a woman said to the Mongol soldiers: If you want to see the shaman's head separated from his body, put soiled women's underwear on his head. The soldiers killed the woman without a moment's hesitation. Then they took the woman's blood-stained underwear and put it on Toolok's head. This time, the shaman's severed head fell from his body, and the soldiers dispersed with joy.

'severed head finally falls from his body, and the soldiers disperse joyfully-

The role of women in the withdrawal of the task or the removal of the shamanic ability is a symbolic reflection of the transfer of female shamanic authority to male shamans as a result of changes in the socio-economic level. In the socio-economic sphere, male dominance transformed the structure of society through the processing of fire, iron and similar metals, which were sources of power in matriarchy. Women, who were the owners of the hearth and therefore the heads of the family, ceded their place to men, particularly with the development of ironworking. The cult of ironworking

facilitated the development of shamanism. Indeed, the magical power of blacksmiths, who were connected to the underworld, was shared with male shamans, and female shamans gradually lost their power and importance. Nevertheless, in later compilations, narratives about very powerful female Shamans should be regarded as remnants of the old social structure.

<sup>10</sup> Drenkov N. P., *Poluchenie Shamanskogo Dara*, p. 277

<sup>11</sup> Lvova E. L., Oktyabrskaya I. V., Sagalaev A. M., Usmanova M. S., *Traditional Worldview of the Southern Siberian Peoples, Space and Time*. Veşçnyy Mir, Novosibirsk, 1988, p. 149

From all this, it is clear that the hereditary aspect of Shamanism is the inability to refuse the task. Refusing the task or withdrawing the call is nothing more than the community's attempt to find an answer to this painful and necessary question. The resulting memorates also serve to alleviate this painful acceptance ritual, at least to a small extent.



## THE SHAMAN'S TRAINING PERIOD AND THE SHAMAN'S CALL

## 6. 1. Training at the Level of Trance and Traditions

Since SHAMANISM is a trance technique, there is no school or educational institution that teaches this art or profession. When we speak of shamanic training, it should be understood in the general sense as the education the shaman receives in the spirit world; the elder shaman's initiation of the candidate (a kind of permission to practise shamanism) is nothing more than the physical repetition of what is learned through spiritual means. From this perspective, Turkish shamanism exhibits a special phenomenon. Certain scientific literature states that the closest phenomenon to Turkish shamanism is found in the shamanic traditions of other Siberian peoples; the different aspects we observe prove that Turkish shamanism has acquired a national sensitivity. Indeed, if an apprentice receives training from an elder shaman for 20 years or more, Selkup shamans and Nganasan shamans also receive additional training.

· receive training from an elderly shaman, while Selkup Shamans and Nganasan Shamans also undergo additional training. 1 The fact that Tuva Shamans or other Altai-Sayan Shamans undergo a 3, 7, or 9-day kamlik ceremony under the guidance of an elderly shaman should actually be understood as the shaman's school of training.

According to the shamanic tradition, the science and knowledge that understands the inner power of objects cannot be acquired through education (especially school education). It can only be attained by experiencing spiritual states. This is what the shaman learns from the spirits. The

candidate is taken to the world of spirits not to know, but to learn. Knowing occurs when the candidate begins their duties as a shaman. From this perspective, education plays an important role in the transition to shaman status.

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<sup>1</sup> See Prokofyeva E. O., "Material on the Shamanism of the Selkups", Problems of the History of the Social Consciousness of the Aborigines of Siberia, Leningrad, 1981, p. 46; Homič L. V., "Shamanism among the Nenets", Problems of the History of the Social Consciousness of the Aborigines of Siberia, Leningrad, 1981, pp. 10-13; Gračeva G. N., "Shamanism among the Nganas Consciousness of the Aborigines of Siberia, Leningrad, 1981, pp. 10-13; Gracheva G. N., "Shamanism among the Nganasans", Problems in the History of the Social Consciousness of the Aborigines of Siberia, Leningrad, 1981, p. 77; Dyakonova V. P., "Tuvan Shamans and Their Social Role in Society", Problems of the History of the Social Consciousness of the Aborigines of Siberia, Leningrad, 1981, p. 136; Potapov L. P., "Essays on the Folk Life of the Tuvins", Moscow, 1969, p. 349

Thus, at the end of the educational process, the shaman has travelled a path from learning to knowing. In the formula "the Shaman is the knower, the candidate is the learner," we encounter two types of educational codes. One concerns the Shaman's own education, while the other concerns the Shaman's education of society. While the first type of education is sufficiently covered in the Shaman's legends and myths, the second type of education can only be addressed by looking at what the Shaman recounts during the initiation process.

Shamanic training actually begins during the disintegration process. The completion of this training and the Shaman's transformation from learner to knower is referred to as the Shaman's removal or the Shaman's revival. According to what an elderly shaman told G. Ksenofontov, when the time comes for the candidate to be revived, a group consisting of innocent, pure boys and girls performs the ceremony of removing (reviving) the shaman. Note: According to Shamanic lore, the removal of the Shaman is only performed in spring and autumn. In fact, an elderly Shaman invited for this purpose will say that the revival of the candidate, in other words, the granting of permission to practise Shamanism, should be left until spring or autumn.

The removal of the Usuyu or Shaman, as the education system is known, involves the candidate learning Shaman techniques under the guidance of an elderly Shaman. The candidate learns the secrets of the Shaman from the spirits. After this, the candidate performs their first shamanic ceremony under the guidance of a master Shaman. G. Potanin ethnographically described this ceremony in the 1870s. For the lifting ceremony, twenty rams are slaughtered, and they eat, drink, and celebrate for nine days. Meanwhile, the elder Shamans perform shamanism in turn. The main element of the first shamanic initiation ceremony is the lifting of the shaman candidate onto a felt mat. The concept of the shaman's lifting originates from this. This ceremony is called usuyu in Yakut, bö belde in Mongolian, and bö degde in Buryat.

We encounter the classical and oldest depiction of the shaman's removal in S. Shashkov's article.<sup>3</sup> On the day the shaman is to be removed, people gather at the designated place, known as the ':

'. Nine trees are planted in three rows at the designated place. These trees are decorated with the skins of nine animals. The candidate sits on a felt rug and waits. The elderly shaman pours cold tarasun ( a liquid substance) over his head several times. The others, holding tree leaves in their hands, stand over the candidate's head and begin to beat him until he trembles. After this, they lift him up from the felt rug and bring him to the previously planted trees. The shaman jumps onto the last tree and repeats this three times, jumping from branch to branch. After this, he sits back down on the felt and sings a prayer song. Once the lifting ceremony is over, the candidate becomes a shaman and acquires the status of a kam.

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<sup>2</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism*, p. 55

<sup>3</sup> Shashkov S., "Shamanism in Siberia-Zapiski IRGO, Vol. 2, 1864, p. 84

After this process, the candidate's relatives *invite* an elderly and powerful shaman to perform a sacrificial ritual to obtain the approval of the spirits and make the candidate a shaman.

If the candidate comes from a poor family, the community will arrange for the sacrificial animal and other necessary items for the ritual at their own expense. Meeting the need in a communal manner demonstrates that shamanism is sustained through social solidarity.

The removal of the shaman is reminiscent of the removal of the khan. Based on the ritual depicted in the *Çjou yıllı-ğı*, known as the selection or removal of the khan, the origin of both the khan and the shaman being seated on felt and circled in the direction of the sun's movement lies in the meanings of exaltation and placing the community's elite in their place. Indeed, just like the khan (those participating in the ceremony learn how many years the candidate for ruler will reign by squeezing his throat), the shaman is first humiliated (physical torment, beatings, dismemberment, etc.) and then exalted. In doing so, they apply the rule that "those above must know what it means to be below."

It is also noteworthy that the shaman, the ruler and the blacksmith cult show similarities in terms of elevation. Indeed, it is known that in ancient times, Turkish rulers were also blacksmiths. Considering that the shaman and the blacksmith originate from the same lineage and that the shaman played a significant role in the patronage of blacksmiths, the shaman-blacksmith-ruler triangle emerges.

The transition phase to Shaman status takes several years. The duration of this period depends on the candidate's ability and lasts at least a few years. Indeed, since one does not generally become a Shaman before the age of twelve, the transition can sometimes take a long time. Another important practice at the time of the Shaman's removal is purification. The Usuyu ritual is notable for the correct application of all its parts. This practice consists of nine stages. However, very few Shamans go through all stages of the purification process. Indeed, while most Shamans go through two or three stages, some go through none. These types of Shamans carry the fear of obligation over consecrated Shamans. Spirits are very serious towards fully consecrated Shamans and punish their mistakes and errors with death. Those who do not go through the nine-stage purification and consecration process do not bear this responsibility.

The rite of consecration and purification begins with water. N. Agapitov and M. Hangelov have described this purification rite extensively in Irkutsk Buryat Shamanism, which is closest to Turkish Shamanism. For this, an invitation is sent...

<sup>4</sup> Temer V., *Symbol and Ritual*, Moscow, 1983, p. 171

<sup>5</sup> Agapitov, N. N., Hangelov, M. N., "Material for the Study of Shamans in Siberia. Shamans in Buryat Irkutskoy Gubernii", *Izvestiya Vostočno-Sibirskogo Otdela Russkogo Geografičeskogo Obščest-va*, Vol. 14, No: 1-2, Irkutsk, 1883, pp. 42-53

The elderly Shaman or ancestral Shaman selects nine young men as his assistants. These young men are the sons of the elderly Shaman. The water with which the candidate will be cleansed is taken in the first spring, sometimes in the first three springs. On the day of the blessing, the selected young men go early in the morning to fetch water from the river. For this, they sprinkle water on the first spring

Upon their return, the young people make brooms from the branches from the tree and place them in the shaman's tent. Other waters are placed on the stove, and various herbs and a few tree barks are thrown into this water. Then pieces are cut from the sacrificial goat's fur, hooves, and horns and placed in the tub. The blood of the slaughtered goat is also poured into this tub. The meat of the sacrificial goat is given to the women, and they prepare food from it. Then the elderly Shaman tells fortunes using the shoulder bone of the sheep. The elderly Shaman gathers the spirits of the candidate's ancestors and offers them wine and milk.

Then the elderly shaman dips the broom in water and strikes the candidate on the back. At this point, nine young men swear an oath to the shaman in unison. This cleansing and lifting process ends with the elderly shaman scattering hair to the helper spirits.

The Alar Buryats wash the Shaman who will perform the first shamanic rite. This ceremony is held in summer, during the birds' first spring or last autumn migration, so that the water warms up. They sit the candidate, who holds a drum, on white felt, and the elders dip the broom in their hands into the water in the bucket and strike the Shaman candidate on the back.

The cleansing ritual begins once a year, sometimes once a month, with the new moon. However, in the ritual of raising the candidate, called "usuyu," there is no cleansing of the candidate with water in Yakut shamanism (·).<sup>7</sup> It is likely that the ritual of cleansing with water also existed in Turkic shamanism. Indeed, elements such as combing the shaman's hair, offering sacrifices, and the candidate being clean at the time of the shaman's removal indicate the existence of purification and blessing with water.

In G. Ksenofontov's compilations, the removal of the Shaman occurs twice a year (early spring) and in late autumn. Based on mythological and ethnographic data, it is possible to say that the basis of this removal ceremony is the idea that the moon is not visible in winter and summer. Indeed, in mythological beliefs, the new moon symbolises early spring, and the full moon symbolises late autumn. Here, it is possible to say that the moon occupies an important place in the training known as becoming a Shaman or, more concretely, the removal of the Shaman. Perhaps the idea that the removal of the Shaman was periodically related to the renewal or rebirth of the new moon and the full moon could also have arisen. Indeed, es-

<sup>6</sup> Potanin G. N., *Ocherki Severo-Zapadnoy Mongoli*, vol. 4, p. 59

<sup>7</sup> Okkan'I., a Yakut shaman and poet, noted in conversations in Baku and Antalya in 1993 that the purification ritual had been forgotten.

In this mythological phenomenon, the moon has assumed the role of the only known deity of all living beings. This confirms the perception of the moon, or the animal mother, as the protective spirit of the Shamans, in the form of a bull. The bull is the earthly symbol of the moon.

The moon, in terms of its changing shape and position in the sky, is known in esoteric knowledge as a symbol of wisdom and mystery. The fact that the shaman's initiation (training) ritual is performed in relation to the moon is based on the moon symbolising the first knowledge. However, over time, some shamanic rituals have strayed from their original roots, making it impossible to fully understand the moon's role in this initiation ritual.

In this context, any individual who undergoes the necessary shamanic training can become either a white or black shaman. The training of a white shaman is carried out under the management and supervision of the *ayn* spirits. However, the training of black shamans is conducted by the *abaasi* spirits. Nevertheless, among the Yakut Turks, where shamanism is hereditary, it is unknown how and where a white shaman (*ayn oyuna*) is trained. Indeed, ethnographic literature, shamanic legends and memorates, shamanic status, fragmentation, ritual death and resurrection, training, *usuyu*, etc., prove that these elements are limited to the black shaman organisation. Shamanistic societies, which provide very little information about white shamans, have been more concerned with the black shaman institute. Sufficient information has been provided above regarding the educational process that black Shaman spirits undergo in the underworld, in the nests of the Shaman tree, which are generally nine in number, alongside the spirits of the *abaas*.

Although the shaman undergoes training (which shamans call initiation) in the shaman tree after ritual death, in the real world he also learns from a master shaman the religious and mythological views of the community and the mystical ways of entering into contact with spirits. In fact, among the Yakuts, the master shaman introduces the candidate to illnesses and teaches them ways to expel these illnesses from the human body. Thus, the shaman's training occurs in two ways. As M. Eliade also wrote, regardless of the method of selection, a shaman is only recognised as such after receiving a two-fold "education":

1- At the level of ecstasy (dreams, trances, etc.)

2- At the level of traditions (shamanic techniques, names and functions of spirits, the mythology and genealogy of the community, secret language, etc.)<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Bayat F., *The Etymology of Turkish Tribal Names in the Religious-Mythological System of the Moon Cult*, Ankara, 2005, pp. 55-60

<sup>9</sup> Eliade M., *Shamanism*, p. 32

The candidate, after dying and being resurrected, ascends to the heavens under the guidance of the ancestral Shaman. There, he passes through three sets of nine stages, learning the secrets of shamanism. After receiving the blessings of the spirits on the ninth level as a shaman, he descends to earth. At each level of the heavens, the shaman acquires specific knowledge. We can see that this method of acquiring knowledge is the same as that of the disciple receiving knowledge from his mentor.

The shaman's spiritual or cosmic journey, his ability to unite worlds settled in various dimensions and different levels of existence, is thanks to the secret knowledge he has acquired. For the shaman, secret science lies within his own inner world. In this context, the shaman differs from all mediums, all esotericists, all philosophers. Inner training is the discovery by the shaman of the source of secret knowledge hidden within man. In the process of fragmentation, the shaman immerses his own spirit in the secret knowledge of the world of spirits, is transformed into a man who transcends meanings and concepts, and is content with this training he has received throughout his life.

At the traditional level, the candidate learns the techniques of shamanism under the tutelage of an elderly shaman—dancing, chanting prayers and songs, performing various theatrical displays, drumming, fortune-telling with a mallet, etc. They also gain experience in making and using Shamanic symbols and equipment such as Shamanic clothing, masks, mirrors, and kam.

Regarding the duration and method of a shaman's training at the level of traditions, N. Pri-puzovii has provided the following information: The elder shaman takes his candidate to the top of a mountain or to a clearing in the forest. There, he dresses the candidate in the shaman's costume, then, to confuse his mind, seats nine chaste boys on one side and nine chaste girls on the other. Then the shaman puts on his own costume and calls on the boys to repeat certain words with him. The old shaman asks the candidate to sincerely give up everything he loves in the world and to dedicate his life to the spirits that may come at his call. The old shaman informs his student about certain evil spirits, how they inflict illness, and teaches him how to subdue these evil spirits. So-

<sup>10</sup> Before becoming a dervish, the Sufi follows the path laid out by the Shaman, passing through four gates and forty stations. Throughout these stages, the dervish inflicts physical suffering upon himself, thereby annihilating his ego to attain unity, a process that bears resemblance to the physical suffering endured by the Shaman. The torments inflicted on the Siberian aborigines (especially the Telengits) by the spirits in order for them to become Shamans (tattooing, binding their hands and arms, tearing their chests, etc.), taboos (abstaining from sexual relations, fasting, not sleeping, etc.) are, in essence, similar to the powerful activities of Turkish Sufism to reach Allah. For further information, see Bayat F., Hoca Ahmet Yesevi ve Halk Sufizminin Bazı Problemleri (Hoca Ahmet Yesevi and Some Problems of Folk Sufism), Baku, 1997, p. 73.

<sup>11</sup> Pri-puzov, N. P., "Information for the Study of Shamanism among the Yakuts of the Yakutsk District", *Izvestiya of the East Siberian Branch of the Russian Geographical Society*, Vol. 15, No. 3-4, Irkutsk, 1885, pp. 64-65

In this ritual, the young shaman skins the sacrificial animal and sprinkles its blood over himself. The meat of the sacrificial animal is eaten by those participating in the ritual.

In ethnographic literature, the ritual-mythological aspects of the transition to Shaman status, known as the removal of the Shaman, are defined as follows: Red and blue ribbons are tied to the tree erected in front of the tent. These ribbons symbolise the Shaman's path to the spirit world. Nine cauldrons are placed to the north of the path to cook sacrificial meat. When everything is ready for the initiation ritual, the candidate and those participating in the ceremony put on their special garments. They then consecrate the shaman's accessories. The Shamans invited to the ritual are responsible for summoning the spirits. The Chief Shaman summons the guardian spirits, and then the candidate repeats the Chief Shaman's words behind him. In this ritual, the nine boys chosen by the Chief Shaman become part of the ceremony. The ritual ends with the sacrifice offering and a feast.

The training of shamans takes place in the same way among the Yakuts. Among the Mongol-Buryat peoples, as mentioned above, the transition to shamanism results in the shaman being seated on felt and lifted into the air. This is also a code in esoteric knowledge that shows the shaman has a separate status.

Based on information from shamanic literature, it is possible to state the following: During their training, shamans learn about the harm that can be caused by the evil spirits of the other world, which harm people and animals, and during the healing process, they act in accordance with the rules of the spirits. This is the most common path in shamanism. Because there is no shaman without evil spirits. The helper spirits are defined as the spiritual teacher of the candidate during their training period. Later, the shaman remains in communication with these spirits throughout their entire activity, constantly calling upon them during their shamanic sessions. The Altai Shamans call these spirits *körmesler*, the Tuva Shamans call them *upsyut*, *uzyut* or *hamnın eezi*, and the Mongols call them *ongon*.

According to W. Radloff, the candidate receives the secrets of the shamanic profession and knowledge of shamanic techniques from his ancestors: with this knowledge, he learns to recite prayers accompanied by drumming, to summon the spirits of ancestral shamans and the spirits of the underworld, and with their help to send his own spirit from his body to the heavens and more often to the underworld.<sup>13</sup> During their training, Shamans thoroughly learn the customs and traditions of the community, their mythological views, as well as Shamanic rituals, Shamanic techniques, etc. They successfully fulfil their duty to teach by conveying what they have learned to the audience during their performances.

According to Plato's philosophy, learning ultimately means remembering. Between the two existences on earth, the soul contemplates ideas: pure and perfect.

<sup>12</sup>

This ceremony is performed in the selection of the *murebbi* among the Tahtacı Alevi of Antalya-Isparta, and the person selected as *murebbi* is lifted onto a white felt and raised into the air while saying Allah, Muhammad, Ali.

C. Şener, *Şamanizm*, İstanbul, 2003, p. 97, provides information about the ritual being repeated three times.<sup>13</sup> See Radloff W., */z Sibirî. Stranitsı Dnevnlka*, Moscow, 1987

shares information of this nature. However, when the spirit reincarnates, it drinks water from the Lethe spring and forgets the knowledge it gained by directly observing the ideas.<sup>14</sup> Shamans also believe in the eternity of the spirit and its passage from body to body, they revive the knowledge their souls learned in the nest before incarnating, the experiences they gained from the realm of ideas after incarnating, and the secret sciences of society, which they keep hidden in their consciousness and through a special structure, which includes returning to their pre-incarnation state during ecstasy.

By undergoing initiation, the shaman brings the knowledge of the otherworld, based on cosmic wisdom, into the real world. Reincarnation through death and resurrection is necessary to regain or restore the secret knowledge that has been forgotten during training. During this training process, the shaman candidate learns the names and functions of spirits, shamanic techniques, the secret language, secret knowledge, and the mythology of the tribe through dreams and trances.

In shamanic literature, there are numerous legends about the first training obtained through embodiment. In both training systems, there are two main shamanic techniques that the shaman learns:

A- Practices related to the trance technique (dreaming, trance state, fainting, etc.).

B- Traditional knowledge (shamanic practices, knowing the names and functions of certain spirits, mythology, the genealogy of the community, the secret language, etc.). IS

However, the shaman's first training is spiritual or mystical training, meaning that while the candidate lies ill, their spirit is trained in the shaman tree, while their body lies motionless in a corner of the tent. Some researchers even attribute the shaman's power solely to an innate shamanic ability, stating that it is performed by spirits.<sup>16</sup>

From a structural semantic perspective, the shaman tree can also be regarded as a tree of destiny that shapes and determines the shaman's life. In Yakut culture, known as *Iyık Mas*, not only shamans but also those interested in magic and witchcraft grow up and receive training in the hollows of this tree, whose top reaches the ninth layer of the sky. The shaman tree is actually another variant of the tree of discerning good and evil. Indeed, in the shaman tree, the candidate grows up through training.

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<sup>14</sup> Eliade M., *The Characteristics of Myths*, p. 160

<sup>15</sup> Polskoy A. E., *Taynye Znaniya. Shamanism*, Minsk, 1998, p. 25 <sup>16</sup> Radloff W., *From Siberia*, p. 367





Figure 9. The tree where shaman candidates undergo training

In esoteric language, possessing this cosmic knowledge means learning the secrets of the cosmos through a mediative path. By eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in paradise, man broke the law and was cast out of immortality into death. The shaman tree is the tree of paradise symbolising the first perfection, which in initiation signifies acquiring the initial knowledge.

i. According to Hudyakov's information, the Shaman tree is called "Oyun Maha" and differs from other Shaman trees in some paradigmatic aspects. 17 Oyun Maha is a large dry pine tree in front of the house of H ♦ Silgilah Begi Duortu. This tree is also called Aar Kutluk Mas. The candidate trained in the branch facing east becomes a Shaman who helps people and heals the sick; the Shaman trained in the branch facing west becomes a Shaman who harms people; the Shaman trained in the branch facing north becomes a Shaman who both harms and heals the sick; and the candidate trained in the branch facing south becomes a Shaman who can enter various trances.

<sup>17</sup> Hudyakov I. A., *Kratkoe Opisanie*, pp. 307-308



Figure 1. The tree in which shamans are raised.

These trees are known as the Shaman's mother tree in traditional Shamanic beliefs. The mother tree, which features prominently in Shamanic legends and folklore, is the tree from which the Shaman was born and received his first abilities.

In these nests, the spirit of the future shaman, in the form of a bird, is nurtured and grows. According to Yakut Shamanist beliefs, a blood-coloured horse coming from the west feeds the island with blood instead of milk. This Shaman island will become a Shaman who eats people (*siyemeh* game) in the future. The white horse coming from the east feeds the candidate in the nest with white milk. Naturally, this shaman becomes a good shaman who helps people. The birds in the nest grow and take on human form. Hara Sılgılâh Begi Duortu takes the candidates from the nest, cuts their bodies into pieces and scatters them in the wind. The wind carries the pieces of flesh far away. If the flesh does not land on the owner of any place, then at the time of the shamanic ritual, that spirit or the owner of that place will not come when the shaman calls.

Shamanism, being a service to evil spirits, means that the most powerful Shamans are trained in the underworld alongside spirits known as Harsa Çabın, who cause evil and disease. It is understood from shamanic memorates that the powerful shaman spirit was trained in one of the nests of the tree next to the chief spirit, Kıday Baksı or Cılga Han. In shamanic legends, the powerful spirit that trains the shaman is known as either İye Kıl or İne Kıl.

powerful spirit known as İye Kıl or İne Kıl. In the shaman tree the hierarchical arrangement of the nests from bottom to top indicates the hierarchy of the candidates being trained there.

<sup>18</sup> See Shaman Legends, p. 7

corresponds to their power. As they ascend to higher nests, the duration of their training increases.

A. Popov also systematically addressed the educational system of Shamanism, known as the Black Faith.<sup>19</sup> According to another source, both good and bad Shamans' spirits are educated in the tree hut by the daughters and sons of Arı Darhan, the patron of Shamans. The shaman is educated not only by the spirits of the lower world but also, as in shamanic mythology, in all three worlds, and shamanism gains value as a practical belief system that unites all three worlds. In this case, the shaman appears as a mediator who communicates with spirits encompassing all three worlds and unites all three worlds.

In one of the nests, the shaman candidate, who shrinks to the size of a bird chick, is nursed and raised by a winged deer or eagle.<sup>20</sup> Here, the esoteric knowledge of the training process is transmitted to the candidate through nursing.

Based on the awareness that shamanism serves the spirits of all three worlds, education in myths and memorates is also carried out according to this principle of division. Based on current information, it must be said that the education of Shamans who will serve the spirits of all three worlds is carried out through a different education system. Below, the special aspects of these mystical education systems are presented based on field materials.

a- The chosen candidate to serve the spirits of the upper world is the plague box -

the spirit of the air, the guardian spirit of the Shamans, is kidnapped by the daughters of Arı Darhan and taken to his house. In front of Arı Darhan's house stands a huge tree with nine branches, three of which are grouped together at the bottom, three in the middle, and three at the top, designed in the shape of a nest or a hole. The candidate's air spirit is trained in one of the nests in the form of a bird chick. The training or education process lasts from one to nine years. The spirits of powerful Shamans are fed by eating eagle eggs.

b- The daughters and sons of Arı Darhan sit on the edge of the nest in eagle form, teaching the island the ways and cunning of Shamanism. Beside the nests of the Shaman spirits, fed on crow eggs, the daughters and sons of Arı Darhan also sit in crow form, performing their duties. Because the spirits of some candidates have only weakly embraced the shamanic training, the daughters remove them from the nest, dry their wings, and feed them rabbit, two-headed eagle, or fish liver. All of this constitutes the composition part of the shamanic training. After the wings of the candidate's bird-shaped spirit have dried, the spirits place him back in the tree's nest, and the shaman's bird spirit remains there for another three years. Once the spirit of the air has completed its training, this time the daughters of the black clouds give the candidate the skin of a gugu bird.

<sup>19</sup> Popov A. A., Poluchenie "Shamanskogo Dara", pp. 283-284

<sup>20</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., Hrestes. Shamanism and Christianity, p. 23

They teach them to dress in the traditional attire and perform the ritual, and once this task is completed, they return the air spirit to its rightful world.

c- The air spirit of the candidate chosen for the middle world is kidnapped by the fire spirit, the water spirit called Ukun, and the guardian spirit of the forest animals and taken to the evil woman of the north and placed in one of the three nests of the great oak tree. The training of the shamans of the middle world lasts from several months to three years. After the training is complete, the candidate's air spirit is taken by the elderly women of the north and placed in an iron cradle in one of the rooms reserved for powerful, medium and weak Shamans. The spirit of the candidate who will become a powerful shaman is nursed by the oldest woman of the north. In this way, the medium-level shaman candidate is nursed by a middle-aged woman, and the weak shaman is nursed by a young sister. According to belief, the spirit of the evil shaman of the middle world is fed by frogs, snakes, lizards or impure spirits.

d- The shaman, who acts as a medium for the spirits of the underworld, takes the air spirit to the elderly women in the north, where it is nursed and trained by these women in an iron cradle. The training period lasts three years. After three years, the candidate's spirit is summoned to the spirit known as the patron of the blacksmiths, called Kıday Mahsı or Baksı (referred to above as Kıday Baksı), and undergoes training in the fire for several years. This is why Shamans trained in the underworld are often called Shamans of the fire spirit.

During training, the shaman passes through nine stages three times under the guidance of the ancestral shaman, learning the secrets of shamanism at each stage. Finally, at the ninth stage, after receiving blessings from the spirits, the shaman acquires the powers to perform rituals, heal, tell fortunes, etc. Here, the shaman's emergence from darkness into a world of light at the final stage symbolically represents the shaman's arrival at his final destination. The spirit of the ancestor shaman who trains the chosen candidate (this shaman is Kyusteh, who died eight centuries ago and was transformed into the star Çolpan in the sky, where he has been waiting ever since to choose his successor) turns his eyes to the torch to guide the candidate through the darkness.

An interesting aspect of this legend is that the spirits of deceased Shamans complain about the increase in murder and sin in the Middle World. It seems that one of the duties of the future Shaman is to prevent the aforementioned evils. Indeed, before the candidate, the spirits stop at the ninth station and cleanse Middle Earth, where the sun and moon do not rise, of murder and sin with their prayers. In the Shamanic tradition of the Tuval, the white-robed ones who carry the Shamans to the sky are also called ak eeren de-

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21 Shamanic Legends, pp. 16-21

22 Alekseev N. A., Shamanism Tı'ürkoyazıcılıh, pp. 45

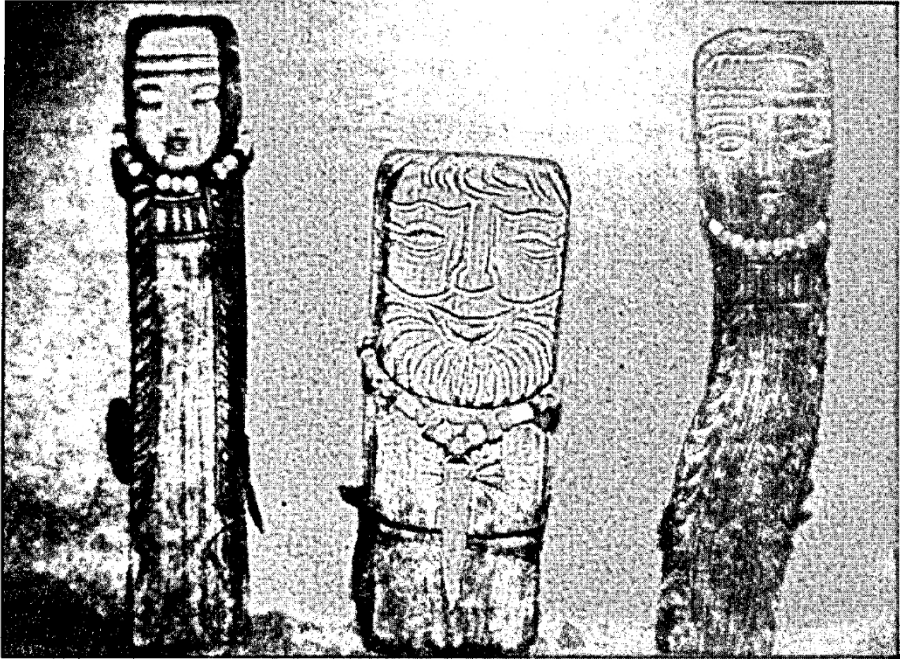


Figure 11. Altay eeren made of wood

nilir.<sup>22</sup> In the Central Asian shamanic tradition, after dying and being resurrected, the master shaman initiates the candidate into the secrets of the art.

Whether it is mystical training or traditional training, in both cases the candidate learns the secret mysteries of the community, its sacred mythology, shamanic techniques, methods and procedures of trance, the shamanic tradition, and shamanic prayers. Although the prayers, recited in the form of rhyming verses, are improvised and never repeated, the master shaman develops this ability in the candidate.

To summarise briefly, the aim of mystical and traditional education is:

- To acquire the cosmic knowledge specific to shamanism,
- To eliminate the "illnesses" arising from unconsciousness by utilising the accumulated knowledge based on the past stored in the cosmic memory.
- and consists of informing society as much as possible with prophecies for future life.

Shamanic training begins with learning how to access cosmic knowledge, travelling, and learning about the guardian spirit and the spirits.

and using the knowledge acquired for the benefit of society.

Here, the shaman's second function—applying the knowledge he has acquired—emerges as the task of educating and raising the awareness of society. The shaman is not only the guardian of cultural heritage and the transmitter of mythological phenomena to society, but also the person who successfully preserves this heritage and these phenomena and successfully applies them. Mythological thought and phenomena acquire educational value in the shaman's community. However, this education is not the same as that offered by other religious or secret organisations. At the very least, the shaman educates society at the level of duties and obligations, and does not neglect to pass on the society's mythology and all its cultural values to new generations. This transmission, as mentioned above, does not remain at the level of oral culture, but is accompanied by performances, images and symbols. The shaman uses images such as horsehair, ice fragments, blood clots, etc., to bring to life mythological symbols such as cosmic journeys, the spirit world, and the opposition between life and death. In this context, the difference between shamanic education and other education systems is that it is not limited to words and teachings but involves practical applications.

## 6. 2. Time of Training The Shaman's Oath

Education is not only about preparing the shaman for this art but also about explaining his responsibilities. Therefore, during the shamanic training process, the shaman also undergoes a ceremony called the oath. The shaman must not break his oath throughout his life and must continue to be useful to society no matter what. Otherwise, the spirits will take revenge on him. The shaman's oath can be found among both Turks and Turkicised Buryats. Below are three examples of this oath prayer.

During the shaman's training process, the elder shaman dips the broom in water and strikes the candidate on the back. At this moment, nine young men chant in unison:

*"If your profession calls you to a poor man's side, ask for little in return for your labour; be content with whatever they give you. Take an interest in the problems of the poor, help them, and pray to God to protect them from the attacks of evil spirits. If a rich person invites you to become a shaman, do not ask for much in return. If you receive invitations to become a shaman from both a poor person and a rich person at the same time, accept the poor person's invitation first."*

The candidate repeats these instructions after the Shaman and promises to adhere to them.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Agapitov, N. N., Hangalov, M. N., Material for Study, pp. 52-53

<sup>24</sup> Priklonskiy V. L., "On Shamanism among the Yakuts," *Izvestiya Vostočno-Sibirskogo Otdeleniya Ruskogo Ge-ografičeskogo Obščestva*, Vol. 17, Nos. 1-2, 1886, pp. 96-97

Here, the oath of the future shaman during the shaman initiation ceremony confirms the advice given by the elderly shaman above. An oath taken from V. Priklonskiy's<sup>24</sup> article is as follows:

*"I swear to be the protector of the unhappy, the father of the poor, the mother of the orphans.*

*. I swear to respect the evil spirits living on the tops of high mountains and to serve them with my soul and body."*

Furthermore, when answering the spirits' questions on the mountain where the shaman was dismembered, he takes responsibility for the tasks he will perform. An example of Turkish shamans swearing an oath to the spirits is as follows:

One of the spirits in white clothes compels the Shaman to take an oath. Shaman:

- I will not think ill of the people and animals created by God, he says.

- If asked, "Will you think bad things about the person who mistreats you, who humiliates you?", if the Shaman replies:

- Yes, I will get angry at the person who humiliates and hurts me, and I will think bad things about them, the spirit hits him so hard on the back that his forehead hits the sharp edge of the peak.

Then another spirit dressed in black presses the shaman's forehead against a black, sharp-edged peak and says:

- "Devour the humans and animals created by God!" If the shaman remains silent without giving any positive response,

they punish him again by striking him on the back.<sup>25</sup>

These two oaths from Priklonskiy and *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, together with the above advice, explain the social segment on which the philosophy of Shamanism is based. Indeed, they clearly show that those who practise this profession do not do so for money, but perform Shamanism to meet the needs and alleviate the troubles of the community. Furthermore, it becomes apparent that Shamanism is both esoteric knowledge and an institution of responsibility towards society. In this context, Turkish Shamanism, and Shamanism in general, is distinctly different from all similar esoteric organisations.

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<sup>25</sup> Bayat R, *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, p. 78

SEVENTH CHAPTER  
THE APPEARANCE OF THE SHAMANIC SPIRIT OR ANIMAL MOTHER

SHAMANISM Although it formed a holistic system among the Turkish tribes, the transition to Shaman status occurred in different variants within certain geographical and socio-economic frameworks. The role played by the Shaman tree in the selection and training of Shamans has been mentioned above. The animal mother concept, which plays an important role in the shaman status and is matched with the candidate's soul, designed as the spirit of shamanic power, is at the forefront of all the elements that make up the shamanic system. In fact, the shaman tree and the animal mother are the two elements that enable the shaman's rebirth.



Figure 1 2. Mythological eagle figure



According to a series of Shamanic memorates, it is this animal mother who brings Shamans into the world. Transforming into an iron-winged eagle, this animal mother comes to the pine tree with nests in its branches and lays eggs in one of the nests. If the eagle incubates the eggs for three years, the Shaman born will be powerful; if for two years, he will be average; if for one year, he will be weak.

When the shaman emerges from the egg, the animal mother gives him to a one-legged, one-armed, one-eyed demon woman named Buyurgestey-Udagan to raise him. She places the child in a cradle and rocks him, feeding him with blood clots. According to the shaman's belief, the animal mother is seen only three times during the shaman's lifetime:

- 1) When the shaman gives birth to his spirit,
- 2) During the dismemberment of the candidate's body,
- 3) When the shaman dies.

The animal mother being imagined as an eagle is consistent with the belief of the first Yakut Shamans that they were born from an eagle sent by God. This eagle has two heads in Yakut tradition and is called "toyon keter" (bird lord).<sup>2</sup> According to some mythological views, the two-headed eagle is Yüryüng Ayn Toyon himself. The two-headed eagle sits atop a white poplar tree with eight branches, each branch having nests where the spirits of future Shamans are trained. Shamans make wooden figures of this two-headed eagle and show it respect.

Furthermore, according to Yakut Shaman legends, the first Shaman was also born from the union of an eagle and a woman. Among the Buryats and Finns, the first Shaman also descended from an eagle. The ability of Shamans to fly to the heavens is also related to his being the son of an eagle. In the Altai shamanic tradition, shamans who fly to reach Bay Ülgen also appear, showing that they have not forgotten that they are descended from a bird mother.

Among the Yakuts, the eagle, which is the animal mother of the shaman, is also depicted as being related to the blacksmith. On the other hand, it is also known that blacksmiths come from the same root as Shamans. One reason why the animal mother, thought of as an eagle, is so widespread in Yakut Shamanism is that the origin myths of the Yakuts are linked to the eagle. In a conversation with the Yakut Shaman Okkan, the origin of the first Yakut from the relationship between the eagle and man was also mentioned.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism*, pp. 60-61

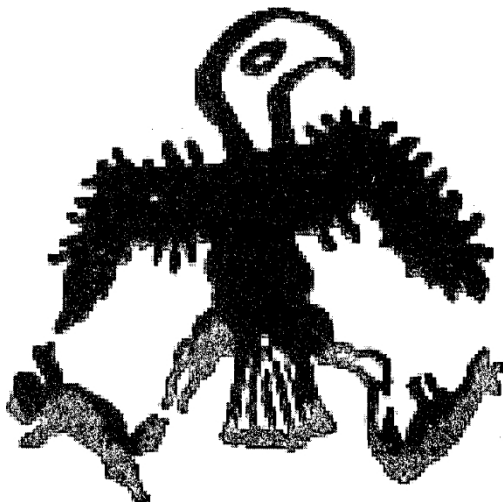
<sup>2</sup> From the accounts of Yakut shaman Okkan in 1993

<sup>3</sup> From our conversation with Yakut Shaman Okkan in Baku in 1993



Figure 13. A carved wooden depiction of a two-headed eagle symbolising Yüryüng Ayı Toyon

Figure 14. The eagle figure, considered the animal ancestor



According to shamanic traditions, each shaman has an animal mother or first animal. It has an attribute that the Yakut Shamans call *Iye-Kıl/İne-Kıl* or *Kep-Kıl*. As mentioned above, this animal is often depicted as an iron-winged eagle or a winged reindeer, and in very rare cases as a bear or an ox. It has also been observed that *Iye-Kıl* takes the form of a dog as the powerless spirit of the shaman. This animal, which roams separately from the shaman, is an independent spirit symbolising the shaman's power of vision, that is, his ability to delve into the past and future, to enlighten himself, and to prophesy. In short, *Iye-Kıl* or *İne Kıl* is the soul of the shaman embodied in an animal. The animal mother's arrival when the shaman dies is nothing more than the shaman's spirit or soul being conceived as this animal.

In particular, in the Altai-Sayan region, the Turkish Shamans living in Far Siberia also have protective spirits called *Emeget/Emegen*, which bear some resemblance to *Iye-Kıl*<sup>4</sup>. However, *Emeget/Emegen*, whose functions are broader, is most likely an entity belonging to the Mythological Mother complex of Turkish mythology, which developed independently of Shamanism. For this reason, *Emeget/Emegen* or *Emegets*, symbolising Mother Earth, are known as female spirits. In fact, the Altai people call the Mythological Mother Earth *Ak Emegen* (white-haired mother). The demonic entity called *Emegelçi* (grandmother) by the Tuva people is imagined as a house spirit similar to Mother Earth. In some cases, this mythological protector is also called *Emegelçi-dzaya-çi* (creative grandmother). This is also the code that defines her ancient function. Indeed, it is known that the Mythological Mother possessed creative power and later relinquished this power to the Sky God. The mythological type of *Emegelçi* has taken shape in Tuva as the family, the *ka-bile ongonu*.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, *Emegelçi* is the protector of children's happiness and health.

In Altay mythological texts, the protective entity known as *Emegender*, *Emeget/Emegen* or *Enekeler* is conceived as the spirit of female ancestors. Altay women preserve *Emegender* by passing down depictions of her made from rags from generation to generation.

*Emegender*, who perpetuates the female lineage as the beginning of womanhood, is an entity with broad functions in Turkic mythology. However, shamans have transformed her into their own guardian spirits. M. Eliade considers the *Emegets* to be distinct entities from the *Iye-Kıl*, known among the Yakuts as the animal mother. According to him, *Emeget* is generally the spirit of a deceased shaman or a minor sky spirit. The shaman sees and hears through *Emeget*.

<sup>4</sup> In 1999, Nadya, a female shaman from Altai, also touched upon this subject in her conversation in Ankara.

<sup>5</sup> Eliade M., *Shamanism*, p. 117

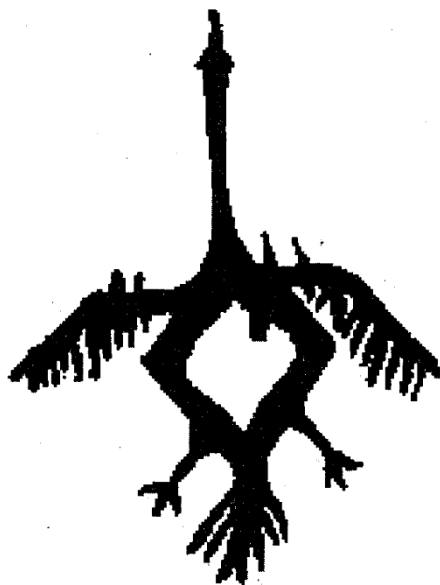


Figure 1 5. Emeget, the protective spirit of Shamans

In the extensive literature on shamanism, the origin of the animal mother is one of the least

A. Popov was the first to address this issue, attempting to clarify the animal image of the shaman according to the views of the Yakut shamans ( ).

.6 When the candidate's training is complete and the air spirit returns to the human body, the primary spirit and the earth spirit are reborn, but they do not return to unite with the shaman's body. The rebirth of these spirits occurs simultaneously in the three types of shamans who serve the spirits of the upper, middle, and underworld. The main spirit is taken to the side of the sickness water and remains there forever.

However, during this time, the main spirit enters an animal form and becomes the shaman's animal mother. Although the animal mother lives independently of her Shari, she is directly connected to the shaman's destiny. Belief

According to this belief, every shaman sees the animal mother three times throughout his life: the first time during his initial initiation, the second time in the middle of his life, and the third time before his death.

In shamanic battles, the fact that the shaman's spirit fights another shaman's spirit in another place while the shaman is sitting at home is also linked to this animal mother phenomenon. Indeed, it is not the fighting shaman himself but his animal mother. For this reason

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<sup>6</sup> Popov A. A., *Poluchenii Shamanstvennogo Dara*, p. 284

that some Shamans transform into a bull, some into an eagle, and some into a one-eyed being, is related to how the animal mother is conceived. It is also believed that the animal mother can take on different forms. The wounding and death of the animal mother similarly results in the wounding and death of the Shaman.

The earth spirit, the shaman's third spirit, transforms into a fish and is placed in a special location within the sickness water. This special location is known simply as the place made from the corpses of seven girls, seven boys, and seven animals. The earth spirit floats in this section in the form of a fish and tries to escape from there over time. If the earth spirit can escape from this special section, the shaman dies. Naturally, both the main spirit and the earth spirit are settled in the underworld.

To summarise all these explanations briefly, the animal mother is the mother spirit, which is the shaman's second spirit, and the Yakut shamans call her by the general name of Iye Kıl. Therefore, the origin of Emeget/Emegen remains obscure. It is also known that Iye Kıl and Emeget are not the same, but both share the same function in that they are the Shaman's seeing eyes.

The role of the animal mother in becoming a shaman is as significant as that of Kıday Baksı. Indeed, in some legends, when the candidate reaches adolescence, the animal mother emerges from the underworld to the surface, cuts the candidate's body into pieces, throws the flesh onto paths leading to illness and death, and distributes it among the spirits. The animal mother shares the same function as the blacksmith who makes the candidate a shaman, or it could be said that in ancient times, the blacksmith also played the role of the shaman's animal mother or patron in animal form.

Of course, as seen in Shamanic literature, the depiction of spirits in animal form gives rise to the idea that the animal mother could be the transformed spirit of the Shaman. Indeed, in Shamanism, the spirit incarnated in the being known as the Shaman's animal mother

, is often a reindeer and

He simply roams around in the form of a bull. According to rumour, Iye Kıl can take the form of any animal. In some legends, the shaman's animal mother is indeed seen to be a deer. The shaman's animal mother is also his guardian spirit. It should be noted here that Emeget, known as the spirit of the deceased ancestors, is also the shaman's guardian spirit.

The belief in spirits has a special place in the formation of the shaman. In general terms, the only way to become a shaman is to have a guardian spirit. The shaman is a person equipped with secret knowledge because he has reached the third dimension of perception (i.e. the other world that ordinary people cannot reach), and this knowledge is given to him from a supernatural source, namely spirits. From shamanic legends, it is understood that...

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<sup>7</sup> Shaman Legends, p. 34

According to the information provided, the protective spirit depicted as an animal is not only there to protect and serve the shaman, but also acts as another self or another being for him, a spiritual entity, a source of energy.

Every human being has a guardian spirit, in other words, a second self. However, unlike ordinary people, the shaman is a person who is aware of, can activate and use his guardian spirit because he can change its state. Another characteristic of the shaman is that, in addition to his guardian spirit, he has a certain number of helper spirits. These helper spirits have specific functions for specific purposes. The guardian spirit is usually symbolised by the bird image placed at the top of the sacred pole during the shaman's ritual.

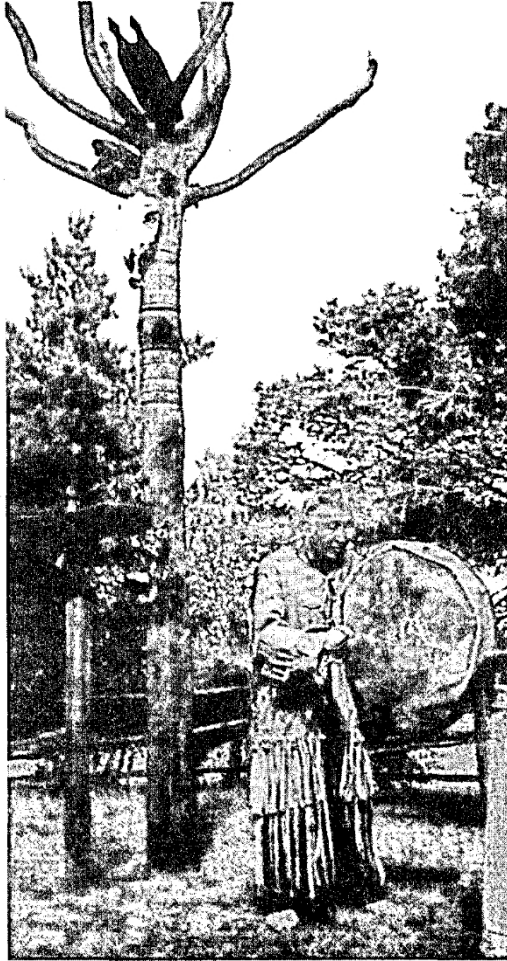


Figure 16. An elderly Yakut shaman performs a ritual demonstration. We see the shaman's guardian spirit bird atop the sacred pillar.

CHAPTER EIGHT  
GENDER CHANGE OR TRANSVESTISM

One of the codes associated with the status of SHAMAN is mystically changing gender, whereby a male shaman becomes a woman and a female shaman becomes a man. However, according to some ethnographic information (for example, the information provided by Seroshevsky and Potanin), there have also been bisexual shamans among the Yakuts and their neighbours, the Buryats. According to J. Frazer's observation, the exchange of clothing between men and women is a dark and complex issue. In his view, there cannot be a single reason for this phenomenon. In such cases, for example, in the cases of the Kasis and the Islanders, men dress and live like women. The main purpose of this practice is to inspire female spirits, who are more likely to choose men, through prayers and movements.

It is also important to note the following point. As explained in travestism or memorates, shamans changing gender is different from homosexuality. Indeed, while homosexuality is not well accepted in society, shamans who change gender are respected members of traditional society. Furthermore, the origins and functions of homosexuality and travestism in shamanism are also different.

It is common in Turkish shamanism for male shamans to wear women's clothing to inspire spirits. Indeed, the female spirit that dismembers the shaman in the underworld, gives him milk, or engages in sexual intercourse with him reinforces this phenomenon. Sexual organs also play a role in some shamanic rituals. Indeed,

the remains of a ceremony performed by Yakut Shamans to arouse sexual desire can be seen. traces of this can be seen.

Shamanic elements indicating or involving gender change:

- 1- Shamans who directly experience transvestism
- 2- This is achieved by wearing women's clothing to evoke a feminine image or to take on a feminine appearance.

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<sup>1</sup> Frazer J., *The Goddess*, London, 1907, p. 433

This entire phenomenon of travestism is based on the belief that Shamans can summon spirits, command them, and most fundamentally, that male Shamans have female spirit mates and female Shamans have male spirit mates. These spirit mates, called heavenly mates, try to resemble the Shamans by changing clothes. By entering the shell of his heavenly mate, the Shaman also puts himself under a kind of protection. It should also be noted that the issue of gender change for powerful Shamans is not a physical event at all.

Y. Z. Yörük explains this topic in a different way: The deities called *ana* among the Turks are always protective and judging gods. The deities known as "Ata" are mostly striking and frightening gods. For this reason, the spirits of Shamans are female, and this is probably why they wear women's clothing during rituals.<sup>2</sup>

The existing memorata about shamans emphasise that male shamans turning into women, giving birth, and then becoming men again after a period of time only serves to highlight that shamans are neither male nor female, but form a third group. Indeed, the presence of symbols of both sexes in the costumes of shamans also confirms that they form a third group. Whether they are male or female, bisexual, or change their gender (transvestism) carries only and exclusively mystical meaning. In all cases, the shaman is a normal human being.

The shaman is the intermediary who connects with the other world. This could be the sky where Ülgen lives or the underworld where Erlik lives. The result is the same in both cases. During the shamanic trance, the shaman departs from his own world and travels to a realm with different measurements, dimensions, space, and time. Naturally, the shaman must adapt to the other world, which in ancient times was achieved by changing gender, wearing women's clothing, painting their faces, etc. This raises the question of the shamans' desire to inspire spirits designed as female.

As a mediator, the shaman brings the values of the mythical world into the real world, uniting the female and male, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic characters, the entire cosmogony of nature and society, the past and the future in one image.

The fact that matriarchy lies at the origins of shamanism is not fundamental to the concept of gender reassignment. Indeed, according to information provided by V. Verbitskiy, in order to drive away the spirits of the dead that prevented the reproduction of domestic animals and to bring back stolen animals, Shamans would paint their faces with charcoal so that the dead would not recognise them.<sup>3</sup> Gender change for the purpose of remaining unrecognised is related to older, known views, the origins of which lie in Shamanism.

<sup>2</sup> Yörük, Y. Z., *Turkish Religions Before Islam, Shamanism*, Ankara, 2005, p. 89

<sup>3</sup> Verbitskiy V. I., *Altayskie Inarodtsi*, p. 97



can be explained by the fact that it was once in the hands of women, but this is not the only explanation. Indeed, being able to transform is the essential condition for experiencing a different time dimension and a different spatial scale. Thus, transvestism is a type of camouflage and a source of inspiration.

In Siberian Shamanic texts, the Shaman's gender change has been transformed into wearing women's clothing among Central Asian Shamans (*perihan*). A. Samoylovich reports that among the Chovdur tribe of the Turkmen, a shaman during his *kamlık* period (Turkmen shamans call this "*göçürme*") ties a red headscarf around his head and wears red women's clothing.<sup>4</sup> Essentially, the remnants of gender change we encounter in Siberian shamanism, such as male shamans wearing women's clothing, are seen in almost all regions of Central Asia. It is known that Oraznazar, the famous shaman of the Chovdur tribe, wore red women's clothing.

The idea of shamans changing gender or cross-dressing, which is a form of transvestism, has been interpreted as if the spirits compelled them to wear women's clothing, thus obscuring both the ritual and religious aspects of transvestism. Although this feminisation appears to be a social tool, it is a spiritual legacy left by a matriarchal society at the root of shamanism to later generations. However, over time, dressing in women's clothing or artificial feminisation became a manifestation of inherited matriarchal shamanism. Yu. Knorozov, who reports that Karakalpak Shamans wear red women's clothing, considers this phenomenon a remnant of Shamanic transvestism.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Uzbek Shamans also reflect transvestism by wearing women's clothing.

H. Z. Ülken once focused on Shamans walking around in women's clothing and believing themselves to be women, linking this phenomenon, in his own words, to the "*maderşahi semiyeye*" period.

The practice of wearing women's clothing has also been preserved among the Nanay Shamans and Ulchi Shamans of the Siberian peoples. In fact, traditionally, every Nanay and Ulchi Shaman has a skirt, a rope, a shirt, and a headdress. Male Shamans wear women's skirts over their trousers. Depictions of spirits appear on the skirts of both female and male Shamans.<sup>7</sup> The conclusion drawn from this transvestism suggests that efforts to erase gender differences are related to the internal structure of Shamanism.

<sup>4</sup> See Basilov V. N., Niyazklichev K., *op. cit.*, pp. 123-124

<sup>5</sup> Basilov V. N., Niyazklichev K., *op. cit.*, p. 134

<sup>6</sup> Knorozov Yu. V., "Mazar Şamun-Nabi", *Sovetskaya Etnografiya*, No. 2, 1949, p. 96

<sup>7</sup> See Smolyak A. V., *Shaman: Personality, Function*, pp. 222-223. The illustrations in the book also show male shamans wearing skirts.

In all cases, crossing the boundary between the material and spiritual worlds is achieved solely through transformation. The shaman's transformation into a woman forms the basis of the philosophy of transformation. Transformation is not only a change in gender but also a change in the nature of the female and male worlds. Indeed, as S. Neklyudov wrote, in Mongolia, they place the deceased woman in the male corner of the house (tent) and the deceased man in the female corner of the house.



Image 17. Namangan Uzbek shaman (shaman) Taşmat-bola Holmatov, who likes to wear women's clothing

In the shamanic phenomenon, transvestism is a belief in the transcendental unity of femininity and masculinity, which ultimately forms an important stage in establishing a connection with humans, and in the transcendability of standards and dimensions. It is more accurate to interpret shamanic transvestism as the transcendental union of femininity and masculinity.

<sup>8</sup> Neklyudov S. Yu., "O Krivom Oborotne", Problems of Slavic Ethnography, Leningrad, 1979, p. 134

The shaman's crossing of the boundaries between the male and female worlds is, metaphorically, his adaptation (transition) to the world of spirits. The wearing of women's clothing (transvestism) is a remnant of the ancient bisexual belief.<sup>9</sup> Not being an ordinary human being, thinking in the third dimension, naturally gave rise to the concept of a third gender. The point of transvestism is that the shaman is neither male nor female.

The shaman belongs to a third gender, situated between the two sexes. Ü. Hassan's views on this matter are as follows: Shamanism is based on matriarchy. Shamanism has existed throughout its development, during which the bloodline organisation based on the mother's "law" was altered by the father's authority; it is a belief system that carries the indelible traces of matriarchy in its origins and has always been attempted to be moulded into the pattern of patriarchy over time. The fact that its matriarchal foundations have not been completely altered, even in its later examples and contemporary remnants, makes it possible to accept shamanism as a system of compromise situated between matriarchal and patriarchal societies, undergoing change within patriarchal societies. Other scholars have also attempted to relate the phenomenon of travestism or transvestism to matriarchy, which is problematic because it is difficult to distinguish between the two.

transvestism to matriarchy, which, even if it has a connection with the nature of the matter, the main issue is the third gender and the third dimension explained above.

the nature of the issue, but the main issue is the third gender and third dimension explained above.

In the legends of Siberian Shamans, we see that the most powerful Shaman is a woman. These powerful Shamans are given the title *utkan/uda-gan*, meaning guardian of the fire. *Utkan*, the female Shaman who guards the fire, preserves the memories of the most ancient times by entering the Mother Earth complex. Indeed, recent research has revealed that shamanism emerged during a matriarchal period in terms of its origins.

The shamanic memorates regarding the first shaman being female or homosexual should be considered as the shamanism transitioning to a new status in order to establish a connection with the spirit world in the archaic era. Indeed, it is only possible to become a shaman after the process of rebirth. In very ancient times, it is possible that rebirth was also perceived as a change of gender. The shaman believes that it is easier to enter the spirit world not with his own existence but in the form of a new being. The idea of transvestism also arose from the notion that the shaman is male in his normal state and female in his trans state. With the acceptance of Islam, the Central Asian Turks tried to preserve shamanism within the new religion. For this reason, Central Asian shamans began to pray to Allah and

<sup>9</sup> In shamanism, the practice of male shamans wearing women's clothing, which is a remnant of transvestism, is applied throughout the Turkish world in the form of dressing male children in girls' clothing. The aim is to ensure that the evil forces seeking to kill the male child are deceived.

<sup>10</sup> Hassan Ü., *Studies on the Ancient Turkish Society*, Istanbul, 2000, p. 71

They consider it their duty to consult the saints. 11 Given this situation, Central Asian Shamans replaced the practice of disguising themselves as women with wearing women's clothing.

A similar practice also exists among Yakut Shamans. Some Yakut Shamans perform rituals wearing women's dresses when they do not have special garments. However, this cannot be considered a reason. Indeed, it is impossible to attribute the wearing of women's clothing solely to the absence of special garments. This is because most Yakut Shamans grow their hair long for no other reason than to resemble women or to take on a female form.<sup>12</sup>

The origins of effeminacy can be traced back to the Scythians. In the fourth volume of Herodotus's History, he mentions that among the Scythians, there were individuals who were not developed in masculinity and could be considered a type of homosexual, known as Enaree, yet they held a respectable position in society and devoted themselves to religious beliefs. The Enaree played an important role in the religious beliefs and ceremonies of the Scythians.<sup>13</sup> Some Western scholars have compared the Scythian Enaree with Siberian (Turkic) Shamans at a typological level. The idea that Enarees were a variant of Siberian Shamans transformed into women through magic was first proposed by W. R. Halliday in 1910, developed by K. Meuli, and attempted to be explained by G. Dumézil in the context of the Ossetian variant of the *Nart De-stan*.<sup>14</sup>

The Scythian priests, the Enarees, described by Herodotus, resemble Shamans in some functional aspects. However, this information was presented as priesthood in a deterrent manner by a Greek unfamiliar with Shamanism, and subsequent researchers have also explained the Enarees as a priestly class who castrated themselves and dedicated themselves to God.

The motif of the bisexual god, which also occupies a significant place in Middle Eastern mythology, is connected to the element of shamanism. In the myths of Agdistis and Cybele, the later interpretation that travesty emerged as a result of service and passion is actually a Middle Eastern variant of a supernatural feature. Like many elements of the phenomenon of shamanism, travesty has been established as an important cultural element in mystical teachings.

Designed as a bisexual being, the shaman, according to belief, does not neglect to transition to the opposite sex when born several times. We encounter examples of this in shamanic legends. For example, legends say that Shamans are born twice, even three times. Aadca Oyuna, a male Shaman, was born for the third time among the Tungus as Kısıltay-Udagan, a female Shaman. Even during the candidate's dismemberment, travestism is observed. G. Ksenofon-

<sup>11</sup> Basilov V. N., Niyazkhıev K., age, p. 136

<sup>12</sup> The Yakut shaman Okkan, whom I met in 1993, also had long hair like a woman.

<sup>13</sup> See: Tarhan T., "The Religious Beliefs and Customs of the Scythians," Tarih Düşüncesi, no. 23, 1969

<sup>14</sup> For general information, see: Eliade M., Shamanism, p. 432

In Tov's compilations, on the Sun and Moon Mountain, the male candidate, who is cut down like a newly felled birch tree, is reborn like a woman.

In fact, the phenomenon of gender change or transvestism is not proportional to matriarchal or matrilineal or patriarchal or patrilineal systems, as some researchers have written. These concepts, frequently used by Western ethnologists, have not retained their validity in Turkish Shamanism. On the other hand, this is not degeneration or corruption either. Indeed, Shamans, who display a mysterious world design, have distinguished themselves from ordinary humans through the concept of transvestism or being bisexual beings.

Whether it is the red colour of the headdress or the red colour of the women's dress worn, in Shamanism, it must be related to the spirits that harm people shying away from the colour red, in short, being afraid of it. By using this colour symbol, the shaman sought to make the evil spirits do his bidding. We can see that this shamanic belief still lives on among the Turkish peoples. Indeed, according to popular belief, evil spirits fear the colour red.

The fact that shamans are born having changed gender is directly linked to the idea that they are pursuing a third gender. According to both the Altai and Yakut shamanic beliefs, the most famous shamans become pregnant at the age of thirty, regardless of gender. Male shamans give birth in a secluded place in the forest after experiencing labour pains, just like a woman. During their first pregnancy, shamans give birth to a "crow" or "gaggar" that flies away immediately after birth. In the second year, shamans give birth to a fish. This also falls into the water and swims away. In the third year, shamans give birth to a bear or a wolf. Like the previous ones, these also leave the shaman immediately after birth and run into the forest. After the shaman dies, the bird she gave birth to the first time enters the body of a pregnant woman, and the woman gives birth to the next shaman. After a long time, a new shaman comes into the world by entering the body of another woman. This reincarnation event continues three times.<sup>16</sup>

We even see male Shamans giving birth like women during the period of fragmentation.

Consequently, the birth of both male and female Shamans is linked to the Shaman's lack of gender or gender change and holds an important place in Shamanism. Indeed, there are instances of male Shamans giving birth in Shamanic legends. It is also worth noting here that the feminisation and childbirth of male Shamans is, in terms of its origin, a simple explanation of the transmission of Shamanism through lineage. Indeed, the bird born of male Shamans entering the womb of a pregnant woman and being reborn as a Shaman is important for the continuity of the Shamanic lineage. The third gender and third dimension status in the paradigm developed in relation to this continuity of lineage and the transmission of the shamanic role.

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<sup>15</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism*, p. 66

<sup>16</sup> Popov A. A., *The Study of the "Shamanic Gift"*, p. 292

SECOND BOOK  
EXTERNAL FACTORS OF TURKISH SHAMANISM

## TURKISH SHAMANISM IN THE HISTORICAL PROCESS

## 9. 1. The Formation of Shamanism

## Some Functional Characteristics in Historical Context

Shamanism, or Shamanism as it is termed in the Western scientific world, is the most widespread and researched of the mystical, enigmatic religions or religious practices seen in almost all societies around the world. In the words of anthropologists, Shamanism is a religious-magical phenomenon performed by the Shaman, who controls the ceremony using trance techniques. The most distinctive feature of Shamanism is based on the belief that the Shaman, who controls this religious-magical phenomenon, can transport his own spirit to other worlds ( the upper and lower realms). The shaman is someone who can transport their own spirit to other dimensions and also control the spirits of the other world.

Shamanism merged with the pre-existing Sky God religion and ancestor cult, reshaping them to suit the Shamanic era and forming a syncretic phenomenon. Shamanism, mistakenly regarded as a religion, is at best a technique of ecstasy and a complex, ideologically and practically oriented cultural element.

Shamanism was the dominant element of our culture until Islam and greatly influenced almost all areas of folklore and folk literature. Although Turkish Shamanism shares many characteristics with the general Shamanic institution, it constitutes a phenomenology because it is the product of a distinct culture and psychology.

The region where Turkish Shamanism is still practised and where Shamanism data is abundant is located within the borders of the former Soviet Union, now Russia, which is why important works have been written in this area. Remaining within the confines of a totalitarian regime, Turkish Shamanism was closed to research by the Western world and was essentially studied by Soviet scientists. The work of V. Dioszegi and some Western researchers is an exception here. Other Western scientists obtained their information about Turkish Shamanism second- or third-hand.

Former Soviet theologians, historians, and ethnographers were drawn to researching the rich field material, providing valuable information about the external structure and accessories of Shamanism. This material, numbering in the tens of thousands, consisting of articles, books, and reports, forms a rich museum of Turkish Shamanism. Shamanic folklore and the Shamanic worldview were also the focus of attention for former Soviet researchers. However, Turkish Shamanism was not treated as a cultural heritage or a living cultural element; rather, the Shamanism of individual Turkic peoples or Soviet territories

Despite all their scientific aspects, the research of Soviet scientists was conducted on the basis of Soviet ideology, which deprived Shamanism of its phenomenal nature.

It is known that shamanism attained a high status during the Mongol Empire period. Indeed, the main method employed by the Mongol Empire, which formed a confederation, to keep the Turkic tribes and other small ethnic groups within its borders together and to maintain solidarity was to establish a unity of belief. Although the tribes included in the confederation spoke different languages, they were bound by the Shamanist belief system. Later, with the expansion of the Empire, Muslim and Christian beliefs also coexisted with Shamanism.

Although Genghis Khan fully embraced the Turkish state tradition, he elevated the Shamanist faith, which had not been seen at the state level among the Huns, Göktürks, and Uyghurs, to the level of official state faith. Indeed, according to Mongol and Turkic oral tradition, Shaman Tubut (Shaman Kukche in official histories) called Genghis "Son of Heaven," announcing that God had commanded him to take the world.

At the great Mongol Kurultay held in 1206, Shaman Kukche declared that he spoke by God's command and bestowed the name "Genghis Khan" upon Temüjin, stating that God had granted him and his sons dominion over the world. Genghis Khan, in turn, bestowed upon this Shaman the highest religious title, "Teb-tengri."<sup>2</sup> The Shaman's influential role in the official state kurultay proves that this belief system became official during the Mongol period. According to information relayed by Ü. Hassan from V. Bartold regarding Genghis Khan's funeral ceremony, female Shamans rode on horseback in front of the coffin.<sup>3</sup> Other data also confirms that Shamans held an important place in state administration and the funeral ceremonies of khans during the Mongol period.

<sup>1</sup> Potanin G. N., *Vostoçnie Motivi Srednevekovom Yevropeyskom Epose*, Moscow, 1899, p. 43

<sup>2</sup> Desmaisons P. S., *Histoire des Mongols et des Tatares par Aboul-Gazi Behadour Khan*, Amsterdam, 1970, p. 88

<sup>3</sup> Hassan Ü., *The Ancient Turkish Society*, p. 188



The Mongols and Buryats referred to Shamans, who held such an important status, as "Sky Shamans" or "Sons of the Sky". The concept of the son of the heavens or sky shamans is also widespread among the Altai-Sayan Turks. Sky Shamans also constitute a separate category. Their social and political roles should also be noted. It is highly probable that the Shaman who proclaimed Genghis Khan as ruler of the world and acted as advisor to the khans was also a Sky Shaman.

However, in the Orkhon-Yenisei inscriptions, it is God who gives the khan his power, makes the people a nation, and protects the state. In the *Oğuz Khan* Epic, the Turkish state epic, it was God, not the Shaman, who commanded Oğuz to unite the world under one banner. This proves that the official belief system of the Turks was the Sky God religion, and that Shamanism was, at most, an application based on esoteric knowledge.

Shamanism as a system was recorded among the Turks during the Göktürk Khaganate period. The adoption of Buddhism by the Göktürk Khan Tobo or Tapar, followed by the Manichaeism of the Uyghur Khaganate, in short, the Turks' adoption of Buddhism, Judaism, and Nestorianism, led to the weakening of shamanism and its influence by these religions. Shamanism also had a significant influence on these religions, particularly Lamaism, a branch of Buddhism (or the Chinese and Tibetan interpretation of it). However, according to some data, although Shamanism was not adopted as the state religion in the Kyrgyz Khanate, established after defeating the Uighurs with its centre in Mongolia, it played a very important role in social life. Indeed, various religions brought to Turkish lands earlier were never introduced to this Khanate during the Kyrgyz period. This was because the Kyrgyz were strongly attached to their old religious beliefs.

Although the Western scientific community acknowledges the influence of primitive religions on Shamanism, they stubbornly remain silent about the influence of Shamanism on monotheistic religions. In his comprehensive work *Shamanism*, M. Eliade expands on this idea by citing the works of scholars who trace the origins of Siberian Shamanism to China and Iran. He even states, based on Western and Russian researchers (particularly the research of S. M. Shirokogoroff), that the shaman's clothing and drum are of Indian origin. Shamans, who previously had broad functions, have gradually relinquished some of their old duties, fulfilling a social function by using the abilities inherited from ancestral Shamans in accordance with the needs of society. In this context, it can be said that the spiritual world of Shamanism has narrowed, but it continues to perform the task of maintaining communication between nature and society, and between spirits and humans.

<sup>4</sup> Mironov N. O., Shirokogoroff S. M., "Sramana-Shaman: Etymology of the Word "Shaman", JRAS, North-China Branch, Shanghai, 55, 1924, pp. 105-130

<sup>5</sup> Eliade M., *Shamanism*, pp. 539-553

In books and articles written about Shamanism in the West and America, the term Siberian Shamanism or Siberian Shamanism is used. Under the non-ethnic term Siberia, the Shamanism of various tribes and ethnic groups (Giylak, Eskimo, Chukchi, Kamchatka, Yakut, Yukagir, Koryak, etc.) is studied. However, although it shares similarities with other elements of Shamanism, Turkish Shamanism is phenomenologically distinct. What Western ethnographers and historians of religion refer to as local or regional characteristics are actually proportional to ethnic life, social psychology, and worldview. Therefore, the term and concept of Turkish Shamanism encompasses the defined and targeted research. On the other hand, it is incorrect, in terms of approach methodology and research method, to bring the Shamanistic beliefs of societies with different cultural characteristics to the same point.

The phenomenon we call Turkish Shamanism consists of practices carried out by Turkic tribes living in the Altai-Sayan mountains and the Far East (Yakutia) today, which have preserved their existence throughout a process stretching from the past to the present. In addition, remnants of Shamanic beliefs that have been absorbed into Islam also exist among the Turks of Central Asia. However, it is certain that the Turks, who established a great empire, did not have a religion called Shamanism (or Shamanism). Shamanic institutions influenced the practices and lives of the Turks, who believed in the Sky God religion, in one way or another. Research shows that Shamanic philosophy originated from the Sky God religion. Sacrificial ceremonies offered to the Sky God, which are outside the Shamanist belief system, ancestor days, respect for the moon, sun, and stars, and the sanctity of the hearth are religious-mythological elements that have little or no connection to Shamanism.

However, Shamanism existed during the 1st and 2nd Göktürk Khaganate periods and had infiltrated the upper echelons of the state. This is confirmed by the fact that the Ashina clan descended from a Shaman family, meaning they were descendants of the legendary leader of the ancient Turks, Shaman Apangpu, and that Shamanism had an influence at all levels of the state. It has been observed that Aşina himself was a Shaman, and the "ruling Shaman" code developed in a similar way among the Mongols, with Chagatai and his wife being Shamans. Furthermore, according to some information, there were even Shamans in Timur's army.

Today, the code "ruler shaman" is used not in the sense of a shaman who can communicate with evil spirits and prevent harm from the beings of the underworld, but rather in the sense of a priest who presides over rituals of a general nature. Nite-

<sup>6</sup> See Mori M., "Političeskaya Struktura Drevnego Gosudarstva Kočevnikov Mongoli", Dok/adı na XII Mejdunarodnom Kongresse İstoričeskih Nauk, Moscow, 1970, p. 1

<sup>7</sup> Pinçen B., "The Cult of Historical Figures in Mongolian Shamanism", *Siberia, Central and East Asia in the Middle Ages*, Novosibirsk, 1975, p. 191

<sup>8</sup> Köprülü-zade M. F., *Influence of Turco-Mongolian Shamanism on Muslim Mystical Orders*, Istanbul, 1929

The ritual of "sacrificing to God," in which the participation of shamans was prohibited, was also presided over by the ruler among the ancient Turks. This, in a way, proves that the ruler-priest exhibited a phenomenon consistent with the institution of the *ak-şa-man*.

Shamanism has adopted a series of religious and mythological elements, transferring previous beliefs into a new cultural dimension. The tripartite nature of the universe is preserved in Shamanic mythology, and Shamans have placed spirits in all three worlds: the sky, home to good spirits; the earth, home to both good and evil spirits; and the underworld, filled with evil spirits. These spirits, invisible to the eye but accessible through the medium of Shamans, naturally have a distinct meaning in Shaman folklore. The primary reason for the belief that the universe is filled with spirits is related to the fact that Shamans deal exclusively with spirits.

Thanks to the abilities they have acquired from spirits, Shamans interact with supernatural powers and assume the role of protector of their tribe or clan. This is why Shamans possess physical and psychological characteristics that set them apart from everyone else. The Shaman's management of rituals is actually a test. The shaman passes this test with his supernatural abilities. The shaman must know the cosmos and the lives, traditions, customs, and languages of those who live in it (spirits, animals, plants, humans). As we see in shamanic legends, the shaman truly lives among people and is always responsible for solving these or other difficulties.

These talented individuals, who are also poets and artists, compose a type of poetry known as assonance, which consists of sounds that are pleasing to the ear

and create a type of poetry we call assonance poetry. However, since the shaman's poetry only occurs during trance, they must be distinguished from ordinary poets.

Indeed, after waking up, the shaman does not remember any of what he said (whether it be prayers or descriptions of what he saw in the sky or underground).

One of the shaman's main duties is healing. However, it should also be noted that the shaman does not treat all types of illnesses, but rather internal illnesses, especially mental illnesses, and general weakness of the body. External illnesses were treated by Shamanist Turks through natural means and with the help of people known as herbalists. The main function of these herbalists, known today as folk healers, is to prepare medicines.

improve it. Post-Shamanism has taken on the role of herbalists and expanded their activities somewhat.

One of the shaman's main duties is to foretell the future. During the shamanic era, the shaman would foretell the future based on certain signs. However, not all fortune tellers are shamans, nor do all shamans tell fortunes.

Nevertheless, among the functions of the shaman are those of an artist (singing, dancing, playing the drum, acting, etc.), a teacher (teaching shamanic mythology

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<sup>9</sup> See Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*,

or who transmits folklore to the community), doctor (treats various mental illnesses) and prophet (foretells the future). Each shaman uses the knowledge they have acquired over time, along with their innate abilities, for the benefit of the community.

Shamanism developed in nomadic societies, particularly in communities that subsisted on hunting and gathering. In such societies, where there was no division into classes or political structure, the shaman was a healer, herbalist, ritual leader, guardian and transmitter of myths, and medium. He also undertook functions such as managing spirits. Most importantly, the shaman conveyed cosmic knowledge symbolically within the context of rituals. As R. Wolsh noted, shamanism disappeared with the transition to settled life and the emergence of class differences. In societies with class divisions, the shaman was replaced by physicians, clergy, mediums, fortune tellers, and magicians. However, none of the Shaman's successors can perform the cosmic journey, which is the characteristic feature of Shamanism.

In addition to its unique characteristics, Turkish shamanism also shares common features with other shamanic systems. To put it abstractly, the shaman is the same everywhere. The shaman is the bearer of esoteric knowledge, the guardian of psychological and ecological balance, the link between the visible and invisible worlds, the guide of spirits, and a skilled healer. This functional characteristic is present in all shamanic systems. However, certain characteristics that vary across shamanic systems constitute the national characteristics of shamanism.

## 9. 2. The Origin of Shamanism's Case

Let us note in particular that there are two prevailing views in science regarding the origins of shamanism: The first is A. Ohlmarks' theory that shamanism originated in the North. According to this view, shamanism is based on trance, and at the root of this trance lies a disease called epilepsy or manic-depressive illness. The second is the theory of Gahs, W. Schmidt and S. M. Shirokogoroff that Shamanism originated in the South. According to this second view, the first Shaman was a woman, and therefore Shamanism is linked to a matriarchal foundation. It is increasingly emphasised that shamanism, believed to have emerged during the hunter-gatherer period, was initially a female occupation. However, the discovery of iron and the fact that hunting became a male art gradually brought shamanism under male domination. Although female shamans were gradually marginalised, they are still recognised as powerful shamans today. Some Altaic tribes...

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<sup>10</sup> Wolsh R., *Duh Shamanism*, p. 25

<sup>11</sup> For general information, see Buluç S., "Shaman," *Islamic Encyclopedia*, *et*



According to the beliefs of the Turks, female shamans cannot serve Ülgen and the luminous spirits because they are considered impure. This confirms that after the period when shamanism was a male pursuit, female shamans were forbidden from serving the sky spirits, and their functional areas were limited solely to the spirits of Erlik and Yer-Su.

Some scholars tend to date the origins of Shamanism to at least 20,000 to 25,000 years before the dawn of civilisation (Mesopotamia-Sumer) in terms of calendar time. When approaching the issue from an esoteric knowledge source, it is assumed that Shamanism, like other secret brotherhood organisations, is connected to very ancient civilisations. Shamanism, like the secret sciences of the Mu or Atlantis civilisation, which is thought to be one of these ancient civilisations, has been influenced by other religious or belief-based teachings. According to esoteric knowledge, the origins of Shamanistic techniques lie in the Mu-Atlantis culture.

The idea that Turkish and, more generally, Asian Shamanism has a history of 20,000 years, as mentioned above, and the fact that Shamanism is found almost everywhere in the world, is another aspect of the matter that should be evaluated in relation to its Mu-Atlantis origin. According to esoteric knowledge, the origin of Shamanism and...

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<sup>12</sup> See Hassan Ü., age, p. 57

The history of the use of shamanic techniques extends beyond a mere myth,

The other side of the issue is that accepting the assumption that Turkish Shamanism, and Shamanism in general, has a difficult-to-prove history of 15-20 thousand years limits its origins to the Asian continent.

Furthermore, when discussing the origins and emergence of religions, historians of religion emphasise the importance of Central Asia, putting forward the view that Shamanism spread from these regions.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the route to Tibet, one of the main centres of esoteric knowledge, also passes through Central Asia. Central Asia not only connects Tibet with the Western world but is also at the crossroads of trade routes extending to China and India.

Y. Z. Yörükan, who approaches this subject from a different angle, attempts to understand Shamanism as the oldest religion of the Turks in his comprehensive article entitled "Shamanism" at the beginning of his work, *Turkish Religions Before Islam* (1932), dividing it into two stages: Primitive Shamanism and Later Period Shamanism.

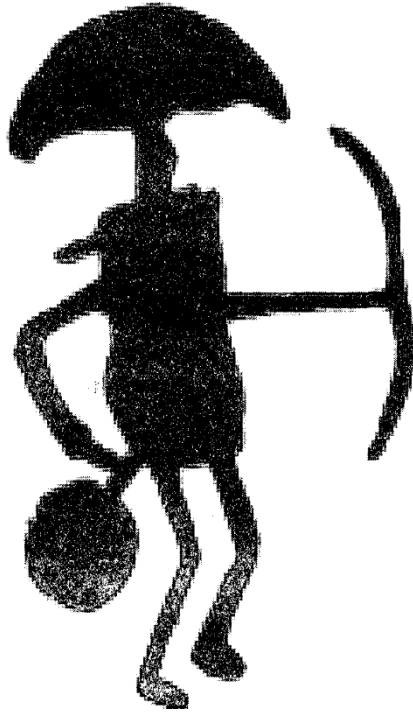


Figure 18. Depiction of a shaman holding a drum and bow on a rock in Siberia (from Diksan's book)

<sup>13</sup> Smart N., *The World's Religions*, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 227-230

<sup>14</sup> See Yörükan Y. Z., *Turkish Religions Before Islam*, Shamanism,

Regardless of anything else, Turkish Shamanism traces its origins back to the Palaeolithic era. Rock paintings can be presented as evidence to support all these assumptions.

Although there is no information about Shamans in early written sources, some rock paintings prove that Shamanism existed in the Mesolithic period. Depictions of Shamans on rocks show that this profession was not only popular

and widespread.

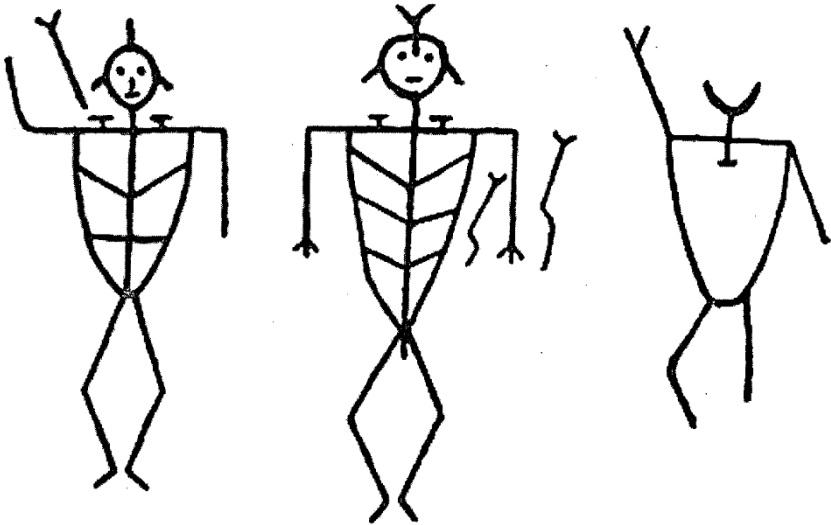


Figure 1. Depictions of Shamans drawn on rocks around Lake Baikal

This spiritual heritage, rooted in the subsistence style of hunting, has been evaluated as an integral complement to Asian nomadism, leading to attempts to trace the origins of Shamanism. Some scientists have suggested that cave paintings dating back to the Palaeolithic hunting period may be related to Shamanism, and elements found in these regions (cave paintings, statuettes, bear skulls, mysterious objects, people wearing bird masks, dancing people, etc.) have also been accepted as belonging to the realm of Shamanism. All of this remains theoretical knowledge today and seems to have been left for future research.

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<sup>15</sup> Hassan U., op. cit., p. 57

G. Ksenofontov links the origins of Shamanism, which he calls the cult of madness, to divine beings imagined as half-wolf, half-bull, half-horse. According to him, the presence of symbols or organs of these animals in the Shaman's clothing, and the Shaman's imitation of the sounds and movements of these animals during ceremonies, should be interpreted as an expression of their origins. 16

and movements during ceremonies as an expression of their own origins. 16

The earliest references to Turkish shamanism are found in the k̡ı-yıt records from the Göktürk Khaganate period. Chinese annals mention the presence of shamans among the Kyrgyz in the 7th century. However, according to the consensus of many scholars, shamanism existed in very ancient times. It is known that the primitive elements of shamanism were preserved in the ancient hunting culture and were foreign to the agricultural masses and developed settled tribes. Based on the evidence we have and the findings of recent researchers, we can say that shamanism emerged among hunters in the Palaeolithic era. 17

The information provided by Islamic sources on shamanism is complex and often insufficient, as it is frequently conflated with other religions or mythological beliefs. The only sources on this subject are two works by Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, *Kitab-ı Malihint* and *Asar-ı Bakiye*, which were published in Europe. This term, which appears as Şe-meniye or Sümeniye in Arabic sources, refers to nothing other than shamanism. However, they did not accept this term as shamanism for a long time. Y. Z. Yörükan (1932), who conducted scientific research on this term in his work *Turkish Religions Before Islam*, wrote the following:

European orientalists had not researched this topic either and, deceived by superficial statements, believed that Buddhism was expressed in the term Sümeniye. From this sentence, Barthold wrote the following in Ibn al-Nadim's work *Fihrist*: 'In ancient times and before Islam, most of the people of Maveraünnehir were followers of the Sümeniye religion'. Barthold, who states in these lines that the Chinese mixed their religions, has himself fallen into the same error and mistakenly regarded Sumanism as merely Buddhism. Although this expression has long been included in books such as *Şerh-i Mevökif* and *Makasit*, which are read in scientific institutions and madrasas, scientists and those who taught these books, those who wrote explanations and additions to them, and even those who produced works on these subjects, did not explain what it was and kept repeating a mistaken idea in a clichéd manner.

"All the knowledge of scholars on this subject since the Teftazani period is contained in the following paragraph from the Commentary on *Mevökif*: 'The Sümeniye belong to the Sumenat. They are idol worshippers and believe in the transmigration of souls; they say there is no path to knowledge other than intuition.' In *Mevökif*, these

<sup>16</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., *Shamanism*, pp. 256-257

<sup>17</sup> Hultkrantz A., "Ecological and Phenomenological Aspects of Shamanism", *Shamanism in Siberia*, Budapest, 1978, pp. 51-52



Discussions within the logical framework of not accepting speculation and conclusion, and that nothing other than the senses can express science, are explained at length and interpreted; however, no information other than the above paragraph is provided on religion and faith. The situation in the two or three centuries before Teftazani was similar. In the periods that followed, no words were added on this subject other than the well-known paragraph given by him and his contemporary Seyyid. In *Keşşöf-i Istilahatü'l-fünun*, we find the following information: 'Sümeniye means belonging to Sumanat. They worship idols and believe in the transmigration of souls. They say there is no path to knowledge other than through the heavens.' The lexicographer notes that they are a sect in India, that they are worldly, believe in the soul's journey, and reside in the city called Sumanat. According to the information provided by Burhan-ı Kati, Sumanat is a famous idol in the country of Gujarat in India. When Mahmud Ghaznavid conquered that country, he destroyed it, and the unseen idol they called Menat was there, with many followers and respect among the Indian heathens.

Ibn al-Nadim states in his *Fihrist*: 'I read a work written by a man from Khorasan about the knowledge of Khorasan in the past and the knowledge that emerged in later times, from a copy he wrote by his own hand. This book was a section resembling the *Düstur*. In it, he states that the prophet of the Sümeniye is Budasef. Most of the people of Maveraünnehir belonged to this sect before Islam and in earlier times. Sümeniye means belonging to Sümeni. They are more generous than all the people of the world and all followers of all religions. Because their prophet, Budasef, told them that the greatest thing that people should not believe in and do, and that is not lawful, is to say 'no' to everything. They act accordingly in their words and deeds. According to them, saying "no" is the work of the devil, and their sect is to expel the devil.

Ibn al-Nadim, when discussing Chinese religion, writes that most of the people belong to the Setu rye and Sümeniye sects, quoting a Christian missionary, and at the end of the topic, he also writes that the emperor and the nobles' religions are Setu rye and Sümeniye. In the same work, when discussing Indian religions and Buddha, he states that Budasef was a prophet sent by Allah to the Indians."

The first of these three groups corresponds to Shamanism, the second to the religion of Confucius, and the third to Buddhism.

Ebu Zeyd-i Bel hi, in *Kitabü 'l-Bedi'* and *'l-Tarih'*, reduces Indian religions to two main branches. One is Sümeniye, the other is Berôhime. He states that Sumanism (written as Şemeniye in another copy) is a sect called Muattila. According to Abu Zeyd al-Balhi, Muattila is known by various names, such as Melôhide, Dehriye, Zenôdika, Mühmele, and Batniye. These sects do not believe in God. Elsewhere he says: The Sümeniye are divided into two groups. One group believes that Buddha was a sent prophet, while the other group believes that Buddha was God himself who appeared to people in that form

The same author, while explaining the religions of the Chinese people, wrote that they were entirely Seneviye and Sümeniye, and then used the word Sümeniye to mean *kô hinler*. Thus, when speaking of Turkish religions, he mentions that Christianity and the Sümeniye religion exist among the Kyrgyz.

and also writes that the Kyrgyz worship idols, the sky, and the sun. Then, when discussing the Seneviye religions, he also includes Sümeniye among these religions.

The paragraphs we have quoted from these two authors contain certain indications, but they clearly state the following: The religion known as Sufism in the Islamic world is nothing other than Buddhism.

But Ibn al-Nadim and Abu Zeyd, who were more knowledgeable about the religions of India, China, and the Turks, and who spent years researching these religions in the East, direct us to a more solid truth than the conclusion we reached above. First of all, this person writes the word that others write as Sümeniye as Şemeniye. Then he says: This is the oldest religion, predating the emergence of Budasef, religions and sharia. Before the emergence of religions, people lived on the eastern side of the globe. Şemenlik is their religion. They worship idols, and their remains still exist today in India, China, and the Dokuzguzlar. The people of Khorasan call them Şemenön. On the border of Khorasan, neighbouring India, their works, the shrines and altars of their idols, are still visible. They believe in the priority of the world and the migration of souls. These words clearly and unequivocally explain that Shamanism, which existed before Buddhism, originated from Buddhism. before Buddhism." 18

As can be seen from this lengthy quotation, Shamanism has been confused with other religious systems in various Islamic sources, further complicating the issue. However, Biruni did not confuse Shamanism with other pre-Islamic religions and described Shamanism as the oldest religion in human history:

"Before the emergence of religions, the people of the earth lived in the East and belonged to the Shamanic religion." 19

Although traces of the Shaman's esoteric knowledge are preserved in present-day Siberian and Altai-Sayan Shamanism, Biruni's information is sufficient to clarify this matter completely:

"Before the emergence of the Sharia and Buddha, people were Shamans and lived on the eastern side of the Earth. These (abede-i evsön) were idol worshippers. Today, their remains can be found in India, China, and Dokuzguzlar. The Khorasanis call them Şemenön. Their works and their idols' shrines and temples can be seen in the Khorasan borders neighbouring India. They believe that the world is ancient, that souls migrate, and that the universe rolls on in an infinite void. For this reason, the sky moves secretly. For, they say, when a round object is pushed, it rolls down. Some of them...

<sup>18</sup> See Yörükan Y. Z., "Shamanism in Islamic Sources: Sümeniye or Şemeniye", Quote 1. (1997): 90-1 14. (Simplified by: Gökhan Türkmen) [www.alewiten.com/](http://www.alewiten.com/) Website.

<sup>19</sup> Yörükan Y. Z., op. cit.

believe that the world was created, but that it has existed for a million years and that this period is divided into four parts, the first of which is 400,000 years. This is a time of goodness and comfort. They say that 3457 years of this time have passed. . . etc."<sup>20</sup>

Shamanism, a source of cosmic knowledge, has conveyed information about the age of the world and developments on Earth in a symbolic language, taking advantage of all the benefits of oral culture, even though it has not undergone an evolution in the form of written texts. If the origins of Shamanism are linked to the Palaeolithic hunting era, then it seems natural that the first Shaman was a woman or that women were involved in its beginnings. Indeed, various Turkish names given to female Shamans include: utagan, udagan, ubakan,



Image 20. A Shor female shaman holding a drum bearing symbols reflecting the shamanic worldview

<sup>20</sup> Yörükan Y. z., op. cit.

Utygan, utügun, iduan, etc. are etymologically linked to the od (fire)-hearth cult. Ut/ud+gan is the spirit that protects the fire and the hearth. In an era when the hunting period had not yet fully established itself, women were the primary guardians of the hearth and fire, and thus cosmic knowledge was in their hands. The fact that, according to G. Potanin, the term udagan is connected to Ötügen also supports our view. Thus, the female shaman is, in terms of origin, connected to the Mythological Mother complex and symbolises the female beginning.

Furthermore, in traditional Turkish shamanism literature, as well as in our interviews with Altai and Yakut shamans, it is emphasised that female shamans are powerful in all respects, and that female shamans have a special place, whether in healing or ritual contexts.

Figure 20. A Tololı female shaman.

Her dress is adorned with a skeleton-shaped ornament.

This is a symbol of the Shamans' ability to return to the world.



The term *Udagan*, which passed from the Turks to the Mongol Buryat peoples, signified both the god of fire and female shamans. This information confirms that the first shaman was a woman who protected the fire.

The majority of ethnographers and historians (Troščanskiy, Bogoras, Stadling, etc.) insist that only female shamans existed when shamanism first emerged. Male shamans gained importance within the context of the division of labour in kinship organisations, with the rise of patriarchy. Over time, in shamanism, which was called the "black

belief," male shamans began to take the place of women.

has begun. In fact, the situation has been taken so far that in some Turkish tribes, female shamans were not considered important enough, and were only invited to perform shamanic duties when there were no male shamans available. For this reason, the heroes in shamanic legends and memorates are male shamans. In very few cases

, female shamans are portrayed as more powerful than their male counterparts.

It should also be noted that the main characteristics that bring about the trance state essential for shamanism, foremost among which is a special shamanic illness similar to neurosis, are characteristic of women. Structurally, women are more susceptible to emotional and exciting situations than men. In Siberian tribes, manic illness is a disease that affects women more frequently. Therefore, women appear to be well-suited to shamanism, both socially and psychologically. It is assumed that the profession of female shamanism later passed into the hands of men during the advanced stages of hunting. The adoption by men of all the tools that provided a livelihood in the division of labour led to the emergence of male shamans and their domination of the entire social arena outside of social rituals.

V. Troščanskiy has explained the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy in shamanism simply but accurately as follows: In every Yakut family, when the husband was away from home, the woman lived separately with her children, relatives and cattle. In this situation, the woman became the head of the family and performed family ceremonies. The *iyе-usа* (matriarchal) family structure gradually transformed into the *аgа-usа* (patriarchal) family structure.<sup>21</sup>

According to V. Troščanskiy's<sup>22</sup> account based on Yakut Shamanism, the process of women becoming black Shamans and men becoming black Shamans began when the art of blacksmithing emerged and blacksmiths were perceived as magicians who ruled over iron. The blacksmith's power came from his relationship with iron. Blacksmiths, like Shamans, were divided into white and black. However, the existence of black blacksmiths was more widely known among the Yakuts.

<sup>21</sup> Troščanskiy V. F., *Evolutsiya Ćemoy Ven u Yakutov*, Kazan, 1902, p. 116

<sup>22</sup> Troščanskiy V. F., op. cit., p. 125

. The similarity between the blacksmith and the shaman is distinguished by the fact that blacksmithing is passed down through several generations of the same lineage. On the other hand, the blacksmith is seen as the shaman's older brother, and the difference between them is erased. In fact, according to some Turkish tribes, blacksmiths and shamans formed a separate class.

In this case, since women cannot be blacksmiths, they are forced to cede primacy in the family and society to men.

Without repeating what has been said above about the blacksmith cult, it is possible to limit ourselves to the following. If there is a profession closer to the shaman and related to the institution of shamanism, it is blacksmithing. So much so that the proverb "Us da oyun bir uyalah" (The blacksmith and the shaman come from the same nest) confirms this. The blacksmith can also foretell the future and heal the sick.

In conclusion, shamanism is an esoteric paradigm phenomenon that emerged in the earliest known civilisations, characterised by its dissimilarity to any of the religious-magical belief systems that followed it.

TENTH CHAPTER  
THE DICHOTOMIC SHAMANIC WORLD

1 O. 1. On the Name of the Shaman

It is particularly worth noting that when Shamanism became a cultural accumulation, it reorganised the pre-existing mythological beliefs to suit its own practices. The cosmology that had been forgotten over time also reached us through Shamanic culture. This is why all symbols belonging to the macrocosm and microcosm are not seen in Shamanic mythology. The oldest twin myth, the dual opposition of centre and periphery ( edge) related to the macrocosm and microcosm, ancestor cult, spirits, etc., do not exist in Turkish Shamanism. Dichotomous division can be interpreted in the Shamanism institution as Shamans who establish contact with the spirits of the upper and lower worlds. Otherwise, we would overstate the place of Shamanism in Turkish culture. Indeed, the Shaman, who is influential in all aspects of social life, may not be involved in certain religious practices, such as those related to the Sky God and ancestor cult. This shows that the Shaman is more of a guide for practical activities than a religious figure. In this context, Ü. Hassan's idea also shows that the shaman is not a religious figure but a public official. According to him, the Altai kama accompanies the ancestor Bay Ülgen, who is sacrificed, to the floor where he is located. The shaman offers the sacrifice. The work done is the public duty of the shaman. Here, the " sacrifice ceremony is managed by the Shamanism is definitely not the case.

The name "Shaman," which carries such a public responsibility, has undergone various etymological changes over time. The international term "Shaman" is generally translated into Turkish as "kam" (gam, ham). According to information from various sources, the terms used for "shaman" in the languages of the Altaic peoples, Tuva, Teleut, Telengit, Lebed, Shor, Sagay, Kaybol, Kachin, Küe-

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<sup>1</sup> Hassan Ü., p. 67

-rik, Beltir, Soyon, Kumandin Turks kam or ham, Yakuts oyun, Chuvash yum, Kyrgyz-Kazakhs bakşı/baksı or bahşı, Buryats bö, Tungus sa-man, Nanays, Ulch people say sama, Oroqen people say sam, Manchu people say sam, Uyghur people say samatı, Nivkh people say çam, Ket people say eenin, Samoyed people say tarıp, Ostyak people say tadıb, Nen people say tadebya, Yukaghir people say alına, Saami people say noyda, Turkmen people say perihan, falbin, and Khanty people say yölta-ku.<sup>2</sup>

Both the Altaic-Sayan Turks and the Yakuts refer to female shamans using words derived from the Turkish od/ut, such as udugan, udagan, utahan, ubahan, iduan, etc. The Mongols, Buryats, and Kalmyks call male shamans bö or böge, but refer to female shamans using the Turkish word udagan. It is also known that some Turkic tribes call female shamans üdege. This term is known to mean housewife or simply lady. The Turkish word udagan has transformed into utakan in the Tungus language and is used to mean sorcerer.

According to the erroneous findings of some scholars, particularly G. Potanin and D. Banzarov, udagan and its variants among Turkic peoples are Mongolian in origin and derive from Etugen/Ötügen. In Mongolian, Etugen means 'main land'. In fact, the term Ötügen has also passed from Turkish into Mongolian, or at least it is a Nostratic term. Various information has been provided about the etymology of this Altaic word.

This word, present in the variants Ötügen/Etugen, Etügen, and İtügen,

\*It can be assumed that it comes from the root öt. This root, which is synonymous, conveys various meanings such as to make a sound and to make a bird sound. From this root, words such as ötür, meaning to pierce, ötgür, meaning to receive news, and ötse, meaning to pass through a hole, have been formed. There are also words related to the root öt, such as öte (to pay) and ötükcü, meaning intercessor or mediator.<sup>3</sup> Of the meanings given in Mahmud of Kashgar's dictionary, the one closest to Ötügen is ötükcü, meaning intercessor, or ötüklüg kişi (a person who has a request from the khan). The gan/ken suffix in the word ötügen has the same semiological function as the gen suffix in the name of the deity Ülgen. Indeed, the gan/ken suffix, added to words denoting divine origin, sanctity, and essence, could initially have been derived from the \*ka root, which was part of the kinship paradigm.

<sup>2</sup> See Potanin G. N., *Dçerki Severo-Zapadnoy Mongoli*, vol. 2, St. Petersburg, 1881, p. 81; Banza-rov D., *Çornaya Vera ili Şamanstvo u Mongolov i Drugie Stati*, St. Petersburg, 1891, p. 35; Potapov L. P., "On the Question of the Old Turkic Basis and Dating of Altai Shamanism," *Ethnography of the Peoples of Altai and Western Siberia*, Novosibirsk, 1978, p. 6; Smolyak A. V., *Shaman: Personality, Function*, p. 56; Basilov V. N., *The Chosen Ones of the Spirits*, pp. 10–11.

<sup>3</sup> Kaşgarlı Mahmud, *Divanü Lugatit-Türk*, vol. 2, Ankara, 1998, p. 144



It should be noted that the term Ötügen/Etügen also means the constellation of the bear in the Altaic and Finno-Ugric tribes. In fact, in the dialect of the Siberian Tatars, utigan means bear.

The earliest sources on Turkish or Mongolian Shamans are Chinese chronicles. The term shaman appears in Chinese sources around the end of the 1st millennium as wu.

We encounter the word kam, meaning which is the ruler of the shamanic tradition, in the Turfan texts, with the first information on this subject coming from Chinese sources. In addition, the word kam appears in medieval texts such as *Kutadgu Bilig*, *Divanü LCigati't-Türk*, *Codex Cumanicus*, Abu Hayyan's *Kitiibu'l-Idriik li-Lisiini'l-Etriik*, and other dictionaries and works. According to W. Eberhard, the Kyrgyz called their shamans "kan" at the beginning of the Common Era.<sup>4</sup>

Commonly known as kam, or kan among some Turkish tribes, this ancient sorcerer, healer, fortune teller, sacrificer to evil spirits, etc., the shaman, a religious-magical figure, was the focal point of kinship in ancient societies. All matters in the practical life of the community were under the control of the shaman, who also acquired the characteristics of a warrior and leader. It is highly probable that the focal point of a religious-magical structure was also the kam (ism). In this context, kam could have derived from \*ka, a term denoting kinship. Therefore, ka+m, ka+n, ka+ğan are also connected to other kinship-indicating words of the same organisation: ka+dm, ka+yın, ka+r(in)daş, ar+ka+daş, etc.

The term 'shaman', which has become an international term, first appeared in the late 17th century in the travelogue of two individuals (E. Isbrand and A. Brand) who travelled to China as Russian envoys. The envoys introduced the word 'shaman', meaning priest or magician in the Tungus language, to Europe. After the 17th century, the word "shaman" began to be used in books written in both Russia and Europe in studies related to shamanism, which formed a special system with a specific preparation and trance technique.

Various ideas have been put forward about the origin of the word "shaman." Just like the emergence of shamanism, the word "shaman" (where it came from and what it was first used to mean, etc.) has not been fully clarified in the scientific world. However, based on numerous studies, it is possible to conclude the following:

1- The word "shaman" comes from the Pali word samana, meaning "a man inspired by spirits".

<sup>4</sup> Eberhard W., *China's Northern Neighbours*, Ankara, 1942, p. 69

<sup>5</sup> See Laufer B., "Origin of The Word Shaman", *American Anthropology*, 19, Menasha, 1917, pp. 361-371; Roux J. P., "The Name of the Shaman in Turco-Mongolian Texts", *Anthropos*, 53, 1-2, 1958, pp. 440-456

2- The Sanskrit word samana, meaning seer, is derived from çramana and played a role in the formation of the concept of Shaman. In Sanskrit, sram, meaning to be weary or appear weary, formed the noun sramana, meaning a man of religious duty. These words in Pali and Sanskrit were used during the Buddhist period to mean Buddhist monk.

3- This term comes from the Manchu word saman, meaning a playful, jumping, lively man. In Manchu, sandambi means "I am performing a ritual." From here, it passed into Tungusic as hamman.

4- According to S. Shirokogoroff, the Tungusic word "shaman" was used to mean "to know through ecstasy".

5- The word "shaman" appears in medieval Islamic sources as "Sumeniyye," a term derived from the word "semen," meaning "Buddhist monk," and originating in India.

It is widely accepted that the term 'shaman' is not of Turkish origin. However, it is known that some scholars (Gy. Nemeth, etc.) have compared the word 'kam' with the word 'shaman' and have written that both are derived from the same root. The word "shaman," which became an international term in the 18th century, was introduced to Europe by the Russians, who learned it from the Tungus. The existence of this word in various phonetic pronunciations proves that it could be a Nostratic language data. Indeed, in Evenki, the root "sa" means to know, to understand, to think. The Old Turkic word san also means to count and to think. It is therefore clear that the term saman/shaman refers to a person who knows, understands and thinks in esoteric knowledge, and the above explanations prove this.

To summarise briefly, there seems to be a consensus in academia that the term "shaman" is derived from the root "saman" or "samana". However, it is possible to say that the kam or shaman culture, which was widespread among the Turks before and at the beginning of the Christian era, also constitutes a stage and is the source of Turkish mythology. For this reason, it is imperative that shamanism be studied using scientific methods.

## 1 0. 2. Structural-Functional Types of Shamans .

As evident from Turkish shaman legends, shamans are divided into two categories:

- 1- Lower World Shamans
- 2- Upper World Shamans

G. Potanin also divided Shamans into two categories:

- 1- Shamans who come from the sky, the source of goodness
- 2- Shamans originating from the evil tree.<sup>6</sup>

In scholarly literature, Shamans are referred to as white and black Shamans. The Altai people call them *ak kam kara kam* or *manyak yok kam manyaktu kam* the Yakuts call them *ayıı oyuna, abaası oyuna*; and the Buryats call them *sagani bö, hara bö*. Tungus Shamans are also divided into two groups: 1. Shamans who derive their power from the sky and are only called upon when deer fall ill. 2. Shamans who derive their power from the underworld and are summoned during all kinds of human illnesses. It should be noted that when shamanism is mentioned, black shamans are primarily considered, which is why after Buddhism spread among some Turkic tribes and Mongols, shamanism was called D. Banzarov. The term dark faith was further popularised by V. Troščanskiy. It is known from ethnographic literature that white Shamans only offered sacrifices to luminous spirits and essentially served luminous spirits. Furthermore, white Shamans...

It is also known that the sun greets the black shamans.

However, over time, white Shamans were pushed into the background as black Shamans became influential in society. In fact, in some Turkic tribes, the white and black Shaman divisions have become intertwined.

The symbols of black and white in Shamanic mythology perfectly represent the distinction between evil spirits and good spirits. Shamans who perform shamanism on black spirits in an appropriate manner, demanding that they leave people alone to cure illness, and who offer sacrifices to black spirits to appease their wrath are called black shamans. Shamans who offer sacrifices to white spirits, asking them for abundance and children, and who perform public ceremonies are called white shamans. <sup>7</sup> Altai, Tuba and others

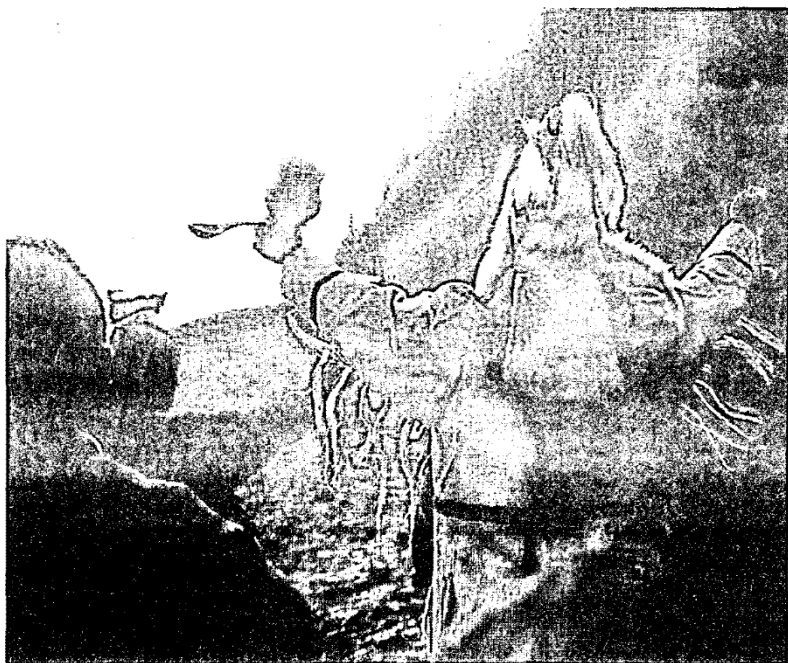
<sup>6</sup> Potanin G. N., *Ocherki Severo-Zapadnoy Mongoli*, vol. 4, p. 63

<sup>7</sup> Troščanskiy V. R., "Opit Sistematičeskoj Programi dlya Sobiraniya Svedeniy o Dohristianskih Verovanlyah Yakutov, Jivaya Starina, vol. 2, 1911, p. 249; Bogoraz V. G., "K Psikolog! Şamans- tvo u Narodov Severo-Yostočnoy Azli", *Etnograficheskie Obozreniya*, No:1,2, Moscow, 1910

Image 2.1. A Yakut shaman and actor, A. Fyodorov, in white shaman attire



Figure 22. Yakut shaman A. Fyodorov greets the morning sun on the Shaman Rock on the Lena River.



In the shamanic tradition of the Altai-Sayan Turks, black shamans are actually associated with the underworld, while shamans ( ) are associated with the upper world. Therefore, the connection of shamans to the upper or underworld is indicated by colour symbols. Generally, red clothing is sewn for shamans going to the upper world, the clothing they sew is decorated with eagle feathers, and their drums are painted red. The garments and drums of Shamans travelling to the black road (i.e. the underworld) are black, and they adorn their headdresses with crow feathers. Furthermore, white Shamans travelling to the spirits of the upper world often ride white horses. The training of white and black Shamans also differs. Indeed, as seen in the shaman legends compiled by G .

Ksenofontov, the spirit of the lower world shamans is nurtured in a special cradle alongside the evil spirits of the underworld and is fed by those who wear shoes. The spirits of the upper world Shamans are raised in special nests, like birds.<sup>9</sup> Shaman legends are filled with these two types of Shamanism. The division of Shamans into the lower and upper worlds is somewhat reminiscent of the white and black Shamans among the Altai-Sayan Turks and the *ayn oyuna* and *abaası oyuna*

Shaman types among the Yakut Turks. However, while the white and black Shaman division creates a difference in terms of either clothing or function, there is no particular difference in terms of clothing or function between the upper and lower world Shamans.

No connection is apparent.

According to some scholars, the white and black shaman institutions developed independently of each other and represented an original shamanic path in the dark ages of history. According to some ideas, white shamans, who serve good spirits, appeared first and were the transformed form of family and clan leaders. Managing social sacrificial offerings and rituals of a social nature also made white Shamans the physical and spiritual leaders of the tribe. The simplest way to become a respected and knowledgeable person in society was to be chosen not only by humans but also by spirits.

It is a fact that within the Turkic tribes, shamanism was more prevalent in the form of black shamanism. According to V. Troščanskiy's not-so-fundamental idea, among the Yakuts, white shamans were men in families headed by men and women in families headed by women.

in families headed by women, it is the woman. However, in contemporary Yakut Shamanism, women Shamans are known as black Shamans. According to another source, Shamans are also classified according to their level of power and ability: great Shamans (*uluhan game*), middle Shamans (*middle game*) and small Shamans (*kenniki game*). The Emeget of the great Shamans was given by Ulu Toyon. Middle Shamans also have Emegets, but they are not as powerful as those of the Great Shamans.

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<sup>8</sup> Basilov V. N. *İzbranniki Duhov*, p. 196

<sup>9</sup> Ksenofontov G. v., *Hrestes and Shamanism*, p. 75

<sup>10</sup> İl-oğçanskiy V. R., *Attempt at a Systematic*,

They are not. Minor Shamans are those who do not possess Emeget. They are not true Shamans, but only individuals with a pronounced neurotic state who treat only minor illnesses, interpret dreams, and can fight minor evil spirits.

A. İnan's views on this subject are also valuable: according to some ethnographers, this institution of white shamans emerged at a time when primitive shamanism began to show a tendency to become a "true religion". White shamans resemble Buddhist monks in many ways.

According to a common view, they are chosen by the spirits of the sky and play with the moon.

A. Savin has provided extensive information about the rituals of becoming a white shaman. 12 In early times, white shamans, who were directed to act as oracles for the tribe's guardian spirits, did not fall ill with shamanic sickness, did not go into trances, and did not offer sacrifices to the spirits. According to Savin, white shamans rarely fell ill. The fact that the white shaman differs from the black shaman in terms of both function and symbols is most likely related to their emergence from among the tribal leaders. In this sense, the black shaman, who was engaged in practical matters (healing the sick, driving the spirit of the deceased from the house, asking for children, helping to find anything lost, etc.), must have been different from the beys, who were the leaders of the clan and the managers of social sacrificial rituals.

Regardless of the formal character of the division between white and black Shamans, the most common view is that white Shamans served good spirits and black Shamans served evil spirits. Former Soviet scholars associate the division of Shamans into two categories primarily with social factors — the emergence of the aristocratic class and the black nobility among nomadic tribes. This led to the division of Shamans into two classes.<sup>13</sup> However, we have no evidence that this division existed in ancient times. The emergence of this dichotomous division played an important role in the chronological approach to McSeley.

In fact, it is clear from Shamanic memorates that white and black Shamanism could not have existed at the beginning. However, it is consistent with Shamanic legends that there could be upper and lower world Shamans or Shamans serving these spirits. The legends of the Yakuts about upper, middle and lower world Shamans should also be added here. The fact that Shamanism conditioned all social life played an important role in the formation of the institution of the white Shaman. The fact that the leader of social sacrificial ceremonies, which did not fall within the Shaman's sphere of activity, was the elder of the tribe led to the formation of the white Shaman as the counterpart of the Shamans who were the leaders of other sacrificial ceremonies.

The former were called white Shamans, the latter black Shamans. Special

<sup>11</sup> A. İnan, *Shamanism in History and Today*, Ankara, 2000, pp. 83-84

<sup>12</sup> For A. Savlin's views, see Alekseev N. A., *Shamanism Among the Turkic Peoples*, pp. 122-123

<sup>13</sup> Milyaylov T. M., *Buryat Shamanism*, Novosibirsk, 1987, p. 103

The term "white shaman" used to describe tribal elders who do not wear special clothing, do not play the drum, and do not enter a trance is a rather conditional concept.

The spirit of the White Shaman candidate first lives in the homeland of Elegey Iyehsit and Onogoy Baay Toyon, ancestors of the Yakuts. Here he sees dreams of the future and spends a time filled with longing and sorrow. The White Shaman's affliction is fate, longing, and distress. After this, the candidate descends to the middle world, transforming into an eagle to find a father and mother for himself. He descends from the top of the woman into her womb and is born nine months later.

In the dichotomous section, we also see that Shamans form a hierarchy according to their powers. V. Butanaev has divided the Hakas Shamans into three categories in this context:<sup>14</sup>

- 1- Pügdürs, the greatest Shamans with nine Shaman drums, special clothing, and numerous helper

. According to belief, during the shamanic process, these Shamans could reach the most distant places.

- 2- Pulğoslar, Shamans with one drum. They are chosen from among simple madmen and can travel horizontally to reach neighbouring regions.

- 3- Çalancılar were weak Shamans who only possessed the power of hypnosis.

These Shamans, who have no clothing or drums, are responsible for minor tasks and cure ailments such as the evil eye and fear.

V. Bogoraz, however, divided Siberian Shamans into three categories based on their functions:

- 1- Shamans who interact with spirits
- 2- Fortune-telling Shamans who predict the future
- 3- Shamans who practised magic, medicine, and witchcraft.

D. Banzarov has grouped Mongolian Shamans into three categories:

- 1- Shamans who have taken on the role of priesthood
- 2- Shamans who have taken on the role of healing
- 3- Fortune-telling Shamans who foretell the future. 16

<sup>14</sup> Butanaev V., *Social and Economic History of the Khakass People in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries*, Abakan, 2002, pp.

121–122

<sup>15</sup> Bogoriz: V. G., *On the Psychology of Shamanism*, p. 21

<sup>16</sup> See: Banzar, v O., *The Black Vira or Shamanism among the Mongols*, St. Petersburg, 1891

Shamans, who perform priestly duties, convey the wishes of spirits to people and assist them in offering sacrifices. These types of Shamans are the leaders of rituals and know the prayers and chants. In addition, Shamans belonging to the first category are also invited for special tasks. Healer Shamans are solely responsible for expelling evil spirits from the sick body and healing the sick. Shamans who foretell the future read fortunes using a sheep's spine or an arrow and make predictions about the future.

Among the Nanay and Ulchi Shamans, the most powerful Shaman is the Kasatı Shaman, who sends the spirits of the dead to the other world, heals, and asks for abundance. Second in rank are the Shamans who are solely responsible for healing.<sup>17</sup>

The most common and general of all categorical Shaman divisions is the white and black Shaman category. This category is common to Siberian Shamanism. However, in some Paleo-Siberian peoples, the concept of white and black Shamans does not exist. In Paleo-Siberian Shamanism, the white and black Shaman category has been replaced by the division of family Shamanism and professional Shamanism. This can also be seen in the grouping of the more primitive Paleo-Siberian Shamanism under the names of family Shamanism and professional Shamanism. Professional shamanism is closer to religious systems and its development accelerated after the spread of Christianity in Siberia. Although family shamanism retained its old structure, it weakened over time. On the other hand, professional shamanism is closer to the black shamanism belief of the Yakut and Altai Turks.

Some scholars insist that there are two types of shamanism among the Paleo-Siberian and other Siberian peoples. According to this classification, shamans are divided into two categories: 1) Family

Shamans and 2) Professional Shamans. Family Shamans are primarily concerned with the health of those belonging to the household, and those belonging to the household ( ) are under their protection. Family Shamans are the leaders of family celebrations and sacrificial rituals. They are also responsible for the family's charms and spells.

duties.

Professional Shamans are Shamans who do not belong to any particular group and operate in all areas. According to V. Jochelson's view, professional Shamanism developed after family Shamanism and built upon its foundations. However, there is also a third category between these two, known as social shamanism, which manages certain rituals in collaboration with family shamans.<sup>19</sup> The accuracy of this entire classification is debatable. Indeed, it is impossible to draw a clear line between family shamans, social shamans and professional shamans. On the other hand, Yakut and Altay-

<sup>17</sup> Smolyak A. V., *op. cit.*, pp. 53-55

<sup>18</sup> Jochelson V., "The Koryak", *The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, New York, 1905, VI, p. 47

<sup>19</sup> Jochelson V., *op. cit.*, p. 47 and following



There are no Shamans belonging to this category among the Sayan Turks. The fact that some weak Shamans perform shamanic rituals only within a narrow circle does not qualify them as family Shamans.

V. Jochelson and V. Bogoras' ideas on family and professional shamanism have been applied to Yakut Shamans by V. Troščanskiy and Stadling. These two scholars view professional shamanism as a special institution and assume that their duties are not related to other social cults.<sup>20</sup> With the development of shamanism, the practice and guidance of social cults fell upon the so-called white shamans. V. Troščanskiy developed these theoretical views among the Yakut Shamans and later explained all Siberian Shamanism in this way. However, it should also be noted that despite the differences between all these categories, the duties and functions of Shamans are intertwined. Differences are only apparent in some specific cases.

This dual division is particularly evident among the Koryak and Chukchi Shamans. Indeed, there are certain functional differences between trance Shamans and fortune-telling Shamans and physician Shamans. In other words, the differences between these Shaman classes developed within a socio-economic context but are also related to individual abilities. It should also be noted that there are some differences in traditional shamanic clothing. However, according to Turkish shamanic thought, differences in drums and costumes are more related to the wishes of the spirits than to the dual division of shamans. Indeed, according to shamanic tradition, drums and costumes are made according to the wishes of the spirits. In fact, symbols, which are the outward expression of Shaman consciousness explained in the context of individual talent and taste, are presented in the context of tradition in relation to the names of spirits.

Powerful Shamans, unlike others, possess all Shamanic abilities and the skill to establish contact with spirits. These types of Shamans declare that they possess these abilities in the name of the spirits. For this reason, Shamans who are grouped into a lower category are influenced by Shamans in a higher category.

The basis for dividing into all these categories lies in approaching shamanism within a broad conceptual framework. In fact, V. Verbitskiy, who provided the most comprehensive and initial information about Altai shamanism, offered the following non-shamanic classification that could clarify this situation:

- 1- There are also epileptic patients called rimçi (to be rimçi) who foretell the future during times of mental anguish.
- 2- There are also fortune tellers, known as telgoçi, who read fortunes.
- 3- There are special fortune-tellers called yarinçi who read fortunes using a burning shoulder blade.
- 4- There are also yadacılar who control the weather with a stone. 21

<sup>20</sup> Troščanskiy V. F., *Opit Sistematičeskogo*, pp. 123-127

<sup>21</sup> Verbitskiy V. i., *Altayskie Inorodtsi*, p. 64

Assigning these tasks to shamans is nothing more than loading shaman types with other non-shamanic cultural elements. Along with the professions listed by V. Verbitskiy, there are nearly thirty arts and professions based on secret knowledge among the Alatau-Sayan Turks today. Based on ethnographic literature, let us list the names of some of them:

- 5- Arınçı-ırınçı (those who tell fortunes by heating sheep bones)
- 6- Arbiş (those who tell fortunes using a shelter)
- 7- Yelbegçi, Çilbegçi (those who perform magic using an old piece or a branch of an oak tree)
- 8- Piligyi (physician, knowledgeable person)
- 9- Körüjji, Köspökçi (those who see spirits)
- 10- Kindik-ene (midwife) 11
- Demçu (pharmacist)
- 12- Kayçı (reciter of the Altay epic of heroism)
- 13- Blacksmith
- 14- Carpenter
- 15- Hunter
- 16- Potter, etc.

## BELIEF IN THE SOUL IN THE CONTEXT OF REINCARNATION

## 1. 1. The Concept of the Soul and

Reincarnation in Shamanism (Reincarnation) The Issue  
of the

One of the most distinctive features of SHAMANISM is the belief in spirits. According to the shamanic worldview, all living beings, both visible and invisible, have spirits. Just as the shaman knows the language of plants, animals and birds, he also knows the language of the spirits that inhabit the invisible world. The reincarnation of the spirit constitutes the secret aspect of the shamanic belief system. The shaman is someone who believes in the journey of the spirit and systematises the belief in spirits. As seen in all folkloric and ethnographic materials, the shaman is someone who can leave their physical body in this world and transport their spirit to metaphysical worlds. This belief expands the shaman's working capacity and establishes their relationship with people at a certain level.

In the beliefs of the Khakas Shamans, the spirit (can) is very important. This importance stems from the fact that during the shamanic ceremony, the spirit (can) takes on a different name depending on the state it passes through or transforms into. In the traditional beliefs of the Khakas, there are several different states of the spirit (can). These are:

- kut, meaning vitality, luck and happiness;
- sus, which is the ray of sunlight that enters through the smoke hole in the ceiling of the tent during the child ritual performed by the kam, giving life to the soul of the child to be born;
- on, meaning breath, the first breath of life and therefore its beginning;
- harah, which lives in the eyes of living beings, departs with death, and means the fire of the eyes;

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<sup>1</sup> Anjiganova L. V., Traditsionnoe Mirovoztrenie Hakasov. Obit Rekonstruktsi, Abakan, 1997, pp. 62-66, Quoted from the website [www.alewiten.com](http://www.alewiten.com), Timur Davletov, from the article Traditional Beliefs of the Hakas Turks Kamlik (Shamanism: Past and Present).

- The name of the conscious part of the soul within a person, meaning thought and idea;
- The new name taken by the soul after a person's death, which continues to exist<sup>for</sup> 40 days' known as *süne* or *sürnü*;
- And in the first year after a person's death, their soul or spirit wanders the earth, but when this soul passes into the underworld (*Alt tilekey*), it takes on a new form called *üzüt*.

As far as can be seen, in the traditional beliefs of the Hakas, the soul has a total of seven different forms. This strongly supports the idea that the concept of the soul holds a very important place in the Hakas worldview.

This also proves the belief in traditional Turkish Shamanism that all humans and animals have more than one spirit. It has been determined that humans have at least three spirits, especially in Siberia, where Turkish Shamanism is widespread.

, it has been determined that humans have at least three spirits. Spirits are usually found in the human energy field or define the energy field. In this context, in the Shamanist belief system, the source of knowledge for humans is the heart. Indeed, the important point where the spirit or spirits reside is close to the chest.

and the energy source is the chest itself. Therefore, although the brain is important in other functions , it does not hold significance in comprehending the hidden secrets.

According to the beliefs of the Altai Shamans, living beings, and especially humans, have six types of spirits. The Altaians do not believe that death occurs when the spirit leaves the human body

. They believe that a person can continue living if the shaman brings back the stolen spirit. Therefore, using V. Verbitskiy's classification, the spirits present in the human body can be listed as follows:

1. *Tın*, *tımp* (soul), *tımt* (breath) are words that exist in plants, animals and humans. The Altaians say *tın uzyulgende ar uezı ay pıla* (when the soul leaves, all organs disintegrate). Superstitious Altaians hear how the soul of a dead person breaks away. In Altai, when cursing someone, they say *tının tırıs etsin* ( may your spirit be torn apart). There are also expressions related to *tın* in Altai Turkish: *tındı ağaşı* (living, fresh tree), *tındı elen* (fresh grass), *tındı balat* (sharp steel), *tının kıldı* ( my spirit came, refreshed), *çaçhan aştın yamgırğa tını kır-yat* ( grain, revived by the rain).

2- *Suzı*, derived from the verb *suzıp* (to fill with water), means to fill with any liquid substance, or *suuzak*, a combination of the words *su* (water) and *uzak* (long), meaning long-lived, healthy, and from there *SUZı*, meaning a healthy person or animal.

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<sup>2</sup> Verbitskiy V. i., The Altai Peoples, pp. 98-99

It means the life force that sustains it. The Altaians say, "maldın suzın uzyuttep alıp pardı" (the spirits or remains of dead animals were taken away) and "kijinin su-zı tyuryup yat" (the spirit of the deceased person wanders).

3- Kut has the same meaning as suzı and is derived from the word kudup (I disappear, I vanish without notice, I disappear from sight). Kut is the life force, fertility, happiness, and goodness. In Altai, kudı çılp pardı (the spirit jumped) means that a person became insane, lost their mind, because they were very frightened. In this situation, the shaman performs a ritual to bring back the spirit that has left the body. In Altai Turkish, the expression er kudup pardı means that the land has lost its fertility, its beauty. Similarly, the phrase kiji kudup pardı means that a person has disappeared.

4- Tüla is derived from the word tülup (I pull, I tear). Tüla means the essence, the mixture of a thing. Animals do not have tüla. It is found only in humans. According to the Altay conception, this spirit is white, lumpy, constantly moving and essence, the mixture of something. Animals do not have tüla. It is found only in humans. According to the Altay conception, this spirit is white, lumpy, constantly moving, and the size of a rifle bullet. Shamans show the tüla they have captured and hold in their hands to the audience during the kamlık ceremony.

5- Derived from the term sür, meaning to drive away, expel, or banish. Sür is the spirit that is marginalised from the home after a person dies, or that the shaman expels from the home on the fortieth day after death by performing a ritual. In Altay, sürmet means appearance, depiction, shape. Sür is also used in this sense. Sür is also found in animals. According to the Altay people's conception, the spirits of animals also migrate to the other world like their deceased owners. There, their owners graze them as they did when they were alive. The word sür also has the meaning of fat. Sürlü meat means fatty meat. Süryülü kiji means a man with an influential gaze. Sür solırıp-yat means that the deceased human being's soul does not want to part with the things it carried with it and loved very much while alive.

6- Süne exists only in humans and is derived from sünelep (I consult, I think). Süne is the intelligent part of a human being. When it leaves the body, it is the size of a human being. In Altayca, kijinin süne püdüttü boy means that a human being's soul is as tall as a human being. Süne türüp-yat means that when a human being's soul leaves the body, it travels to the places it visited during its lifetime

It makes a sound similar to a moan, and sometimes it can be heard by living humans. He calls one of them by name. According to the belief of the Altaians, the man whose name is called dies shortly thereafter.

V. Troščanskiy has provided information about the beliefs of Yakut Shamans, which are similar to the spirit beliefs of the Altai tribes.<sup>3</sup> Within this different spirit belief, we can see three spirits: 1) tın (life, breath), 2) kut (physical spirit), and 3) sür. The tın in humans, animals, and plants is similar to the beliefs of the Altai Turks. Kut is both in humans and animals and is similar to the beliefs of the Altai Turks.

and plants is similar to the belief of the Altai Turks. Kut is both in-

<sup>3</sup> Troščanskiy, V. F., Evolyutsiya Čemoy Ven u Yakutov, Kazan, 1902, pp. 72-74

It exists in both humans and animals and consists of three parts: a) buor-kut, the spirit of the earth, which is composed of the elements of the earth. b) Salgın-kut, the spirit of the air, which is composed of the elements of the air. c) İye-kut, the mother spirit, which comes from the mother.

According to Yakut belief, at birth, buor-kut comes from the earth. Salgın-kut is taken from the air. İye-kut passes to the child from the mother. Unlike the

, the Yakuts' belief in kut is, as seen, three-stage. According to information provided by V. Troščanskiy, sür descends into the mother's body from her temple when she becomes pregnant. Kut is sent by Ayn Toyon, while sür is sent by Ulu Toyon. Sür is related to the beginning and has no reflection or representation. Kut, however, has...

There are three depictions along with the rın. After death, the abaasılar are placed in a box, but according to belief, after a few days, the kut revives beside the body and migrates to the other world. Thus, only the kut goes to the other world. The sür does not disappear after death; it passes into the fish.

The belief in spirits mentioned above proves that the Shamanist Turks had a distinct concept of the spirit. This also indicates that the Turks had a belief in spirits since ancient times and that a related concept of the afterlife developed.

The belief in spirits naturally gave rise to the belief in the other world. However, since the Shamanist Turks believed that the spirit of the deceased Shaman was reborn in another Shaman, they incorporated the concept of reincarnation. In other cases, the deceased human...

It is impossible to encounter the belief that a soul passes into another person. The concept of the migration of the soul in shamanism was reshaped in the Alevi-Bektaşî community after the advent of Islam. According to the Turkish shamanic worldview, souls, which are metaphysical beings, do not exhibit any characteristics that distinguish them from humans beyond this aspect. Indeed, although a separate realm is envisaged when referring to the realm of spirits, in the Shamanic belief system, spirits are present everywhere and in everything. However, certain characteristics—their invisibility, lightness, ability to fly, familiarity with the other world, etc.—place spirits in a special category. In shamanic ceremonies, shamans acquire the characteristics of spirits by settling them into their drums and themselves.

Tuva Shamans have most likely adopted the view that humans have white and black spirits, influenced by Lamaism. The spirits of sinners are black and go to the underworld after death. The white spirits of good people, however, die...

After death, it ascends to the heavens. In accordance with the belief in reincarnation, Tuva Shamans believe that it passes from body to body.

The depiction of spirits presents a broad spectrum in shamanic literature. Indeed, alongside spirits resembling humans, there are also spirits with animal appearances. Spirits can be small in appearance, or large and terrifying.

Consequently, it is possible to say that the understanding of spirits in shamanism encompasses a broad meaning, that spirits exist both inside and outside of humans. For this reason, when spirits are called, they come. In difficult times, these spirits help and protect their owner, even showing them the right path. The belief in spirits coincides with the esoteric aspects of Shamanism. Indeed, according to the esoteric source of Shamanism, it is not the Shaman himself who observes the realm of spirits and learns their secrets, but his spirit.

### 11.2. The Shaman's Protective and Helper Spirits

In shamanic mythology, there is a category of spirits that holds a special place and is divided into two parts: 1) protective and 2) helper. The number of helper spirits symbolises the shaman's power. The shaman's main helper is his ancestors. Shamans call their helper spirits *töstar*, which is the plural form of the word *töz/tös*, meaning essence, core, or that which has existed since eternity. Thus, the *töz* mountains, which inspire the shaman to become a shaman and make his drum, are also helper spirits. Furthermore, these mountains are the *tözs*, the ancestors of the tribe.

In shamanic legends and memorates, the role, description, and settlement area of each of these spirits is also explained. Famous shamans have no more than 47 helper spirits, while weak shamans have no fewer than three. Shamans with many helper spirits are powerful, while those with few are weak. Shamans are active and powerful with the help of spirits. Therefore, the formula emerges that one cannot be a shaman without a helper spirit. Shaman cannot exist, the formula emerges. Indeed, the Shaman's primary duty is to establish a connection with the realm of spirits.

In addition, Shamans also have guardian spirits. While the role of helper spirits is generally to transport the Shaman to the other world during trance or to assist him in healing, guardian spirits have taken on the function of preventing harm that may come to the Shaman. Each helper spirit performs its function within the context of its specific role. Furthermore, while guardian spirits form the Shaman's essence, helper spirits provide him with various information and assist him in the other world.

The shaman's most important guardian spirit is, according to shamanic mythology, the spirit imagined in the form of a bull.

In times of danger, the bull can transform into different shapes, even into a needle. In the Shamans' battles, the fatal wounding or death of one of the bulls means the Shaman's injury or death in a similar manner.

The most important of the helper spirits is Emeget. Emeget's main task is to guide the shaman during the trance. The shaman sees through Emeget's eyes, hears through Emeget's ears, and speaks through Emeget's mouth. According to belief, it is the size of a fingernail. Emeget enters the Shaman. The Shaman is chosen by the spirits of the upper world.

descends to the shamans in the form of fire. One cannot be a shaman without Emeget. When the shaman dies, Emeget leaves the body and enters the wooden bird sculpture surrounding the shaman's grave, protecting it.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the shaman's helper

There are also helper bird and animal spirits. One of the shaman's helper spirits is Ke-Leni, an old being with one eye, lame, and very jealous. The spirits of ancestral Shamans also belong to the category of helper spirits. Most helper spirits are placed in a special place called *ideli* in the Shaman's belly during the initiation period.

According to V. Seroşevskiy, who provides information about Yakut Shamanism, Shamans essentially have three helper spirits: Emeget, Iye Kul and Keleni.<sup>5</sup> Emeget is an indispensable quality of every

shaman's indispensable attribute. However, V. Seroşevskiy states that weak and inauthentic shamans do not have Emegets and that they engage in sorcery. Nevertheless, Emeget is also the name of the iron breastplate that the shaman wears on his chest

. However, as seen, Seroşevskiy mistakenly includes the protective animal mother of shamans, Iye Kul, in the category of helper spirits.

The Iye Kul is the animal guardian sent by the Shaman to kill other Shamans (to eat the enemy, to use the Shaman's term). These animals can be bulls, bears, dogs, wolves, etc. Thus, the Shaman transfers his own spirit (*kut*)

to another animal. It is also known that the eagle can be an Iye Kul

is also known. The crow is the Iye Kul of the Tuva Shamans. Indeed, according to Tuva Shaman belief, the raven (crow) is the sacred animal that the Shaman consults and that establishes a connection between the spirits and the Shaman. The cult of the black raven, symbolising the celestial realm and celestial energy, is widespread among the Tuva Shamans.

In the shamanic worldview, the crow (raven) is the protector of spirits, while the eagle is the protector of the material world or material things. According to him, in Altai mythology the raven asks Ülgen for souls for humans. However, in the Turkish shamanic tradition, both the eagle and the raven are known as the first shamans, and for this reason, they function as the animal mothers of the shaman. The eagle trains the shaman among the Yakut Turks, while the raven does so among the Altai Turks. This difference is based on geographical specificity as well as the vitality of ethnic interaction. However, like the eagle, the raven is also a symbol of the Sun, or in other words, of light and warmth.

Among the Hakas Shamans and Tuva Shamans, the bear is widely believed to be a protective spirit. In fact, the Hakas depict the bear they call *Aba töş* and adorn it with a bear claw and an iron ring. According to belief, *Aba töş*, the shaman's protective spirit, also fulfils the duty of driving evil spirits from the home. *Aba töş mera-simi*, which is also believed to cure diseases of the urinary tract, is performed towards sunset, at the end of the old moon. The bear, called *Adıg eeren* by the Tuvan Shamans, protects the Shamans from foreign attacks and

<sup>4</sup> Popov A. A., Poluchenie "Shamanskogo Dara", p. 290

<sup>5</sup> Seroşevskiy V. L., 12 Years in the Land of the Yakuts, St. Petersburg, 1902, pp. 626-628



It is known as the spirit that protects against evil eyes. Tuva Shamans make its image either from black cloth or from the skin of a bear, stripped from its front paws after being hunted. Tuva Shamans hang the image of the bear from the right corner of the yurt.

According to Shamanic belief, the emergence of a new Shaman is known to the old Shamans by the presence of the new Iye Kıl, whom they have never seen. However, Iye

Kıl can only be seen by sorcerers, magicians or Shamans. It is invisible to ordinary people. Iye Kıl is the spirit that Shamans anxiously conceal. In Shaman legends, it is seen that Shamans say that their Iye Kıl cannot be found by others

, that it is hidden far away, that it is hidden in the rocks of the Edjigan mountain, etc. Once a year, when the snow melts, Iye Kıl comes out of its hiding place and wanders around. The Iye Kıls become exhausted and worn out from fighting, brawling, and noise. A shaman with such an Iye Kıl also feels very ill. Sometimes the Iye Kıl can be harmful. Especially the Iye Kıls of female shamans can be harmful.

According to the beliefs of Yakut Shamans, when the Shaman performs his duties, another spirit with special characteristics assists him alongside Emeget and Iye Kıl. This spirit is called Kele-ni. With the help of this mischievous spirit, the Shaman performs indecent movements and gestures

and gestures. Its appearance resembles an evil being that lives in darkness, a devil imagined as a girl, or small devils.

The fact that all helper and guardian spirits are depicted in the form of puppets, pictures, etc. in Shamanism indicates the cultic nature of representation (puppetry).

In the tradition of Central Asian shamans, the guardian spirits, which were conceived as animals, have been replaced by spirits called ervah, which have become anthropomorphised. A Central Asian shaman cannot practise shamanism without ervah. Furthermore, the power of the ervah is equal to that of the shaman. During the shamanic ritual, the shaman wages war against evil spirits with the help of these ervah.

Based on the information provided by sources about these helper and guardian spirits of shamans, the following conclusion can be drawn. In the shamanic world, there are guardian and helper spirits that can be grouped into four categories. The first category includes the spirits of deceased ancestral shamans. The second category includes animal spirits. The third category includes human spirits. The fourth category includes spirits of plants and minerals.

category includes the spirits of deceased ancestral shamans. The second category includes animal spirits

, the third category includes Emeget, and the last category includes Keleni, which is a mischievous and terrifying spirit. The spirits belonging to each category have a special role in shamanic art and shamanism.

The spirit of the ancestral shaman generally controls the selection of new shamans. As M. Waida also mentions, when one of the shamans dies, the spirit of the ancestral shaman begins searching for a new candidate so that the profession is not lost. During the six months of mourning, this ancestral shaman spirit, which assists the shaman, can transform into any animal.

<sup>6</sup> Waida M., "Problems of Central Asian and Siberian Shamanism. ", Numen, 30. 2 1983, p. 228

It should also be noted that the ancestral shaman spirit and the shaman's animal spirit play an important role in preparing the candidate for shaman status.

The guardian spirit that makes the candidate a shaman in the initiation rites gives him white and black helper spirits. An experienced shaman can divide these helper spirits into two during the shamanic initiation. Some of the helper spirits are taken by the shaman's guardian spirit. The shaman, who has just begun his shamanic initiation, notices that some of the spirits that did not respond to his call are taken by the guardian spirit.<sup>7</sup>

The shaman acquires his helper spirits in various ways, for example, by birth, during the shaman initiation ceremony, when performing ceremonies as a shaman, when being trained, when being initiated, etc. However, in all cases, before the shamanic ceremony, the shaman must praise both his helper and guardian spirits before becoming a shaman.

, etc.).

The helper spirits of shamans also exhibit certain differences among the Altai-Sayan and Siberian Turks. However, it is worth adding that these helper spirits play a significant role in enabling the shaman to leave the real world and journey to the otherworldly realm ( ). Indeed, without these helper spirits, the shaman cannot undertake cosmic journeys nor heal the sick. According to him, the shaman can heal the sick because he possesses the anthropomorphised spirits of a sacred realm. Thus, the shaman is a bridge, a mediator between the spirits of the sacred realm and the beings of the human realm. All the shaman's power lies in his ability to "befriend" the spirits

. In particular, when the shaman is in a trance, the community sees him as sanctified.

. At the same time, the shaman can also transform into a spiritual being to enter the sacred realm.

All these helper spirits also demonstrate a metaphorical understanding, as they appear during the shaman's trance. Whether these spirits actually exist or are merely a subtle pact based on mythological foundations is of no concern to contemporary science; the main issue is that the effect of this metaphorical concept is clearly evident in healing the patient and conducting the rituals.

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<sup>7</sup> Alekseev N. A., *Shamanism Among the Turkic Peoples*, p. 110

<sup>8</sup> Waida M., *op. cit.*, p. 234

## 12 1. The Shamanic Worldview and Shamanic Mythology in the Context of Oral Culture

Shamanism, which constitutes an important part of our cultural history, has influenced the Turkic religious-mythological system, and a large portion of the mythological texts that were not written down at the time have reached us through Shamanic narration. The Shaman is the society's A person who knows their mythological ideas and adapts them to their profession. We learn about Turkish mythology, especially the system of spirits, from Shamanic texts. The cosmological, animistic mythological views that the shaman spontaneously expresses are actually the general values that society has preserved for many years. In this context, the shaman is merely a transmitter, a narrator who partially modifies or corrects the text according to the situation.

According to scientists researching Siberian shamanism, the shaman sees all of nature and society as being under the influence of good and evil spirits.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, the shaman produces various texts about these powers. In fact, because the shaman knows the beliefs and expectations of society well, he has changed the general mythology to suit his own purposes and bound to himself people who cannot cope with evil spirits on their own. However, this cannot be the basis for some researchers (e.g. S. Buluç<sup>2</sup>) to link the belief in the Sky God and Earth-Water to shamanism. Indeed, the shaman's interest

and with whom they establish relationships and offer sacrifices are spirits, not gods.

The shaman constructs his own world based on myths, legends, memorates and poems rooted in oral culture. Although the worldview he reflects in his oral cultural products draws on cultural elements that preceded and followed him, it is original. The basis of shamanic culture and philosophy is the idea of the unity and harmony of man and nature. According to the shamanistic world view, the cosmos

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<sup>1</sup> Nioradze G., *Der Schamanismus bei den Sibirischen Völkern*, Stuttgart, 1925, p. 56

<sup>2</sup> Buluç S., "Shamanism", *Türk Amacı*, I, issue 1-6, 1942; Buluç S., "Shamanism", *Türk Amacı*, II, issue 8, 1943

mos, the world, humans and the animal and plant kingdoms surrounding them form a whole. Gök-le İdik Yer-Sub is the protector of this unity and the guarantor of order. In this sense, Shamanic culture is a culture of nature and sharing.

Additionally, the concepts of time and space are reflected in Shamanic paintings.

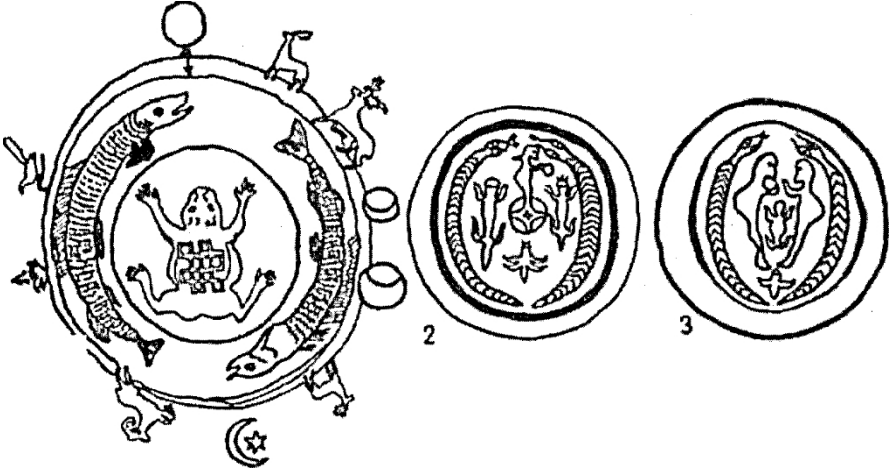


Figure 23. The Altay Shamans' time (calendar disc) and space (circle) discs. (From Ögel's book)

In shamanism, spirits and their duties, the shaman's relationship with the spirit world, the summoning of helper spirits before ceremonies, etc., are systematically addressed. In this context, the basis of Turkish shamanism consists of the beliefs about spirits and the spirit world that form the foundation of Turkish mythology and were developed specifically by shamans. The shaman is the interpreter who translates the language of spirits to the community.

In Shamanic initiation, each Shaman candidate undergoes training in dreams, trance, the names and functions of spirits, Shamanic techniques, secret language, and the mythology of the tribe before becoming a Shaman. In fact, during training, the Shaman is taught secret knowledge along with mythological facts. In that context, the Shaman is the guardian of the tribe's mythical and mystical world, the bearer of myths and secret knowledge.

Shamanic mythology is a metaphorical interpretation of general mythology, or to put it more plainly, the cultural function of Shamanic mythology is metaphorical. Therefore, the Shaman's life is built entirely upon mythological phenomena. Shamans, who connect themselves and their lineage to the otherworld, are defenders of their worldview with this mysterious knowledge.

Shamanic mythology also contributes to the strengthening of the Shaman phenomenon. According to Shamanic cosmogony, the purpose of the world design, which consists of upper, middle and lower layers, is not to show the cosmological landscape in a clear way, but to show how the Shaman passes through these cosmic layers. The shaman uses tools such as poles, ropes, etc., which connect this tripartite cosmic structure, and makes his cosmic journey by passing through the openings.

In shamanic mythology, the aim is for only those endowed with special status (such as epic or fairy tale heroes chosen by God, shamans, yogis, etc.) to benefit from and pass through the axis that runs through the centre of the three cosmic rings. However, whatever the purpose may be, Shamans transmit the cosmic accumulation and knowledge developed by the community over thousands of years from generation to generation. In this context, the Shaman forms a passage between the mythological age and the historical age, as well as establishing a connection between society and the hidden world. Shamanic mythology plays an important role in establishing this connection.

Although it is natural for cosmogonic and origin-related myths to occupy an important place in shamanic narratives, it is equally natural that myths of origin and creation do not feature in the shamanic repertoire. Indeed, the creation of the first human, the emergence of tribes, and the formation of heroic tales do not fall within the Shaman's sphere of interest. In this context, the Shaman preserves and perpetuates not all of the society's mythological phenomena, but only those necessary for his profession.

All of the shaman's actions, the movements and dances he performs during the ritual, and his prayers and songs contain mythological motifs. The shaman cannot be considered prepared for his profession without embracing the mythological phenomena of society and without a thorough knowledge of cosmogonic and origin myths. However, as mentioned above, although the shaman is intertwined with mythological phenomena and ritual formation, he is not a narrator. His aim is to work for the benefit of society and to direct existing elements towards this goal. The shaman forms a bridge between mythological phenomena and real life, introducing society to the beginning by passing it through this bridge.

The concepts of time and space have a distinct feature in shamanic mythology. Indeed, from the perspective of Turkish shamanism, time is seen as insignificant. Because time, which is in perpetual motion, is, according to the shaman, an ever-transcendable phenomenon. To put it concretely, the shaman transcends time as well as space by travelling to the other world.

, thereby changing the concept of space and transcending time. Death is reversed. By turning, he stops time, etc. Since the shaman can easily transcend time and space while performing shamanic rituals, time and space are not given much importance in shamanism. At the same time, the shaman can connect with places from where he sits, just as he can transcend time. Just as they depict worlds and times on their drum, they also bring together the concepts of time and space as if on a painting.

The mythological figures honoured by shamans were later studied by researchers as part of Turkish mythology. For example, the beings featured in the mythological phenomena of the Altai-Sayan Shamans are: Ülgen, Erlik, Uguz Khan

(this is Oğuz Khan), Taz Khan (Ülgen's mother, residing in the highest realm of the sky) He resides on the sixth floor. Ülgen, according to belief, resides on the twelfth or fifteenth floor.), Muzıgan Khan, Bobırgan, Yayık Khan (He who flooded the earth with water, in short, the Noah of Shaman mythology), Kırgız Khan, Totoy Khan<sup>3</sup>, etc.

Shamanic mythology also provides information about Ülgen's sons and daughters ( ). According to Teleüt Shamans, Ülgen has three sons and twelve daughters, or seven daughters in some variants. His sons are Temir Kaan, Soltıgan and Yamgratu-Yajıgaan. Yamgratu-Yajıgaan is known as the god of thunder and lightning. However, Erlik, his family and his helpers hold an important place in Shamanic mythology. Powerful Shamans can descend into Erlik's world during their trance and even encounter this terrifying spirit. When Erlik sees the Shaman, he says:

Kanatu poo flew from  
Kaygantu poo flew from Black  
Kongis tıdı titan Kaydan poo  
keldin<sup>4</sup>

*(Winged creatures cannot come  
here. Clawed creatures cannot  
come here.*

*You resemble a black insect. Where  
did you come from?)*

Shamanic cosmogony is also, in broad terms, a repetition of the universe design in the Turkish mythological system. The universe consisting of three layers, each layer consisting of various strata, and spirits settling in the strata proves that the Turkish mythological system lies at the heart of the Shamanic worldview.  
proves that the essence of the shamanic worldview is rooted in the Turkish mythological system.

Shamans also recount certain myths about the emergence of their profession. In tribes where the belief in shamanism is strong, the connection of this art with the other world is specifically recorded. For example, among the Yakuts, shamanism was established by Ulu Tayan. In Altai shaman folklore, the patron of shamanism is Erlik. V. Verbitskiy, in a myth collected from the Altaians, describes Erlik as t h e

<sup>3</sup> Potanin G. N., Oчерki, vol. 4, p. 69

<sup>4</sup> Potanin G. N., Oчерki, vol. 4, p. 67. This mythological question is preserved in Azerbaijani fairy tales in the hero's encounter with the seven-headed Giant in the underworld: "If a bird came, it would spread its wings; if a donkey came, it would spread its hooves; how did you come?" This question is preserved in the fairy tales. It is a fact that the fairy tales are shaped on examples of Shamanic mythology, but their structural and functional aspects have been shifted in another direction.

He has therefore confirmed that he is his patron. According to the myth, until the Flood (called Ya-ik/Yayık by the Altaians), the ruler of the entire earth was Tenis (Deniz) Khan. During his reign, there was a famous man named Hama. Hama had three sons.

During the Flood, Hama, his three sons, and other living creatures were saved. This Flood story, described at length by Verbitskiy, closely resembles the story of Noah's Flood. After being saved, when Hama's youngest son Balıksa fell ill, he called upon a man named Tyangaru to perform shamanic rituals. At that time, Erlik had taught Balıksa how to perform shamanic rituals. Upon hearing this, Ülgen cursed Ba-Balıksa, cursing him and making him Erlik's servant for offering him as a sacrifice. Seeing this, Tyangaru says, "Just as I offered Erlik a sacrifice, I will offer you a sacrifice too." Ülgen then tells him, "From now on, your name shall be shaman."

Most Altay Shamans and Teleut Shamans trace their lineage back to the legendary powerful Shaman Kadılbash, while Telengit Shamans trace theirs back to Tostogoş. Therefore, these two individuals can be considered the ancestors of the Shamans.

According to another mythological narrative, the first shaman learned shamanism from Erlik. This shaman's name was Yangara.<sup>6</sup> The fact that the Altai-Sayan Turks refer to Buddhism as "ak yang" shows that the word "yang" is used in the sense of religion, belief, principle, or rule. Therefore, "Yangara" means a person who brings new rules and new beliefs.

As can be understood from the myths presented above, the first shaman was trained by Erlik and his shamanism was approved by Ülgen. According to the beliefs of the Altai-Sayan Turks, Erlik also made the first drum. This means that Erlik, the ruler of the underworld and patron of blacksmiths, was also the patron of shamanism.

He is also a builder. We see this in another myth as well. People afraid of the flood gather together and want to build mountains in seventy-seven places. Despite all warnings, the people do not stop working. God changes his language to stop these working people.

Erlik also sends evil spirits called etkers to each of these seventy-seven tribes. Seeing this, Ülgen gives science to seventy-four tribes to protect them from the harm the etkers could cause.

He did not give knowledge to only three tribes—the Soyons, the Uryanhals, and the Tubals. Because they had acquired the art of making drums and kam from Erlik. Ülgen said to them, "Instead of doctors and medicine, your kam and your book place—

What drums do you have? Deal with them however you like, he says. <sup>7</sup> From this brief summary of the myth, it appears that Erlik created the institution of shamanism and the shaman's tools. On the other hand, the shaman's...

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<sup>5</sup> Verbitskiy V. I., *Altayskie İnarodtsı*, pp. 125-126

<sup>6</sup> Verbitskiy V. I., *Dictionary of the Altai and Aladag Dialects of the Turkic Language*, Kazan, 1884, p. 75

<sup>7</sup> Verbitskiy V. I., *Altayskie İnarodtsı*, pp. 127-128

It has been reported that there were no books in this place, because the Shaman took on the task of healing the sick, imparting secret knowledge, and communicating between humans and spirits all by himself.



Image 24. Dutchman Nicolaus Witsen; in the mid-17th century, he visited Siberia and described what he saw through his drawings. In this image, he holds a drumstick that is larger than normal.

A Tungus shaman is depicted wearing a headdress with ears and horns and claws on his feet.

In Yakut beliefs about the emergence of shamans, the role of the eagle is emphasised. The first shaman was brought to earth by an eagle. According to the belief, the spirit of a child destined to become a shaman is devoured by an eagle before birth. The eagle, having consumed the child's spirit, flies to a vast meadow where the sun's rays never fade. In the middle of these meadows stands a red pine tree and an elm or beech tree. The eagle lays its egg on one of these trees and departs. After sitting on the tree for a while, the egg cracks open by itself and a child emerges from inside. The child falls into the cradle under the trees, just as it emerged from the egg, and begins to grow there. According to mythological belief, good shamans are born from the egg on the red pine tree, while bad shamans are born from the egg on the hornbeam or beech tree.



The men emerge from the egg on the hornbeam tree. Whether the shaman is good or evil, the eagle is protected by the mother throughout its entire life.

Two-headed Yakut eagles have often symbolised Yüryüng Ayn Toyonu. Shamanic texts also mention that the most powerful Shamans are the sons of the Chief God.

According to Yakut shamanic tradition, the first shaman was An Arkıl Oyun, or simply Arkıl, who was powerful enough to resurrect the dead.

An Arkıl Oyun or simply Arkıl. Some shamanic legends provide information about the miracles of An Arkıl Oyun. Indeed, in shamanic texts

As can be seen, An Arkıl Oyun is a powerful shaman who raises the dead, restores sight to the blind, and heals the mentally ill.<sup>9</sup> He is also known as a shaman who fought against God and refused to bow down to Him. According to the Yakuts, this shaman's fame reached Yüryüng Ayn Toyon. Yüryüng Ayn Toyon summons him and asks where he got this incredible power. The shaman replies that all his deeds and power belong to him. Yüryüng Ayn Toyon is angered by this insolent answer and has An Arkıl thrown into the fire. However, from the fire in which he burns, the spirits of powerful shamans are born.

Yakut Shamans would call upon the An Arkıl Spirit before the shamanic ceremony, then examine the patients and begin treatment. In Yakut shamanic literature, the powerful Shamans' ability to resurrect the dead and restore sight to the blind is perceived as a legacy of Arkıl. This first shaman spirit, whom the shamans consulted, was also the first fortune teller and would predict the future. There is no doubt that the name Irkıl ( Arkıl, Cırkıl) comes from the Old Turkic word *ırk*, meaning fortune telling (Turks used to say *ırk bakmak* to mean fortune telling). The name of the Uyghur fortune-telling book *Irk Bitig* is also derived from the word *ırk*, meaning fortune-telling book.

In Mahmut Kashgari, "ırk" means divination, revealing what is hidden.<sup>11</sup>

In the Islamic variant of the Oğuz Epic, the fact that Oğuz Khan's vizier is named Irkıl indicates that this vizier established the Oğuz state structure and the territorial administrative system, foresaw the future, and was influenced by the Shaman complex in the Turkish epic tradition.

Furthermore, the information provided by A. Sagalaev and I. Oktyabrskaya also indicates that the first Shaman...

Myths related to man are recounted. According to Yakut Shaman mythology, the first Shaman was so powerful that he did not even reckon with God. Angered by this, God burned the first Shaman in fire. The body of the first Shaman was made up of snakes, lizards and frogs.

<sup>8</sup> Öge! B., Turkish Mythology, vol. 1, pp. 595-596

<sup>9</sup> Priklonskiy V. L., "Tri Goda v Yakutskoy Oblasti", Jivaya Starina, vol. 4, St. Petersburg, 1891, p. 52

<sup>10</sup> See Bayat E. The Oğuz Epic Tradition and the Oğuz Khan Dastan, Baku, 1993, p. 60

<sup>11</sup> Kashgariy M., Devonu Lugotit Turk, Vol. 1, Tashkent, 1960, p. 78

<sup>12</sup> Sagalaev A. M., Oktyabrskaya I. V., Traditional Worldview, Sign and Ritual, p. 109

was formed. As his body burned, only a frog could escape. The evil spirits that descended from this frog gave the famous Shamans their shamanic duties. A similar mythological phenomenon also exists among the Buryats. According to Buryat mythology, the first shaman, Hara Girgen, competes with God and even wins the race. After this, his power diminishes, and subsequent generations of shamans

world.

The eagle motif in Turkic shaman mythology has been passed down to the Buryats as the birth of their first shaman following the eagle's relationship with a woman.

The myth of the emergence of the Shaman, which is directly related to the animal archetype, is extensively described in Shamanic legends (memorates). According to these legends, the candidate grows up and is educated in the bird's nest on the Shaman tree in the other world. The cradle hangs from the branches of the trees, and the Shaman's power is determined by the height of the branches (there are usually three nests. The highest nest is where the strongest Shaman grows up) the Shaman's power becomes apparent.<sup>13</sup>

In the Central Asian shamanic tradition, Korkut Ata, the miracle worker of the kopuz, the patron of the Akins and the Jırçıs, is highlighted as the patron of the shamans. According to the reports of the 19th-century Kazakh scholar Ch. Velihanov and the famous Russian scientist G. Potanin, Kazakh Shamans accept Korkut Ata as the first Shaman, but at the same time, they consider him to be the inventor of the kopuz, the teacher who taught the bahşıs to play it, the first to recite the sar- (song in Kazakh Turkic) and taught warriors to recite it during raids.

yadır, 14

According to our limited knowledge, shamanism first gained strength and became influential in society with the emergence of patriarchy. However, although some shamanic memorates are symbolic in nature, they indicate that the first shamans were women. Indeed, in a shamanic legend, the source of the nine shamanic spirits whose spirits were brought to create the shamans is related to a female origin. In the legend, these nine spirits, which are the source of evil, are depicted as women, and even

the names of a few of them are mentioned. The fact that one of these female Shamans is named Uot is a remnant of her connection to the fire-hearth cult. The fact that female Shamans are called Udagan/Utgan in Turkish also confirms this. Thus, Shamanic mythology proves that Shamanism has existed since the hunting and gathering period, as a product of culture.

Shamanic mythology has been stratified under the influence of religions, and certain phenomena have been attributed to sacred religious figures and the cult of supreme worship. Over time, this type of interaction has been observed in Lamaist and Christian circles, as well as in Islamic circles.

For example, according to Central Asian shamanic legends, the emergence of shamanism

<sup>13</sup> See Bayat R., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, pp. 54-68

<sup>14</sup> Velihanov Ç. Ç., *Sobranie Soçinenij v Pyati Tamah*, t. I, Alma-Ata, 1961, p. 29; Potanin G. N., *Ocherki*, vol. 4, p. 843

<sup>15</sup> See Ksenofontov G. V., *Legends and Tales*

It is linked to the name of God Almighty. A legend related to this states that God Almighty taught Shamanism to humans through the intermediary of Gabriel. Shamans, who struggle for survival, sought to escape the danger of extinction and dissolution by linking their profession to a supreme being, as seen in this legend.

Another legend states that the master of the Central Asian Shamans (bakşılar) was Hz. Fatima . To summarise briefly, the application of Shaman mythology to time and ideological conditions proves that Shamanism has a mobile, dynamic structure. However, secret organisations and the secret knowledge they offered also played an important role in the formation of this mythology. According to the ancient knowledge of some civilisations, there are seven layers of vibration in nature, each of which signifies the existence of a being.

The four vibrations perceived by human emotions: mineral, plant, animal, and human. The person who remains outside, perceiving and remembering the other three vibrations, is the Shaman. The fact that Shamanic mythology contains such detailed information connected to the world of spirits is also due to the Shaman possessing these feelings. Apart from Shamans, esotericists are also those who know the vibrations, unlike ordinary people. The shaman is a person who has realised that these vibrations have a single source. In this respect, when examined carefully, shamanic mythology is the mythology of beings that exist as one and the vibrations that prove the existence of these beings.

As mentioned above, shamanic mythology is not the product of an original worldview. In this context, it is possible to say that shamans use the mythological views of society according to their own secret knowledge. According to the Shamanistic views of the Yakut and Altai-Sayan Turks, the universe consists of three separate worlds, one above the other. However, this superimposition means that these worlds exist within each other in a parallel manner. Indeed, there is a world tree (designed as a tree or mountain) that connects the worlds and is located at the centre of the universe, and Shamans can ascend to the heavens through the same hole as they descend to the lower world, clinging to the world tree, which is imagined as an arrow, or through its holes.

Along with all their different aspects, other worlds are designed similarly to our world: a realm with a sun, moon, stars, living beings, mountains, forests, and waters. Shamanism has drawn upon the real views of the tribe to which it belongs, utilising them in the form of conceptions in the establishment of invisible worlds. The beings in the separate layers of the universe are invisible to the people of the world. The only person who can see them and interact with them is the Shaman. However, the beings of these worlds are different from humans in some respects. The beings of the celestial realm are luminous spirits; they are immortal and subtle. The beings of the underworld are...

<sup>16</sup> See Malov S. E., "Shamanism among the Sartov of Eastern Turkestan", *Sbornik Muzeya Antropologii i Etnografii*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Petrograd, 1918, p. 16.

Their venom is invisible to the eye, and their black blood gives them a cold and terrifying appearance. Among the Yakut Turks, Yür-yüng Ayı Toyon and Ulu Toyon are the rulers of the upper world, while Arsan Duolay is the ruler of the underworld.

Among the Altai Turks, Ülgen rules the upper world, while Erlik rules the lower world.



Figure 25. Shape-symbols on the upper part of Altay-Turkish drums.

In shamanic mythology, the beings of the lower world harm humans. The shaman's ritual is also performed in this context for the spirits of the lower world. The shaman enters into dialogue with the spirits of the lower world to bring back the spirit of a sick person or a person who died before their time. No one but the shaman can go to the underworld, the source of illness and death, and bargain with the inhabitants of the other world. Like the shaman, the spirits of the underworld also use caves, holes, etc., which connect the two worlds, to come to the surface and steal people's souls and take them to the other world.

In shamanic mythology, the rulers of both the upper and lower worlds (Ülgen and Er-) are the sons of the Sky God. Since the shaman's knowledge is transmitted in a trance state, it initially appears obscure and chaotic. In reality, however, the shaman conveys hidden knowledge to the profane (uninitiated) world through symbols and veiled language. In this respect, a series of concepts in shamanic mythology have esoteric characteristics.

Furthermore, Shamanic mythology is visually embodied in clothing and drums. In this sense, the drum and clothing are visible manifestations of Shamanic mythology.

## 12. 2. Shamanic Legends and Memoirs of the

Legends, memorates, and assonant rhyming prayers, which are reflections of the Shamanic worldview and mythology, are known as primary sources on Shamanism. The internal and external structure of shamanism, its worldview, and its philosophical characteristics are narrated in a symbolic language in shamanic legends. However, shamanic legends also have certain characteristics that, when listed here, reveal the importance of these legends, memorates, and assonant rhyming poems in understanding shamanism:

- 1- Society and the Shamans themselves believe in these legends.
- 2- Shamanic legends exhibit ethnographic concreteness and clarity.
- 3- Shamanic legends are used not only to convey information in symbolic language, but also for ritual purposes.

It is a fact that Shamans played an active role in the formation of Shamanic memorates. Indeed, during their ritual activities, Shamans conveyed certain phenomena such as prophecies, visions, and hearing to the community, which later contributed to the formation of legends and memorates.

The vast majority of existing shamanic legends concern shamans known in ethnographic literature as black shamans. These rumours, which are mostly eyewitness accounts and, to a lesser extent, memorates told by the shamans themselves, reveal the phenomenological structure of Turkish shamanism.

As E. Novik points out, these legends contain mythological time, historical past time, recent past time, and present time. There is no fairy-tale time in Shaman legends.<sup>17</sup>

The conclusions drawn from the Altay-Sayan, Central Asian and Yakut Shaman legends and memorates encompass a broad spectrum, ranging from the formation of Shamanism to the miracles, battles and burials of Shamans. Therefore, Shaman legends can be divided into the following groups:

- Narratives about becoming a shaman, dismemberment, and the shaman tree.
- Legends describing the role of the animal mother in becoming a shaman.
- Legends about shamans who display miracles or bring misfortune.
- Narratives about Shamans healing the sick.
- Narratives about the struggle of Shamans against evil spirits to test their powers and the value they brought to themselves or society as a result of this struggle.
- Legends about shamans fighting each other.
- Narratives about the burials of shamans.
- Various shaman stories

The first two of these were covered in the first section as they describe the transition to shaman status. Let us examine some of the remaining ones below.

## 12. 3. Shamanic Miracles from a Socio-Cultural Perspective

At the core of Shamanist belief and Shamanic practices lies the awareness that the Shaman is an extraordinary individual. The fact that shamans display an extraordinary character in every respect is realised in the phenomenon we call miracles. The socio-cultural meaning, convincing society of their powers, being conscious of the other world and being able to transport their spirits to another dimension, being able to demonstrate the transformation of the world and the other world, are all described in the concept of miracles.

— information provided by ethnologists, anthropologists, and folklorists about shamanic miracles

<sup>17</sup> Novik E. S., *Ritual and Folklore in Siberian Shamanism*, Moscow, 1984, p. 232

<sup>18</sup> See Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*,

<sup>19</sup> Of course, with the acceptance of Islam, the miracles manifested by shamans, Buddhist monks and Christian saints in the past had to be abstracted from the saint's miracle and brought into line with the rules of Sharia. For this reason, the extraordinary events performed by non-Muslims were called *istitrac*, while those performed by Muslim saints were called *keramet*. While *istitrac* involved magic and sorcery, *keramet* involved the display of wisdom with Allah's permission.

, while those displayed by Muslim saints were called miracles. While miracles involved magic and sorcery, miracles were perceived as the display of wisdom with Allah's permission. On this subject, see: Eraydin S., *Sufism and Sufi Orders*, Istanbul, 1994, p. 29

It is of this nature. However, in a Shamanist world, what is important is not that all these miracles and extraordinary events are realistic, but that these phenomena constitute a cultural element and organise a social order. From this perspective, Shamanic miracles are of great importance in understanding the Shamanist world or the Shamanic world model. Indeed, it is possible to say that miracles are of great importance in terms of reviving the traditional Shamanic worldview, learning the mechanisms of the Shaman's healing system, and understanding the status of Shamans.

The phenomenon of miracles, which is enduring in the socio-cultural context, has been able to preserve its existence in the new civilisation environment by overcoming religious and political obstacles. The concept of miracles, which forms the basis of Turkish saintly tales, is nothing other than the transformation of the Shamanistic phenomenon. Just like the storage and Shamanic miracles and Shamanic phenomena in general have shaped the esoteric knowledge of Islamic Turkish culture, layering and transforming to create a new civilisation.

Various forms of miracles, from Shamans who do not burn in fire to those who swallow axes, turn into birds, walk on water, animate inanimate objects, and protect their tribe even after death, have made Shamanism a cultural element.

Miracles are also important in demonstrating the shaman's power. For this reason, shamans sometimes stab knives or swords into their hearts or stomachs, walk barefoot over broken bottles, or eat bottles or other hard objects. For example, the Turkmen shaman Oroznazar would insert a sword into his stomach and sit in the middle of the yurt performing a ritual, then with a sharp movement, he would pull the sword out of his stomach. However, there would be no wound on his stomach.<sup>20</sup>

The shamans' changing of forms is a miracle in itself. The changing of forms, which is widespread in shamanic legends and memorates, is actually connected to the shaman's animal ancestor design. By entering the form of his animal ancestor, which is usually a bear, wolf, bird, etc., the shaman aims to be saved.

Similarly, a guardian in distress, before Islam, would...

He escapes by transforming into the form of an animal he knows as his animal mother, or into the form of a bird he has sanctified, such as an ongon. This demonstrates that he fulfils the protective role of the animal he has transformed into. Occasionally, he takes the place of the animal itself and prevents harm from coming to it.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Dikson O., *Shamanic Healing*, p. 431

<sup>21</sup> We also see an extension of this belief in shamanism, particularly the motif of taking the form of a bird, in the saint legends of Sufism.

Sufism. In fact, the lack of distinction between human and animal spirits, the equivalence of transformation from human to animal and vice versa, has been evident since the earliest belief systems of the Turks. The miracles of the shaman and the

The motif of death and resurrection forms the main source of Shamanic miracles. This type of miracle, which encompasses a wide range of events from Shamans reviving dead women to reviving any dead animal, emphasises the fundamental purpose of demonstrating that it is possible to prevent death, even if only temporarily. The fact that Shamans also know their own deaths through miracles has led to the skilful use of this phenomenon in later dervish legends.

In particular, the memorates about shamans dying and being resurrected two or three times prove that death and resurrection are common in shaman folklore. However, miracles are not limited to events that benefit society

. Indeed, some evil-spirited shamans eat human flesh, and their miracles consist solely of harming people or the wealthy. Especially Shamans display supernatural powers that can harm people if they are denied what they desire.<sup>22</sup>

Shamans' ability to bring any object necessary for the community from the other world through miracles demonstrates that they work for the benefit of the community. In this context, Shamans ascend to the celestial realm and descend into the underworld. For example, a shaman plucking stars to prevent cold spells is an example of this.<sup>23</sup> Shamans also demonstrate their usefulness to society by stopping floods. The phenomenon of some powerful shamans being seen in seven places at once extends from the miracles of shamans to the legends of sheikhs.

## 1 2. 4. The Shaman is a Warrior

The shaman is not the sole director of socio-cultural life. However, the shaman, who is at the centre of social events, participates in military campaigns, even stands at the head of the military unit, and participates in battles himself. However, although the shaman has lost his military, warrior function over time, his old warrior functions have been preserved in his clothing, symbolic weapons, and metal tools.

Shamanic legends and memorates provide extensive information about the wars of the Shamans. However, the Shaman's resemblance to a warrior is also a distinct feature. Indeed, thanks to his cosmic knowledge, the Shaman has learned to deal with entities that harm society. His costume and drum refer to the characteristics of a warrior, and the same accessories also refer to the Shaman's transformation into a warrior in the other realm.

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See: Ocak A. Y., *Menâkıpname/er as a Source of Cultural History*, Ankara, 1992; Bayat F., "The Role of Shamanism in the Formation of Anatolian Folk Sufism", *Proceedings of the International Congress on Anatolian Beliefs*, Nevşehir, 2000

<sup>22</sup> See Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, pp. 121-161

<sup>23</sup> Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, pp. 153-156



is intended to inform. Each symbol is both information and a battle tactic.

The shaman's cosmic journey is a form of warfare. Indeed, he is always at war with the spirits of the underworld or, more generally, with evil spirits. In this context, it is possible to consider the shaman's warfare in three dimensions:

- 1- The shaman fights against spirits that cause illness and bring misfortune for the benefit of society.
- 2- The shaman fights other shamans or sorcerers to gain an influential position in society.
- 3- The shaman fights with shamans of other peoples for various reasons.

The single point that unites these three dimensions, and where all the legends converge, is that it is not the shaman himself who fights, but his animal mother. Shamans who kill each other are referred to in shamanic language as "Great: " meaning "The shaman ate the lesser shaman." This is an indication that the battle takes place between the animal mothers of the shamans.

Smallpox, the most dreaded disease of ancient times, also occupies a significant place in Shamanism. The spirit of smallpox, one of the foremost disease spirits fought by the Shaman, also features prominently in Shamanic narratives. According to information taken from legends and memorates, the shaman fights against the spirit of smallpox, which brings disease, and other evil spirits such as aza and abaasi. This battle results in the shaman defeating the evil spirit and preventing the harm it would cause. Just like the spirits of the other world, the shaman also takes on the appearance of an animal during this battle.

Stories about the bull-like flower spirit fighting the Shaman's bull, İye Kulu, are still recounted among communities that keep the living tradition of shamanism alive. However, there are also mythological beings that have undergone a new cultural construction, such as Koroson/Koroosun Ata, which the Muslim Kyrgyz identify as the flower spirit. In other Muslim communities, there are also

the term "flower spirit" or "flower disease-sending entity" is present in narrative variants, the name of this spirit is unknown. The preservation of the name of the flower spirit and the Kyrgyz's sacrifice of rams to this spirit in the Kyrgyz community, which adopted Islam late and has not yet broken away from Shamanism, demonstrates the extent of this structure.

The shaman's attire also resembles that of a warrior. In a shamanistic society, the shaman is also a warrior. Like an alp or batur, who fights the enemy on the battlefield, the shaman also fights against evil spirits that hinder the comfortable life of the community and harm people. In this context, the shaman's manyak (outer garment) fully serves as armour. The warrior artistry in the shaman's attire



Image 26. A Yakut shaman dressed like a warrior with his drum

Hanging a set of iron objects on the part called the apron serves as armour, believed to protect the shaman when fighting evil spirits. Other symbols also liken the shaman to a warrior: arrows, bows, mallets, even drums, etc. Nine small bows sewn onto the garment transform the shaman into a full-fledged warrior. Accordingly, it is not said that the shaman dresses, but rather that he arms himself. This means that the shaman arms himself like a warrior. The hanging of tassels on the shaman's drums also indicates his warrior skills. Indeed, the sound of the drum resembles a military march.

Furthermore, the presence of bows and arrows and iron shields among the Shaman's belongings also indicates that he is a warrior. Indeed, after sending arrows at his enemy, the Shaman protects himself from the enemy's arrows by using his drum as a shield.

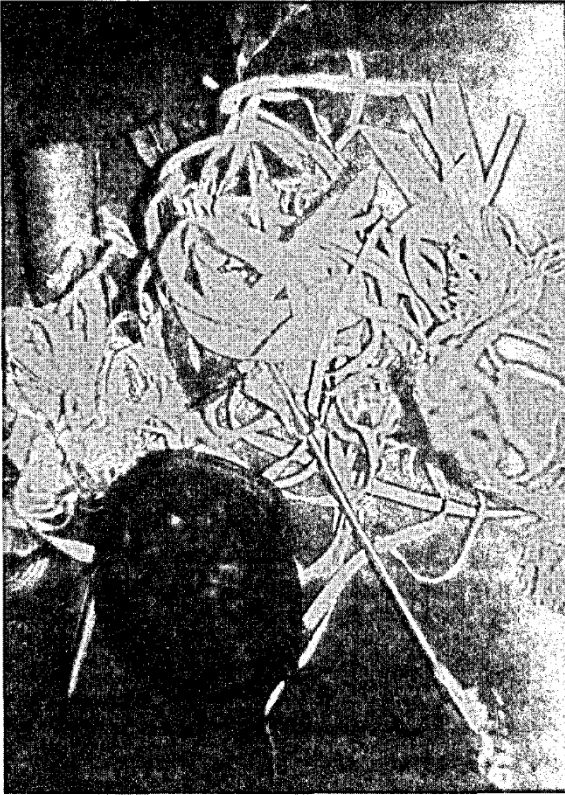


Figure 27. Iron armour, copper arrow, and other items of Tuvan Shamans

The depiction of bow and arrow, and people armed with bow and arrow on the shaman drums of the Altai-Sayan Turks, and the universal character of such depictions, should serve as an example of the shaman's warrior nature. By carrying a bow and arrow with them and drawing a bow and arrow on their drums, shamans prove that they are warriors of the community. The depictions of shamans on rocks also confirm the presence of these weapons of war alongside the shaman.

The shaman's wearing of iron armour during his *kamlık* period<sup>24</sup> is seen as being transferred to the sufi's arming himself during the ceremony. For example, it is said in the *Vilayetname* of Hacı Bektaş Veli that Hacı Bektaş, who mastered the science of *irfan* and gave him a bow and seven arrows. The fact that shamans are also given wooden swords and bows and arrows in the shaman initiation ritual shows that cultural elements have not changed. During the *kamlık* period, shamans also often carried

<sup>24</sup> Galdanova G. R., *Dolamistskie Verovaniya Buryat*, Novosibirsk, 1987, p. 70

<sup>25</sup> The Life of Hacı Bektaş Veli, *Vilayetname*, Edited by A. Gölpinarlı, Istanbul, 1958, p. 45

They would shoot symbolic arrows from their bows. Both male and female shamans in Central Asia would carry wooden swords or real swords with them when they went to treat patients.

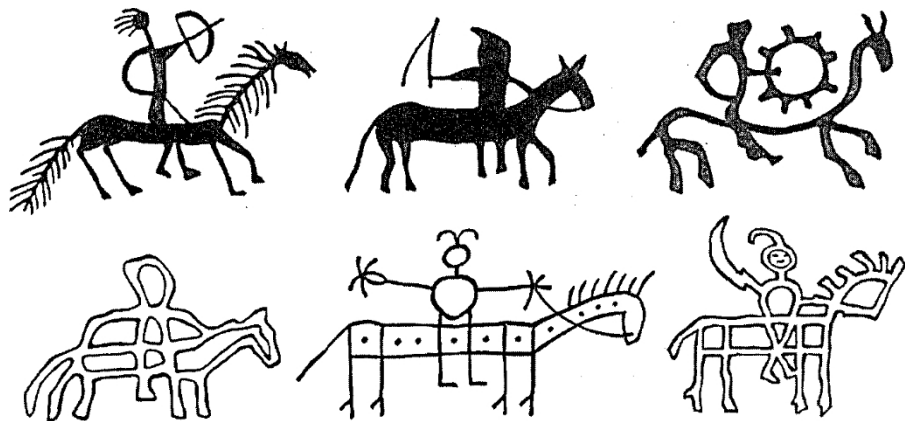


Image 28. The shaman, mounted on his assistant's horse (tin bura), is in a state of battle against enemy ghosts/evil spirits, holding a bow or sword in his hand.

As is evident, the shaman was always at the khan's side during all military campaigns. As an active participant in the military-democratic era of the Turks, the shaman's (drum, clothing, mallet, symbolic weapons worn on his chest, etc.) are reminiscent of Turkish warriors. In fact, the Yükegir tribe of the Turks, Shamans-

They called the shaman's "and dressing".<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the blacksmith's sword encircling the shaman, who passed through the initiation rites, once again proves that the shaman was the leader of the warrior band from his own lineage in ancient times

, the blacksmith's sword-girding once again proves that the shaman was the leader of the warrior clan from his own lineage in ancient times. Central Asian Shamans, like warriors, take a whip and a half-metre sword in their right hands and perform *kamlık*. During *kamlık*, they move the sword from side to side, as if they were fighting. This is consistent with the warrior characteristics of the society they belong to.

with the warrior characteristics of the society they served.

Shamanic legends and memorates feature significant accounts of shamans attacking each other, with the powerful shaman devouring the weaker one. However, these battles are not physical fights between two or more shaman groups, but rather spiritual battles. Indeed, the shaman's protector-

The spirit-possessed *Iye Kıl*, in the form of any animal, sees the animal of another shaman.

<sup>26</sup> Basilov V. N., *Selected Spiritual Texts*, p. 113

<sup>27</sup> Malov S. E., *Shamanism in Sartov*, p. 7

If one animal eats the other, the shaman whose spirit is embodied in that animal also dies. However, in some cases, the spirit of the deceased shaman is known as his second celestial spirit or being. The Emeget of the great deceased Shamans ascends to the heavens and becomes the shaman's celestial being. If Emeget does not ascend to the heavens, it means that one day, it will appear on earth.

It is known that shamans fought each other without entering the animal spirit form. Indeed, powerful shamans shoot magical arrows at their enemies from where they sit. These arrows are called *yörbö* in shamanic literature, and shamans keep them in their ears and shoot them when their lives are in danger. In addition, every shaman has a spirit that shoots arrows.

Furthermore, there are memoirs describing how Yakut Shamans, Tungus Shamans, or Altai Shamans fought against Buryat or Mongol Shamans. This is an indication that these Shamans were closely involved in the wars that existed within the ethnic context. To a large extent, these ethnically based wars reflect the participation of Shamans in the army in ancient times.

From shamanic legends and memorates, it is understood that shamans disliked those who practised magic and sorcery. Some legends recount the struggle between shamans and sorcerers. Although shamans were interpreters of spirits on earth

, society fears sorcerers much more. According to belief, a shaman cannot heal a person harmed by a witch

, a sorcerer or witch can heal someone harmed by a shaman. The conflict between shamans and sorcerers or witches ends with the latter winning. Nevertheless, powerful shamans can

It is also seen that he defeated the sorcerer. According to <sup>1</sup> I. Hudyakov, the difference between a shaman and a sorcerer is as follows:

is as follows. The sorcerer causes harm or heals through spittle and prayer, while the shaman works with spirits. Additionally, it is possible to encounter sorcerers among shamans, who are referred to as *aptaah oyun* or *aptaah udagan*.

## 12. 5. The Shaman's Prayer-Clapping

A large part of what the shaman says in a trance consists of prayer-chanting. In shamanism, these chants are performed to the accompaniment of drums and are therefore connected to music, resulting from the shaman's combination of theatrical and poetic codes. A skilled poet, the shaman only recites poetic prayers when in a trance; one cannot expect chants-prayers from the shaman in his normal state. On the other hand, because the shaman speaks while in a trance, he cannot repeat what he has said. The fact that the shaman performs poetic prayers with the mouth of the spirits and does not remember what he has said in normal times led the people in later periods to believe that he was possessed by spirits.

<sup>28</sup> Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, pp. 21 1-212

<sup>29</sup> Hudyakov I. A., *Kratkoe Opisanie*, p. 306

has been influential in the formation of the legends of the physical poets.<sup>30</sup> As N. Drury also writes, "The shaman expresses his power and intention through songs and mystery songs. Songs are the voices of God and the spirits, and just like the sacred drum, they help the shaman feel energised by the energy they give him."<sup>31</sup>

V. Seroşevskiy presents the following prayer-song of the Shaman from a ceremony he witnessed.<sup>32</sup> Before moving on to the prayer-song, the Shaman changes the melody of the drum and his tedious and chaotic prayer-song resounds:

*"O mighty bull of the earth, mighty horse of the steppe I am  
the roaring mighty bull*

*I am the neighing horse of the steppe*

*I am more distinguished than all beings I am  
more talented than each of you*

*I was created by the most powerful master. O horse of the  
meadows, come and teach me what to do. O enchanting bull of  
the earth, appear and speak to me. O mighty master, give me  
your commands.*

*Watch them come with me with your eyes. Those who did not walk with me, let them not follow me.*

*Approach as far as you are allowed. Look carefully, pay attention, be cautious.*

*Look very carefully. Everything is for you, everything.*

*On the left bank, O lady with the staff, if something is wrong, if I have not taken the right path, I beg you  
to correct my mistake, give me your commands.*

*Show me my mistakes and my path. My mother, give me wings to fly, pave my broad path.*

*Spirit of the sun, mother of the sun, living in the forest in the south, behind the nine hills, jealous one, I  
worship you, let them remain, let your three shadows stand tall.*

*Living on your mountain in the east, my ambitions are great power, my thick-necked father, my lord,*

*And white-bearded fire, I ask you with all my desires, with all my obedience. Accept all my desires.  
Pay attention, fulfil them, pay attention to everything, do everything. "*

<sup>30</sup> The Central Asian Shamans who came to Anatolia with a large crowd before the Mongols formed the folk Sufism in this region. The poets of folk Sufism also stated that they performed the hymns they recited through His mouth, meaning that He was the one who spoke, He was the one who made them speak, thus transferring the old Shamanic belief to the new civilisational environment. Everything Yunus Emre and Barak Baba said when they were in a state of ecstasy was written in the name of God. It is known that when Barak Baba was in a state of rapture, foam came from his mouth and he recited many lines that were meaningless and difficult to understand.

<sup>31</sup> Drury N., Shamanism, p. 77

<sup>32</sup> Seroşevskiy V. L., 12 Years in the Land of the Yakuts, p. 641-642. This prayer-clap is given in a slightly different form on p. 116 of A. İnan's book, Shamanism in History and Today.

The shaman performs all his prayers and chants only during the ritual, reciting them spontaneously, and in this respect, no two prayers are alike. Prayer songs are recited during seasonal rituals and healing sessions and, because they are spoken from the mouths of spirits, they often present a chaotic and difficult-to-understand situation.

often present a chaotic, difficult-to-understand situation. Especially the prayer chants

It is observed that they are read for a specific purpose. Indeed, the shaman aims to soften the patient's heart, dispel the thoughts in their head, and cleanse all their energy centres with the prayer song they recite during the shamanic session. To this end, shamans influence the patient's spirit with the help of throat sounds. As observed with the drum, the shaman's prayer song is also recited with other musical instruments, particularly the horned drum, homus (komus), flute, etc. Both the flute and the horned drum are as ancient as the shaman's drum.

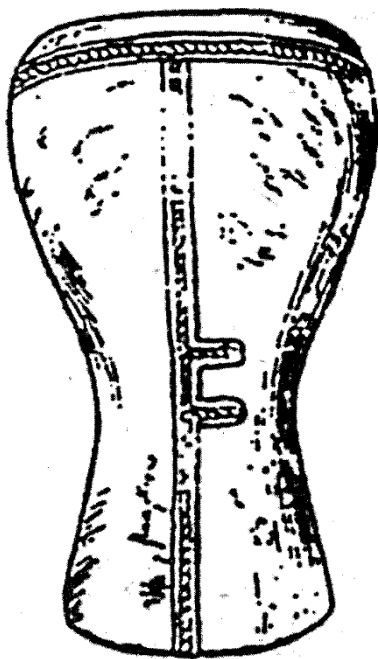


Figure 29. Horned drum found in the Pazyryk kurgan

The first of the prayers is dedicated to praising the shaman's helper spirits. However, the shaman is in contact with otherworldly beings who are the source of secret knowledge, and although what he says may seem chaotic, there is an order and system to it. The Yakuts accompany the shaman's prayer-song, that is, the songs sung by the spirits.

Thus, Shamans are nothing more than spokespeople for the spirits.

The fact that secret knowledge exists only in the form of words among the chosen few—poets, minstrels, bak-şıls, kayçılar, shamans, sorcerers, fortune tellers, etc.—allows us to contemplate the divine origin of words. The shaman's murmuring of things that sometimes the participants in the ceremony do not understand, conveying esoteric knowledge in a secret language, is a phenomenon seen in later Turkish Sufis. Indeed, what Barak Baba said in a state of ecstasy may be an example of this.<sup>34</sup> The epistemological origin of Turkish Sufi poets' great value placed on words extends to Siberian Shamans' view of words as the source of secret knowledge.

Generally, prayers and chants are rich in subject matter, ranging from the shaman's simple, symbolic description of the creation of the world and the origins of the living and inanimate world to his recounting of what he has seen in the other world. By imploring and praising God and the great spirits, the shaman

In this context, shamanic prayers provide the best information about the hierarchy of spirits and the functions of spirits in Turkish mythology

The shaman leads people to the sacred beginning by recounting cosmogonic myths, outlines the signs of the end by making eschatological myths the subject of prayers and chants, and calls on people to avoid evil and do good. With this esoteric knowledge, the shaman strives to prevent the increasingly corrupt life of society. Efforts to preserve the balance between nature and human society

Unfortunately, the study of chants, which has not been sufficiently examined to date, will provide inadequate information about shamanic knowledge, shamanic psychology, the shamanic worldview, and shamanic mythology.

<sup>33</sup> In this context, it is possible to compare the Sufi poets who spoke with the mouth of God, their hymns, their breaths, and their wisdom, which they expressed with His power.

<sup>34</sup> Barak Baba, like all Sufis, would show signs of hysteria when he came into ecstasy, foam would come from his mouth and uttered many incomplete, obscure sentences and broken verses during this period. (Ülken H. Z., *Anadolu'nun Dini Sosyal Tarihi* [The Religious and Social History of Anatolia], Ankara, 2003, p. 77)



THIRTEENTH CHAPTER  
THE MANIFESTATION OF SHAMANIC CONSCIOUSNESS  
IN THE CONTEXT OF SHAMANIC SYMBOLS

13. 1. Brief Introduction

The shaman must possess the tools necessary to prepare himself for the Otherworld: costume, drum, headdress, shoes, mirror, bowl, stick, mask, etc. However, it is not essential for a shaman to possess all of these items. Indeed, according to information provided by G. Potanin, the Uryanhay Shaman (ham), who has special clothing and a drum, performs shamanic rituals at night. The Kyrgyz Shaman (haksı) performs shamanic rituals during the day, has no special clothing or drum, but uses a musical instrument called a kopuz. <sup>1</sup>The clothing, drum, mirror, etc., representing the shaman's symbolic world, are actually the most important tools for the shaman to undertake his cosmic journey. These clothes and tools are objects inhabited by the shaman's helpers and helper spirits. In this context, the robe, drum, mallet, and mask not only symbolise the shaman's helper spirits, but also map out the cosmos. We have collectively termed all these the symbols of the shaman.

Shamanic tools, known as the symbolisation of shamanic consciousness, vary from region to region and may also differ within a single society. The primary reason for this difference is that shamans have different statuses.

Shamanism is rich in elements, symbols and signs, or in other words, shamanism is a system of knowledge transformed into symbols. Because symbols facilitate narration

· esoteric knowledge is often presented through symbols and emblems.

In this context, the shaman's clothing, drum and ritual performances, which are full of symbols from start to finish, and his speaking in a symbolic language, should be considered as a way of conveying secret knowledge to the profane (the society that has not undergone initiation).

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<sup>1</sup> Potanin G. N., Oçerki, vol. 2, p. 81

### 13. 2. The Costume of the Shaman from the Perspective of the Shamanic Worldview

The special costume known as the attire of Turkish Shamans consists of five types of garments: the coat called *manyak*, the mask, the headdress, the shoes, and the iron plate. Among these, the most important are the coat called *manyak* and the headdress.

#### 13. 2. 1. *The Shaman's Manyak from a Structural Semantic Perspective*

Shaman mythology, Shaman culture, and the mysterious world of the Shaman are symbolised in the Shaman's attire (costume). The secret symbols of the spirit world become visible in the shaman's costume. Since the spirits reside in the shaman's costume, the costume is the main factor that will separate the shaman from the real world with ecstasy. In that sense, the shaman's costume is actually the cosmic destiny of the shaman. To put it more plainly, the "writings" on the costume are the symbolic language of Shamanic art and the phenomenon of Shamanism. The costume has a functional role in symbolising the society's mythological thinking and cosmic knowledge, preparing the Shaman for a journey beyond the boundaries.

Clothing is as important to the shaman as the drum, and since it must be prepared in accordance with tradition, it has sometimes been observed that shamanic rituals are performed without clothing. However, such rituals are very rare and are performed for insignificant matters; the main ritual does not take place without costume. Without clothing, the shaman's battle against evil spirits becomes impossible, which is why Turkish shamanic texts state that the shaman first performs a ritual with the permission of the spirits. However, it is particularly important to note that the shaman only wears his costume during ceremonies; in other situations, he dresses like any other member of society. According to information provided by G. Potanin, the shaman's costume consists of 1) a coat, 2) a cap, and 3) shoes, all made of various fabrics and reaching down to the knees.<sup>2</sup> In addition, there is mention of a red sash that shamans tie around their waists.

According to Shamanic belief, either all or some of the helper spirits live in the clothing. Therefore, Shamanic clothing occupies an important place in the Shaman's symbolic world. On the other hand, the Shaman's clothing (costume) is also an indicator of his social status. Indeed, the various Shaman costumes preserved in museums today are an important tool for learning about the socio-cultural fabric of 19th-century Yakut or Altai Shamans.

<sup>2</sup> Potanin G. N., *Oçerki*, vol. 2, p. 84



Figure 30. Front view of the Yakut shaman costume (from Alekseev's book)



Figure 31. The back of a Yakut shaman costume (from Alekseev's book)

According to A. Popov, the costume is directly linked to human life. Indeed, the deterioration or damage of the garment brings illness or death to its owner. The Ngasan say that a person's garment is like their heart; it must not be damaged or destroyed.<sup>3</sup> The same belief holds a fixed place in Turkish Shamanism.

The garment that is essentially the shaman's attire is called *manyak* among the Altai-Sayan Turks. Russian and former Soviet ethnographic literature provides sufficient information about the making, description and symbols contained in the shaman costume. The costume called *manyak* by the Altai Shamans is generally open-necked and resembles a robe decorated with iron, animal claws, sable fur and other items. The Kobdin Shamans call the garment *mandzık*, the Uryanhay Shamans call it *terig*, and the Halhal Shamans call it *umışıl*.

<sup>3</sup> Popov A. A., "Duşa i Smert po Voozreniyam Hganasanov", *Priroda i Čelovek v Religioznh Preds-tavleniyah Narodov Sibiri i Severa*, Moscow, 1976, p. 34

Tuva Shamans call the robe worn by the Shaman a *hamnaar ton*. Short and long strips of fabric are sewn onto the outside of the Shaman's robe: at the front, sides and back.

These fabrics are called *uptyusin*. While there are general similarities in all these shaman costumes, there are also differences in their contents, as indicated by their names. This is related to geographical and ethnic characteristics, the tradition of shamanism, and the status of the shamans.



Figure 32. The back of a South Altai shaman costume (from Alekseev's book)

The shaman, during the time of the shamanic trance, gives the impression of belonging to another world, both spiritually detached from this world and through his attire. Cosmic travel demands the renewal of the body as well as a different costume. The shaman's attire essentially consists of a robe and a headdress. The conclusion drawn from the information provided by shamanic legends and discourses is as follows: Although great importance was once attached to shamanic clothing, over time, under the pressure of other religions and the gradual degeneration of shamanism, the clothing has lost its significance. Indeed, in many places, especially in recent times, shamans do not wear special clothing.

. In fact, among the Altai Turks, it has been observed that Shamans perform their rituals with only a drum. This signifies a departure from tradition and the loss of cosmic knowledge.

The creation of shamanic attire begins with the permission and guidance of spirits, according to shamanic belief. Shamanic attire is not a product of chance or individual fantasy, but rather the result of the collective thoughts and designs of the community. In short, it must be said that the costume and the symbols on it are nothing more than the materialisation of cosmic knowledge. Since the pieces attached to the garment play a symbolic role, it should not be overlooked that they are a manifestation of Shaman mythology.

Shamanic clothing is symbolically surrounded by three animal depictions: the bird, the bear and the deer. In earlier times, there were also garments symbolising the wolf. However, as the wolf symbol disappeared from Shamanism, this type of clothing was replaced by the bear, bird and deer. Indeed, it is noteworthy that 19th-century Siberian and Altai Shamans wore deer antlers on their heads along with their ceremonial garments bearing the deer symbol. Considering some of its symbols, it can be said that the Shamanic garment entirely symbolises the Shaman's animal mother.

Although the shaman's clothing, identified with animal depictions, symbolises the shaman's animal mother, for some reason B. Ögel and those who followed him used the term animal father. they use them, whereas in Shamanism the animal mother occupies an important place and the garments also symbolise the animal mother. In the depictions of the animal mother mentioned above

do not seem to include depictions of wolves. The absence of wolf clothing and the fact that shamans who possess the wolf mother

is not considered a noble shaman in Northern Siberia must be related to the decline of this cult over time. For example, since the animal mother of the Teleut shamans is a mythological bird, the *manyak* worn by the shamans, made of deer or sheep skin, also symbolises the same bird. The feathers and other parts attached to the *manyak* make the bird more recognisable (its wings, tail, beak, etc.). The robes of Tuvan shamans, made from sheep or goat skin, feature two black crows (*iyn kara kuskun*) carved from wood with their beaks turned towards each other on the shoulders, which is therefore the symbol of the Tuvan shaman's animal mother.

Therefore, it can be said that the clothing of Tuvan Shamans, in its entirety, symbolises the bird, as does the costume of Siberian Shamans.

The shaman's headdress also symbolises the animal mother, that is, the bird. In short, the shaman, with his headdress, dons the guise of the animal mother and embarks on a journey to the other world. The shaman, during the ceremony, is just like a bird

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<sup>4</sup> See Ögel B., *Turkish Mythology*, vol. 1, p. 37

<sup>5</sup> In 1999, the Altai woman shaman Nadya said that modern shamans no longer adhere to such practices in any serious way

By performing movements similar to flight, they visualise this symbol. Over time, the shaman's clothing and headdress, symbolising the animal mother, have been replaced by drawings on the robe and headdress. The bird symbol indicates the shaman's essential upward flight (sometimes descending underground), while other animal symbols indicate the shaman's journey to the underworld, known as the "blind ones".

According to some sources, the shaman's costume consists of thirty pieces. However, as the garments have degenerated over time, the number of these symbols has increased, and the meaning of some of them is not clearly understood. It is known that the main part of the manik consists of a jacket made of maral or white sheepskin.

Pieces symbolising the spirit world are sewn onto this jacket. For example, nine small dolls represent Ülgen's nine daughters, and tiny garments represent their dresses. In addition, depictions of snakes and frogs, representing the evil beings in Erlik's world, are also sewn onto the shaman's costume.



Figure 33. Front view of the Hakas shaman costume (from Alekseev's book)



Figure 34. Back of the Hakas Shaman costume (from Alekseev's book)

The shaman is obliged to wear special clothing to fight against evil spirits that hinder the community's peaceful existence and harm people. In this context, the shaman's robe fully serves as armour. The shaman's costume is adorned with symbols that prevent evil spirits from approaching or harming the shaman. Indeed, hanging iron objects on the part called the "döşlük" fulfils the function of armour, believed to protect the shaman when fighting evil spirits.

According to some, the iron chains that Shamans hang from their backs over their costumes symbolise the Shaman's power, while according to others, they serve as protective armour during the Shaman's journey to the spirit world. Similarly, the iron circle is also intended to protect the Shaman from the attacks of evil spirits during the journey.



Image 35. Front and back of the Sagay Shamans' caftan (from Alekseev's book)

Additionally, the belief that evil spirits fear iron is also influential. For this reason, small brass bells are hung on the arms of the shaman's robe, four on the right and one on the left, and there are also small bells and rattles attached to the back of the robe. Generally, the number of bells attached horizontally and level is greater. Altai Shamans carry nine small arrows in addition to all these sound-producing iron and copper items. Various beads and other items are also found in the shaman's bag, along with plates symbolising the moon and sun.

According to N. Pripuzov, the depiction of the sun and crescent moon on the shaman's costume, or the presence of plaques symbolising these two celestial bodies, signifies the darkness of the spirit world. These iron plaques serve as torches, illuminating the shaman's path through the dark world. Depictions of imaginary animals, fish, birds, and other fantastical creatures also point to this dwelling place of dark spirits.

Shamans sometimes wear a jacket called a kaftan over their costumes. As with the manyak, the kaftan also features Shaman symbols.

The preparation of the shaman costume is a ceremony in itself. The manyaq of the Altai shamans is sewn over two to three months and features nearly six hundred items with symbolic significance. The shaman's costume, with its symbols made of iron, copper, bone, wood, etc., and weighs around 15-17 kilograms. The

, women, usually from the shaman's family, sew the shaman's robe. During period, it is essential that the women do not see any men. The shaman's costume is kept in the tent a special place in the tent.

Shamans also hang iron plates above the maniac. This plate serves to protect the shaman

A special ceremony is held to dress the shaman prepared (n). The Altai shamans call this ceremony yelbü or manyak arula. The main purpose here is for the spirits to accept the candidate who is about to begin his duties as a shaman in terms of the costume. Meanwhile, some changes may also be made to the prepared costume according to the wishes of the spirits. Shamans only wear their garments during ceremonies and hang it in a special place in the tent the rest of the time. In some shamanic traditions (for example, among the Altai Turks), the costume is kept in a leather bag. Although shamanism is passed down through the family line, the shaman's manyak is not given to anyone else, and no one else in the family, not even the shaman himself, can use this costume.

It is understood that since the deceased Shaman's helper spirits have abandoned the madman, the new Shaman cannot wear the old madman's clothes. Another important issue is that the new Shaman must have new helper spirits. New helper spirits do not settle in an old Shaman madman. It is essential to make a new madman for the new Shaman

. The deceased shaman's old maniac is hung from a tree in the forest. When the shaman is buried, the madman is also placed at the head of the grave.

In the ritual performed to consecrate the costume (according to Yakut Shaman legends), an elderly Shaman takes the candidate to the top of a high mountain or to the steppe, dresses him in Shaman clothing, and gives him a drum and a willow branch wrapped in horsehair. Nine men stand to the candidate's right and nine girls to his left. The elderly shaman presiding over the ceremony stands behind the candidate, dressed in his robes, and recites a series of prayers ( ). This is called the oath prayer. The candidate repeats this prayer, pledging to the poor,

<sup>6</sup> PriP.uzov N. P., "Svedeniya dlya Izuçeniya, p. 95



those in need, the mentally ill, and the helpless, and pledges to respect spirits and fulfil their wishes.

It should be noted that Shamans also perform a purification ceremony for their costumes before each ritual.

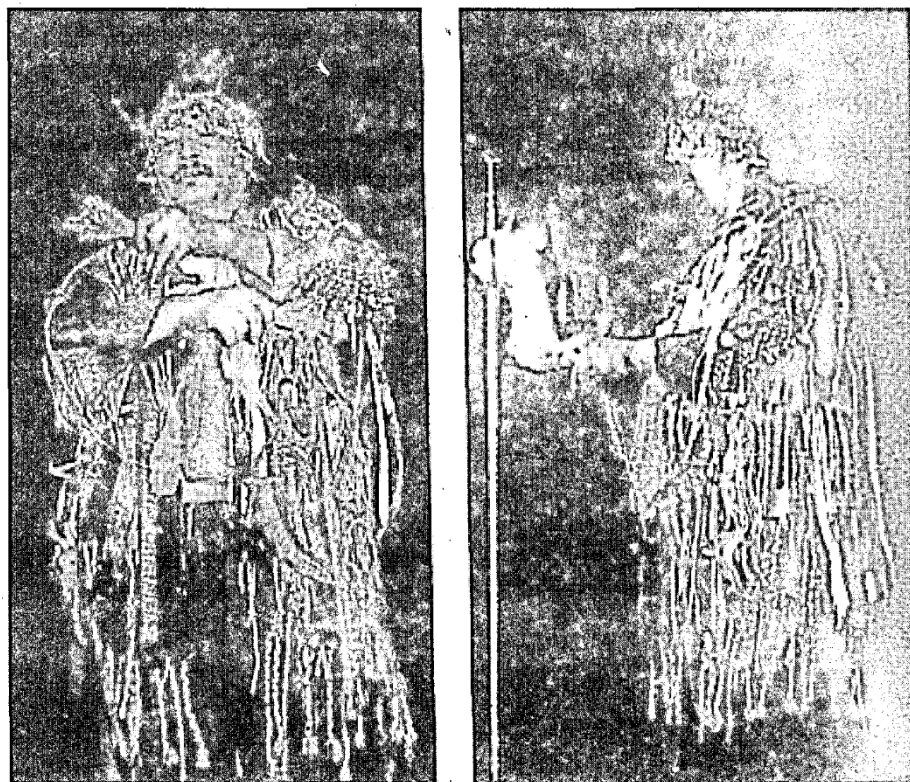


Figure 3b. The shaman (Mongol, Laza),  
purifies his costume and hands with juniper before leaving the komligo. (From Dikson's Book)

There is no difference between the clothing of female and male Shamans. Generally, differences arise according to taste, the wishes of the spirits, and the power of the Shamans; clothing is never made according to gender. Indeed, it is known that Yakut Shamans adorn themselves with women's braids, while Khakas Shamans wear beads and necklaces and place girls' caps on their heads.<sup>7</sup> Both female and male Shaman clothing, with all its symbols, serves to unite the Shaman with their ancestors.

<sup>7</sup> See Şaşkov S., Şamanstvo, p. 85

The special shamanic clothing and drum are more commonly associated with black Shamans. Only those responsible for offering sacrifices to the spirits of the luminous sky, to God, or to Ülgen White Shamans do not wear special clothing. However, V. Troščanskiy's views on this matter differ. According to him, the Yakuts had different costumes for white and black Shamans. The costume of the white Shaman (bear shaman) does not feature animal depictions, because white Shamans are protected by bears and are therefore not symbolised in animal form. This idea is refuted by shaman legends and memorates. Indeed, it is known that some bears are imagined in the shape of cows, while others are imagined in the shape of horses. According to V. Troščanskiy, the costume of black shamans does not feature a sun symbol. The sun image is specific to the white Shaman costume. The falsity of this thesis is also evident from the existence of sun and crescent moon images drawn on the black Shaman costume mentioned above.

Furthermore, the shaman's clothing has acquired a national identity, with the robe, caftan, headdress and other complementary elements displaying different characteristics in each shamanistic society. Indeed, the clothing of the Mongol and Buryat shamans, who are closest to Turkish shamanism, features elements characteristic of national consciousness. An example of Manchu shaman clothing is given below.

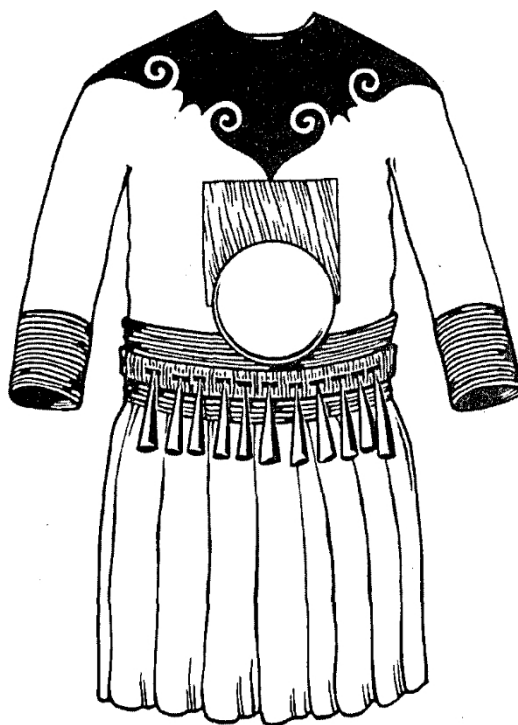


Figure 37. McNcu Scheman garment  
(from S. M. Shirokogoroff's monograph  
published in 1835)

13. 2. 2. *The Headdress and Mask as Complementary Elements of the Shaman's Attire*

The shaman's headdress is a symbol of shamanic mythology, represented by the costume. The headdress occupies an important place in shamanism because it completes the shaman and forms a unity with him. The headdress is also the most important of the symbols that distinguish shamans from one another. Indeed, it was not possible for Shamans to make headdresses arbitrarily or for each Shaman to wear the headdress of their choice. The headdress not only completed the costume but also carried socio-cultural content. Headgear possessing magical power is an important external element in Shamanism because it protects the Shaman's head, their most delicate and vulnerable part.

Shamans make their headdresses from leather or, in some regions (such as among the Kumandin Shamans), from birch bark. The headdresses of the Altai and Uryanhay Shamans are square or rectangular in shape, made from deer skin, and covered on the outside with shiny fabric.

The hats of the Kobdin Shamans are cylindrical and covered with yellow fabric on the outside. The fabric covering the outside of the hats of the Tuva Shamans is blue, with two copper eyes and a nose sewn onto it. The sides of the headdress are decorated with various items. A tail-like piece of fabric is sewn onto the back, which gives the impression of a bird spreading its wings when the shaman dances in a dimly lit room. It is common in shamanism to attach bird feathers, especially eagle, owl and sometimes

black chicken feathers, is common in shamanism. The headdress worn with the manya and symbolising the bird is called a bird's cap. The bird's cap is made of red fabric and hangs down from the top of the shaman's head towards the back. Tuvan Shamans also make the earmuffs they sew onto the headdress from red fabric.

Teleut Shamans sew their hats from yak skin, and in this state the wings of the yak are not cut. Sometimes the head of the yak is also left uncut and used to decorate the Shaman's headdress.<sup>9</sup> Other headdresses are decorated with bird feathers, fox fur, beads, strings, etc. Turkic Shamans also gave their headdresses various names.

For example, Kobdin Shamans call their hats *abgulda*, while Halhal Shamans call them *orgobçi*.<sup>10</sup> It is also known that Tuva Shamans call their hats *hamnar bört*, and these headdresses exhibit different characteristics for women and men.

<sup>9</sup> See Potanin G. N., Oçerki, vol. 4, p. 53

<sup>10</sup> Potanin G. N., Oçerki, vol. 2, pp. 81-83

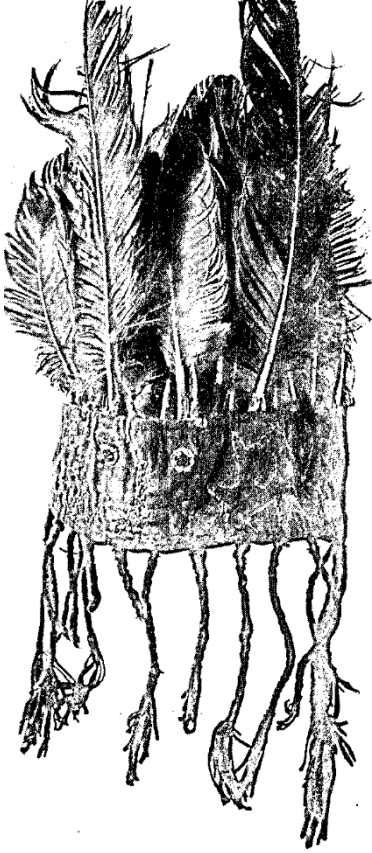


Figure 38. Tuva Shaman headdress - bird feather

The main part of the headdress is made of red fabric three spans long, while the lining is made of coarse fabric. Three buttons are sewn around it. It is also traditional to sew fox fur onto certain parts of the headdress — the eyes, the centre of the forehead and the nape of the neck. As the headdress has three parts, it is called a three-membered kus pörük. Five, nine or sixteen rows of beads are also sewn onto the cap. Examples of some Shaman headdresses below show how these headdresses vary from region to region:

<sup>11</sup> The fact that the Oghuz Turks, who later embraced Islam, wore red caps and were called Kızılbaş (Redheads), and that they formed an important military force in the establishment of the Safavid dynasty, shows that Shamanism continued to exist in the form of popular Sufism.

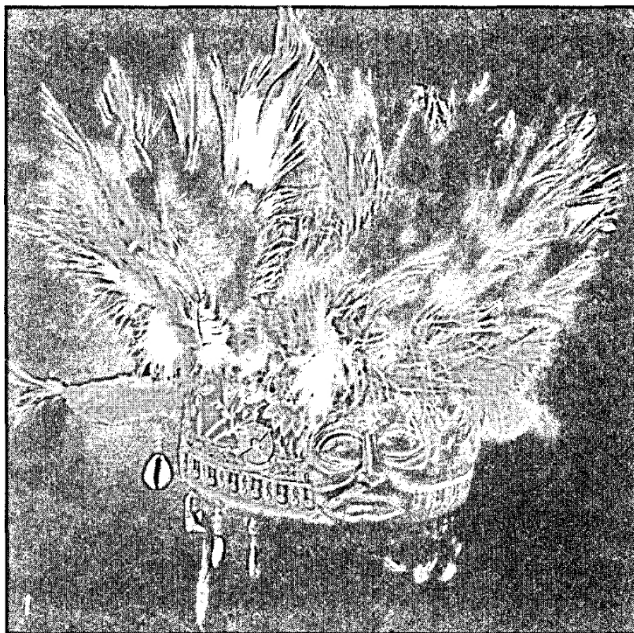


Image 39. The feathered headdress of Tuva Shamans - hamnar bört (from the Abakan basin).

What is interesting is that it completes the headband of a mask carved and painted from wood. (From Hoppal's Book)

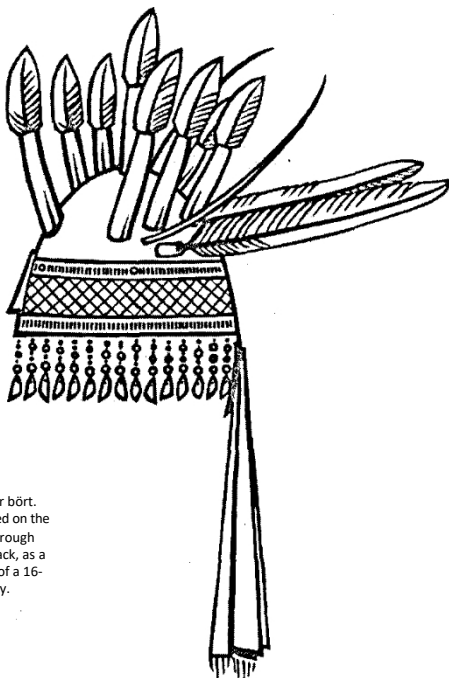


Image 40. The headdress of a Tuva female shaman – hamnar bört. Pearl strings, with camel beads at the ends. Before being placed on the headdress, the akba-ba and baykuş foylari were threaded through reeds. Between the feathers are two thin horns, and at the back, as a tail, an animal skin. This headdress was found in the grave of a 16-year-old shaman girl at the beginning of the 20th century.

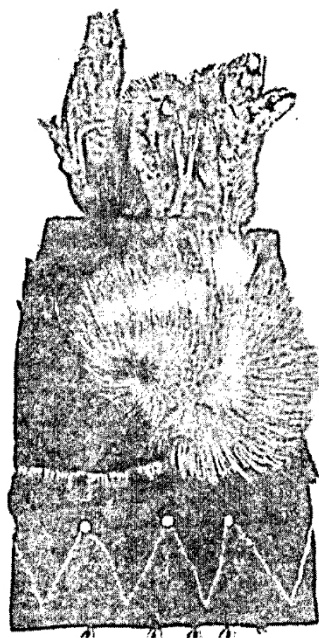


Figure 41. Southern Altai shaman headdress (from Alekseev's book)

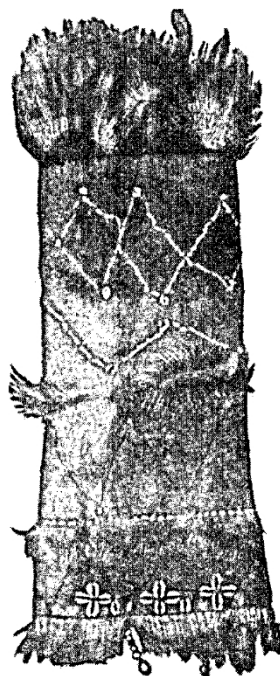


Figure 42. Southern Altai shaman's headdress (from Alekseev's book)



Figure 43. Telengit Shamans' Headgear



Figure 44. Sagay Shamans' baılıQı

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It is also worth noting that ancient Shamans wore horns on their heads. These horns were often made from deer antlers, and in some cases, bull horns. Horns can be seen on the headdresses of both Yakut and the related Tungus Shamans, as well as Buryat Shamans. Some Siberian Shamans wore reindeer horns on their headdresses.



Figure 45. A Khakas shaman wearing a horned headdress

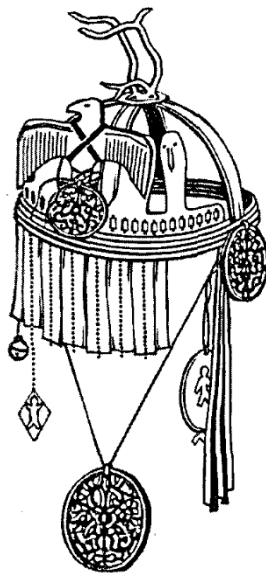


Figure 46. A Ngonoson shaman headdress with horns (from Happal's book)

According to Potanin's information, the headdress of Buryat Shamans is an iron hoop with two iron horns on it, the tips of which point backwards.<sup>12</sup>

The fact that the Nanay and Ulchi Shamans, who are among the peoples of Siberia, call their hats "hui," meaning horn and hat, once again demonstrates the importance of the horn in Shaman headdresses. The horn, as is well known, is a symbol of sovereignty and secret power, but it also proves that the ancient Shaman belief was linked to the moon-centred cult.

It is well known that during ceremonies, Shamans make sounds like bulls and fight against disease-bringing spirits by transforming into bulls. Furthermore, it is clear from observers' accounts that Yakut Shamans bellow like bulls during their rituals and wear bull horns on their heads.

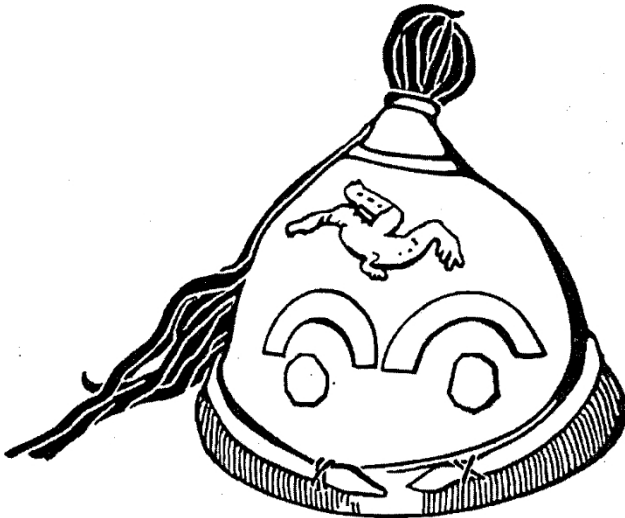


Figure 47. Yakut Shaman headdress

In short, clothing and headgear play an important role among the external factors that facilitate the shaman's journey to the other world. Some shamans wear masks along with their headgear. G. Ksenofontov's collection of shaman legends mentions very powerful shamans who wear iron masks.<sup>14</sup> Some

masks are known to be made of leather or tree bark. For example, based on information provided by G. Potanin, who travelled through Altai, Siberia, and Mongolia, we learn that Siberian Shamans wear masks. In Altai, Siberia, and Mongolia, we learn that Siberian Shamans wear masks. These masks are made of birch bark

<sup>12</sup> Potanin G. N., *Oçerki*, vol. 4, p. 55

<sup>13</sup> Bayat F., *Oğuz Epic Jittienesi* and *Oğuz Khan Dastan*, Bakı!, 1993, pp. 79-81

<sup>14</sup> See Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*,



made from bark, with a squirrel tail worn instead of a moustache and beard. It has been observed that the Buryat and Tungus Shamans, neighbours of the Turks, also wear masks. According to M. Eliade, the mask is not always a camouflage or defence against spirits, but a primitive technique for participating in the spirit world through magic.<sup>16</sup>

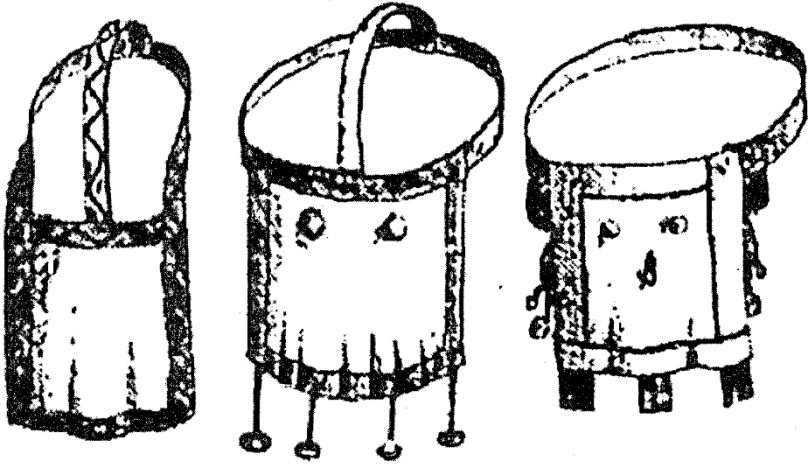


Figure 48. Shaman masks

The mask is important in completing the shaman costume, but it also contains certain symbols. Indeed, according to the beliefs of the Turkic shamans, the eyes of some shamans wearing iron masks were so powerful that when they looked at a cow, they would kill it. From this perspective, wearing a mask is interpreted as a tradition to avoid harming people. However, in mystical traditions, the prevailing view is that the mask represents a being, particularly the ancestors. While mystical teachings suggest that the wearer becomes one with the mask, this phenomenon is not found in the Turkish shamanic tradition. Instead of masks, some Yakut and Altai Shamans paint their faces so that spirits will not recognise them. This shows that masks, although rarely used in Turkish Shamanism, are used to adapt to the spirit world. Another point that should be emphasised is that masks are worn to protect against evil.

Along with wearing masks to avoid being recognised by spirits, some female shamans perform naked rituals. In fact, nudity also serves the purpose of avoiding recognition.

<sup>15</sup> Potanin G. N., *Oçerki*, vol. 4, p. 54

<sup>16</sup> Eliade M., *Shamanism*, p. 197

Here, the sun, wind, light, and the heat of the fire envelop the body, and the spirits no longer recognise the shaman who drives them from the patient's body.

The symbolic clothing, headdress and mask serve the purpose of camouflage and protection and constitute the main external elements of the trance technique. In essence, the costume, together with all its accessories (hat, mask), is an allegorical interpretation of the shaman's assumption of a new identity.

## 13

## 3. Divination Tool - Mirror

Another object that completes the shaman's costume is the mirror. More commonly seen among Tungus and Manchu shamans, the mirror also appears in Tuva, Hakas, and Yakut shamanic rituals. Indeed, according to information provided by Turkish shamanic texts, the mirror, costume, drum, and headdress are not made for the display of spirits, but are found. Thus, the mirror is described as a tool of prophecy directly offered to the shaman by the spirits among the shaman's accessories. The mirror is used to see the other world and determine the location of spirits. In fact, V. Dioszegi has shown that the Manchu-Tungusic word *panaptu*, which describes the mirror, is derived from the word *pana*, meaning "spirit, human spirit" or, more clearly, "spirit-shadow".<sup>17</sup>

Tuva Shamans take their mirrors with them when they go to treat patients. The mirror, called *küzüngü* in Tuva (in Azerbaijani Turkish, the nasal n sound has been dropped and this word has become *küzgü/güzgü*), is the Shaman's, has-

It is the tool he uses to determine whether he can heal the foal. The *küzüngü* is circular in shape and made of polished metal. According to belief, the mirror is the most powerful of the shaman's tools. According to the Tuvalus, the mirror, which is of heavenly origin, is the shaman's closest assistant, especially in the treatment of illnesses such as headaches and paralysis sent to humans from the heavens. A talented person can imitate the shaman, even the shaman's *kam*, but only shamans can be mirrors. Some powerful shamans can perform *kam* rituals without the shaman costume and drum

However, it is impossible to perform shamanism without a mirror. It is essential for every powerful shaman to have a heavenly mirror.<sup>18</sup>

The mirror, widely used in the shamanic tradition of the Siberian peoples, has been used for various magical and mystical purposes in every tribe. The mirror in Siberian Shamanism  
The main reason for its prominence is that the oldest polished copper mirrors were made in Siberia in the 2nd millennium BC. Siberian copper mirrors are notable for being older than mirrors produced in China.

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<sup>17</sup> Tuna E., *Shamanism and Acting*, Istanbul, 2000, p. 1

<sup>18</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit., p. 56

The importance of mirrors is clearly demonstrated in shamanic legends. Indeed, it is reported that the shaman performed a ritual for the mirror he found. For example, it is said that the famous Tuva shaman Sat Soyzul had twelve mirrors. From this legend, we learn that the shaman Sat Soyzul turned to a blacksmith to make a mirror.<sup>20</sup> The celestial origin of the mirror is actually linked to the myth that it came from the blacksmith. The mirror is not only a tool for divination but also a repository for illnesses. As a tool for divination, the mirror has also been used in many magical and occult traditions. Turkish Shamans use the mirror more to summon spirits.

Furthermore, according to the Tuva belief, the mirror is the shaman's most powerful spirit (his most powerful helper spirit). According to him, only folk healers treat without a mirror. The real shaman cannot perform shamanism without a mirror, nor can he treat.

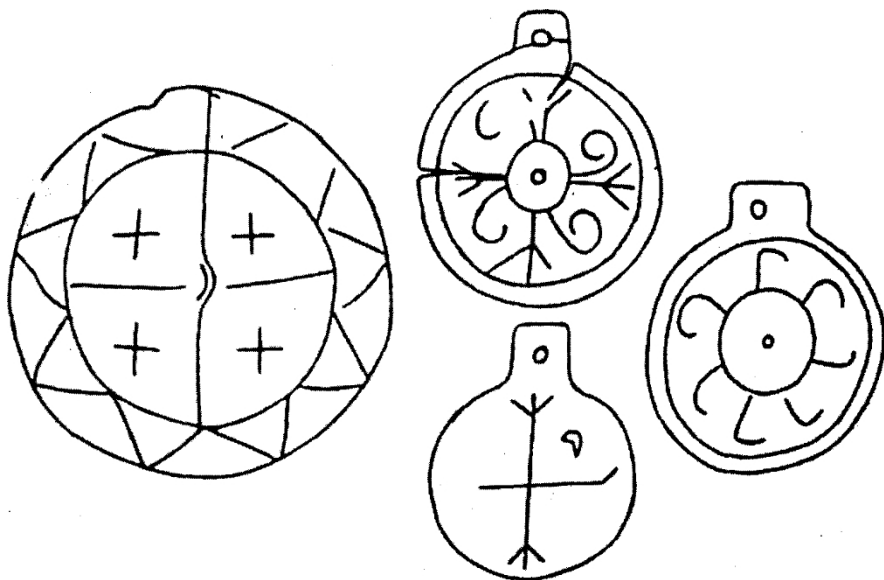


Image 49. Depictions of copper mirrors from the 2nd-4th centuries AD (from Diksan's book)

<sup>19</sup> One day, Shaman Doskaar was searching for something when he saw a mirror shining beneath the steep rock face of the stream. As soon as the shaman saw it, he spread a sheepskin on the ground and placed a cowhide over it. Then he began to perform the ritual. The shaman did not allow anyone to go near the place where the mirror shone. After finishing his ritual, he took the mirror and wrapped it in the skins he had opened. (Bayat R. *Turkish Shaman Texts*, p. 143) The shaman brought the mirror he found to his own home. This very valuable mirror brought the shaman great fame.

<sup>20</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit., p. 56

According to legends about shamans finding mirrors, the place where the mirror is found is usually the old bed of a river or the bottom of a rock. In shamanic literature, this place is called *küzüngü oynar çer* (the place where the mirror plays). The fact that the shaman must perform a ritual to stop and obtain the mirror playing in the sky shows that the mirror is as important in shamanism as the costume and drum. Another important issue is that the backs of celestial mirrors feature the twelve-animal Turkish calendar. Older mirrors symbolised the sun, its waxing and waning, and its rebirth. Therefore, depictions of the sun were found on the backs of mirrors.

The mirror's movement and the presence of the twelve-animal calendar on its reverse side serve to illustrate, in the Shamanic worldview, that time flows in the direction of cosmic travel and cosmic knowledge. For this reason, Shamans keep the mirror in the most revered place in the house—above the hearth, opposite the door. According to information provided by M. Kenin-Lop-san, some Shamans place the mirror in a specially prepared leather pouch, hang it from their belts, and carry it with them.

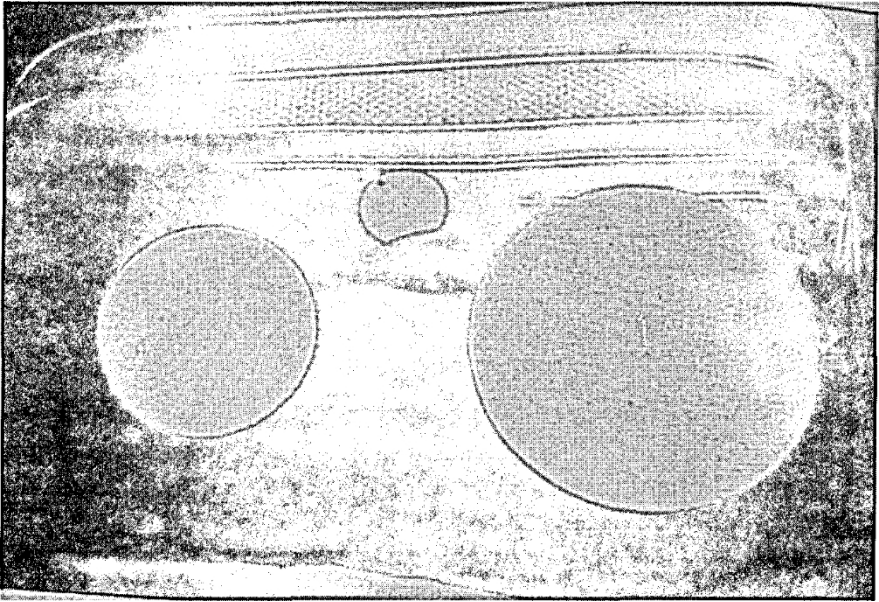


Figure 50. The mirror of the Tuva Shamans

In the mornings, either the shaman or the shaman's wife feeds the mirror by pouring freshly brewed milk tea into it and performs services. The shaman's wife raises her right hand in front of the mirror

<sup>21</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59

He pays his respects by placing his hand on his chest and taking a step back with his left foot. In the evening, the shaman places a burning candle in front of the mirror. When the mirror is brought to the patient's location, it is "fed" with the cooked tail of a specially skinned ram. This allows the mirror to be perceived as a being with a soul.

The shaman usually uses the mirror to diagnose illness and make predictions about the future. In Turkish folklore, the mirror is also a tool for divination, capable of showing a person's future. The shaman describes the power of the mirror during the ritual and speaks of it as an inseparable friend:

*The blessing of the ancestors*

*You have taken my heart, my love*

*The blessing of the deer*

*The gift of iron, my dear.* 22

(The gift of the spirits

I have a copper mirror with a gold-plated  
frame The gift of the heavens

I have an iron-plated copper mirror)

The celestial mirror is the shaman's helper and the dreaded enemy of evil spirits. As seen in the prayer chants of the Tuvan shamans, it is known that the mirror breaks the teeth and spine of the evil spirit that comes to steal the patient's soul, forcing it to retreat.

Unlike other shamanic items, the mirror is left to the shaman's close relatives after his death. If the shaman has no relatives, then the mirror is placed on the shaman's grave. According to belief, the mirror turns back towards the heavenly place from whence it came and is found by the new shaman.

The mirror, which occupies an important place in the shaman's ritual, is not as widespread among other Turkic communities as it is in Tuvan shamanism (Yakut shamans also use mirrors). The main reason for this is the interaction between Tuvan shamanism and Mongolian shamanism. Indeed, Mongolian Shamans use the mirror both for healing and for divination.

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<sup>22</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit., p. 60

### 13.4. The Shaman's Trance Technique, Celestial Consort, and Mount - The Drum

#### 13.4.1. *The Drum in the Context of Belief*

The drum, which embodies all the symbols of shamanism, is an integral part of this profession and also embodies the defining feature of ethnic history. Indeed, while Turkish Shamans are the sole users of the drum, in Koryak Shamanism, the drum belongs to the family, not the Shaman, and any member of the family can use it as a musical instrument.<sup>23</sup> In fieldwork, the Shaman's drum occupies a place as important as the Shaman's clothing.

The shaman's drum also holds an important place in terms of national history. Shaman mythology, worldview, way of thinking, and the philosophy of nomadic or hunter-gatherer life are symbolised in the paintings and figures drawn on the drum. ... same ..., the ancient symbols preserved on the drum also determine the origins and sphere of influence of shamanism. The structure of Turkish shaman drums is almost identical, regardless of the details. However, comparing these drums with the shaman drums of other peoples reveals a number of differences in an ethnolinguistic and national origin context.

The drum, the primary trance technique in shamanism, is the main instrument that distinguishes shamans from other religious figures. Among some Turkic peoples (Lebed Tatars, Kyrgyz, certain Yakut tribes), the bow or staff also plays an important role as a trance technique instead of the drum. It should also be noted that there are shamans who practise shamanism without drums. Despite all this, it can be said that the drum is the shaman's main musical instrument and trance technique. The drum is perceived as the only sacred musical instrument that conveys people's wishes to the spirits and brings the will of the other world to humans.

In ethnographic literature, it is referred to by the Turkish term *tüngür/dünür*.

We see that the drum is also called by the same name among some Siberian peoples. Therefore, it is possible to list the terms related to the drum in the shamanism of the Turks and their neighbouring peoples as follows: The drum of the Uryanhay shamans is circular and is called *tyüngür*. The Kachin shamans call the drum *tyür*, *tyüre*, while the Alar Buryats call it *hese*. The Mongols call the elliptical Shaman drum *bar*. However, it is also known that in Mongol Shamanism, the drum is called *düngür*. Among the Tuvans, the drum is called *hengere*, *düngür*, and *donkyur*. The Soyok Shamans

Karagas Shamans also call the drum *tüngur*. Among the Teleuts, the drum is called *tünür* or *ça-*

It is called *lu*. Halhal Shamans call the drum *hengrik*. The Shaman drum, which is 3-4 *dyüm* (between 30-50 cm) wide and mainly oval, partly round in shape, is called *tüngür* or *tür* among the Altai Turks.

<sup>23</sup> Jochelson V., *The Koryak*, p. 56

24 While the Yakuts call the drum *tüngür* or *tünür/dünür*, Manchu Shamans call it *tunkun*.

As can be seen, *tüngür* has evolved from its original meaning as the drum of Turkic Shamans into a general term.

In Yakut Turkish, one meaning of *tünür* is "kinship formed through marriage." *Tünüreter* means to marry, to be married. In Anatolia, *dünür* is also a term for kinship established through marriage, referring to the kinship between families whose sons or daughters are married to each other. According to V. Troščanskiy, this dual meaning of the term *tünür* is by no means coincidental. Indeed, the shaman is, in fact, the head of the family. In this context, the drum is a link between the shaman and the community, between the shaman and the spirits.<sup>25</sup>

The belief that the drum is the shaman's spiritual or heavenly spouse is widespread among the Altaic-Sayan peoples, including the Shors, Teleuts, Kumandins, Chelkans, and Tubas. Furthermore, the prohibition against women and children touching the drum confirms that it is the shaman's spiritual spouse. In fact, among the Shors, it is explicitly stated that the drum is the shaman's wife. Indeed, the drum is prepared by the Shaman candidate's uncle, grandfather or grandfather's brother, in short, the oldest member of the family. One more person is needed for this. This last person is called the mother of the drum. The oldest member of the family becomes the father of the drum. During this process, the drum is called the bride and the candidate is called the groom. When the drum is ready, the groom's relatives come to the bride's family home with ribbons of various colours to be hung on the drum. These gifts symbolise the headdress. A few days later, the groom arrives at the place where the drum was made, accompanied by his relatives.

During this time, other people also gather. In front of the crowd, the prospective groom recites the formulas for asking for the girl's hand. To this end, the groom offers a glass of wine to the father of the girl, who is referred to as the bride. While the girl's father is drinking the wine, either the groom or one of his relatives takes the bride drum and starts running out of the room as if kidnapping the girl. The symbolic father and mother begin to accuse each other and even start a fight. However, none of this lasts long, and everything ends in fun. The symbolic wedding, known as the shaman's official inauguration, begins in early spring with a special ritual: the groom ascends to the sky to bring back his fiancée.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, the fact that shamans view the inner pole of the drum as Mother Earth's sexual organ and the skin stretched over it as the hymen is a belief dating back to ancient times.

<sup>24</sup> Potanin G. N., *Očerki*, vol. 4, p. 40; Radloff W. W., *Iz Sibiri*, p. 368; Ivanov S. V., *Materialy po Izobrazitel'nomu Iskustvu Narodov Sibiri XIX -Nachala XX vv.* Moscow-Leningrad, 1954, pp. 653, 687

<sup>25</sup> Troščanskiy V. R., *The Evolution of the Black Veil*, p. 129

<sup>26</sup> Sternberg L. Ya., "Electivity in Religion", *Ethnography*, No. 1, 1927, pp. 22-23

The drum proves that the meaning of the shamanic relationship is transferred to men and women. In this case, women and their bodies are equated with the cosmos.

Therefore, the following conclusion can be drawn: just as shamanism began with women, the drum also symbolises the beginning of women. It does not seem possible to explain all this with a matriarchal structure. Here, the drum, which most likely gathers the shaman's helper spirits and disease-bringing spirits and is one of the indispensable external factors of shamanism, is married to and integrated with the shaman.

According to E. Prokofyeva, who has also researched shaman drums in an article,<sup>27</sup> it is possible to divide the drums of Turkic Shamans into three types: Altai, Shor, and Sayan-Yenisei drum types. However, as is evident from the information of other researchers and the examples of drums preserved in the Ethnography Museum, such a typology needs to be concretised.

The size of the drum is determined by the spirits' wishes, depending on both the shaman's age and the shamanic tradition. Immediately after shamanic illness, the candidate's new drum is made. With his status, it is also essential that his drum be made along with his clothing. Indeed, it is impossible to imagine Shamanism, known as the black faith, without a drum.

According to V. Troščanskiy, the drums of black Shamans and white Shamans are also different from each other. Once, when Troščanskiy showed the drum of a white Shaman to an elderly Yakut woman who understood Shaman clothing and drums, the woman recognised it as the drum of a white Shaman by the horsehair tied inside the iron rim.<sup>28</sup> Here, contrary to the assertion that white Shamans conduct rituals without drums, we encounter the fact that white Shamans also have drums.

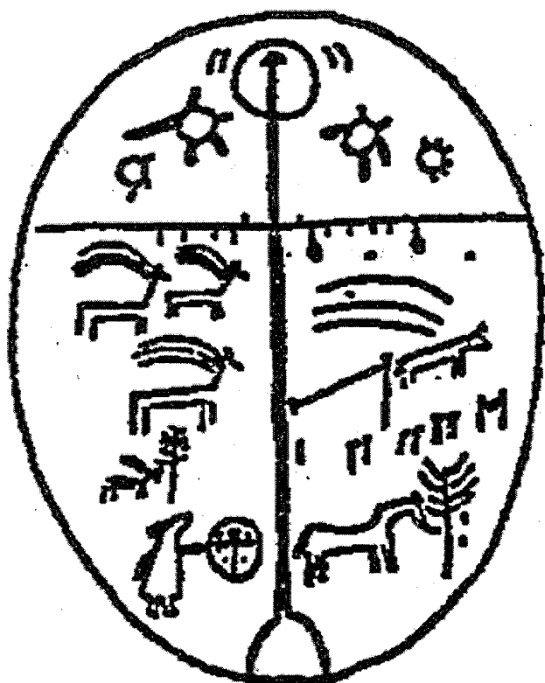
In shamanism, the making of the drum, which holds a very important place, is done according to the wishes of the spirits, just as with clothing. The shaman's drum is made from birch or cedar wood, which must be untouched, i.e. clean, as required by the Altaic-Sayan peoples. The frame is covered with deer, mountain goat or horse skin. In short, five things are required to make a drum: wood, iron, copper, leather and hair string.

The manak and the drum are made not at the shaman's own request, but at the request and suggestion of the spirits. The spirits also inform the shaman how many drums he will use until the end of his life. According to the beliefs of the Tsekhan shamans, the Three Suri Mountains, Just as he is permitted to make his first drum, the shaman is told how many drums he will use throughout his life and how many years of shamanism he will practise with each drum. In this way, the shaman learns how long he will practise shamanism on the sacred mountain, or in other words, how long he will live. Similarly, the Kumandin shamans also use drums.

<sup>27</sup> Prokofyeva E. D., "Shamanic Drums", *Istoriko-Etnograficheskiy Atlas Sibiri*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1961, pp. 435-490

<sup>28</sup> Troščanskiy V. F., *Evolutsiya Čemoy Ven*, p. 133





They take it from the ancestral mountains they consider sacred. According to the Kumandin Shamans, if the drum designated by the mountain is not made, the Shaman pays for it with his own health. Kumandin Shamans receive the command to make between three and nine drums from the ancestral mountains until the end of their lives.<sup>29</sup>

In ethnographic literature, it is clear that the first drum of the Shor Shamans was made by the ancestral Shaman or the ancestral mountain. According to the Shamans, Mustag Mountain, which gave them the drum, is also the sacred essence that shapes the destiny of the Shamans. It is known that Shor Shamans change between three and nine drums, and with this, the Shaman learns how much shamanism he will perform with each drum from Mount Mustag. If the last drum is torn or damaged, the Shaman cannot make a new drum. This signals that the Shaman's death is approaching. When the shaman dies, the drum is taken to the forest and either placed on top of the grave or hung on a tree near the grave. The shaman's body is also buried at the foot of this tree. No one from the family or another shaman has the authority to use the drum of the deceased shaman.

If the shaman's drum wears out or is damaged before its time, it is assumed that its owner will fall ill. Therefore, the shaman must protect against the illness.

<sup>29</sup> Potapov L. P., "Kult Gor i Altaye", *Sovetskaya Etnografiya*, No. 2, 1946, p. 151.

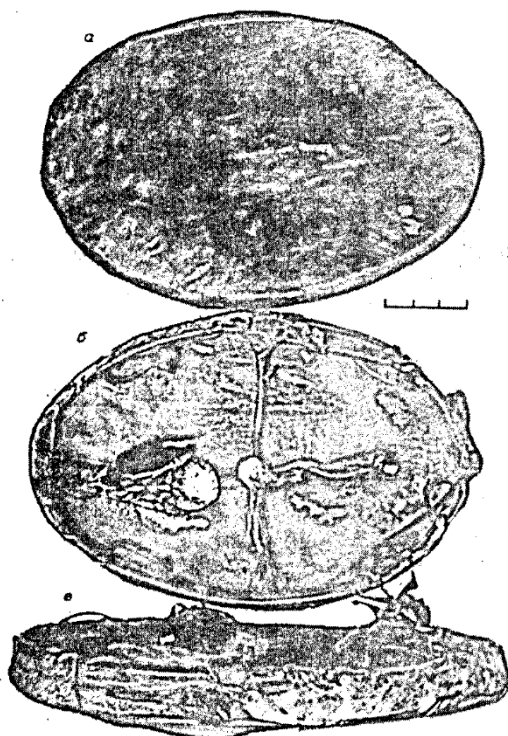


Figure 51. Yakut white shaman drum, front, back and side views (from Alekseev's book)

offers a horse or ox as a sacrifice to the guardian spirit and thus obtains permission to make a new drum. According to the belief of the Tubal Shamans, the drums of Shamans fighting each other also participate in this battle. Indeed, blood flows from the drum of the defeated and dead Shaman. Furthermore, it is possible to kill the Shaman by breaking the drum.<sup>30</sup>

The shamanic cosmogony symbolically represents the shamanic worldview. The shaman drum forms a unity with its parts. There is sufficient information in scientific literature about the making of the shaman drum and its symbols.<sup>31</sup> Soviet ethnography

<sup>30</sup> Lvova E. L., Oktyabrskaya I. V., et al. *Traditsionnoe Mirovozrenie, Prostranstvo i Vremya*, p. 170

<sup>31</sup> Potanin G. N., *Ocherki Severo-Zapadnoy Mongolii*, Vol. 1-IV, St. Petersburg, 1881-1883; Anohin, A. V., *Materials on Shamanism among the Altai*, Leningrad, 1924; Anohin, A. v., "Shamanism among the Teleuts", *Sibirskaya Izvestiya*, No. 253, Tomsk, 1913; Radloff W., *From Siberia. Pages from a Diary*, Moscow, 1989; Ivanov S. V., *Materials on the Decorative Arts of the Peoples of Siberia in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1954; Prokofyeva E. D., "Shamanic Drums", *Historical and Ethnographic Atlas of Siberia*, Moscow, 1961; Vaynshteyn S. I., *Tuvinskoe Shamanstvo*, Moscow, 1964; Dyakonova V. P., "Pogrebalny Obryad Tuvintsev ka istoriko", *Etnograficheskii Istochnik*, Leningrad, 1975; Potapov L. P., *Altayskiy Shamanism*, Moscow, 1986; Alekseev N. A., *Shamanism Among the Turkic Peoples of Siberia*, Novosibirsk, 1984; Kenin-Lopsan M. B., *Ritual Practice and Folklore of Tuvan Shamanism*, Novosibirsk, 1987

The museums in the region feature drum types used by the Altai-Sayan Turks and Yakut Shamans. Let us provide a few examples of drums from some of the books where these are featured:

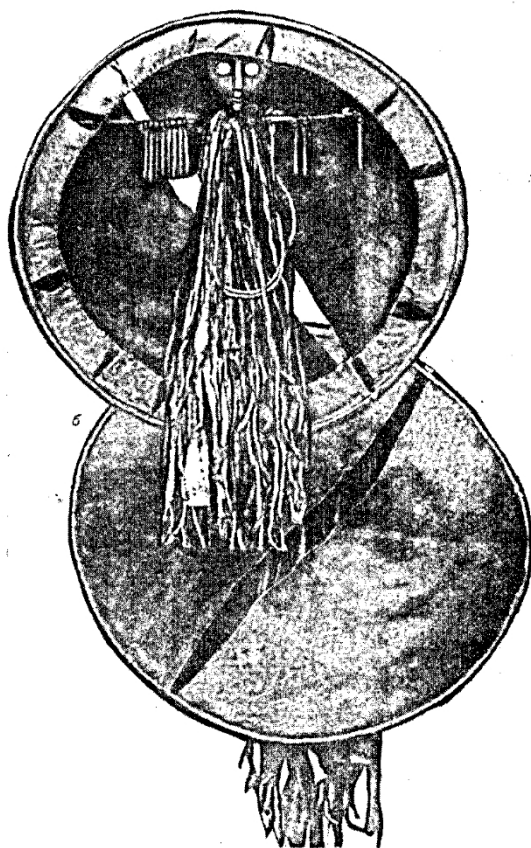


Figure 52. The drum of the Telengit Shamans, front and back (from Alekseev's book)

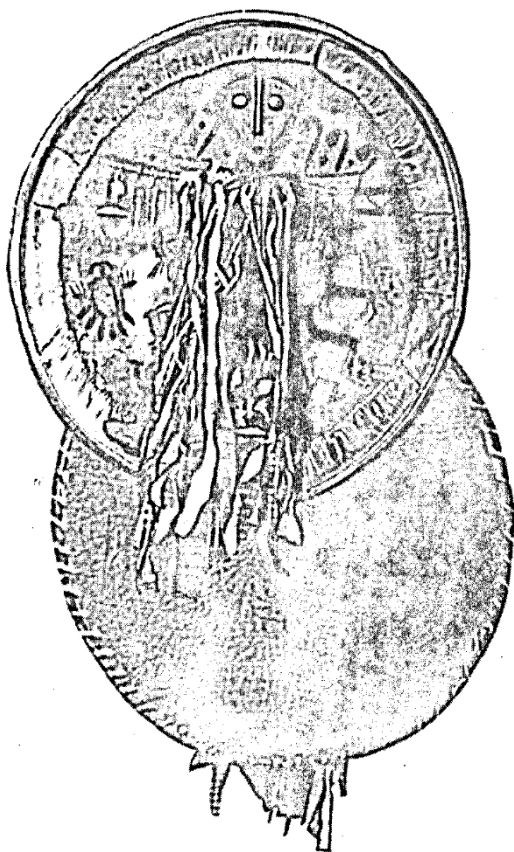


Figure 53. The drum of the Tubalar Shamans, inner and outer parts (from Alekseev's Book)

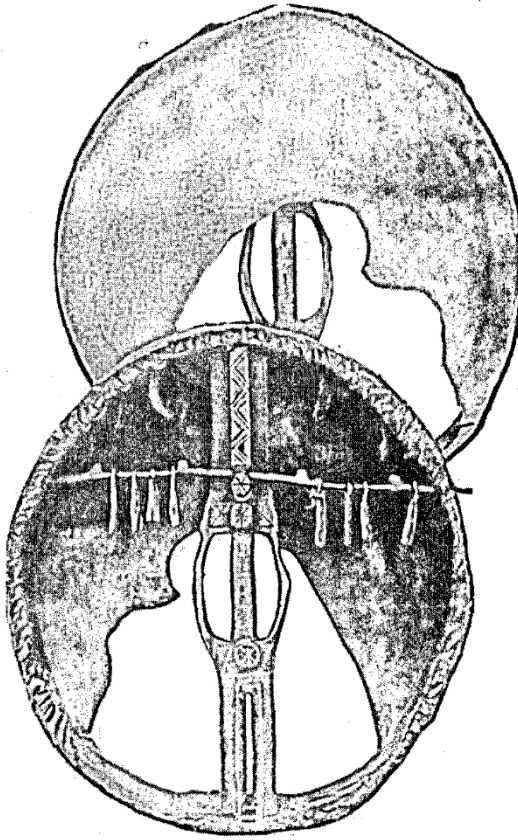


Figure 54. The drum of the Sagay Shamans, front and back (from Alekseev's book)

The presentation of the drum to a newly appointed shaman and the ceremony held on this occasion are known as the shaman's first initiation. During this initiation, just as with the clothing, the candidate receives the spirits' approval regarding the drum. Sacrifices are offered to Ülgen, Erlik, and other great spirits.

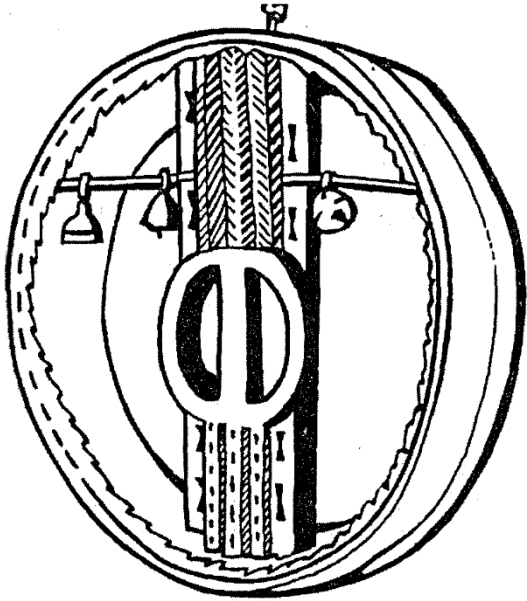


Figure 55. The drum of the Sher Shamans, split in two by a shaft thrown from the centre

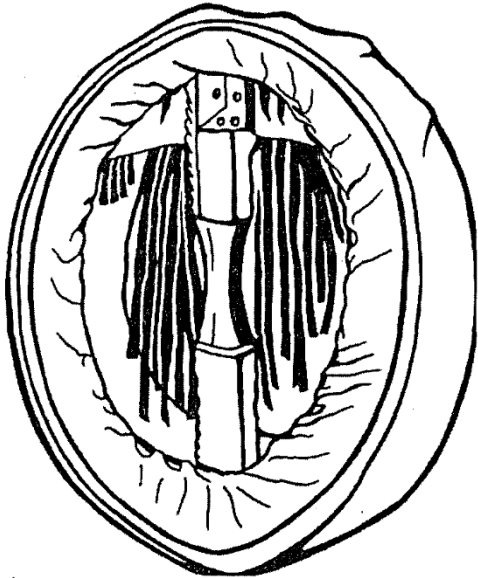


Figure 56. The drum of the Sher Shamans

The drum is essentially made of beech wood and is divided into two parts by the handle that serves as the armrest. The wooden handles are attached to the drum vertically and horizontally in a criss-cross pattern, and this shape resembles a human figure with its arms spread out to the sides. In fact, on

Shaman drums feature a human face carved into the upper part of the vertically placed handle, symbolising the spirit of the handle, the drum, or the Shaman. Two

small metal plates play the role of eyes. These symbolise the shaman's far-seeing eyes, while the human figure symbolises his helper spirit. The rectangular metal plate represents the beard, while the heart-shaped plate represents the heart. A plate similar to these plates is also found on Teleut shaman drums.

The human figure dividing the shaman drum into two parts is called *tüngür eezi* by the Altai-Sayan Shamans. This guardian spirit is known as one of the Shaman's main helpers and the spirit protecting the drum.



Figure 57. *Tüngür eezi* (From Hoppal's Book)

The rectangles intersecting horizontally and vertically on the upper part of the drum are known as Ülgen's writings. Shamans sometimes refer to this as Ülgen's seal. Kobdin Shamans call the human figure on their drums *ham buter*. Similarly, the drums of the Çelkan Shamans and the Altai Shamans are also divided into two parts by a human figure:

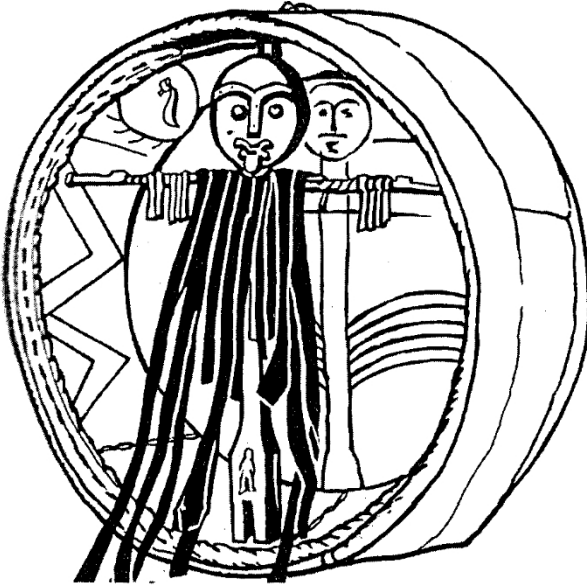


Figure 58. The drum of the Çelkan Shamans (from Alekseev's book)

In contrast, the circular drum of the Uryanhay Shamans is divided into two parts by a vertical handle. This handle is called *toktuş* and is decorated with various objects. However, it does not resemble a human figure. The horizontal handle running through the middle divides the drum into upper and lower parts (the sky and the earth or the world of spirits and the world where humans live).

The horizontal handle divides the drum into two unequal parts. The upper part of the handle symbolises the sky, while the lower part symbolises the underworld. This wooden handle is attached to an iron rod inserted into the frame. The iron rod also prevents the drum from breaking. A series of images painted in red or white adorn both the inside and outside of the drum. The individuals who draw the images, or shamans,

are individuals who are well versed in Shaman mythology and social consciousness. In most drums, the outer surface features the moon on the right, the sun on the left, and between them or slightly above, a star image, along with imaginary and real animals and creatures symbolising the evil spirits of the underworld, the *körmes*, and the good sky spirits.

The images are drawn. According to S. Ivanov's depiction, who studied shaman drums, Si-



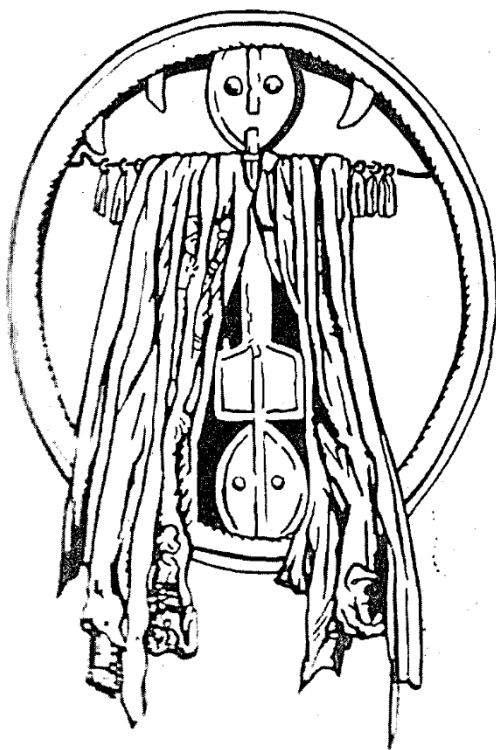


Figure 59. The drum of the Altai Shamans - *tüngür*

In general, the sun is depicted on the right and the moon on the left in the drums of the Biryä and Altai Shamans.<sup>32</sup>

The opposite situation is also possible. Indeed, on the drums of the Hakas and Altai Shamans, the sun is on the left and the moon on the right.

We often encounter sacred mountain images on shaman drums that prove the kinship between the shaman and the mountain clan. There are drums on which images of Erlik and Ülgen's sons and as well as images of birds and snakes.

<sup>32</sup> Ivanov S. V., *op. cit.*, pp. 75, 95



Figure 60. The drum of the Altai Shamans - *tüngür*

The shaman drums of the Siberian and Altai Turks are generally divided into two parts by a line drawn down the middle. The upper part represents the celestial realm, while the lower part represents the underworld. The images symbolising the upper and lower worlds reflect the shaman's cosmogonic views. Among the Altai and Sayan Turks, symbols of the celestial and subterranean realms are more prevalent. In contrast, it is known that some Altai tribes also pay attention to the depiction of earthly entities. Generally, whether it is the drum of the Yakut, the Altai-Sayan, or the Mongol-Buryat Shamans, they all share similarities. The difference is determined solely by the individual thoughts of the Shaman. This shows that, as in the case of Shamanism, the drum is also universal.

The drum, divided into two sections, features bird images differentiated by colour: white, red and black. The horses on the drum are also depicted in white and red. The people with bows, birds and horses depicted on the drum are shown moving to the right.<sup>33</sup> In terms of the symbols depicted, the drums of the Altai, Khakas, Teleut, Telengit, Shor and Kumandin peoples show similarities.

<sup>33</sup> See Ivanov S. V., *op. cit.*, pp. 595-599

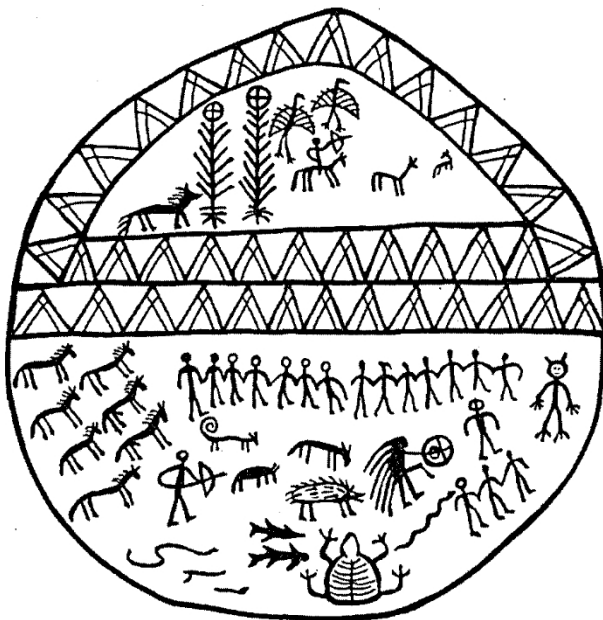


Figure 61. The drum of the Kachin Shamans

The shamanistic beliefs of the Turkic tribes living around the Altai-Sayan mountains also show many similarities. In particular, the fact that the Altai-Sayan Shamans' ascension to the heavens on their horses

to the heavens is depicted on the drums, which is of great significance.

N. Katanov's information about the Shaman drum of the Minusinsk Tatars is also noteworthy.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, the Shaman drum of the Minusinsk Tatars generally consists of three parts: the inside of the drum, the outside, and the mallet. The size of the drum is about one arshin. Although the frame of the drum is made of willow wood, the vertical handle is usually made of beech wood, and the top is covered with horsehide. The main parts of the drum, the wood and iron stick, are not replaced or renewed. Only the skin of the drum can be renewed. There are twelve holes in the handle called *mars*, which symbolise the holes the shaman will use to descend into the underworld. The embossments between the holes symbolise mountains. At the top of the handle is an iron rod used by the shaman to ward off evil spirits. Eighteen iron bells are attached to the iron rod, which is the shaman's weapon for warding off evil spirits. Two bells attached to the rod represent the shaman's helper spirits.

<sup>34</sup> Katanov N. F., "Tales and Legends of the Minusinsk Tatars", Siberian Collection, St. Petersburg, 1887



Figure 62. The drum of the Teleut Shamans. The horse on which the Shaman rides to the heavens - here

The upper part of the drum depicts a seven-coloured rainbow, at the end of which there is a depiction of a ladder in the shape of two squares. The ladder is the tool the shaman will use to ascend to the heavens. Two white

birch trees. At the top of the ladder are depictions of seven girls, who are most likely Ülgen's daughters. Next to the girls are depictions of two birds that help the shaman ascend to the heavens. There are also two horsemen depicted on the drum. The red horseman ascends to the underworld, while the white horseman ascends to the heavens.

ascend to the heavens. Two depictions of birds that assist the shaman in his ascent to the heavens can also be found on the drum. Two horsemen can also be seen on the drum. The red horseman goes to the underworld, while the white horseman goes to the heavens. The three lines running through the centre of the drum represent the boundary separating the real world from the underworld.

The lower part of the drum features images of a frog and a snake protecting the sheep. Additionally, images of mountains, the sea, a golden pillar, etc., are also depicted on the lower part of the drum. Two fish depicting the underworld are also found at the bottom. Two dogs, one black and one brown, are depicted as guardians who alert the shaman when evil spirits approach. The depictions do not end there. Indeed, at the bottom of the drum are the seven

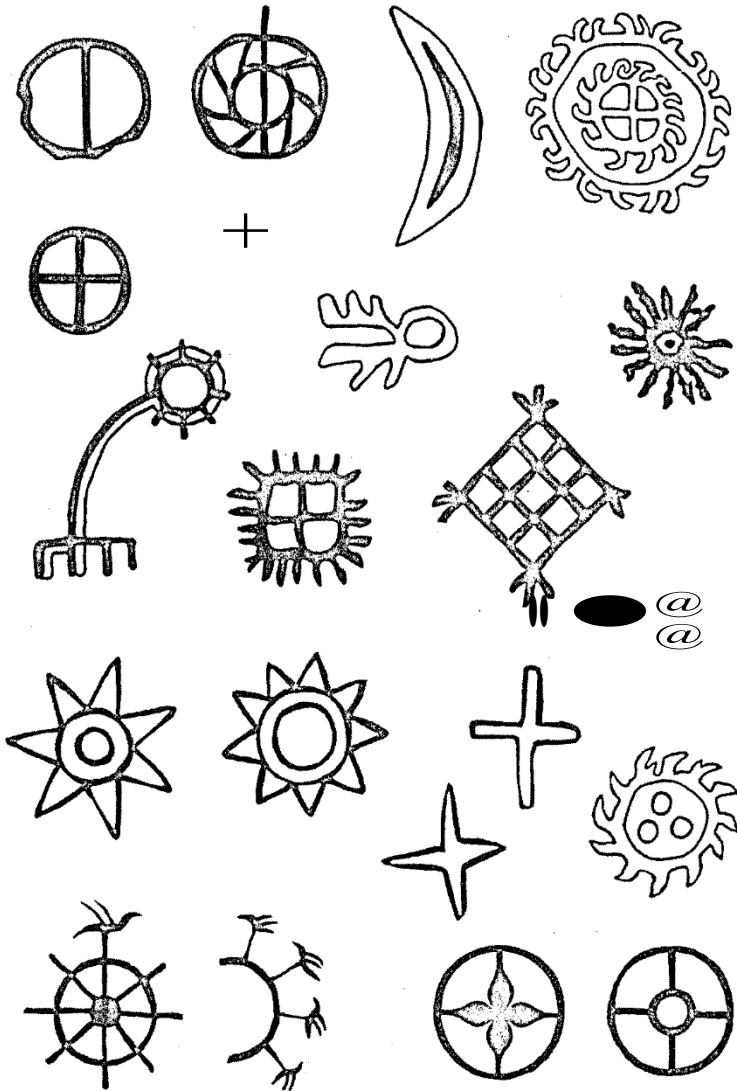


Image 63. Mythological symbols on the shaman's drum.

There are also depictions of seven people riding horses. The rabbit image on the lower part of the drum also signifies the spirit that protects the shaman's tools.

In the Shamanist beliefs of the Altai Turks, the ladder symbolising the Shaman's ascent to heaven is depicted alongside other images on the outer part of the drum.

The depiction of the ladder symbolises the vehicle used by Shamans during their journeys to the upper world.

To summarise briefly, the lower and upper parts of the shaman's drum consist of the following sections: 3s

On the upper part of the drum, there is a depiction of two birds of the eagle species, aba-tıys (female bear), sugızınım-karagat (the Great Khan's horse), kızıl-kih-han, and on the lower part, bay kayın, two ulug-bay kayın trees, white and black бага (frogs), seven bird nests and seven bird feathers representing the kşiti-us spirits, seven young girls - kşti-kız ki, representing the seven human ailments, headaches, toothaches, and other ailments prayed for at the time of ulugere, ot-imeze (mother of fire), etc. All these depictions and symbols serve the purpose of enabling the shaman to establish contact with the spirit world. Communication with the world of spirits gives the shaman a unique place in society. In this respect, the shaman's worldview, mythology, and all secret knowledge are transformed into symbols and "written" on his costume and drum. Below are some of the mythological symbols found on the drum.

During ceremonies, the shaman gathers his helper spirits inside the drum, so the images on the inside of the drum resemble the portraits of the drum's owner or owners. These images, which are more reminiscent of human figures, are depictions of both ancestral shamans and shaman spirits. The image of the tree, one of the fundamental elements of the world model and which unites the three worlds, also features on the inside of the drum.

According to belief, the shaman uses this tree like a ladder to ascend to the sky and descend to the underworld

The drum, the primary trance technique of shamanism, was made by the first celestial shaman according to shamanic mythology and hangs from the world tree on Mount Altai, awaiting the second coming of the sky shaman to save humanity

The evaluation of the drum, which is the medium of communication for spirits in the shaman's esoteric knowledge, within the paradigm of the doctrine of salvation indicates the high status of this trance technique.

<sup>35</sup> See: Potanin G. N., Oçerki, vol. 2; Mihaylovskiy V. M., "Shamanism", Izvestiya Obşçestva Lyubi-teley Estestvoznanii, Antropologi i Etnografi, vol. 25, Moscow, 1892, p. (18;

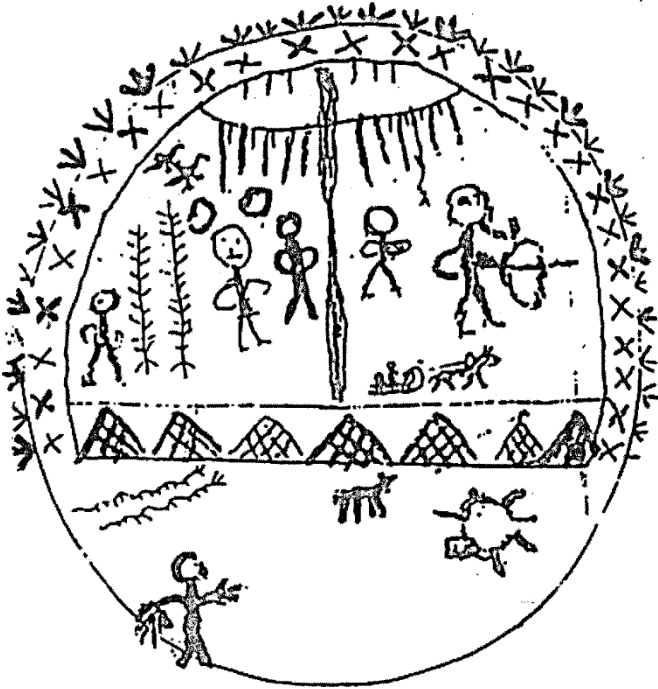


Figure 64. A drawing of a drum by the Sher shaman Kakuş in 1913

#### 13. 4. 2. *The Mallet as a Complementary Technical Element of Esmer*

Next to the drum, there is also a mallet, called *obru* by the Altay and Uryanhay Shamans. The Halhal Shamans call the mallet *tahiur*.<sup>36</sup> The Yakut Shamans call the mallet *bulaayah*. The mallet, which resembles a sphere, is usually made from sacred birch wood, just like the drum. However, mallets made from willow branches or pine wood, deer bone or antler are also found. The part of the mallet that strikes the drum is covered with rabbit or hare skin. This ensures that the sound produced by the drum is muffled. The main purpose of the muffled sound here is to symbolise the sounds coming from the other world. In general, the shaman mallets of the Altai-Sayan Turks are similar to each other:

<sup>36</sup> Potanin G. N., *Oçerki*, vol. 2, pp. 81-84

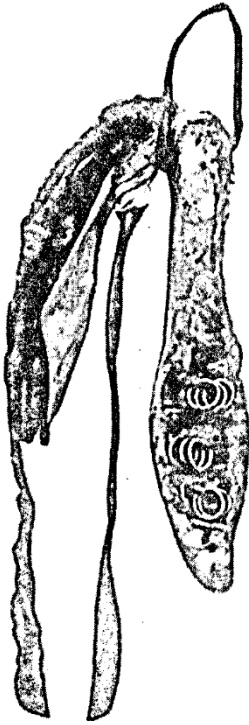


Figure 65. Tuva Shamans' mallets (from Alekseev's book)

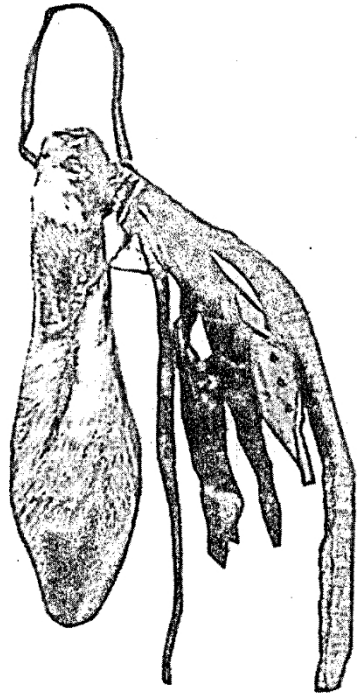


Figure 66. Tuva Shamans' mallets (from Alekseev's book)

Pieces of cloth and leather, which serve as a whip to drive away evil spirits that have come to the patient, are attached to the handle of the mallet. Since the mallet is part of the drum, in some communities it is decorated with pictures or rings. The shaman uses the mallet as a) a weapon, b) a paddle, and c) a whip. It is also known that Tuva Shamans use the mallet for fortune-telling. Indeed, the drum is the shaman's boat for crossing the river and the winged horse he rides to ascend to the heavens.

The drum, which has an important place in the shaman's trance technique, is a widespread shamanic belief.

According to the belief, it is the mount that carries the shaman to the sky and takes him to the underworld. This is why Altai shamans refer to the drumstick as a whip and the drum as a mount. It is even recorded that Yakut shamans call the drum a horse. According to Yakut belief, the drum is transformed into an animal and the mallet into a whip during the shamanic ritual, and the shaman travels to the other world riding this animal.



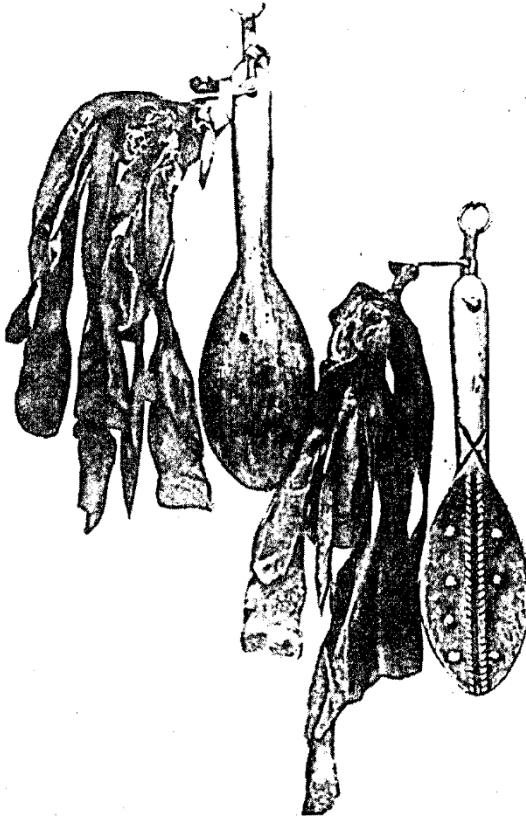


Figure 67. The front and back sides of the Sagay Shamans' mallet (from Alekseev's book)

.37 When the shaman is in a trance, the drum is seen as his horse, deer, or wolf that lifts him up to the heavens, or as the boat that takes him to the underworld. The mallet here takes on the role of either a whip or an oar.

As Campbell also notes, Shamans leave their bodies and ride their drums to travel beyond the visible world.<sup>38</sup> In some tribes, the Shaman's drum is also referred to as a deer, a roe deer, or a bear. However, it should also be noted that when the Shaman ascends to the sky, the animal he rides is called a barak or parak.

<sup>37</sup> See Pripuzov N. P., *Svedeniya dlya Izuçeniya*, p. 65; Maak R., *Vilyuyskiy Okrug Yakutskoy Oblasti*, part 3, St. Petersburg,

1887, p. 118; Pekarskiy-E. K., Vasilyev V. N., "Plaş i Buben Yakutsko-go Şamana", *Material on Ethnography of the Rasii*, Vol. 1, St. Petersburg, 1910, p. 115; Priklonskiy, V. L., "Yakutsk Folk Beliefs and Tales", *Living Antiquity*, 1891

<sup>38</sup> Campbell, J., *Primitive Mythology*, Ankara, 1992, p. 93

nilir.<sup>39</sup> In particular, the drums of Altai shamans feature animal figures called *bura*, which some researchers consider to be totems. In fact, *bura* is a depiction of the mystical animal that the shaman rides to reach another dimension during his mystical journey.

If Tuva Shamans stretch leather over one side of their mallets, they attach nine rings to the other side. When the mallet strikes the drum, the rings touch each other and produce sounds. Shamans also use this type of mallet to tell fortunes and predict the future. Towards the end of the ceremony, the Shaman strikes the mallet towards the sun and interprets the sound based on how the mallet falls.

towards the sun and makes interpretations based on how the mallet falls.

If the mallet falls with the rings facing upwards, it means everything will be fine. If the rings fall towards the ground, this is interpreted as bad. If the mallet falls with its belly facing upwards, it is thrown again.

The rhythmic sounds produced by the drum compel the spirits to enter the drum. In this case, the drum's second function is to act as a tool for summoning spirits. The shaman gradually increases the rhythm of the drum and often turns it.

Playing the drum causes trance. Thus, the drum is the means that induces trance and transports the shaman to another realm (according to shamanic belief), or fulfils a third function. As evident in Yakut shamanic legends, the sounds produced by the drum gather helpful spirits to the drum while also frightening away evil spirits.<sup>40</sup>

The drum and costume are two important elements that complement each other. Shamanic mythology, macro- and microcosmic designs, and sacred knowledge are symbolically gathered in these two elements. To summarise briefly, the cosmic symbols on the drum, mallet, or costume are the externalisation of the concept of Shamanism and the spirit world, concretising the abstract concept and particularising the whole.

Once the mallet and drum are prepared, the candidate performs a ritual to animate the drum under the guidance of an elder shaman. A drum that has not been animated or purified is nothing more than a musical instrument. The mystical power of the drum and mallet is secured through the act of animation. The purified costume, drum, and other shamanic items are the most important elements in the shaman's mystical journey.

The shaman's ritual, which has an important place in the shaman's life, is performed with music, drums and mallets. During the ritual, the shaman's use of music and song helps him transport himself to other worlds. However, the role of the drum and mallet does not end there. During treatment, the music produced by the mallet and drum plays an important role in healing.

<sup>39</sup> Here, it should be remembered that the name of the horse ridden during the Mirac, which holds an important place in Islam, is Burak, and the influence of Shamanism on other religions in the subsequent section should not be overlooked. On the other hand, it is also possible to approach the issue in terms of utilising cosmic knowledge sources.

<sup>40</sup> See Bayat F., Turkish Shamanic Texts,

#### 14. 1. The Relationship Between the Kam, Kamlık, and the Kam-Commissioner

The most prominent functions of the SHAMAN essentially occur during the time of kamlık. During kamlık, the shaman enters into contact with spirits, brings the other world into his own world, and introduces the audience to a mysterious realm. Outside of kamlık, he is an ordinary person.

He is human. In this context, the Shaman belongs to both worlds. In his natural state, he is of this world and an ordinary person. During his trance state, he is transformed into someone belonging to the other world and is also endowed with cosmic knowledge. He lives a dual world and is an ordinary human being. During shamanic rituals, he is transformed into someone belonging to the other world and is also endowed with cosmic knowledge. The shaman, who leads a dual life, Shaman, in fact, is a person who assumes that the other world is also within this world.

By adding the suffix -la to the Turkish word kam, the term shamanism was formed, which indicates a process, and it has become a common term used by all Siberian shamanism. This also indicates that the term shaman

and the suffix -lık is added to the verb to form the term kamlık, which denotes a process. This term has become a common term used throughout Siberian Shamanism. This shows that the sphere of influence of Turkish Shamanism encompasses the Evenks, Nanays, Ulchs, Mongols, Tungus, Chukchis, Koryaks, and other peoples. A shaman is, in fact, a shaman when he or she is performing shamanism (kam). All ritual-based activities are clarified within the context of the concept of shamanism.

According to shamanic mythology, the source of knowledge is the other world, which witnessed the beginning or is the source of the beginning. The shaman's training and rebirth in the other world signifies that he is the bearer of this knowledge. In this context, the shaman, during the shamanic journey considered a cosmic voyage, takes on the role of conveying this knowledge to humans. The shaman's ascension to the sky and descent into the underworld is his ability to see the other world, and therefore the future, before he dies. The philosophy of cosmic travel, which forms the basis of shamanism, is to live by overcoming death and the future.

In terms of its function, shamanism is first and foremost a means of understanding and perceiving the universe and the relationship between the material world and the spirit world within it. At the same time, shamanism has the power to determine social status and integrate individuals into society.

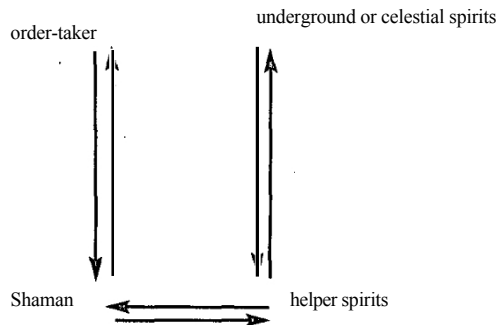
It also has an educational function. The information provided by the shaman during the *kamlık* period also serves a cultural function in introducing members of the community to religious and mythological elements. The cultural and educational functions form the socio-cultural fabric of the shamanic ceremony in the form of two main elements. . Another important issue here is that everyone, except for the shaman who leads the ceremony, is equal in terms of knowledge and experience regarding the ceremony.

In this context, Shamans, who accept dialectical change and view life and existence as a process of movement, wish to convey all these philosophical ideas and natural accumulations to humanity through their shamanic practices. The fact that this is realised in the form of ritual performances proves that Shamans use a special language (music, dance, and movements, performances, and signs accompanied by recitation) to convey cosmic knowledge. Therefore, it can be said that shamanism is a tool for teaching knowledge. Shamans do not use any specific place (temple) to teach this type of knowledge; they find any place in nature suitable. The philosophy of harmony with nature is also consistent with the freedom of shamanism, and the absence of any rule-based sanctions in shamanism seems to be connected to this free shamanic worldview. The absence of stereotyping, similarity, and repetition in the shamanic process is also related to the unique structure of shamanism.

*Kamlık*, a specialised practice, is only performed when absolutely necessary. This necessity—There is an orderer who creates the order. In this context, action during the order period:

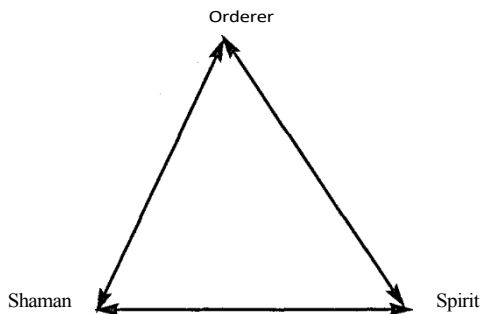
from the orderer to the 7 Shamans,  
 from the Shaman to 7 of his helper spirits,  
 and from them to 7 spirits of the underworld or heavens. The  
 return:  
 from the harmful spirits to the 7 helper spirits, from there  
 to the 7 Shamans, and  
 from there to the 7 orderer

in this manner. If we combine both formulas, then it takes the form of a four-cornered the following chart emerges:



As seen in shamanic legends, this formula can be reduced to a triangular shape. Indeed, the known formula:

The customer 7 Shaman 7 spirit form is much more common.



Both Paleo-Siberian and Turkic Shamans perform shamanism at a specific time. The shamanic ceremony performed in a dimly lit room as darkness falls creates a distinct illusion on the audience-

creates a distinct illusion on the audience in terms of its effect. From this, it can be seen that the code of night lies at the heart of the shaman's understanding of shamanism. As the Tuva Shamans say

*Hamnaar hamı çuve*

*Kara dune hamnaar çuve. 2*

(Those who perform shamanic  
rituals

Perform shamanism in the darkness of night)

However, according to some information, there have been Shamans among the Tuva people who performed shamanism during the day. In fact, one Shaman was given the name Hündüs Haknaar (Daytime Shaman) because he performed shamanism during the day. All these exceptional cases do not invalidate the idea that Shamans perform shamanism at night.

During the trance, the shaman's dance, starting gently and gradually accelerating, along with the monotonous sound of the drum, is accompanied by the drum's rising and falling tones, which help to bring the desired world scene to life.

<sup>1</sup> See: Bogoraz V. G., "The Chukchee", American Museum of Natural History. History. (The Jesup North Pacific Expedition), New York, 1904, VII, pp. 438-440; Jochelson V., The Koryak, p. 52; Seroşevs-kiy V. L., 12 Let v Krayu Yakutov, pp. 639-641; Potanin G., Sketches of North-Western Mongolia, vol. 1, St. Petersburg, 1881, pp. 60-65

<sup>2</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit., p. 22

<sup>3</sup> See: Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit., p. 17

The fact that a large number of people are called to the kamlık ceremony shows that kamlık is a social activity. Furthermore, one of the advantages of collective kamlık over individual kamlık is the belief that spirits are active during times of social unity.

The end of the shamanic ceremony varies from region to region. However, the shamanic ceremonies of the Yakuts, especially those of the Northern Yakut Shamans, differ from the general Turkish shamanism. At the end of the shamanism ceremony, the Northern Yakut Shaman removes his clothes, gives his drum to his assistant, and releases his helper spirits. All these functions are supported by poems recited by the Shaman on the subject. At the end of the shamanism ceremony, there is the mystical washing of the Shaman, which is not found in other Turkic tribes. The Shaman asks for clear water from Lake Baikal to be given to him. The water is poured into the shaman's hand by a young woman who has never seen a man and has never committed a sin. However, before the young woman pours the water, the shaman asks her some questions. The young woman must answer these questions in the negative. After all this, the shaman washes his hands with the water poured by the young woman.<sup>4</sup> With this, the mystical purification and kamlık are complete.

During the shamanic ceremony, the shaman's utterances in an obscure, complex language, raising and lowering his voice, have been recorded repeatedly by all observers. In fact, since the shaman speaks to spirits in the language of spirits, those who have not attained the secret cannot understand this language. During the shamanic ceremony, the shaman lowers and raises his voice, just as he raises and lowers the sound of the drum, and at the end of the ritual, both the shaman and the drum fall silent.

On the other hand, the fact that the shaman imitates the flight of birds, neighs like a horse, and moves like a bear during the ritual is proof that he has long observed the movements and behaviour of birds and animals

, this cannot lead to the Shaman being labelled a good actor and interpreted one-sidedly. The main issue is not whether the Shaman is truly an illusionist or a talented actor

The real issue is that for tens of thousands of years, without any school, the secret teaching has been passed from shaman to shaman through the medium. Acting and illusionism should be evaluated in the context of this

context. During the ritual, the shaman's play (dance) is not an imitation of the bird or animal he is mimicking, but a fusion with the bird or animal.

## 14. 2. At the Level of Game Philosophy Kamlık

Known in general Turkish as kamlık, the Turkmen call the ceremony performed by the shaman through ecstasy göçyüne. Among other Central Asian Turks, Şama-

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<sup>4</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., Uraanghay-Sahcılar, Vol. 1, Yakutsk, 1992, p. 334

's shamanic status as a fairy game. Ethnographic data also shows that Turks refer to Shamanic ceremonies as games. Even the Muslim Turkmen tribe of Çovdur referred to the Shaman's shamanic status as playing. The term playing is also used among the Altai-Sayan Turks, the peoples of the Far East and Siberia.

.7 The shaman's game symbolises the shaman's path to maturity.

The Yakuts have even combined the relationship between Shamans and games by referring to their Shamans as "players." Indeed, the term Shaman means "one who plays" or "one who jumps." All these facts show that the code of play is fundamental to Shamanism. Play is the only way to separate oneself from the outside world, to leave the real world, to reach another dimension; it is the essential element of the Shamanic ceremony. A general overview of shamanic dances shows that the shaman essentially symbolises two animals. The first symbolises horse riding, while the other symbolises bird flight. A. Sagalaev and I. Oktyabrskayas also attempt to unlock the nature code of the game with the neighing of a stallion. Thus, the game takes on the role of a means of communication between humans and nature. With the help of the animal and bird codes, the game performed by the shaman symbolically conveys the horizontal and vertical world model to the audience.

The Nanay and Ulchi peoples of Siberia also refer to play and dance as *meu*, which means shamanism or shamanic practice.<sup>9</sup> This demonstrates the primary importance of play in shamanism and ecstasy.

In the animal kingdom, play is the foremost biological method of education, essential for strengthening young animals and developing their concentration. Indeed, wild animals play with their young to prepare them for hunting and the struggle for survival in nature.

prepare them for hunting and the struggle for survival in nature.

Whether in the social realm or in nature, play is part of education. Through play, the shaman gains strength against the other realm and prepares himself to encounter beings from another world.

From a different perspective, play is a symbol of the variable, disrupted spirituality of another world. The play of beings from the other world is seen as a violation or disruption of normal behavioural rules. Ethnographic

materials, the playfulness of the mountain spirit or the owner of the taiga is interpreted as a threat to human society.

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<sup>5</sup> Malov S. Ye., *Shamanism in Sartov*, pp. 17-20

<sup>6</sup> Basilov V. N., Niyazklıçev K., "Perejitki Şamanstva u Turkmen-Çovdurov", *Domusulmanskiye Ve-rovaniya i Obryadı v Sredney Azi*, Moscow, 1975, p. 126

<sup>7</sup> The rhythmic dances of the Yeseviye, Bektaşiyi, and Mevleviyi orders during the sema/semah process, their origins From this perspective, it is a more advanced form of the Shamanic ritual. The Alevi-Bektashi and Mevlevi orders also reached God spiritually by ascending to the sema. While the Prophet ascended to God's side only during the Mi'raj, the dervishes ascended to the side of the Almighty Creator every time they performed the sema ceremony. During the sema ceremony, both the Yesevi and the Anatolian saints performed movements resembling the flight of birds, reflecting the time when the shamans before Islam turned into birds and flew into the skies.

<sup>8</sup> Sagalaev A. M., Oktyabrskaya İ. V., *Traditional Worldview, Sign and Ritual*, pp. 121-122

<sup>9</sup> Smolyak A. V., *op. cit.*, p. 57

are excluded from the ethical rules. Indeed, the daughters of Erlik, the ruler of the underworld, also play with the Shaman, and their game is considered rude and immoral when viewed from the perspective of normal behaviour. Thus, the Shaman, through his game, interferes with the rules of the other world.

In concrete terms, the game eliminates the distinction between nature and society. To put it another way, the shaman's game, even if only temporarily, erases the differences between the otherworld and the real world.

Turkish has conservatively encoded the content of secret knowledge and mythological rituals in language. Indeed, this term, which has variants such as *oyun*, *oyın*, *oın* in various dialects of Turkish, has meanings such as dance, gambling, role-playing, lying, mischief, etc. Furthermore, the word *oynak* means toy or fool in Siberian Turkish, has the meaning of deviant in the Kyrgyz, Sagay, and Koybol dialects, and expresses the meaning of prostitute in the *oynaş* variant in Azerbaijani and Turkish. In Tuva, there is a festival called *oytulaş* on the night of the full moon in late autumn, which is known as a game where unmarried young people break their sexual taboos. , where unmarried young people are known to break sexual taboos through games. <sup>10</sup>

Games are variants of verbal myths transformed into symbols. In this context, the shaman's ritual, which consists of games, can be described as having ritual, mythical and religious content. M. And explains the ritual-based game as follows: Ritual is a metaphor for a phenomenon related to the universe. This metaphor is, here, more of a mystical repetition, an identification for the representation of a phenomenon. The function of the ritual function is not merely allegorical; it enables worshippers to participate in the sacred phenomenon itself.

If the game is a combination of opposites, the shaman is a mediator between these dualities. The shaman's game is different from ordinary games of entertainment and desire in its structural characteristics and in that its function is linked to ritual. The shaman transforms the secret knowledge of society into a spectacle within a limited time, in a limited space and in accordance with a limited task

. The shaman owes the game to the message he can convey during the communal time. The game forces the shaman to take on another personality. Indeed, during the game, the shaman is a different person.

. The game compels the shaman to assume another personality. Indeed, during the game, the shaman temporarily accesses a source of knowledge closed to the material world because he is turned towards the existence of the other realm.

The game is a union in both Shamanism and Sufism, it is attaining the truth and carries a mystical character. We can consider the *sema* (the game) performed by Mevlevi and Bektashi dervishes

can be considered a perfect example of this cosmic game. It is immediately apparent that the Bektashi *semah*

is clearly of Shamanic origin at first glance.

<sup>10</sup> Sagalaev A. M., Oktyabrskaya I. V., *Traditional Worldview, Sign and Ritual*, p. 123

<sup>11</sup> And M., *Oyun ve Bügü. The Concept of Play in Turkish Culture*, Istanbul, 2003, p. 30



Play is a matter of national consciousness and has been religious in nature since ancient times. Whether Mevlevi or Alevi-Bektashi sema/semahs, the composition of the The sound is followed by a dance, which is called raks. In both Shamanism and folk Sufism, one of the two main elements of ecstasy is music, the other is dance. Dance is the first of the paths leading to ecstasy. It is not merely physical movement or the weakness of the body, but the essential nourishment of the soul, the way to find truth in the heart. It is believed that through dance, the soul ascends to the heavens and man conquers his evil self. Dance is also a way of warding off evil spirits. The institution of the Sheikh, with the same cultural heritage inherited from their predecessors

both in Central Asia and Azerbaijan, as well as in Anatolia, within the framework of Islam. within the framework of Islam. Since play is the only way to connect with the spirit world, sheikhs and elders, like their Shaman predecessors, use play during healing sessions. In short, music, assonant rhyming poetry and dance are the main elements that bring the Shaman into a state of ecstasy, distancing him from the temporary concerns of the world and removing the barriers between the spirit world and society.

In the shaman's metaphysical world, the broad concept of play brings together all philosophical phenomena and unites all existing designs. The term 'play' being used for Yakut Shamans, and the bloodletting of Central Asian Shamans being called fairy play (a term used to emphasise its more mystical content) is for this reason. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that dance, in terms of its origin, is magical and cultic (related to magic and worship), and is the expression of emotions, excitement and enthusiasm through rhythmic movements (with or without musical instruments) in all ages and all countries.

During the game, the shaman truly transports his soul to another realm; he does not play alone, but also makes his spirits play. Furthermore, the participation of the audience during the ritual brings the relationships between members of the community to a harmonious level, eliminating moral and psychic negativity. The game takes the community to a world it has never known, temporarily relieving the tension and fear that weigh upon it. "The mind, the creator of language, constantly moves back and forth between the material and the imagined through play."<sup>12</sup> Thus, through the language of play, the shaman offers the community the positive code of life, the life force.

The formula used by Central Asian shamans", *oyna perim oyna*" (play my drum, play my drum), is very similar to the rhythm "*oyna kü-lüm oyna*" (play my drum, play my drum) used in Azerbaijan. The playing with puppets depicting the protective spirits of shamans is a phenomenon seen among all Altaic-Sayan Turks. In Azerbaijan, the phrase "*oyna gülüm oyna*" (play, my dear) addressed to the puppet represents the preservation of the desire for increase and abundance through the puppet in the context of play. Kuk-

<sup>12</sup> Eroğlu T., *The Study of Folk Games and Halays in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia*, Ankara, 1995, p. 17

<sup>13</sup> Huizinga J., *Homo Ludens. A Study of the Play Element in Culture*, Istanbul, 1995, p. 21

The fact that they are called Emegender or Emeget in Altay, which means relative on the mother's side or grandmother, implies playing with ancestors and coming under the protection of the guardian spirit. In both cases, the establishment of a mystical bond between the player and the played is noteworthy.

A Shor legend explains playing with puppets and taking the puppet that embodies the woman's grandmother (Eme-gender) along when going to her husband's house. According to this legend, after Oyrot Khan's sister got married, she gave birth to a blind girl. The Shor khan's wife forces a powerful shaman to perform a ritual. After performing the ritual from late at night until morning, the shaman tells the woman, "Go to your brother Oyrot Khan and bring the puppet you played with as a child." The wife of the Shor Khan went to her brother. However, her brother did not want to give her the puppet. So she got her brother drunk, took the puppet, and returned to her husband's yurt. The shaman performed a ritual, scattering hair to the spirits, and the little girl's eyes began to see. From that day on, the wife of the Shor Khan places the puppet under her daughters' pillows when they go to bed. When the girls grow up and marry, she puts the puppet among their dowry and sends it to their husbands' homes. From that time on, Shor girls take the örökönnörü (puppet) with them when they leave home. 14

Puppets, which later became mere children's toys, had a ritualistic function in ancient times and served a ritualistic function. It was believed that puppets resembling humans, animals, birds or fantastical creatures possessed magical powers and were widely used in shamanism for protection, assistance, magic, etc.

In the philosophy of the game, the shaman resembles beings from the other world and takes on a role like a theatre actor. The shaman's transformation into a bird or a bear is nothing more than taking on a role. Therefore, the shaman's performance is not just his dancing, but his playing with spirits. He is distinguished from a normal actor by being a player in another world and playing with his ancestors. The shaman fulfils his acting role, which is imbued with a unique thought and drama. Otherwise, the shaman cannot enter the other world.

All these facts clearly reveal that the shaman's play is cultic in nature, and this concept of cultic play became the main element of the sects after the Turks accepted Islam. After Islam, the semah occupying a primary place in Turkish orders indicates the unchanging essence of the culture, but only its changing form.

<sup>14</sup> Ktaş S. S., Mifi, *Legendı Gornogo Atlaya, Gorno-Altaysk*, 1978, pp. 88-89

<sup>15</sup> In Turkish orders, particularly in the Alevi-Bektaş semahs, the origin of linking to Shamanism is an accepted view in science (M. F. Köprülü, E. Krohn, F. Bayat, etc.). Semah is also of Shamanic origin in the context of ensuring the dervishes' become ecstatic and enter a state of trance. The slow start and gradual acceleration of Alevi-Bektaş semahs is a Shamanic tactic used to induce trance.

The shaman's concept of play is a special strategy for relating to beings from the other world. Indeed, the philosophy of playing with spirits is not merely about transporting oneself to another dimension, not merely about repeating cosmic knowledge, not merely about understanding the other world, but also about mitigating and nullifying the other world's opposition to the real world, which will serve as a source for life and death. Therefore, play is a phenomenon that reconciles opposites and eliminates negativity.

The shaman's trance state also begins in the form of a game (dance). Indeed, the shaman, dancing frantically, believes he has reached a mystical world, and his spinning and leaping symbolise the rotation of cosmic bodies. It has even been suggested that shamanic dances mimic the orbit of the sun. The repetitions of these rotations, such as 3, 7, 9, correspond to the layers of the sky in Shamanic belief.<sup>16</sup> However, this dance does not exhibit a uniform characteristic. With his accelerating and decelerating dances, the Shaman displays a state like descending and rising sea waves and enters a trance state more quickly. Trance-based dance is present in all ancient and primitive belief systems. The shaman's dance is privileged because it is performed to achieve a transition beyond consciousness. Thus, the dance is a phenomenon that prepares the shaman for the transition beyond the boundary and is as important as the drum in realising it.

### 4 3. Rhythm in the Game: The Philosophy of the

If the game is the primary ecstatic state of shamanism, then the drum is the most powerful technique for entering a trance. Indeed, monotonous beats, that is, the repetition of the same rhythms in succession at specific frequencies, create a hypnotic state that allows shamans to enter a trance. However, during the ritual, the shaman drum rhythms do not have a metronome-like continuity. The drumbeat slows down as it speeds up, or softens as the sound rises. First of all, it should be noted is that, regardless of how the shamanic ritual begins, it ultimately takes place around a circle.

The circle is a symbol of the cosmos and philosophically signifies immortality and rebirth. It is possible to see that the drum, which plays an important role in shamanism, is based on eight rhythms in all cases. This corresponds to the eight chakras (energy sources) in humans, from the navel to the crown. The rhythm of the drum also changes from a tempo that rises from low to high.

It is possible to systematise these rhythms as follows, using O. Dikson's book: as follows:

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<sup>16</sup> And M., *Oyun ve Bûgü*, p. 88

<sup>17</sup> Dikson O., *op. cit.*, pp. 262-263

a- *The snake rhythm* consists of three slow beats on the drum, which represent gaining determination, attaining something new, and gathering inner strength by utilising external resources.

b- *The deer rhythm* is performed with two slow and two fast beats. This rhythm is for the safe delivery of pregnant women, the sharing of possessions, and isolation.

c- *The turtle rhythm* consists of one beat, two fast beats, and one beat. This rhythm is about ensuring peace and harmony and laying the foundation for new production.

d- *The bull rhythm* consists of one beat and four quick beats. This is the accumulation of repelling enemies, material development and physical strength.

e- *The Fish rhythm* consists of two quick and two slow beats. This is about overcoming obstacles on the path to achieving one's goal and helping love.

f- *The spider rhythm* consists of two fast beats, one normal beat, and two more fast beats. This is the ability to resist spiritually, to prevail in controversial situations, to use productive power to the fullest, and to purify oneself of negative energy.

g- *The bear rhythm* consists of four fast beats and one additional beat. This is about protecting one's position, removing obstacles between oneself and others, and immersing oneself.

h- *The tiger rhythm*, on the other hand, consists only of six quick strikes. This power is about gaining strength, being self-sacrificing, having the opportunity to show oneself, and spending the energy gathered in healing and educating others.

All beats start from the lower part of the drum, moving from left to right, rising towards the upper part. Shamans generally begin with slow beats. This is preparation for entering a state of ecstasy. Furthermore, each rhythm and Shamanic dance has its own specific purpose. Therefore, entering a trance state has a specific purpose.

· has a specific function. Therefore, to enter a trance state,

begins with a movement from south to north and with a turtle rhythm. As information on this subject has been provided in the section above, there is no need to repeat it here.

Another important technical tool in the shamanic dance and transition to a trance state is holding the drum, which is about a foot in diameter, above the head or face, and in very few cases close to the chest.

The drum beats create powerful vibrations above the head. This brings the shaman into a hallucinogenic state. Turkish shamans use the drum's rhythm, which starts slowly and accelerates, to transport their spirits to the upper and lower worlds.

The shaman induces a hallucinogenic state in the audience during the shamanic ritual through the rhythmic sound of the drum. The drum is the most important tool for the shaman to transport his spirit and reach another dimension. Indeed, the ritual is performed with the help of the drum. It has been scientifically proven that playing the drum for an hour connects ordinary people to spirits, as if they were

For example, among the Salish Indians, Wolfgang

According to recent research by a scientist named G. Jilek, rhythmic shamanic drumming produces drum vibrations in EEG theta wave frequencies (4-7 cycles per second), which are equivalent to brain waves associated with dreams, hypnotic imagery, and trance states. The fact that theta waves are indicative of creative thinking further emphasises the importance of the drum. It should also be noted here that the fact that some contemporary Altai Shamans perform their healing rituals without drums is proof that the Shaman is gradually transforming into a medic.

Shamans also resort to auxiliary methods to accelerate the hallucinogenic state: drinking alcoholic beverages, smoking tobacco frequently, burning certain hallucinogenic trees and inhaling their smoke, eating sacred plants or mushrooms, etc. According to N. Drury, "Sacred plants are believed to open the gates to the sky, establishing contact with God and spirits and reaching a greater truth beyond."<sup>19</sup> However, the philosophy of rhythm created by the drum and mallet, the essential elements of the ritual, plays an important role in the shaman's trance.

#### 14. 4. The Sentagma of Shamanism

Ethnographers and folklorists observing the shaman's ritual have often labelled him an illusionist, charlatan, or at best an artist, drawing particular attention to the fact that the ritual is performed after darkness falls and partly in a dimly lit room, attributing this to the shaman's deliberate choice. There is something else beyond the designs listed above in the philosophical origins of the ritual. The reason why the shaman's theatre performance, based on aesthetic art, is performed at night is not, as has been said, to give the shamanism an air of mystery, or for the shaman to take advantage of the darkness of night to perform illusions, or because spirits harm people at night and death occurs at dawn, but because the other world has a structure opposite to this world. Contrary to this world, where horses eat grass and dogs eat meat, in the other world, horses eat meat and dogs eat grass. Fairy tales are evidence of this shamanic worldview, which presents the other world in terms of opposite concepts

Here there is sunlight, there darkness; here life, there death; here the material world, there the spiritual world. The shaman performs his kamlik at night because he focuses on the other world, conforms to the rules of the other world, and ultimately brings the other world into his own world. In short, because the night of this world reflects the other world, the shaman's kamlik is performed at night, not during the day.

<sup>18</sup> See Drury N., *op. cit.*, p. 77

<sup>19</sup> Drury N., *op. cit.*, p. 83

. No shaman believes that what they do is not real.

No spectator would accept that the shaman is a charlatan. Belief forms the essence of the shamanic art.

The shaman's use of helper spirits in his shamanic practices and cosmic journeys is the most distinctive feature of Turkish shamanism. The animal mother, who possesses two or three helper spirits

to as many as ten, the shaman's primary helper is still the animal mother seen in his design as a shaman. According to shamanistic belief,

, the animal that each shaman can easily transform into is his animal mother. The Yakuts call this animal mother Iye Kul. In addition, another helper spirit known as a powerful protective spirit of the shaman is the spirit of a deceased shaman, called Emeget der,ilen.

is known as the Emeget, which belongs to a deceased shaman.

During the shamanic trance, the shaman, who incarnates as an animal spirit or another spirit, sees and hears through these helper spirits, according to belief. During the trance, the shaman first summons small, weak spirits and places them in his drum. These are usually bird spirits that help the shaman ascend to the sky. Later on, the shaman summons the more powerful spirits and finally Emeget (the shaman's other self). The trance only begins after all the helper spirits have been brought together.

However, during the ritual, along with the spirits assisting the shaman, there is also an assistant chosen by him from among the participants. This man heats the shaman's drum over the fire and assists the shaman in various matters. The person who assists the shaman in conducting the ritual is called the *kuturksut* (feeder). Despite all its details and differences, the first part of the shamanism of the Siberian and Altai-Sayan Turks is almost the same. To what has been said so far, it is possible to add the structure of shamanism in a syntagmatic plan.

By simplifying the table prepared by E. Novik on the syntactic structure of the sentence, it is possible to present a new scheme as follows:

Initial stage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The breakdown of the kaide</li> <li>2. Insufficiency or harm</li> <li>3. Disaster, illness, etc.</li> </ol>
Opposition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Power acquisition (helper spirits)</li> <li>5. Obtaining information about the source of evil</li> <li>6. Preparation for mediation</li> </ol>

Mediation
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7. Migration
8. Relationship with spirits
9. The end of the relationship
10. Return

Final stage
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11. The elimination of evil
12. Providing information about the source of evil
13. The release of power (helper spirits)
14. Rewarding the shaman

Kamlık is a practical event in the social-philosophical sense and is performed for various reasons. However, it is also important to emphasise that kamlık is a process. Thus, kamlık performed from primitive times to the present day symbolically represents the beginning of this process. From this perspective, kamlık shows similarities among all Siberian and Altai-Sayan Turks, at least in its initial stages. Despite similar practices in geographical and ethnic structures, the shamanism process requires a certain rationalism in existing cultures and modes of production. The rapid awareness that developed over time enabled Shamanist societies to realise their uniqueness. This is nothing other than the realisation of uniqueness. The varieties of shamanism are also an indication of this awareness.

In this context, Uryanhay Shamans perform two types of shamanism:

1- Special shamanism, which is performed when a shaman is invited to cure an illness; to cleanse the house of the spirit of a deceased person; to prevent animals from dying; to ask for a child; to ask for a plentiful hunt, etc.

2- Traditional shamanism, which is performed three times a month, on the 9th, 19th, and 29th of the month.

Special shamanism is performed where the shaman is invited, while traditional shamanism is performed in the shaman's own home.

The number 9 here and the 10-day interval between each one are also related to the shaman's secret knowledge and are an important phenomenon in explaining the philosophy of the kamlık.

G. Potanin divides the shaman's shamanism into four parts:

- 1- He sits facing the fire and keeps watch.
- 2- He stands with his back to the fire and keeps watch.

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<sup>21</sup> Potanin G. N., *Ogerki*, vol. 2, p. 83

3- During the ritual, the shaman places his drum on his foot and leans against it, conveying to the audience what the spirits tell him and what they show him in the other world.

4- In the final part, the shaman again turns his back to the fire, strikes the drum where it is hung and removes his special garments.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to the shamanic ceremonies performed for various reasons, there is also a shamanic ritual known as purification. This ritual is one of the proofs that shamans attach great importance to the philosophy of death and life. This is the type of shamanism performed by the shaman to send the spirit of the deceased to the other world on the fortieth day or any other desired day. Indeed, according to the beliefs of the Altai-Sayan Turks, the spirit of the deceased, usually called *üzüt*, wanders around the house and harms the owners of the house until the shaman performs the purification ceremony.

The shaman, usually invited by the deceased's family, performs a ritual in the house of the deceased or around the house to purify it of the spirit of the dead and to take the spirit of the deceased to the underworld, that is, to its new and eternal home. Teleut Shamans take the spirit (grief) of the deceased, who lives in the cemetery until the fortieth day and occasionally wants to enter the house, away from this world and specifically from the closeness of their relatives, to the other world through a special purification ceremony. According to belief, the shaman takes the spirit of the deceased away from this world and specifically from the closeness of their relatives to the other world through a special purification ceremony.

by means of a special purification ceremony, removing it from this world and specifically from the proximity of its relatives, and taking it to the other world. According to belief the deceased's relatives believe that the *üzüt* primarily resides in the storm.<sup>23</sup>

To remove the spirit of the deceased, which disturbs family members and is a source of illness, the house must be flooded. According to belief, Yayık Han does this. During the ritual, the shaman paints his face so that the dead of the other world do not recognise him.

He draws lines. He offers the dead a drink called *arak*, an alcoholic beverage, and gets them drunk. The dancing shaman suddenly shouts, "The house is flooded!" Yayık Khan sends a flood, and the spirits flee in fear of the flood, thus freeing the family from the spirit that had possessed the house.<sup>24</sup>

Teleut Shamans perform a ritual with an axe when sending the spirit of a deceased man to the other world. If the deceased is a woman, the ritual is performed with a shovel. However, according to N. Drenkova's information, the axe and shovel are also necessary items for the Shaman's own protection. <sup>25</sup>

Tuva Shamans also have ceremonies known as sending off the sun and watching its rise. This ritual is performed collectively by several Shamans. For this ceremony, nine poles are erected, symbolising the nine layers of the sky.

<sup>22</sup> Potanin G. N., *Essays*, vol. 4, p. 59

<sup>23</sup> Anohin, A. V., "Duşa i ee Svoystva po Predstavleniyam Teleutov", *Sbornik Muzeya Antropologii i Etnografii*, Vol. 8, Leningrad, 1929, p. 262

<sup>24</sup> Yörükhan Y. Z., *Before Islam*, pp. 88-89

<sup>25</sup> Lvova E. L., Oktyabrskaya I. V., et al. *Traditional Worldview, Space and Time*, p. 193



In the ritual performed around the tree, the chief shaman stands in the centre and conducts the ceremony, asking God and the spirits for abundance and health.

Among the Altai-Sayan Turks, the *isiah* ceremony, known as the purification of animals, twice a year when migrating to summer and winter quarters, that is, in early and late spring. For example, Hakas Shamans perform a ritual every spring and autumn to purify the *isiah* (a Hakas term) with the aim of ensuring the increase of livestock. According to the informants, all *taigas*, which are social ceremonies, are held in early and late spring.<sup>26</sup>

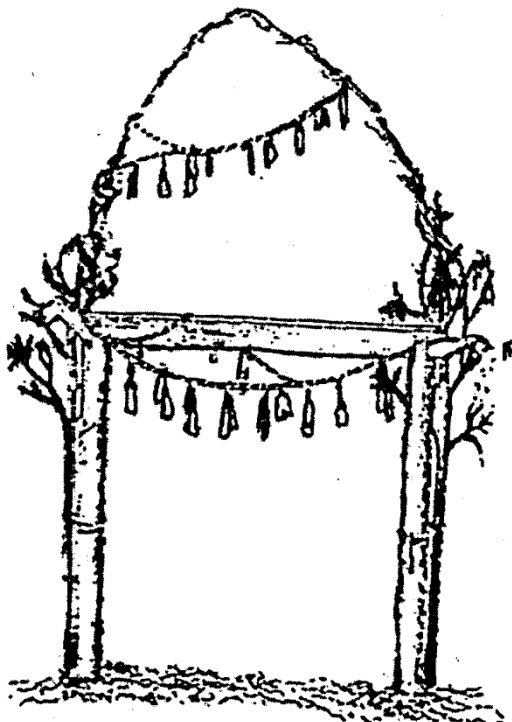


Figure 68. Poles prepared for the *Isiah* ceremony.

Shamans also perform sacrificial ceremonies for spirits, especially those of the underworld, and preserve the mythological worldview in their rituals. It should also be noted that ethnographic literature provides sufficient information about the shaman's sacrificial ceremony.

Sacrifice occupies an important place in the Shaman's ceremony, known as *kamlık*. Since *kamlık* is performed for a specific purpose and the Shaman...

<sup>26</sup> Lvova E. L., Oktyabrskaya I. V., et al. Traditional Worldview, Space and Time, p. 46

Since the shaman's role is to eliminate any negativity within the community, the offering of sacrifices is essential. Generally, the sacrifices offered by the shaman are divided into two categories: bloody and bloodless. The Yakuts call the sacrificial ritual *kereh*, some Altai shamans call it *pura*, and some call it *tayılga*. S. D. Maynagaşev has depicted a shamanic sacrificial ceremony, but he has not provided any information about to whom this sacrifice was offered.

. It was probably offered to Ülgen.



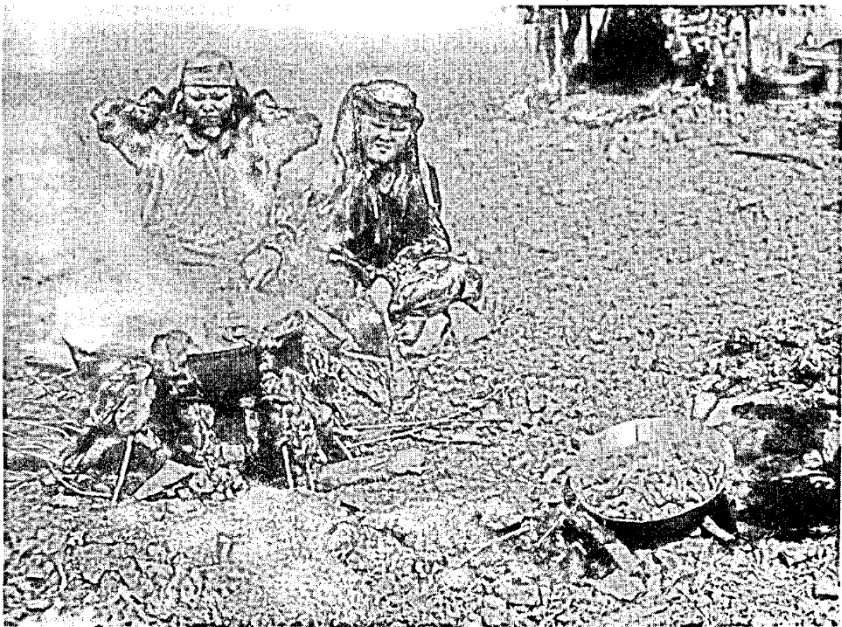
Image 69. In 1914, S. D. Maynagaşev, a Sagay scientist, photographed the Sagays' horse sacrifice. These were sacrifices performed by Shamans.

Sacrifice is the most important means of establishing contact with the other world. The shaman's offering of sacrifices to the spirits during the ritual period does not only serve to satisfy the spirits' need for energy and sustenance, but also aims to bring the community's strained communication with supernatural beings to a certain level. The shaman's role here is to determine the form and manner in which the sacrifice is to be offered. The shamanic ritual performed by the shaman, whether bloody or bloodless, cannot be performed without sacrifice. Thus, we see that the shaman performs a wide range of sacrificial rites, from feeding the fire spirit to offering sacrifices to the spirits of the sky or the underworld. The shaman is entrusted with a social duty because he has taken upon himself the ritual of offering sacrifices, which is one of the most important phenomena in social life.



Figure 70. This horse sacrifice was made for the welfare of the people. Horse sacrifices were traditional among the nomads of Eurasia.

Figure 71. Women are cooking the meat of the sacrifice.



Among the Yakuts, bloody sacrifices are offered to the abaasi, while bloodless sacrifices are offered to the ayn and the iççi. However, there is also information that one of the ayn, Baay Bayanay, the patron of hunters,

sacrifices are also made to Baay Bayanay, the patron of hunters.<sup>27</sup> Sacrifices to good and evil spirits rituals. In particular, since no bloody sacrifice is offered to Yüryüng Ayn Toyon, the separated animal is left to roam free. It is forbidden to use these animals for any purpose (riding, milking, harnessing, etc.). According to this tradition, all mares left to roam free wander the steppe.

In addition to his duties as a shaman, the shaman also has the task of managing traditional festivals. In particular, the Yakut Turks have two festivals of a social nature, one of which is the ayn ıııııı and the other is the abaası ıııııı.

Ayn ıııııı is performed in early spring and serves to commemorate Yuryung Ayn Toyon and to wish for a bountiful year. However, the shaman is not the leader of the Ayn ıııııı ceremony. In this ıııııı ceremony-festival, after sporting games and performances, the dramatic struggle between winter and spring is enacted, and at the end of the ceremony, a sacrifice is offered. A person dressed in white, called Ayn-uola, represents spring on a white horse, while another person, dressed in black or dark colours, rides a horse of the appropriate colour and represents winter.

Abaası ıııııı is held in late autumn, just like ayn ıııııı, outdoors but in the evening. This ıııııı ceremony-festival is dedicated to the dark spirits, especially their leader, Ulu Toyon. If the ayn ıııııı ceremony-festival is managed by the tribe's elder, the manager of the abaası ıııııı is nine male Shamans and nine female Shamans. The same similarity is seen in a slightly different way in the Altai Shaman ceremonies.

Indeed, the Altai Shamans also perform different rituals of sacrifice to Ülgen and Erlik and determine the sacrificial animal according to the state of the spirits and their specific category. The first spring sacrifice is usually given in honour of Yüryüng Ayn Toyon. Here, the information provided by V. Seroşevskiy, V. Verbitskiy, and W. Radloff complements each other.

The sacrificial rite in honour of Ülgen also lasts two or three days, sometimes longer. This Shamanic ceremony, described by V. Verbitskiy, is the oldest known account and is therefore included here in abbreviated form. This ritual consists of three stages. The first begins at sunset and can be considered the preparatory stage. A place for the shaman and a sacrificial animal are selected. For this purpose, a special yurt (tent) is prepared and covered with skins and carpets called seoltı.

<sup>27</sup> Seroşevskiy V. L., 12 Let, p. 389

<sup>28</sup> Troşçanskiy V., Evalyutsiya, pp. 105-106

<sup>29</sup> Verbitskiy V. i., Altayskie İnorodtsı, pp. 65-72

A fresh green beech tree is planted in the centre of the tent. Instead of a flag, a rag is tied to the top of this tree. Nine cuts are made in the tree to represent the steps of a ladder. The entrance to the tent faces east. In front of the tent, something resembling a nest is made from tree branches so that the animals can be placed there. Then, several horses are selected for sacrifice, cups are placed on their backs, and the horses are made to run. If the back of the cup falls upwards, the horse cannot be offered as a sacrifice.

The selected horse is tied with a long rope. Then the rope is given to the headman (baştut han kiji), who is specially selected for this task. The shaman is assisted by the headman (baştut han kiji) in offering the sacrifice and performing the ceremony. The headman is not a shaman, but an experienced person.

The shaman blows on the horse with a branch of birch in his hand. This signifies that the shaman is sending the horse's spirit to Ülgen.

After putting on the shaman costume and iron apron, he places the white-feathered red cap on his head. He takes his drum and mallet in his hands. He strikes the drum with the mallet in a powerful manner

and prays first to the spirits connected to Ülgen, then to those connected to Erlik.

The shaman then sings prayers and songs, first to Kergıday, son of Ülgen, then to Kan-Karşıit, Kızı-gan and Mergen-han, and all these prayers end with:

*Orbı kagar on kolum On  
yanıma kulep kel Or:  
Orbu kagar on koluma Altın  
tuga öynap kel*

Here, the shaman's request for the spirits to come cheerfully, dancing and playing, indicates the great importance of the game. At the end of all the prayer-songs, the response "ao, kam, ay" is heard. After this response, the shaman leaves the tent, climbs onto the puppet representing a goose, and pretends to fly in the sky, reciting the following prayer:

*Ag ayastın aldı bılan Ak  
pulıttın üstyü bile Kog  
ayastın aldı bile Kok pulıttın  
üstyü bile  
(Below the white sky and  
above the white cloud. Below  
the sky and above the sky  
cloud.)*

The goose responds to the shaman with the prayer-clap "ingay gak, gak, ingay gak, kay-gak gak, kay-gay-gak".<sup>30</sup> At this moment, the sacrificial animal - the pura - begins to neigh. The shaman chases the sacrificial animal on the goose and runs around the tent from one side to the other. Then he enters the tent, throws his drum behind him over his left shoulder with his left hand, and holds the mallet with his right hand. This means that the shaman has caught the horse. One of the spectators catches the thrown drum before it hits the ground. If the drum falls to the ground, it means that the shaman has not caught the horse. After catching the horse, the shaman releases the goose.

The shaman leads the sacrificial horse to a secluded place. Then someone turns the horse's head towards the east and sacrifices it. The Altai people kill the horse by breaking its spine. They cover all the places where blood might flow with grass so that the blood does not fall to the ground. Then they remove the horse's skin along with its head. They hang this head and skin on a pole called a baydar

. If the head of the skinned horse faces east, it means the sacrifice has been offered to Ül-Gen, and if it faces west, it is offered to Erlik. After chopping the meat, cooking it in a cauldron and preparing it for eating, the shaman first takes some meat, puts it in a cup and praises the spirits, first in the name of the chieftain, then in the name of the horse's owner. Here, the shaman's fortune-telling by throwing the cup and other functions, such as calling the fire guardian, etc., also take place.

After the meat is eaten, the shaman takes his tobacco and, in order, offers it to Yayık/Yaik Khan, Kayra Khan, Yanıs, Yabır Khan, Ülgen's family, Mansar Khan, He prays and applauds Pırçu Khan, Kelegey, Abagan, Mordo Khan, Altay Khan, Erlik, Oktu Khan, Purhan Khan, Merkit, and other spirits. Since this lengthy shamanic ritual lasts several days, so the shaman prays and praises the spirits again, reads fortunes, etc. The presence of women in the sacrificial ritual offered to Ülgen is forbidden

Among the Mongols, shamanism is also divided into two types: social (taylgan) and private (kirik).

The time of the shaman's cosmic journey and his passage through the pre-existing hole to reach the upper and lower worlds indicates the existence of a transition point between worlds. Just as the shaman slips through this passage into other worlds, evil spirits that harm humans and animals also enter the middle world through the hole used by the shaman. Therefore, during the shamanic trance, the shaman must skilfully close this hole. The Altai Turks, especially the Teleuts, call the shaman who patches the hole with a needle and thread like a tailor, uçukçu. Uçuk means thread in Altai, and uçukçu means one who has thread.<sup>31</sup> The shaman, known as the spirits of disease,

<sup>30</sup> The goose that the shaman rode during his cosmic journey has become a sacred animal among the Tahtacıs. The Tahtacıs embroider two goose feet crossed within a circle or triangle on the collars and shoulders of their garments. (Tuna E., Shamanism and Acting, Istanbul, 2000, p. 66) Kaz Mountain is also a sign of this sacredness.

<sup>31</sup> Lvova E. L., Oktyabrskaya i. V., et al. Traditsionnoe Mirovozenie, Prostranstvo i Vremya, p. 108

and when he performs shamanism against the evil spirits called *yangis som*, he closes the hole leading to the underworld by sewing it up with a needle and thread. To do this, he closes the hole by skilfully twisting 27 threads.

V. Dyakonova has provided information about the two types of shamanism practised by the Tuva Shamans.<sup>32</sup> According to her, there are two types of shamanism: black and white. White shamanism is performed to cure illness and save those in distress, and during this time, the Shaman must wear white or off-white clothing, and all symbols must also be of this colour. During black shamanism, the shaman wears black clothing and performs shamanism with a drum that is close to black in colour. Black shamanism is performed to kill the shaman's enemy.

It is evident from ethnographic literature that shamans also perform ceremonies for building new dwellings and erecting hearths. Men establishing new dwellings invite the shaman for this purpose, so that he may pray for the proliferation of the tribe, for animals to bear young, and for the new dwelling to be auspicious, and offer sacrifices to the spirits. The bloody sacrifice is offered while the hearth is being built. The shaman smears the blood of the sacrificed animal on the place where the hearth is to be built and sprinkles it on the fire.<sup>33</sup> There is not much information in shamanic legends about the ceremony of building a house. However, one legend describes the details of the ceremony, how the yurt is built

and the shaman's role in the ceremony.<sup>34</sup> The Yakuts pray to the eagle and *Iyehsit Hatun* is because the eagle is considered a protective spirit among the Yakuts.

<sup>32</sup> Dyakonova V. P., "Tuvan Shamans and Their Social Role in Society", *Problems of the History of the Social Consciousness of the Aborigines of Siberia*, Leningrad, 1981, pp. 139-140

<sup>33</sup> İnan A., *Shamanism in History and Today*, p. 118

<sup>34</sup> When a Yakut person wants to build a new house, they look for a sacred place. A shaman is called for this ceremony. After a sacred place is chosen, the man building the house prays:

- Great mother (my mother), owner of my eight-cornered house, listen, hear me, he prays. After saying this, he turns to the east, takes off his gloves, and continues his prayer:

- I pray for my short life and my transient fate. I beg the spoon that reads fortunes and knows all things.

I beg the spoon. O pure and exalted Gods, hear me. O Gods who rule the underworld, listen. I offer you the spoon I used to read the fortune, which knows and sees all.

Then the shaman throws his glove towards the sky, saying 'uruy'. If the glove falls upside down, it is considered a bad sign. Then the shaman prays once more and throws the glove again. Finally, the glove falls with its palm facing upwards.

The person building the house immediately says 'uruy' and sticks a cross into the ground. Immediately, this man's neighbours and family build a hearth there. They pour oil and yoghurt into the hearth and throw in horsehair. The shaman or the man building the house takes a spoon and says:

- For our daily fortune, for our two-day destiny. O owner of this place, spirit of the fire, listen. Great mother, protect us in your bosom, he prays.

The shaman prays for the house to be blessed, for the sacred hearth to always burn, for the family to multiply, and for the animals to be plentiful and fruitful. Again, he throws the spoon into the air and shouts 'uruy'. The shaman prays while looking towards the hearth. He asks God about everything. Praying at length, he throws the spoon into the air again. If the fortune-telling is favourable, the homeowner immediately takes the spoon and hides it in his bosom. Everyone present rejoices. One of the elderly men says:

Shamanic legends bear witness to shamans performing rituals to request children. In ancient times, Yakut women who were barren would ask the eagle for a child. The Yakuts named the child born with the help of the eagle *hotoy törtüteh* (derived from *kartal*). This means that with the development of shamanism and its dominance in all social spheres, the ritual of asking for a child was also included among the shaman's abilities. In such rituals, we can see the chief god along with a few spirits who can give the spirit of a child.

In the child-asking ritual, the Shamans first go to *Ayısıt*, the guardian of birth, and ask him for a child. However, since they do not receive a positive response from *Ayısıt*, they then ask *Syüüleer Bılıt Tyördiger*, the guardian of lightning and rain, for a child. The spirit of clouds and rain gives the elderly couple two children. In this ritual, the Shamans perform *brrr*... over the old woman's head to take the children's spirits and place them in her body. The old woman loses consciousness.<sup>35</sup>

Among the Yakut Turks, the ritual of asking for children is called *ayınsıt/ayınsıt tanarar*. Typically, two Shamans perform these ceremonies, and they are mostly white Shamans. Indeed, since Shamans who perform exorcisms cannot rise to the side of *Yüryüng Ayu To-yon*, wealthy men invite white Shamans for this ceremony.

In the second legend, the white Shamans first ask the chief god *Yüryüng Ayu Toyon*. The god gives the old leader two sons. However, the second shaman also visits *Ayısıt*, who lives on a lower floor and is saddened by this situation, and takes four male and two female child spirits from him. The shamans blow the child spirits from the temples of the leader's wives into their wombs.<sup>36</sup>

However, according to the information provided in ancient shamanic texts, the shamans arouse sexual desire to ensure the increase of animals and humans.

It is known that they also performed shamanic rituals for this purpose. The purpose of this shamanism is the belief that the human race will continue indefinitely.

belief system is to ensure the perpetual continuity of the human race. Since the shaman also takes on the role of protector of the community, he sees the continuation of the lineage as a manifestation of the sacred knowledge of the older generations. Indeed, the shaman sees his own future, and therefore the future of shamanic knowledge, in subsequent generations. This is the fundamental condition of existence. Accordingly, shamans have also performed rituals that arouse sexual desire.

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- He prays: "Build a fiery hearth and let the burning hearth never go out; may the house be bountiful in winter and blessed in summer!"

When the hearth is built, a sacrifice is made. They throw the blood of the sacrificed animal onto the hearth. Once the house is ready, *kumys* is collected for seven days. No one is given *kumys* until the shaman has prayed. The shaman prays, takes some *kumys* and, turning towards the east, says:

- O owner of the horse herds, *Kartal*; *Yesekey İyehsit hatun*! Grant us beautiful horses with manes and long-horned animals!

On either side of the shaman are two sacred trees, birch trees, because the spirit *Iyehsit*, protector of animals, greatly favours this tree. (Bayat R, Turkish Shamanic Texts, pp. 242-244)

<sup>35</sup> Bayat R, Turkish Shamanic Texts, pp. 227-228

<sup>36</sup> Bayat R, Turkish Shamanic Texts, pp. 229-230



In the ritual performed by Buryat and especially Yakut Shamans to awaken the sexual desire of the earth spirit, known as *calın*, a tree is chosen for the ceremony. The tree actually symbolises the world tree. The heads of the three poles driven into the ground are hollowed out to hold kumis. This kumis is drunk in honour of the earth mother.

trees. Objects and ribbons are hung from the rope, representing the earth mother.

It is meant to symbolise. At the time of the ceremony, the Shaman begins to dance with thirty-nine girls holding birch branches and an equal number of boys. Then the Shaman asks the earth mother for *calın* (sexual desire) so that the lineage may continue. The Shaman neighs like a horse, and the women participating in the ceremony also neigh like horses and throw themselves on the Shaman and make movements as if they were making love (in Yakut, they call this *oyunu kibingneen baralara yüsü*).<sup>37</sup> The Shaman throws the *calın* he took from the earth mother three times towards the women, and each time the women throw themselves on him. At the same time, the *calın* is thrown at animals to ensure their growth and abundance.

Furthermore, in the Kumandins, Shors, and Chelkans, participants in an ancient ceremony called *Koça Kan* or *Koçigan* make masks from birch bark and prepare sticks symbolising the horse's genitals from birch branches. When the shaman undertakes a cosmic journey, the participants also wear the mask, mount the stick like a horse, and perform the *koçigan* dance. This ceremony, with some local variations, is also practised among the Kumandins, Shors, and Altay Turks of the Altai-Sayan region.

The Kumandin Shamans do not perform the *Koçigan* ritual specifically. Researchers from the 19th and 20th

Researchers from the 19th and 20th centuries write that this erotically charged ceremony took place during the time of sacrifice to *Ülgen* among the Kumandins. Both the Altai and the Kumandins call the mask, prepared from the bark of the *toz* tree and decorated with pictures, *koça*. At some point during the ceremony, the shaman takes out the *koça* hidden under the madman and places it on the face of one of the participants. The man wearing the mask begins to dance wildly, like a madman. The other participants also join in this dance, which symbolises eroticism. The man wearing the mask moves like a stallion and performs the actions of the shaman in the *calın* ceremony described above. The man wearing the *koça* mask visits houses one by one, performing certain sexual movements with a stick symbolising the horse's genitals and collecting offerings from the houses. Meanwhile, those participating in the *Koçigan* game sing shaman songs. Although the *Koçigan* ceremony, symbolising marriage, matrimony and the desire for children, was frequently performed in ancient times, especially in late autumn, it seems to have been forgotten in recent times.

Tuva Shamans also perform shamanic rituals for the iron snake. This type of ritual is largely performed to prevent illness that may befall individuals or the community.

<sup>37</sup> Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, pp. 230-232



Image 72. Tuva female shaman Albina Tava-Sambu performing a ritual on an iron snake (from Diksan's book)

Tuva Shamans also have purification rites, which are numerous according to Shaman folklore. Purification rituals, which are connected to animistic views, are recognised by society and are related to the perception of the living world around us. Examples of these include the purification of fire, the purification of springs, the purification of trees, the purification of animals, the purification of the oban, the purification of water channels, etc.

One of the shaman's duties is to send the spirits of the dead to the other world. Part of the shaman's memorat is to send the spirit of the deceased, who does not want to leave this world for the other world and harms their relatives, to its rightful place. According to Turkish religious-mythological thought, the presence of beings and objects in places where they do not belong is a source of danger. The shaman, who performs the ritual at the request of the relatives, sends the deceased from the world of light to the dark realm on the 49th day. The shaman informs the deceased spirit as follows:

*"Do not return to your relatives, to the world of light. Wherever you go, stay there. We have no need for your voice or your laughter. You have no work left to do under the sun. Even if you were under the sun, there would be no days for you. Even if you ran across the earth before my eyes*

*There is no permission left. Farewell to the world of light, do not return, take no one with you. If you need Erlik, your friends are demons, and you are a demon too."*<sup>38</sup>

Central Asian Shamans incorporate Muslim traditions into their shamanic performances, acting as shamans for the spirits of the forty, whom they call *çiltan*. At this time, they sing to the accompaniment of drums and, entering a trance, foretell the future.



Image 73. Two Uzbek sisters, Shamans Nobat and Ayday, light candles for the spirits of the *çiltan*.

Regardless of the broad scope of shamanism, shamanic ceremonies are generally performed largely for healing purposes.

<sup>38</sup> Dyakonova V. P., *Pogrebalniy Obryad Tuvintsev kak Istoriko-Etnograficheskiy Istochnik*, Leningrad, 1976, p. 63



Figure 74. They place candles on a tray containing the remains of a sacrificed lamb.

Ayday, in order to summon the shaman spirits, loses himself.



Image 75. Nebat also sings and loses himself.

FIFTEENTH SECTION  
THE SHAMAN'S HEALING SYSTEM

15. 1. The Shaman's Worldview: Human Physiological  
Characteristics and Energy Sources

KAMLIK is largely performed for therapeutic purposes. This is confirmed by ethnographic data and Shamanic legends. According to recent research, the therapeutic system practised by Shamans dates back at least 20-30 thousand years (at least to the Mesolithic period, ) and this ancient healing method has been passed down from generation to generation, reaching the last Shamans. In the changing world context, the shaman's healing technique has been renewed and enriched, but has essentially preserved its ancient methods. The shaman's healing method has remained unchanged because it cures all illnesses, primarily spiritual or psychological illnesses and physical symptoms.

According to the shamanic worldview, illness arises as a result of the effects on humans of the visible and invisible worlds and beings that surround us. According to shamanic tradition, illness is nothing more than the result of humans gradually disrupting their relationship with nature, a living entity, reducing it to an unbalanced state, in other words, neglecting nature. The external world, perceived as spirits, determines the whole of human life in one way or another. Illness, famine and poverty are under the control of evil spirits, and the arrival of these spirits into our world over time causes negativity to emerge. This arrival can occur in two ways. In the first case, the arrival of spirits into the human world results in negativity arising from people's disregard for spirits and the weakening of the relationship established with spirits through sacrifice. In Shamanic terms, this means the breakdown of the harmonious relationship that exists between nature and humans.

. In the second case, over time, spirits create negativity in order to control the world according to their own desires.

. However, this is not necessarily a negative development.

The ever-present factor is still the suppression of negative emotions such as jealousy, envy, hatred, and resentment in people's inner world ( nature) and outer world.

, envy, hatred, and other negative emotions)

The shaman possesses secret knowledge, understanding the qualities and language of both the external world and the inner world and being able to communicate with them. This situation makes the shaman the only person capable of eliminating this negativity. The purpose of the ritual performed for healing is limited to expelling the evil spirit causing the illness from the patient or retrieving the stolen spirit from the other realm. Because the loss of the spirit reduces the body's resistance to zero, the shaman must recreate the lost energy source and thus cure all spiritual and physical illnesses. To achieve this goal, the shaman uses a variety of tools.

According to O. Dikson, a researcher of shamanism, the first shamans and herbalists had sufficient knowledge of the structure and physiology of both humans and animals. All this was learned with patience, systematised and carved into rocks. The philosophical and practical basis of the shaman's healing system is the synthesis of the physical body and the energy source. Therefore, the shaman must have a good understanding of the energy source and disease points in the human body, creating a physiological classification by dividing people into cold, hot and vapour types.

M. Kenin-Lopsan explains the purpose of the Tuva Shamans' healing sessions as follows.<sup>2</sup> According to the Shamanist worldview, illness is caused by one of the spirits residing in the human body leaving the body or being stolen by an evil spirit. By bringing back the spirit that has left or been stolen from the human body, the Shaman restores order to the human world. However, if the person's main spirit, which Tuva Shamans call *kol sünezi* (main spirit), leaves the body, the person dies and it is not possible for the Shaman to bring this spirit back. The spirit that causes illness leaves the body as a result of fear, stress, spiritual collapse, mental and physical exhaustion or wear and tear.

The spirit that leaves the body is replaced by an evil spirit, or, to put it in Shamanic terms, a harmful spirit takes over the body.

To a large extent, the shaman is not merely someone who understands human physiology and knows the causes of illness, but also someone who is well versed in the energy source within the human body, which is itself a microcosm. All this knowledge has not only been passed down through tradition, but also through esoteric means.

Illness begins when a wave called an explosion from the diseased organ in the body sends a signal to the brain in the form of a serpentine movement and spreads throughout the body. A disease signal originating anywhere in the body is first perceived in the brain, and the pain spreads throughout the body. This is because, according to the shamanic system, the human body is a copy of the entire universe. The millions of tiny cells in our body are the living inhabitants of the universe. The brain symbolises the Absolute Power of the universe.

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<sup>1</sup> Dikson O., op. cit., p. 10

<sup>2</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit., p. 27

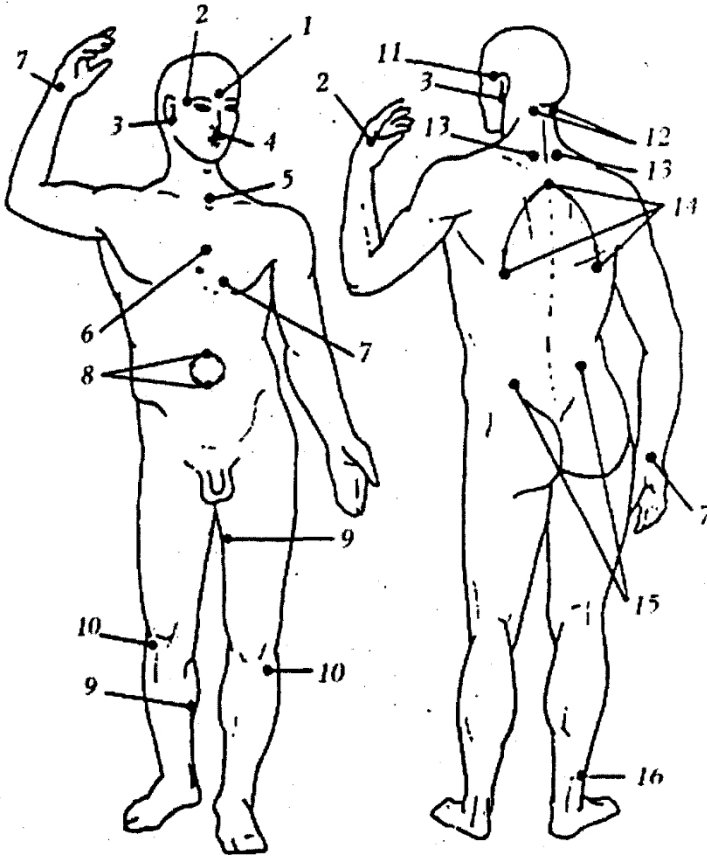


Figure 76. Areas in the human body where diseases accumulate: 1-dizziness, 2-headaches in the forehead area, 3-insomnia, 4-toothaches, 5-asthma, 6-coughing, 7-heart pains, 8-stomach pains, 9-impotence,

10 O, depression, neurotic fear, 11-earache, 12-headaches in the back of the head, 13-neck stiffness, 14-heart pain (menstrual pain in women), 15-back pain, 16-foot pain, body weight. (From Dikson's Book).

Therefore, all information received from the external world through our separate organs is first transmitted to the brain. From this perspective, the body is not only the site of mental illness but also the place where physical pain originates.

Therefore, in addition to spiritually-based treatment, the shaman is someone who knows how to treat physical symptoms. Furthermore, the shaman's treatment system is not limited to spirits that are the source of illness, but is also carried out in a similar way with various medicines. This shows that in a changing world, the shaman has also taken on the function of a medic over time. By instilling the belief in recovery in the patient, the shaman enables them to heal themselves and not succumb to the illness.

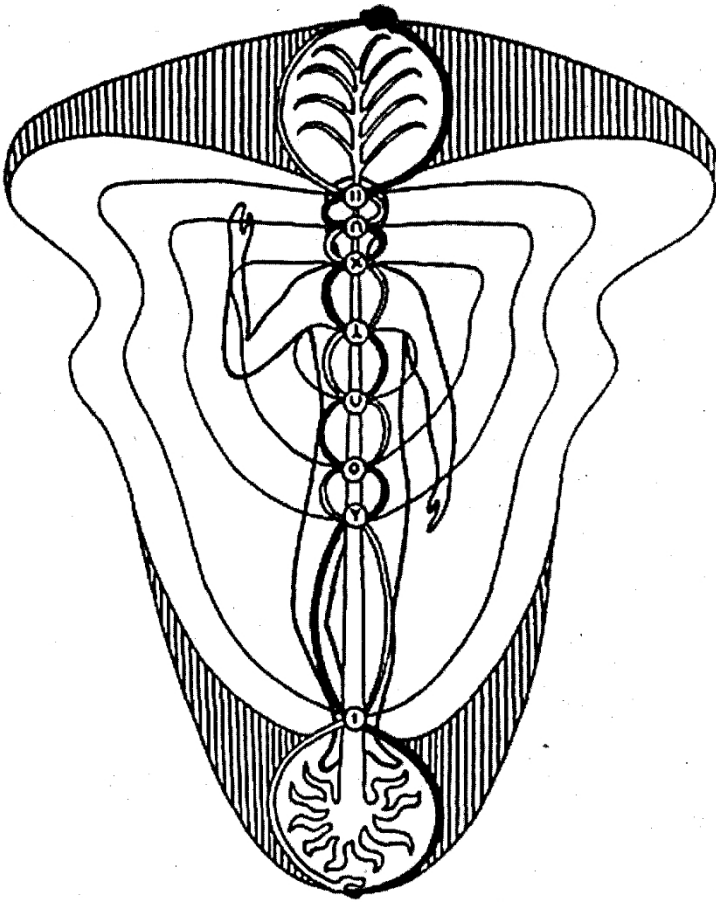


Figure 77. The shaman's conception of the energetic structure of the human being.  
Eight energy sources starting from the foot bone (from Diskon's Book)

It is achieved. Furthermore, the shaman's healing system is fundamentally different from modern medicine's approach of treating only the diseased organ. O. Diskon summarises this difference as follows: European doctors treat individual diseases or diseased organs, whereas the shaman treats the whole body by addressing the spirit.

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Human health, thought and life are indexed to the five powers of nature (mother tree, mother fire, mother earth, mother metal or wind, mother water)

<sup>3</sup> Diskon O., *op. cit.*, p. 146



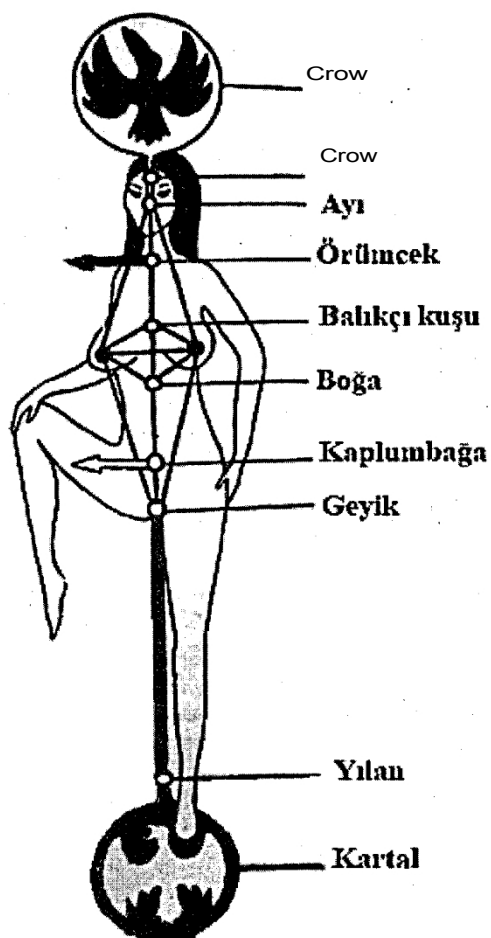


Figure 78. Eight energy sources symbolised by animals other than the crow and the eagle - the chakra

Each of these forces is connected to one or more organs of the body. For example, the tree element governs the liver and gallbladder, the fire element governs the heart and intestines, the earth element governs the stomach and spleen, the metal (wind) element governs the lungs, and the water element governs the kidneys and bladder. <sup>4</sup>

The power that comes from the sky is characterised by heat and fire. The power that comes from the earth is associated with coldness and ice. Tuva, \_Shaman Nikolay Oorjak's "In the body, the most

<sup>4</sup> Dikson O., op. cit., p. 142

His statement that "the most important are fire and water" proves how crucial it is to pay careful attention to all these sources of power and the human body's connection to nature when determining the type of human illness. The presence of fire and water in the body creates vapour (steam), which is valued as the body's tangible power. Thus, heat, cold, and vapour exist in the human body, which determines the areas of settlement of the powers of sky, water, and earth in the human body. The effect of these three main powers on the human organism and their mutual relationships have formed the basis of the Eastern medical tradition, which Siberian shamans, Tibetan and Indian medicine men have long sought to systematise and utilise in treatment.

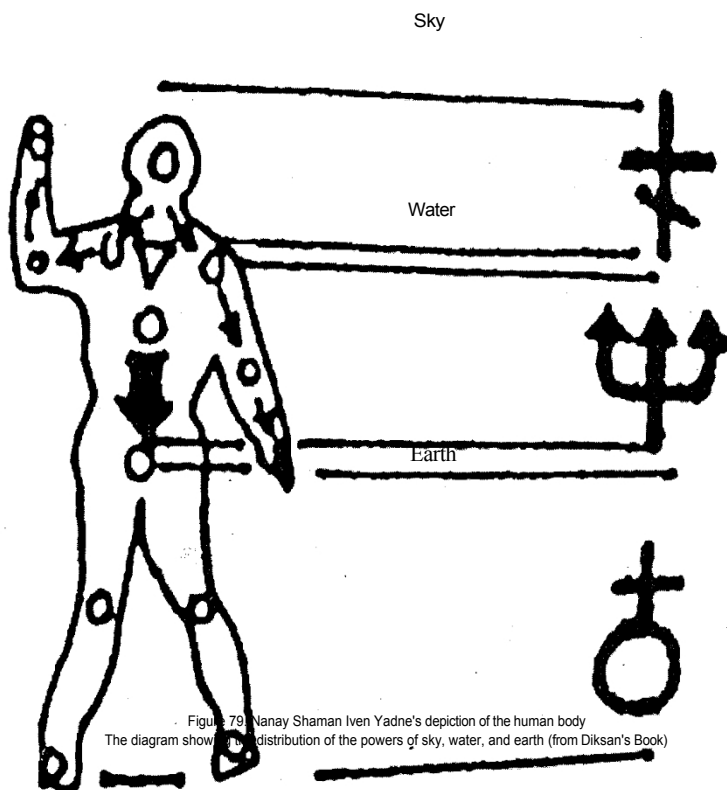


Figure 79. Nanay Shaman Iven Yadne's depiction of the human body  
The diagram shows the distribution of the powers of sky, water, and earth (from Dikson's Book)

Another point to note here is that, according to the Shamanism system, human life is divided equally into periods. This division varies between 7, 8, 9, and 12. However, according to the oldest representations, human life is divided into 8 or 9 equal periods.

Drawing on O. Diksen's book, it is possible to list the characteristic features of these periods as follows:

According to this system, human being enters a new stage after living for 8 years, undergoing both external and internal changes in each stage:

1- From birth until the age of eight, humans live without realising the existence of objects and things in the mineral realm. In traditional cultures, children do not receive a name until the age of eight; they are only called by their childhood nickname. At the age of nine, they undergo a purification ceremony and receive a name. If the child cannot find a name, they must wait until the age of sixteen.

2- The second stage is between the ages of 9 and 16. During this period, the child is like a plant and begins to understand life, and sexual maturity also begins during this time.

3- The next stage is between the ages of 17 and 24, and the child is characterised as an animal at the beginning. The person understands everything and begins to think independently.

4- True adulthood occurs between the ages of 25 and 32. During this period, logical and measured actions take place. People strive to establish their own families. Women, however, are on the verge of fading and losing their freshness.

5- Between the ages of 33 and 40 the entire body undergoes a reformation.

6- Between the ages of 41 and 48, a person's view of the world changes. This stage is considered the second physical and intellectual rebirth period. After this, the organism prepares for death.

7- Between the ages of 49 and 56, mental agility, concreteness, and practicality fade.

8- Between the ages of 57 and 64, sentimentality begins.

9- Between the ages of 65 and 72, life flows by without the desire to do anything new.

10- Between the ages of 73 and 80, a desire to rest overtakes the individual. After this, the most dangerous age is 81. The Mongols organise special ceremonies to deceive evil spirits:

After birth, the shaping of human existence continues through the stages of life. These age periods are also largely related to diagnosis and treatment.

<sup>6</sup> Diksen O., op. cit., pp. 91-92

## 15. 2. Methods Applied in Diagnosis

The shaman, who is knowledgeable about human physiology, first attempts to diagnose the patient who comes to him. In the shaman's view, illness arises as a result of the disruption of the functions of heat, cold, and vapour in the human organs.

, coldness, and vapour functions within the human body. The initial

diagnosis involves determining which of these three energy forces is disrupted. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the characteristics of these energy sources:

- a) Coldness is responsible for regulating the body's blood circulation and managing physical activity.
- b) Heat regulates the organism's digestion and temperature.
- c) The liquid is responsible for consolidating the idea and gives the springs elasticity and

During illness, the inflammation of any organ affects at least all the organs belonging to the type of illness mentioned above. Therefore, diagnosis is directly linked to a thorough understanding of the body.

The body succumbing to the spirit called disease occurs as a result of the deterioration of these energy sources. Therefore, the important issue in diagnosis is for the Shaman to learn the human type and apply the treatment method accordingly. The decrease or loss of the power source indicates eight diagnostic paths: two for the cold disease type, two for the heat type, and four for the vapour disease type. Correspondingly, eight treatment methods are applied.<sup>7</sup>

The oldest diagnostic technique involves determining the patient's body temperature or energy. For example, the shaman, with eyes closed, moves his hand back and forth over the patient's body and head, endeavouring to detect whether there is a particular heat, energy, or vibration emanating from a specific part of the patient's body. This proves that Shamans use a specific technology to cure illnesses and that a real treatment is being applied. Sometimes the Shaman passes a feather over the patient to find the diseased organ. The tremor allows the diseased organ to be identified. One of the Shaman's diagnostic procedures is to measure the body's vibration with a burning candle and identify the diseased organ.

Another form of diagnosis is made by checking the pulse in the arm or by holding the veins over the affected area. Thus, the shaman attempts to deduce what kind of illness the patient has from the patient's pulse.

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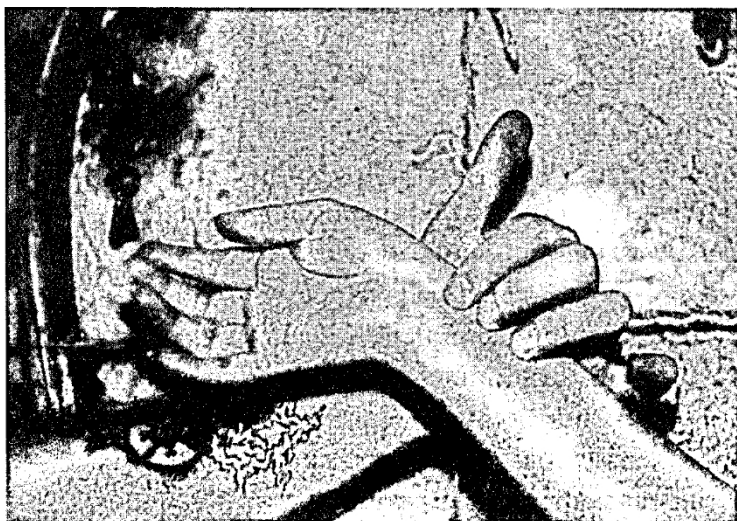
<sup>7</sup> Dikson O., *op. cit.*, p. 210

<sup>8</sup> See Harner M., *The Way of the Shaman*, Istanbul, 1999



- Figure 80. A Hakas female shaman diagnosing using the flickering of a burning candle

Image 8.1. Diagnosis through pulse control (from Dikson's book)



When making a diagnosis, the shaman observes the patient's body structure and face, which is the mirror of the heart. Weakness indicates ice disease, while obesity indicates water disease; a medium build indicates the presence of fire disease. The shape of the head, the colour of the skin colour of the skin, bags under the eyes, swelling of the eyelashes, and other pathological signs are important factors in diagnosis, the result of thousands of years of therapeutic experience. Examining the patient's tongue is also a method that facilitates diagnosis.

However, all these diagnoses are not combined, but depend on the shaman's power and skill and is known as the first diagnosis in shamanism.

The final diagnostic method in shamanic healing practice is known as prophetic diagnosis, performed using 41 or 45 stones arranged in nine circles within a circle, dividing the human body into three parts: lower, middle and upper, with each part further divided into three sections: lower, feet, pelvis, abdomen; middle, chest, heart, throat; upper, nose, brain, eyes.

The Altai, especially the Tuva Shamans, make use of this final diagnosis. In the Shamanic healing system, this is called the "final diagnosis".

The shaman randomly distributes the stones he has taken among the three sections of the circle. The diagnosis is made based on whether the stones are in even or odd numbers. He takes four stones from each section and places them in the section closest to him. Thus, after the first section is completed, the second and third sections are also completed. In the first section, one and three stones are interpreted as good, while two and four stones are interpreted as bad. The lowest circle, i.e. the foot, is the snake; the pelvis is the deer; the abdomen is the turtle; the chest is the bull; the heart is the fish eagle; the throat is the spider; the nose is the bear; the brain is the tiger (the ninth section is the eye, located on the outer structure and symbolising the crow and the eagle). Therefore, the stones are counted from bottom to top, up to the crow-eagle circle, according to the principle of even and odd numbers.

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<sup>9</sup> Dikson O., op. cit., pp. 224-227

Ta ba ka	Si ra	Symbol	Body limbs	Single (1-3)	Double (2-4)
❖ 1111	1	1	foot	movement, certainty, calculation	slowing down, inactivity, inconsistency
	2	y	pelvic bone	stability, faith, discernment	confusion, anxiety, vulnerability
	3	< >	abdomen	sexuality, creativity harmony,	dullness, destructiveness, disorder
O 111	4	u	chest	independence, energy, determination	dependence, laxity, inactivity
	5	A	heart	comfort, moderation, perspective ness	anxiousness, excitement, anger
	6	x	throat	balance, harmony, sociability	resistance, fear, closed- mindedness
Y 1111	7	il	nose	under its jurisdiction, coordinated, concentration yonlu	inaccessibility, separation, shyness
	8	11	brain	intellectual, imagination, intelligence	lack of intelligence, rationality, stupidity
	9	*	Eye	mysticism, discovery, spirituality	atheism, scepticism, materialism

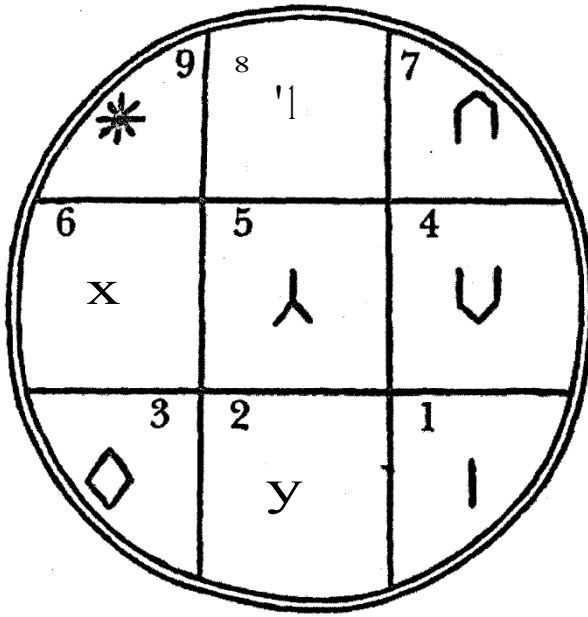


Fig. 83 Diagnostic divination circle divided into three sections and nine circles

### 15. 3. Traditional Healing Methods Practised by Shamans

According to the traditional shamanic worldview, illness arises as a result of the decrease, loss, or conversely, increase of any one of the five elements common to all living beings in the body.

The breadth and variety of the shaman's healing techniques exemplify his use of methods comparable to those of a physician. According to V. Barnouw, the shaman successfully employs herbs, roots, special teas, poultices applied to wounds, ointments, etc., alongside massages and sweat baths during the healing process. When these prove insufficient, the shaman may resort to other methods.

For example, suction. Especially in the treatment of psychosomatic illnesses, the shaman By instilling confidence in the patient, the shaman pursues the path to healing. Suction, described by V. Barnouw as another method, is known as the most frequently used treatment technique among Turkish shamans.

<sup>10</sup> See Barnouw V., *An Introduction to Anthropology: Ethnology*, vol. 2, The Dorsey Press, 1975, p. 250



Suction is known as the oldest method in healing practices. Suction is derived from the root word *em*, meaning medicine in Old Turkish. Even today, it is known that all herbal medicines are called *em* in Gaziantep.

In fact, treatment through medicine was also practised by the ancient Turkish physicians, the herbalists, and consisted of a number of sections: herbal, animal, mineral, human, and mixed. However, we see that magical elements were also used alongside medical elements in these practices. Therefore

Treatment through *em* emerged as a result of the shaman giving priority to the magical path. The fact that contemporary Shamans sometimes use certain herbs like medicine, burning them and holding the patient over the smoke, shows that Shamans also benefited from the techniques of herbalists. This means that the Shaman added a new dimension to the method of suction and began to heal the patient with his own suction method.

After the diagnosis is made, the shaman calls upon his helper spirits. The shaman summons his helper spirits to expel the illness from the body and begins the suction process, one of his treatment methods. During the suction-based treatment process, the shaman spits what he has extracted from the patient into a basket or another container filled with sand or water. Meanwhile, he sings to psychologically comfort the patient.

The patient's relatives who attend the shamanic ceremony also observe the shaman's procedures and participate.

They accompany him by singing songs. After concentrating on sucking, the shaman sucks the diseased organ vigorously. Sucking is often symbolic. However, in some cases, the shaman also begins the physical act of sucking by opening the garment covering the patient's diseased organ.

The shaman can drive away the evil spirit causing the illness simply by taking it into his mouth and spitting it out. Under no circumstances does the evil spirit pass through the shaman's mouth into his body.

He must not stop. Otherwise, the shaman himself will become ill. The suction process may take time. Indeed, the shaman continues suctioning until the evil spirits are completely removed from the patient's body. Another point to note here is that the shaman imitates actions such as vomiting and spitting. To check whether the patient has recovered, the shaman again slowly moves his hand over the patient's body without touching it, thereby assessing the situation. If no vibration or heat emanates from the body, it means that the evil spirits have been completely expelled from the body. Knowing that the body is sick through vibration and heat is a treatment system unique to shamans.

The time of healing or treatment The shaman's appearance and state in the dimly lit room and state was described by V. Seroşevskiy as follows: The shaman's head is bowed forward, his eyes are half-closed, his hair is scattered like wild animal fur and spread across his sweaty face, his mouth is twisted in a terrifying manner, saliva drips from his chin, and his mouth frequently foams. In this state, the shaman

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<sup>11</sup> Seroşevskiy V. L., 12 Let, p. 644



Figure 84. The shaman first finds the spirit of the illness,  
b) then expels the disease spirit from the body by sucking it out.



He moves back and forth in the middle of the room. He beats the drum wildly, solely to excite himself. He shakes his jingling costume and gradually displays the appearance of a madman, his voice and movements resembling a drunkard.

His descending and rising frenzy resembles a wave. Sometimes he raises his drum above his head and sings a prayer-song in a serious and calm voice, calling upon the spirits.

Finally, the shaman knows and finds all his desires. He recognises the causes of the illness and negativity he sought. The shaman is certain that he is useful to those who need his help. With his encircling dance, song, and play, he draws the sick person closer to himself. With a new approach, the source of the illness is removed by striking it out of the body or by the shaman sucking it out of the affected area. Then the shaman comes to the centre of the room and expels the illness from his mouth by spitting and blowing. The shaman determines what sacrifice will be offered to the powerful spirit that sends illness and negativity.

The shaman shields his eyes from the light with his hands and looks carefully at the corner inside the room. If he senses anything suspicious there, he begins to beat his drum again, dances, comes alive with terrifying movements, and implores the spirits.

Finally, everything is cleansed, and it becomes clear that the clouds of suspicion are not as thick as they seemed, because the sources of negativity have been expelled, the sacrifice has been accepted, the prayers have been heard, and the ceremony has ended. The shaman remains in the room a little longer to use his prophetic abilities, foretelling good things and answering questions from curious onlookers or relatives about what he saw during his journey far from our world.

At the end of this entire healing ceremony, the shaman comes to the place reserved for him in the most honourable spot in the room and sits on the horsehide.

According to M. Perrin, shamans practise two types of treatment systems: these are somatic and spiritual in nature and constitute two approaches. Illness can be viewed as a deficiency, usually related to the escape, corruption or alteration of the spirit, or as an excess, caused by the entry into the body of a disease-causing element or "disease spirit". There are two types of treatment corresponding to these two approaches: endorcisme and exorcisme. Endorcisme is the restoration of the missing part, while exorcisme is the expulsion of the disease-causing element from the body. The suction method used by Turkish shamans may be the best example of exorcism.

Many of the methods used by the shaman during treatment are noteworthy. In particular, the shaman's cosmic journey to the other world in pursuit of the sick spirit...

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<sup>12</sup> Perrin M., op. cit., p. 76

The battles he wages with spirits and otherworldly beings are significant and exemplify the endorcisme method by forming the core of shamanic mythology. To strengthen the psychological effects on the patient, the shaman takes them back to mythical times, performing a series of rituals for this purpose and bringing the patient along with him to the world of the ancestors. The shaman facilitates treatment by showing the patient the origin of the illness in the world of spirits existing in the subconscious ( ) and leaving the patient alone with their illness. The only method applied here is to comply with the rule that "knowing the origin of the illness is half the cure".

The fact that shamans smoke tobacco or blow tobacco smoke onto the patient during the ritual is also noteworthy as one of the treatment techniques. Indeed, shamanic narratives about the spirits of the underworld loving the smell of tobacco confirm this. The evil spirits that have entered the patient's body cannot stand the smell of tobacco and leave the body, coming to the shaman to smell the tobacco. The shaman then takes them back to where they came from.

Furthermore, according to traditional Shamanic belief, tobacco is a substance that alters the Shaman's consciousness, enabling him to connect with spirits. The scent of tobacco, which pleases the spirits, is a kind of offering that the shaman presents to the spirits. Therefore, the shaman's smoking of tobacco is not only to alter his consciousness in order to connect with the spirits, but also to satisfy the spirits.

The traditional shamanic healing system has survived for thousands of years ~~reached~~. The healing system and methods, which are essentially similar, vary from region to region. Indeed, the healing techniques practised in the shamanistic traditions of the Central Asian Turks

primarily involves healing with a whip and a stick, and as a system, it involves transferring the illness.

The treatment system of Central Asian ~~differs~~ differs from that of Siberian Shamans. Indeed, as S. Malov writes, the main task of Turkestan Shamans is to transfer the illness to an animal or any object.

In contrast, Siberian Turkic Shamans draw the illness into a special place in their stomachs and expel it from their bodies.

and then release it. The methods used by Central Asian Shamans to remove illness from the body are also very interesting. They beat the patient with a whip or stick in their hands , or they press their feet onto heated iron, then use their hot feet to...

By placing it on the patient's back, they remove the illness and transfer it to any animal or object. The shaman's choice of animals and objects to which the illness is transferred

<sup>13</sup> For information on the practices performed during the treatment process, see Malov S. E., op. cit., pp. 5-15

<sup>14</sup> The treatment sessions of Central Asian shamans bear a strong resemblance to the practices of Alevi-Bektashi communities.

pigeon, rooster, sheep, chicken egg, dog skull, horse skull bone, etc. They sometimes transfer headaches to a human skull as well.

By summarising S. Oldenburg's account of observing and recounting how a shaman healed a patient in Kuçar, it is possible to see the treatment methods of the Central Asian shaman, known as *perihan* or *bakşı*. The *bakşı* (shaman): invited to heal the patient, first ties the rope he has hung from the ceiling to the floor, wraps a white piece of cloth around this rope, and hangs a *tuğ* near the ceiling. While the *bakşı* performs ablutions to pray, three people heat his drum over a fire. Meanwhile, musicians play and sing:

*Kuran beşi bismilla İşning  
beşi bismilla İşke kerdim  
bismilla İştın çıktım  
bismilla Yaylaylı yaylaylı  
Derya boyı boylaylı  
Belikleringä arz eytin  
Hudayimge yığlayıl<sup>16</sup>*

After the song, the game (dance) called *usula* begins. Two elderly women play this game, but over time, those participating in the ceremony also join them. After the game, the shaman asks for a pair of candles (two pieces of wood with oiled cloth tied to their ends) and places them under the *tuğ*. Meanwhile, they also give him his heated drum. The shaman sits barefoot and holds the *tuğ* with his left hand. They seat the patient, who has performed ablutions, opposite the shaman. The sick woman holds the *tuğ* with both hands. The shaman begins his prayer with *bismillah*.

The patient slowly rises, holding onto the staff, and begins to circle around it until he tires and sits down. The shaman makes movements as if striking the patient's chest with a knife. Meanwhile, he continues to recite prayers. Throughout this treatment, the patient and the shaman stand up several times and dance around the pole. The shamanic ceremony, which begins at 6 p.m., ends at 2:40 a.m.

As can be seen from all these descriptions, Central Asian Shamans

They seek to restore the patient's lost energy and heal them by boosting the body's resistance through the old method of reassurance and intimidation. Today, Siberian Tatar Shamans use one of the oldest treatment methods: intimidation to heal.

<sup>15</sup> Oldenburg S., "Brief Notes on the Peri-Honah and Duahonah in Kuçar", *Sbomik Muzeya Antropologi i Etnografi*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Petrograd, 1918, pp. 17-20

<sup>16</sup> Oldenburg S., op. cit., p. 18

They continue to perform the ritual. For this purpose, the female shaman suddenly lifts her skirt during the ritual, exposing her genitals to the evil spirit afflicting the patient. According to belief, when the spirits see the woman's genitals, the spirits leave the patient's body. In addition, the shaman forces the patient to scream by hurting any part of their body. It is understood that the patient's sudden scream disgusts the spirit that has possessed them, causing the spirit to leave the body.



Figure 85. Tatar

Illness (from

S. Malov also made several observations similar to this treatment system among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia.

17 As can be understood from the observations of both S. Oldenburg and S. Malov, in Central Asia, shamanism is called *peri-oyun*. According to belief, jinns, fairies, and giants send illness to humans and animals. The sick person,

<sup>17</sup> Malov S. E., *op. cit.*, pp. 1-16

first explains their problem to the shaman. The shaman then makes a diagnosis and determines the method and date of treatment. At the same time, the shaman requests several animals in order to deceive the illness and expel it from the body. The treatment system of Central Asian Shamans begins with transferring the illness to an animal or any inanimate object. These animals and objects include pigeons, chickens, sheep, eggs, horses, dogs, and sometimes human skulls.

The ceremony begins with a ritual dance. During the healing session, the shaman and spectators dancing is nothing more than reducing the illness to a trance-like state. The length and number of dances are determined by dolls called *konçak*, *korçak* or *koyçak*, which are thrown into the fire after each prayer. Throwing the last doll into the fire signals the end of the ritual. An integral part of the healing ceremony is the *tuğ*. The shaman first attaches one end of an unused rope to the ceiling of the house and the other end to a stake driven into the ground. The *tuğ* is taut so that during the dance, participants can hold onto it and spin around it. Green and red pieces of cloth are tied to the upper part of the *tuğ*.

Some shamans hold a whip and a sword in their right hands while praying. The shaman, holding the sword and whip, dances and bows his head to the burning fire. Then the shaman strikes the wall with the sword and pretends to roast something from the house with the whip. On the second day

day, the shaman takes the pigeon and turns it over the patient's head from side to side. Then he inserts the sword into the patient's head and neck and burns the places where he has inserted it.

He strikes. On the third day, after circling the *tunggut*, the shaman strikes the patient's back with the whip

and gives the whip to one of those present. The person who receives the whip immediately takes it outside the house. It is understood that the shaman expels the illness by gathering it in the whip and therefore has it thrown out of the house. Throughout this entire treatment method, musicians play and sing songs or induce the shaman into a trance state by playing music.

Central Asian Shamans enter a trance state by playing the drum and also by the musicians playing. Reaching the patient with the whip can have two meanings. The first is to revive their energy by frightening them, the second is to drive the spirits out of the patient by frightening them. Indeed, according to observers, beating the patient with a whip plays a very important role in the healing process.

As mentioned above, the shaman's method of removing illness is called *kuçuruk*, *kuçurma* or *küdelgekö*, which means transferring the illness to something else, an animal, oneself or someone else. As this treatment method has been known since ancient times, post-Shamans of recent times strive to revive it. The method most frequently utilised by Shamans working in both ancient and modern Shamanic centres during the treatment process is to direct (motivate) the patient towards healing and to programme themselves accordingly.

In addition, the sound of drums or other musical instruments, pitmotherapy involving the shaman's chants and dance, and the use of fragrant trees such as *irben* and *artış*

aromatherapy, herbal medicine, hand therapy, hypnotherapy, psychic therapy, etc. are also widespread. Shamans treat their patients with various herbal medicines, fish oil, the glands of various animals, rubbing, massage, and holding. Old and new therapeutic methods are used together today, forming the essence of living Shamanism. Indeed, Central Asian Shamans who have accepted Islam maintain both belief systems together, thereby establishing their treatment systems within this context.

Since shamanism and Islam coexisted in Central Asia, shamans would call upon Muslim saints for help in times of difficulty.

difficult times, they would call upon Muslim saints for help, say "Bismillah" before beginning a ceremony, and sometimes pay their shamanic dues by lying on the graves of Islamic saints. For example, the Kazakhs would invite both shamans and dervishes from the Jabriya sect to treat their sick.

by inviting both shamans and dervishes from the Jabriyya order. Shamans would sometimes send the sick to the mullah.<sup>19</sup> Mullahs, who were Muslim clerics, would treat the sick by writing prayers and opening books

and also utilised Shamanic methods. Particularly in rural areas,

In Azerbaijan and Anatolia (among the Turkmen and Yörük), the head of the order seems to have taken on both functions.<sup>20</sup>

O. Suhareva also observed an important treatment session.<sup>21</sup> According to O. Suhareva's description, the female shaman lit 41 candles for the spirits, 11 candles for the souls, 6 candles for Gavsul'-Azam, and 1 candle

va's description, before beginning the treatment session, the female shaman lit 41 candles for the spirits, 11 candles for the souls, 6 candles for Gavsul'-Azam, and 8 candles for the charms. Then, one of the patient's relatives gave her a black goat's blood.

The blood of the sacrifice is collected in a container without being spilled on the ground. They remove the goat's stomach and give it to the female shaman. The shaman places the stomach on the patient's aching abdomen.

Then he anoints the patient's body with the blood of the sacrifice. When the blood dries on the patient's hands and becomes invisible, the shaman says that the spirits have licked the blood. Then the shaman anoints the patient's hands with blood a second time, saying, "*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, caniga can, kani-ga kan*" (*In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, life for life, blood for blood*), and declares that the sacrifice has been given in place of the patient's life. After cooking and eating the sacrificial animal's meat, the shaman begins the kamlik. O. Suhareva describes the kamlik ceremony in great detail.

The ceremony continues until midnight. Then everyone goes to bed. The female Shaman also sleeps under the patient's feet. As can be seen, it is not the patient but the Shaman who sleeps under the patient's feet. What is interesting from the perspective of folk Sufism is that the female Shaman

<sup>18</sup> See Anjiganova L. V., "Sacred Foundations of the Ethnic Culture of the Khakass", [www.gov.kk.kassia.ru/hist/index9.htm](http://www.gov.kk.kassia.ru/hist/index9.htm)

<sup>19</sup> Divaev A., "Kirghiz Diseases and Methods of Treatment", *Turkmen Vedomosti* 2, issue 80

<sup>20</sup> Bayat F., "The Role of Shamanism in the Formation of Anatolian Folk Sufism", *Proceedings of the International Congress on Anatolian Beliefs*, 23-28 October 2000, Ürgüp/Nevşehir, Ankara, 2001

<sup>21</sup> Suhareva O. A., *Demonology*, pp. 62-65



The shaman dances to the sound of the drum, reciting a prayer composed of poems arranged in ear-shaped verses. As the drum is played, the patient trembles, and many of those attending the ceremony join in the dance in a trance-like state.

entering a trance and joining the dance. The shaman beating the patient and lifting them up to dance demonstrates that this is the main element of the ritual

. Many methods in the treatment process are the same or similar.

With this change, it continues to exist today among the Turks of Anatolia and Azerbaijan. Just as the shaman in Anatolia was transformed into the Alevi and Tahtacı dedesi, in Central Asia the shaman continues to exist by adopting a few elements from Islam.

It should also be noted that in many respects, Shamanism has preserved its existence within the Alevi-Bektashi community after Islamisation

and has prompted research by scholars.<sup>22</sup> The issue to be addressed here is the Shamanic healing system practised by Alevi dedes or ocaklis.

It should be continued in the same manner. Grandfathers who were former clan or tribe leaders heal illnesses just like Shamans. In particular, the Sele grandfather treats patients possessed by spirits and the mentally ill. In contrast, the Kargin grandfather treats all kinds of illnesses. The Tahtacı leader treats a condition called dalaz, which is an itchy skin disease.

It is also known that the elders recite prayers to cure snake bites, scabies, and alazlama.<sup>23</sup>

One of the treatment methods of Central Asian Shamans is treatment with fire, which is common among the Yakuts, Bashkirs, Kazakhs and other peoples. Indeed, by treating with the cosmic power of heat, the Shaman proves his mastery over fire.

The shaman heating his drum in the fire demonstrates the cosmic nature of heat. Shamans spin the rags they have burned around the patient's bed.

They believe that they can drive away the spirit of illness. Central Asian Shamans achieve this by saying,

‘*◆Has alas, küllü beladan halas*’ (May you be free from all misfortune), that is, by performing aiaslama. In Azerbaijan and Eastern Anatolia, this shamanic method is known among the people as alazlama (a little burning) and is essentially used to remove fear

. Or the illness is driven out by frightening it from the sick body. The shaman, like a psychotherapist, knows that fear will awaken the person's dormant power and therefore uses fire. In the treatment system, the shaman, with the mace in his hand, strikes the sick person.

<sup>22</sup> See Köprülü-zade M. F., *Influence of Turco-Mongolian Shamanism on Muslim Mystical Orders*, Istanbul, 1929; Yörükân Y. Z., *Turkish Religions Before Islam, Shamanism*, Ankara, 2005; Ocak A. Y., *Menakıpname/er as a Source of Cultural History*, Ankara, 1992; Bayat F., *Hoca Ahmet Yesevi and Some Problems of Folk Sufism*, Baku, 1997; Bayat F., “The Role of Shamanism in the Formation of Anatolian Folk Sufism”, *Proceedings of the International Anatolian Beliefs Congress Proceedings*, 23-28 October 2000 Ürgüp/Nevşehir, Ankara, 2001

<sup>23</sup> Yörükân Y. Z., *Before Islam*, p. 105

also aims to raise resistance power through fear and disgust.

Fear, surprise, disgust, etc., are evoked in human emotions, and thus...

is undoubtedly the oldest healing method known to mankind, and Turkish Shamans still successfully utilise this treatment today. Indeed, the body's reaction enables the re-perception of lost vital fluid, and the illness is easily expelled. By confronting the patient with the evil spirit that has entered them, the Shaman calls upon the patient to fight for their life.

Another very ancient shamanic treatment method involves burning the affected areas.

The aim is to eliminate pain and promote healing. To achieve this, the energy source or disease point corresponding to the area of the body experiencing pain is burned. It is also possible to treat these burned areas by inserting needles. As a burning technique, the shaman uses tobacco, cigarettes or dry grass. This system, developed over thousands of years, also forms the basis of modern acupuncture. Furthermore, according to Shamanic healing practices, the human body...

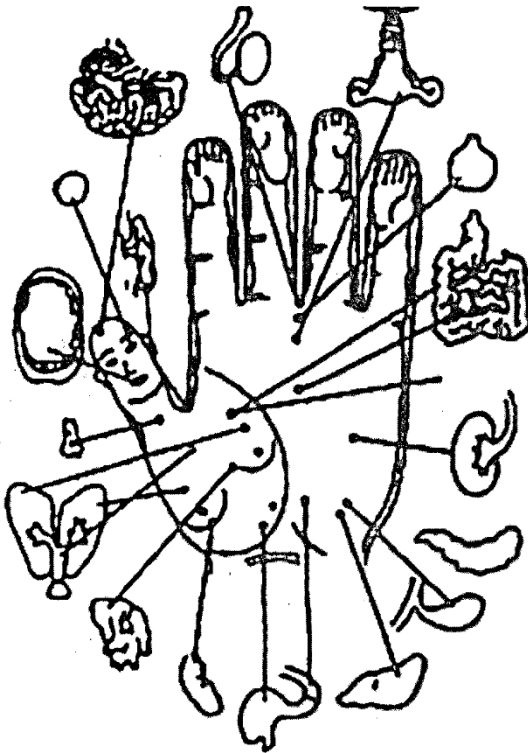


Figure 86. The connection between the hands and fingers and the internal organs

It is written on his hands and ears. The body was created based on the fingers or the fingers based on the body. Each finger represents one or several internal organs.<sup>24</sup> The thumb is responsible for brain and throat activity

The little finger is responsible for the hand, the middle and ring fingers for the feet, the palm for the intestines, and the base of the thumb for the lungs.

and the base of the thumb is responsible for the lungs and heart. Similarly, because the inside of the hand represents other internal organs, it is possible to eliminate pain by inserting needles into the appropriate places in the hand or fingers when the corresponding organ hurts.

Reflexology, which is one of the alternative medicines today and is known as cleansing the body from within, also treats diseases with the help of foot and hand signs.

Reflexology, which emerged from the development of ancient shamanic healing methods, is one of the widely practised alternative medicine methods in China and other Eastern countries.

One of the treatment methods is that of the Shamanist Yakuts, who take the patient outside when thunder roars and lightning strikes. According to their belief, the spirit that brought the illness leaves the patient's body, frightened by the thunder. When the first lightning strikes, the Yakuts leave their homes and circle the spot where the lightning struck three times. The Yakuts say, "Abaası adaray yok ol" (May the spirit perish).

When lightning strikes, the Yakuts leave their yurts and circle the place where the lightning struck three times. The Yakuts say, "Abaası adaray yok ol" (God, I cleanse with fire).

According to Altai Shamanism, illness occurs when the spirit that has left the body is stolen by one of the spirits of the other world. However, a person also becomes ill when one or more

evil spirits entering the patient's body. Naturally,

the shaman either finds the stolen spirit and returns it to its owner, or expels the evil spirits that have entered the body, depending on the type of illness. The healing ceremonies in Turkic shamanism consist of four stages:

1- Calling upon the spirits to diagnose the illness.

2- The helper spirits provide the shaman with information about the sacrifice to be offered for treatment.

3- The shaman's cosmic journey to treat the patient and the transfer of the illness to an animal, or the shaman stealing the patient's soul from the other world and bringing it back.

4- The slaughter of the sacrificial animal and the shaman's offering of the sacrificial meat to the spirits that are the source of the illness.

<sup>24</sup> Dikson O., op. cit., p. 452

<sup>25</sup> Popov A. A., "Material on the History of the Religion of the Yakuts of the Vilyuysk District", Collection of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, Vol. 2, 1949, pp. 271-272

During the treatment process, the shamans' act of bringing patients who are between life and death back to life does not mean giving people eternal life; this effort only prevents death that comes before its time. According to shamanic belief, humans would not die if there were no evil spirits. In this context, the shaman's healing system is, in a sense, a battle against death. For this purpose, he has special techniques: trance, placing his helper spirits inside his drum, cosmic travel, etc. In short, the shaman is a human being in search of immortality. According to Freud, immortality is entirely natural. However, immortality is not eternity.<sup>26</sup> The shaman is a person who is aware of this, and his healing system is not aimed at giving people eternity, but at preventing untimely death.

Shamanic legends recount the shaman reviving a three-day-old corpse, the purpose being to demonstrate the shaman's great power while also preventing untimely death. However, the fact that the shaman revived the woman by rubbing her body with his hand, which he had heated three times in the burning stove, and transferring the illness to himself,<sup>27</sup> is another variant of the previously mentioned method of healing by suction.

A series of shamanic techniques, types of games, and forms of performance used during the treatment process are intended to show the shaman's patients that they are not alone emotionally and spiritually in their battle against illness or death. Directing his spiritual and physical power towards healing the patient, the shaman dispels the patient's feelings of loneliness and restores their self-confidence. This constitutes the essence of the shamanic healing system. Furthermore, in healing rituals, the shaman's drumming (Central Asian shamans play an instrument they call a *devre* or *daire*) is intended to channel all positive energy to the patient and influence them in an optimistic direction. Through music, the patient recalls pleasant memories and finds the will to live. Furthermore, the drumbeats improve the working tempo of the patient's cardiovascular system. The musical treatment method practised by shamans for thousands of years and continued today is being placed on a scientific platform through modern psychorhythmotherapy, which investigates the role of musical instruments and music in general in treatment.

The legends recounting the healing rituals of shamans do not describe the course of the ritual. They merely emphasise how shamans heal patients, especially those possessed by spirits. The most important point to note during this ritual is that the shaman blows on the face of the possessed patient and strikes them with a mallet.

It is healing by striking. There are accounts that Kyusteh, the famous Shaman of the Yakuts, cured possessed patients who attacked everyone using this method.<sup>28</sup> Üf-

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<sup>26</sup> Freud, S., *Totem and Taboo*, Paris, 1932, p. 108

<sup>27</sup> *Shaman Legends*, p. 107

<sup>28</sup> See Bayat F., *Turkish Shamanic Texts*, pp. 161-172

Another form of healing is when the shaman sprinkles water taken into his mouth onto men who have lost their minds at weddings. According to the general belief derived from legends, people become ill as a result of evil spirits stealing their souls. The shaman first finds out where the evil spirit that stole the soul is, then determines where the evil spirit has hidden the soul, and then takes the stolen soul and returns it to its owner.

One of the oldest healing systems is massage therapy. However, all the medicine men of the ancient world have made use of this very common healing system. This healing and treatment system is performed using the energy of the human hand and requires special training and skill.

In Tuva, at the Shaman treatment centre, new methods are used alongside traditional treatments. Tuva Shaman Nikolay Oorjak uses ancient methods such as massage to restore the patient's energy source, and also rings bells to summon helpful spirits or cleanse the room.

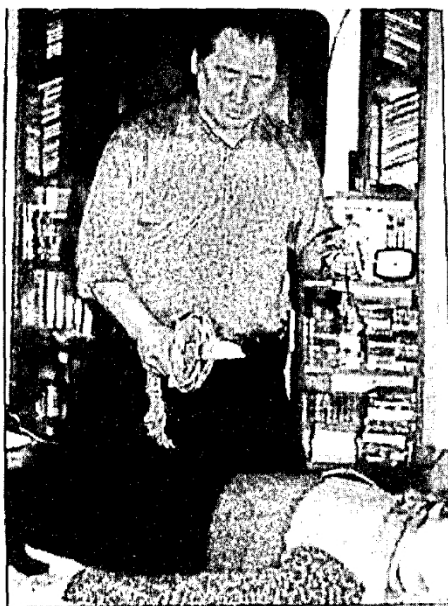


Figure 87. Tuva Shaman N. Oorjak's massage therapy

- a) He summons spirits with a small bell,
- b) concentrates on pressing with his fingers



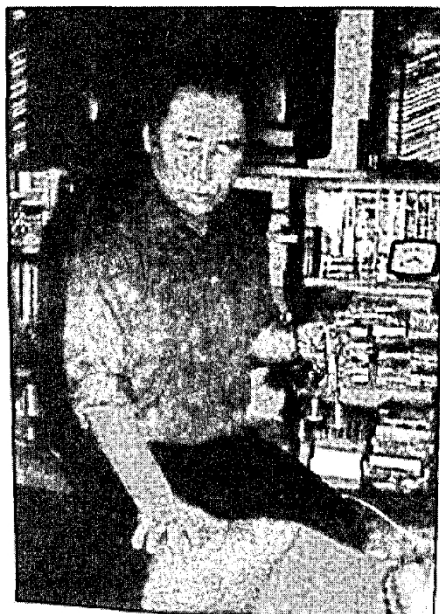
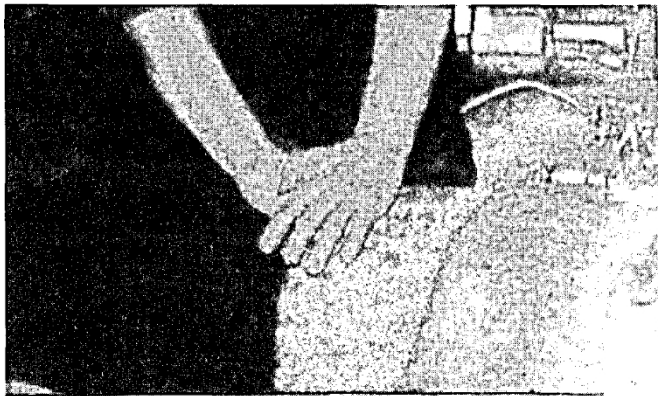


Figure 88. c) Presses the affected organ with his hands,  
d) soothing movements

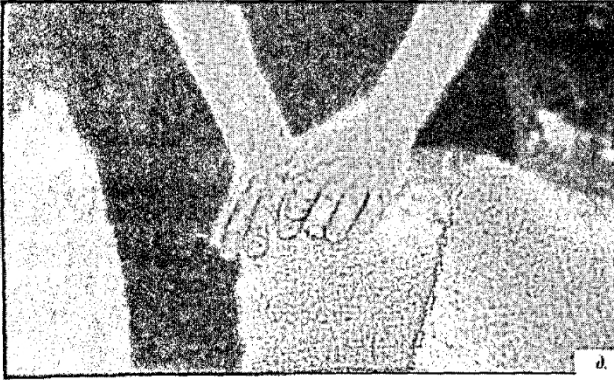


Figure 89. e) He gives strength to the patient,  
D purifies with bird feathers and a small bell (from Diksan's Book)

In addition to rubbing the diseased organ with massage, another form of massage involves pressing the patient's back with the feet. Furthermore, in this healing session, the shaman performs movements on the patient's back as if dancing, and doing so naked is observed in both the ancient and modern shamanic healing systems.



One of the treatment methods used in both traditional medicine and Shamanism is bloodletting. According to Shamanic technique, the removal of blood from the body is known as cleansing the body. Indeed, the thickening and darkening of the blood indicates an increase in the disease accumulated in the body. It is noted that blood taken from the affected organ is noted to play an important role in healing. Furthermore, it is known from the Shamanic healing system that bloodletting has a significant effect on eye pain and headaches.

In conclusion, it is possible to state that the shaman's healing technique, in all its forms, including concrete methods such as suction and the use of medicine, has a mystical-magical character. Traditional science bears witness to the fact that a simple touch of the drum creates excitement. Contemporary science shows that the shaman's treatment has psychological meaning.

In tradition, this is referred to as the shaman treating with magic or using magical power. Magic begins where science ends. Calling the shaman's treatment system magical is based on a one-sided assessment of all available data. However, the shaman is the person who combines science and magic. Although the healing system is mystico-magical, i.e. predominantly magical, the existence of practices such as cauterisation, bloodletting, and healing through plants proves that the shaman uses science and magic together. Although Shamans have no medical training, they treat patients because they can access the source of knowledge about illness on their own. The main source Shamanism draws upon is the knowledge of the secret of living in harmony with the environment. Without this, the health of both individuals and society is impossible.

On the other hand, through his rituals, the shaman not only heals the physical aspects of illness, but also leads the community to the secret of living without disease. Through the healing ritual, the shaman conveys the message to the community to live in unity and solidarity, transforming individuality into collectivity. Furthermore, the shaman instils in the community the awareness that he himself is indispensable. Thus illness and negative spirits are nothing more than a metaphorical understanding of treating illness and overcoming difficulties.

#### 1 5. 4. Astı

In all traditional societies where shamanism exists, after performing a healing ritual, the shaman receives a gift in return for his labour, which is called *astı* in Tuvan Turkish. This term, like *kamlama* or *kamlık*, is used throughout Siberian shamanism and has entered ethnographic literature in this form.

The shaman is a person who has sworn to help people. He does not perform healing for money, but accepts the *astı* given to him. The shaman is given symbolic gifts: tobacco, needles, thimbles, bowstrings, belts, sacks, etc. In addition, the *astı* given reflects the social

It varies depending on their circumstances: poor patients give small gifts such as personal belongings—knives, robes, silver rings, goatskin bedspreads, goatskin rugs, ropes, sheepskins—while the wealthy or well-off give goats, sheep, horses, bulls, a few small animals, money, etc. However, regardless of the circumstances, the shaman receives gifts for performing the ritual, while the spirits receive

sacrifices. According to the shaman's belief, he receives the *astı* as payment for the treatment. The spirits demand it; otherwise, the spirits become angry with the shaman and direct their anger towards him. According to O. Dikson, the famous shamans have assistants during their shamanic trances. The assistant's duty is to accompany the shaman along the way, carry the shaman's belongings

, providing the Shaman with the necessary assistance during the ritual, finding patients in need of treatment, protecting the items the Shaman receives in exchange for his labour, etc. In return for all this, the assistant receives one-fourth of the Shaman's offerings.<sup>29</sup> As mentioned above, in Turkish Shamanism, the assistant is called the head holder.

The revival of shamanism in Altai and Far Siberia, and the opening of shamanic treatment centres, has changed not only some ancient healing methods but also the understanding of *astı*. Shamans who treat patients at these centres agree on *astı* with the patient beforehand. The Altai woman shaman we spoke to confirmed this. Indeed, in our time, *astı* is not limited to what the patient gives, as it was in ancient times, but is also possible with the shaman's consent.<sup>30</sup> Since the sacrifices offered by the patient to the spirits during the *kamlık* period are outside the concept of *astı*, the shaman receives the gifts not for himself, but for his drum, as stated by the Tuvan female shaman Albina Tava-Sambu. Indeed, a drum that is not fed does not work. The more *hak* (*astı*) there is, the faster the healing

According to the shaman, the more you give, the more you receive in return.

21st century post-Shamans believe that cheap treatment will not be respected. However, the old Shamans performed their duties not to claim rights, but because it was their duty. When 21st century post-Shamans want something special for their rights, they express it with applause, whereas the old Shamans did not want anything for themselves but only to drive away the spirits of illness and reward the helper spirits. In a rapidly changing world, many aspects of shamanism are changing and taking on new meanings. Whether this process is good or bad, it should be seen as shamanism adapting to the times. Naturally, this does not refer to fake shamanism (which also exists).

<sup>29</sup> Dikson O., *op. cit.*, p. 276

<sup>30</sup> From a conversation with the Altai woman shaman Nadya in Cappadocia in 2000

<sup>31</sup> See Dikson O., *op. cit.*, p. 279

TEN GOLDEN SECTIONS  
THE SOCIAL-ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXT OF SHAMANIC BURIALS

Shamans, equipped with the community's secret knowledge, are individuals who live alone or experience loneliness, even though they work for the benefit of the community. Their death and burial, in this context, deviate from community traditions and form a distinct shamanic tradition. According to belief, a shaman dies a) from the natural from illness sent by evil spirits and b) as a result of attacks by other Shamans. This battle is called *hamnarnin çijiri* (Shamans eating each other) in Tuvan. However, regardless of these two types of death of the Shaman, the burial custom remains unchanged.

Based on available information, it is possible to say that Shamans perform burial ceremonies based on very ancient religious beliefs. This burial tradition, which we do not encounter in Turkish culture in mourning and burial ceremonies, provides the basis for considering Shamans as a separate class. The main sources regarding Shaman burials are ethnographic information along with narratives or memorates called Shaman legends.

As is evident from Shamanic memorates, they do not bury deceased Shamans. They hang them from a tree for a period of time, waiting for the flesh to separate from the bones. The same N. Katanov also confirms this information. According to N. Katanov, in the Kara-Irtysh region, lay the deceased Shaman on a platform constructed from black pine branches.<sup>1</sup> Presumably, placing the deceased on trees and leaving them there has been a long-standing practice among the Shaman-

has been a long-standing practice among the Turkic peoples. For example, according to some historical accounts, the Beltirs and Kachins historical information, did not bury their dead, but hung them from trees in the forest.

Similarly, until recently, the Shors and Tuva people did not bury their dead either; they laid them on platforms built on four wooden poles or on platforms suspended from tree branches, a form of above-ground burial.

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<sup>1</sup> Katanov N. F., "Journey to Karagasam in 1890: Notes of the Russian Geographical Society, Vol. 17, St. Petersburg, 1891

The tradition of burial in trees also existed among other Altai-Sayan Turks. According to N. Direnkova, the tradition of burial in trees existed among the Shors, other Altai peoples, and the Abakan Turks.<sup>2</sup> The Altai

would wrap their deceased shamans in skins and hang them from tree branches. The custom of burial in trees is also found among the Beltirs, Tubas, and Barabin Tatars.

The Altai people would hang the body of the shaman, wrapped in leather or cloth, from an old tree that was inaccessible to everyone, and cover the dead with tree branches. It is known that the Altai Shamanists called such trees *kamtit*. *Kamtit* means the tree where the shaman (*kam*) is buried.

Hanging the dead on a tree is older than burial on four stakes (wooden poles).

which is connected to the forest cult. Indeed, in creation myths, the tree appears in the role of mother and father. Logically, that which originates from the tree also returns to the tree. The practice of hanging the shaman's coffin from a tree and waiting until the flesh is cleaned from the bones is connected to the shaman tree (*kam* tree). The shaman tree plays an important role in the shaman's death, just as it did in his creation. However, it has also been observed that they did not place the deceased shaman on a tree but left him on the top of a mountain. Until recent times, the Sagay people would place the deceased shaman on the mountain top and wait for the flesh to separate from the bones.<sup>3</sup> The bodies of shamans, hung on trees or placed on mountain tops, were buried with their clothes and drums.

In shaman burials, after the flesh had separated from the bones (a period of ♦ years or (which may take longer) burial is the final stage in the process of becoming a shaman, involving the separation of the bones from the flesh and covering them with new flesh, thus transforming the candidate into a shaman. Bones are sacred in relation to flesh because they are the dwelling place of the spirit. Indeed, it is not flesh but bone that makes a shaman a shaman. The counting of bones, the acceptance of a candidate with too many bones or, conversely, a candidate lacking one bone, into shamanism, etc., proves our point.

The burial of the shaman is called the removal of the shaman and is performed with a special ceremony under the supervision of an experienced shaman or shamans. Furthermore, considering that the candidate's first shamanic ceremony after the training process is also called the removal of the shaman, it is possible to say that in shamanism, the beginning and the end complement each other.

The burial of bones has been extensively covered in shamanic literature. The long-standing practice of this tradition, the use of the term *seok çigarga*<sup>4</sup> (to collect the bones) instead of burying the deceased. after the flesh has been separated from the bones.

<sup>2</sup> Direnkov, N. P., *Shorsky Folklore*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, p. 438

<sup>3</sup> Katanov N. R., "Tales and Legends of the Minusinsk Tatars", *Siberian Collection*, St. Petersburg, 1887, p. 225

<sup>4</sup> Chudoyakov A. I., *Studies of the Shorsky Epic*, Kemerovo, 1995, p. 86

The deceased Shamans are not buried in public cemeteries. Buried in places inaccessible to humans and animals, such as mountain tops, mountain slopes, the base of a solitary tree in the forest, or inside a tree trunk, the Shaman, who experienced solitude in life, is also buried alone and in a desolate place in death. This confirms that in earlier times, Shamans were buried in caves in the mountains. These Shamans fulfilled the role of ancestors of the Shamanic lineage.

The fact that the deceased Shaman is buried with his face turned towards the west during the funeral ceremonies of the Tuva Shamans shows that the west occupies an important place in Shamanism. In the Shamanic worldview, the west is known as the dwelling place of evil spirits. It is known that the Shaman's grave also contains tools belonging to the Shaman, such as a mirror, drum, mallet, etc.

According to the information provided by M. Kenin-Lopsan, it appears that shaman burials involve several stages or pass through several phases:

Immediately after the shaman's death, they break the bed on which he lay. In Tuvan, this is called *orun buzan*. They lay the shaman on a skin spread on the ground and light a candle at his head. The second stage is called *ham hooru*, meaning the summoning of the shaman

. The relatives of the deceased shaman call another shaman to determine which direction the spirit of the deceased has gone.

. In addition, the invited shaman stands in front of the yurt and purifies the house of evil spirits with a piece of cloth in his hand.

The third stage is called determining the place where the shaman will be buried. Since it is forbidden to bury shamans in the mountains, the steppe or open ground is preferred for burial. Naturally, the burial site is purchased in exchange for money or something else. As the Tuva people are Lamaists, a lama indicates the place where the shaman will be buried. However, shamans are not buried in the ground; they are placed on a specially prepared place called *ham seri*, which is built on four trees.

The day on which the deceased will be taken from the house is determined in turn. Women and children are forbidden from attending the shaman's burial. The *ham seri* is specially prepared, the shaman's body is placed there and his belongings are placed beside him. The deceased shaman is laid on his right side. The head of the deceased is turned towards the west. According to S. I. Vaynšteyn, the history of this custom dates back to the Scythian-Saka period.<sup>6</sup>

The ancient Kidan people also had a custom of hanging their dead from trees. After three years, the Kidan people would burn the bones of the dead.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit., pp. 84-88

<sup>6</sup> See Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit., p. 88

<sup>7</sup> History of Tuva, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1964, p. 65

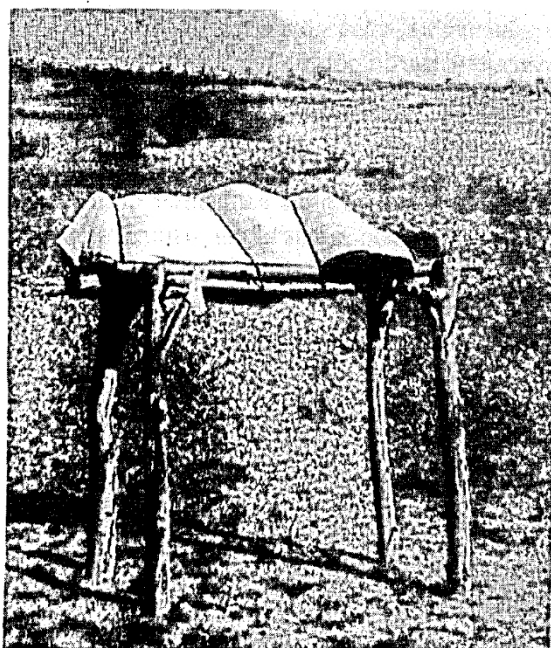


Image 90. A Tuva shaman burial (kam seriz) found in the Alask River.

According to the beliefs of the Turkic peoples of Siberia, the shaman provides the connection between heaven and earth, therefore, after the shaman dies, his spirit must travel between the two.

The shaman's clothing, hat, headdress, and drum are hung between two mallets.

The body of the deceased faces west. A stone is also placed under the head.

According to some scientists, one of the oldest burial rites is above-ground burial, or what is referred to in ethnographic literature as burial on four stakes. Sometimes they would simply hang the deceased from a tree ('). According to this scientist, the Shamans would hang the coffin from an oak tree with the face facing downwards.

As seen in Shaman legends, before burying the deceased Shaman, they would hang him from a tree so that his flesh would separate from his bones. They would also hang his drum from the same tree, but they would cut and chop the shapes on the drum with a knife and break the drumstick and place it inside the drum. Usually, they place the shaman's body in a coffin carved from wood and hang it from the branches of a black pine tree. It is not possible to bury the shaman until the branch rots and the coffin falls to the ground

, it is not possible to bury the shaman. When the coffin falls to the ground by itself, they invite three great shamans. They slaughter three horses and offer the meat to the dead, then place the shaman's bones in the hollowed-out tree trunk and close the trunk.<sup>9</sup> This

<sup>8</sup> Kimeev V. M., "Traditional Features of the Funeral Rites of the Shorts of the Miras River Basin," Young Scientists and Specialists of Kuzbass in the Fifth Five-Year Plan, Kemerovo, 1981, p. 152

<sup>9</sup> See Shaman Legends, pp. 117-118

Along with the burial ceremony, it has also become customary to bury the bones of Shamans in the ground.

From the information provided by some scholars, we learn that there are seven types of burial customs among the Altaians. <sup>10</sup> It should be noted that some of these burial ceremonies originated from Mongol tribes, while others emerged under the influence of religions that were later adopted.

According to the beliefs of Shamanist communities, famous Shamans are not buried after death. They are kept in specially prepared arangas in the open air. When the arangas decays and the shaman's body falls to the ground, they lift it three times with the help of three, six or nine shamans. During this ceremony, a red-coloured ox with a white mouth and a horse of a similar colour are sacrificed. While lifting the shaman's bones, one of his relatives must die. Arangas means the place where the shaman is temporarily kept.

According to ethnographic data, the Yakuts call the grave where the shaman is buried *menge*. <sup>11</sup>

Additionally, a custom that has been practised by the Altai Turks since ancient times is to pour *araka* onto the grave of a deceased shaman. <sup>12</sup> This is a kind of offering to the spirit of the deceased shaman.

Whether it is the cemetery where the shaman's bones are buried or the tree where his body is hung, it is considered a place that people should stay away from and not approach.

According to the beliefs of Shamanist societies, approaching the shaman's grave or the tree on which his body is hung could cause the patient to become insane or even die

. For this reason, the graves of shamans are located in places that are not easily accessible to the community.

The following conclusion can be drawn from all these Shamanist burial practices. Belief The burial rites, which are the least altered part of the system, show that Shamanism has changed little since the Scythian-Saka period. However, ethnographic data indicates that over time, ethnic and geographical interactions have resulted in Yakut or Altai Shamanism acquiring different characteristics. It should be emphasised that, despite some differences in practice, the essence of Shamanic burials remains the same (hanging on a tree, waiting for the bones to separate from the flesh).

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<sup>10</sup> Shatinova N. i., Semya u Altaytsev, Gorno-Altaysk, 1981, p. 99

<sup>11</sup> Ksenofontov G. V., Shamanism, p. 147

<sup>12</sup> Kenin-Lopsan M. B., op. cit.; Potapov L. K., Altayskiy Shamanism, Leningrad, 1991

SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER  
THE INTERACTION OF SHAMANISM AND POST-SHAMANISM

17. 1. The Influence of Shamanism on  
Other Religious and Philosophical-Practical  
Systems

Shamanism, which emerged in the north-east of the Northern Hemisphere, played an active role in the belief system of Turkish society until the advent of heavenly religions. It did not remain merely a component of Turkish culture, but also had a significant impact on world culture. Shamanism, which forms the fundamental paradigm of the Turkish cultural ecology, is being revived today both in Siberia and in the Western world under the name of post-Shamanism.

In a speech he gave at a scientific conference in 1912, G. Potanin referred to the role Shamanism played in Christianity. A partially abridged text of the speech was published in a newspaper in Irkutsk in 1926.

Following G. Potanin's prescient insight, in 1929 G. Ksenofontov, in his book *Shamanism and Christianity*, discussed the emergence of the phenomenon of Jesus Christ.

He has scientifically discussed the significant influence of shamanism; unfortunately, this great scientist, who was forced to die early due to the Soviet regime's red terror, was unable to continue his thoughts.

In this context, it becomes clear once again that the heavenly religions or the religions that preceded them

within the framework of local beliefs. The fact that Christianity and Islam are accepted in some regions while differing in others, blending with old beliefs, is based on this reality. Old Turkish beliefs

Christianity and Islam, is based on the fact that they blended with old beliefs. The unique place of shamanism in the old Turkic belief

system, the unique place of Shamanism was preserved even after Islam.

Essentially for hunter-gatherer societies: Shamanism, which is unique to them, later also had an impact on the lives of steppe peoples. In this context, traces of Shamanism can be seen from the cultures that emerged in India to the Greeks, and even in Europe. Naturally, it would be correct to attribute all of these to influence.



However, the connection between Indian yogis and Shamanic culture<sup>1</sup> and the similarity between Shamans and Buddhist priests, is noteworthy. Furthermore, the tribes of the Altaic Turks who adopted Lamaism resemble Shamanism either in their outward appearance—for example, the Burhan seers wearing clothing reflecting the travesty ideology characteristic of Shamanism, and the lamas wearing clothing similar to women's attire—or in their internal structure.<sup>2</sup> The recent rapprochement between Shamans and Lamas is also a concrete result of this interaction.

It has been noted that the magas/magla- also share many commonalities with Shamans.<sup>3</sup> The information provided by Biruni on this subject is also very important.

According to Biruni, the two great religions of the ancient world, Zoroastrianism and Sabianism, also adopted their ancient rules and customs from Shamanism.

, this religion, whatever it may be called (totem, idol or deity), spread to China, India, the Far East, Horasan

and the southern countries in the earliest times and played an important role in shaping the religious beliefs there. The Zoroastrian religion, prevalent in Iran, Azerbaijan and Central Asia (known as Zoroastrianism in Iran and the Mag religion on the Indian border), was also influenced by Shamanism in a way

influenced by Shamanism through its emphasis on water and fire. Later, the author explains in another part of his work how other religions emerged from Shamanism:

"Bacturnas, who destroyed Jerusalem, was the governor of Iraq for the central government of Keylehrasep, based in Balkh. This means that during this period, the Belh region was more developed than Iraq. Permanent relations had been established with Central Asia. Thus, 400 years before Buhtunnasar, the Turkish khan Tūr had also invaded Iraq."<sup>4</sup>

Ancient religious scholars such as Biruni also agreed that all religions originated from a single source

Shamanism has been identified as the oldest religion and has been partially idealised.

In short, Shamanism, which is not a religion, and Shamans, who do not form a religious group, have influenced ancient and new religions with some of their practices, especially the trance technique, healing system, divination, etc. The Shaman technique has been adopted by these religions.

It has been adopted by the seers of the I's. In fact, according to a scientist named G. Stepanov, Sakyamuni/Śākyamuni, who laid the foundations of Buddhism, was a shaman.

<sup>1</sup> See Ruhen W., "The Origin of Buddhism," DTCFD, 1, issue 5, 1943, pp. 115-128

<sup>2</sup> Sagalaev A. M., Oktyabrskaya I. V., Traditional Worldview, Sign and Ritual, p. 114

<sup>3</sup> See Nyberg H. S., *Irans Forntida Religioner*, Uppsala, 1937; Ohlmarks A., *Studien zum Problem des Schamanismus*, Lund, 1939

<sup>4</sup> Yörükán Y. Z., *Before Islam*,

Perhaps this is why there are a number of similarities between Shamanism and Buddhism.

The spread of shamanism in the East and Europe is related to the migration of peoples. Indeed, although the Scythians brought shamanism to Europe, followed by the Huns, it was the Turks who brought it to Iran and India.

China also benefited. For example, according to D. Zelenin, some aspects of Chinese culture bear a strong resemblance to shamanism. However, it is a fact that Chinese culture was influenced not only by Turkish shamanism but also by Manchu and Tungus shamanism.

It is worth noting that humanity, in its search for cosmic knowledge, all wise groups capable of preserving this knowledge, as well as to Shamans. Shamans attracted the attention of other mediums because they passed on cosmic knowledge from generation to generation through tradition and put this knowledge into practice.

This is likely why religious and philosophical systems have turned to shamanism.

Shamanism is at the root of human history's beliefs, which is why it spread to different geographical areas over time. Later, as a result of socio-cultural and historical developments, Turkic tribes adopted other belief systems. Although they became Muslim, Christian, or Buddhist, they remained Shamanist at the core of their folk beliefs and traditions. Despite being labelled as superstition, and despite differences in climate and natural conditions and the cultural and belief systems of the countries in which they lived, shamanism has retained its vitality throughout the ages. Therefore, the roots of shamanism in Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism.

After the acceptance of Islam, Turkish Shamanism became Yesevi, Bektashi, Safavi, The preservation of traditions in orders such as Hayderi, Bayram, and Rifai, and in marginal institutions known as Kalenderi and Abdal, is not an influence, but rather the adaptation of ancient culture to Islamic civilisation.

"Since Turkish Shamanism existed as an ideology that dominated traditional civilisation, it exerted influence in other areas of the ethnic-cultural system as well. After the acceptance of Islam, Turkish Sufism, which emerged in the 11th-12th centuries, is nothing other than the emergence of the old civilisation under the name of Islam."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See Banzarov D., *Sobranie Soçineniy*, Moscow, 1955, p. 87

<sup>6</sup> "The Ideology of Siberian Shamanism," *Izvestiya Akademii Nauk*, No. 8, Moscow-Leningrad, 1936

<sup>7</sup> Bayat R, Hoca Ahmet Yesevi and Some Problems of Folk Sufism, Baku, 1997, p. 68

It is also a fact that Shamanism has influenced a number of systems and has also been influenced by them. In particular, after the acceptance of Islam, it is possible to note that the Shamanism of Central Asia underwent an Islamic interpretation.

It is possible to note that the Turks, who accepted the Islamic religion through the Sufi orders, formed Turkish Islam

This Islamism preserves Shamanism in a synthesis with new religious doctrines.

The Shamanic belief system adapted to Islam has been preserved mainly within the Alevi movement and Shiism. As H. Z. Ülken also wrote, tribes arriving with their shamans and magicians, unable to convert to Islam, brought about a religious transformation in Anatolia.

Consequently, the Isna Ashari and Shiite sects, along with their shamans and magicians, introduced a religious transformation in Anatolia.

tribes that arrived with their shamans and sorcerers brought about a religious transformation in Anatolia. Consequently, the "magical religion" that took root under the guise of Isna Ashari and Shiite dogma

, the "magical religion" that took root became the motto of the new state.<sup>9</sup> In particular, it is an undeniable fact that Shamans had a major influence on the formation of Alevism-Bektashism and the emergence of the institution of the dede.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Lamaist and Christian Turks also keep Shamanism alive. This is why traces of Shamanism can be seen in the traditions and beliefs prevalent throughout the Turkish world.

On the other hand, these remnants of belief are so numerous that terms such as Turkish Islam, and Turkic Christianity are valid terms, and religions exhibiting a syncretic structure are taking on a national identity.

It is now known that Shamanism, in both ancient and modern times, has spread throughout the world on a niche scale.

Shamanism, with its different forms and practices, worldview and philosophy, has some common features regardless of all these. However, scientists, especially American anthropologists, focus on a single Shamanism doctrine without emphasising the differences. It is a known fact that Shamanism, although universal,

<sup>8</sup> For example, with the transition to Buddhism, Buddhist monks tried to erase the influences of Shamanism, but they did not succeed. In this case, Buddhist monks assimilated Shamanist values and/or legends into their own beliefs and tried to adapt them to the accepted teachings of Buddhism. The same situation arises with the acceptance of Christianity. Kept alive in the region

Christian saints appropriated these legends and used them as a means of spreading their faith. With the transition to

Islam, certain elements from religions previously known to Turkish communities, such as Buddhism, Manichism, Zoroastrianism, Mazdeism, and Christianity, sought a new foundation for themselves. This foundation was provided by Sufism, which emerged in the 9th century and spread throughout Anatolia in the 11th century.

They found themselves in the midst of a spiritual current. Motifs reflecting these belief systems can be frequently observed in the tales of saints, particularly in the Bektaşî menakıbnameler. Mastery over natural forces, animating inanimate objects, raising the dead, controlling fire, magic and sorcery are some of these motifs and miracles. However, the main factor that shaped the saintly tales in the form we know today was Buddhism. The concept of saints in Buddhism, like the concept of saints in Sufism, is closely linked to the idea of miracles.

The concept of saints in Buddhism, like the concept of saints in Sufism, is closely linked to the concept of miracles.

<sup>9</sup> Ülken H. Z., *The Religious and Social History of Anatolia*: p. 84

<sup>10</sup> On this subject, see Şener C., *Shamanism*, Istanbul, 2003, pp. 95-103

Although it exhibits a similar structure in Polynesia, Australia, and the Pacific Ocean, it cannot be the same, and these are also similar to the shamanism of the Altaic, Central Asian, and Siberian Turks.

Finally, it must be said that Shamanism, like all religious systems, has been influenced by these religious systems.

## 17. 2. The Post-Shamanism Issue

The 21st century is characterised by the disruption of ecological balance and the unbalanced exploitation of natural resources, which are the primary conditions of human life. All these factors are leading humanity towards its own destruction. It can be said that the apocalypse is the end that humanity has brought upon itself. Duru-

**The only thing that can restore** *harmony* in the increasingly troubled developed Western and American world is the peaceful power of civilisation and humanity's embrace of national culture and the integration of society with nature.

is the peaceful power of civilisation and humanity's embrace of national culture and the unification of society with nature, passing through the reconstruction of lost harmony.

This doctrine of salvation is termed post-Shamanism

and is a philosophical and ritual practice that unites humanity's past and future in one place. Shamanism is a programme for establishing or at least protecting the future in the form of cosmic knowledge from the past. The shaman, like the main hero of this doctrine of salvation, has prepared his defence mechanism for thousands of years and has been able to survive regardless of all destructive external and internal factors.

This phenomenon lies at the heart of humanity's aspiration towards post-shamanism.

Shamanism, a philosophical system of transcendent worldview and metaphysical world, today presents more of a conceptual structure than a practical interpretation of certain culturally specific practices. Shamanism, which does not prejudge any religious system, philosophical movement, or belief, is a single philosophical-practical system that can coexist peacefully with all listed worldviews and religions and maintain its interaction with them. This is the main reason for <sup>its</sup> longevity. Shamanism or post

Shamaril'ism has become a source of inspiration in this regard.

On the other hand, post-Shamanism is becoming increasingly widespread in Siberia and Altai, establishing itself in the developing world. Shamanism centres established in Yakutia, Khakassia, Tuva and Altai form the basic principles of post-Shamanism in the synthesis of metaphysical and physical knowledge, reviving traditional Shaman mythology and philosophy. Alongside research conducted at these centres, shamanic practices such as kam sessions are also performed, and patients are healed. In a world where technology is rapidly advancing and spiritual values are being pushed into the background, the shaman still has his own...

. This should be the most essential function of post-Shamanism.

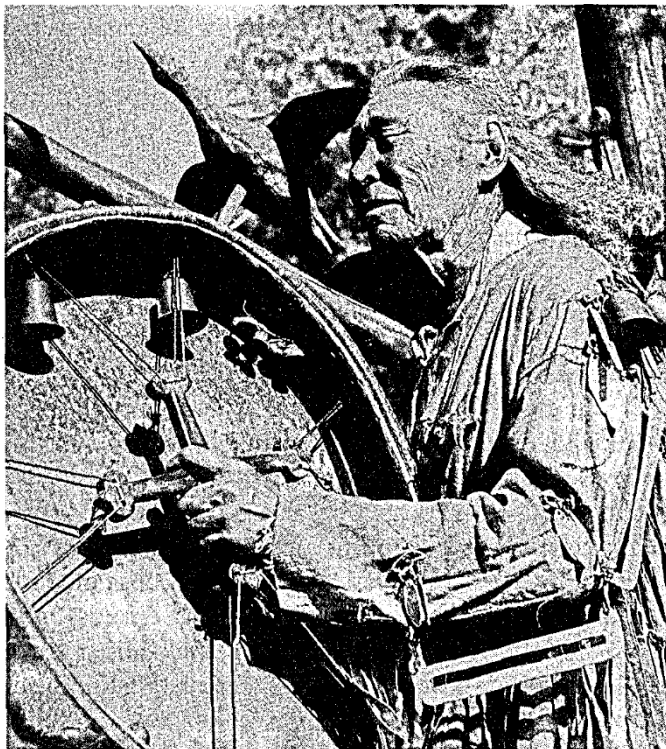


Image 91. Yakut Shaman J. D. Isbekav retired and withdrew to his hut (allas), where he made a shamanic sacrificial site, shamanic clothing, and a drum.

Today, he wants to revive Shamanism. (From Hoppal's book)

In a globalised world where ancient civilisations have collapsed, and traditional ways of life, known as superstitions, are rapidly disappearing, the belief in shamanism is being revived, shifting from a subject of interest to a phenomenon that people aspire to. Practically speaking, with the revival of the concept of post-Shamanism, people are applying ancient healing methods despite the advanced state of modern medicine. While experiencing a revival process among people who long for and cherish the past, post-Shamanism does not resort to coercion or fantasy. However, it is difficult to find a post-Shaman today who fulfils all the functions of the ancient Shaman.

Indeed, it has been observed that tradition has changed over the last two hundred years under the intense pressure of Christianity, and before that, Islam and Buddhism. The point humanity has reached has brought post-shamanism to the fore.

. Beyond the Turkish world, in America, Australia, and New

The post-shamanism process in Zealand and Africa has become a subject of interest in the contemporary world.

L. Anjiganova explains the source of the fascination with post-shamanism and the gradual development of shamanism as follows:<sup>11</sup>

1- Shamanism has become the focus of interest not only for researchers in various scientific fields (anthropologists, psychologists, philosophers, physiologists, linguists, musicologists, etc.) but also for the general public. A number of scientists and practitioners attribute the cause of the global ecological crisis, among other reasons, to the disappearance of the biophilic thinking that was dominant in the Shamanic worldview. Peoples undergoing a period of national revival seek religious or ethnic reasons for this. They find most of the answers to these questions in Shamanism.

2- Shamans (as well as practitioners of other religious systems) were psychotherapists until the 20th century. In some communities, they still perform this role today. S. I. Vaynšteyn and N. P. Moska-lenko, contemporary researchers of Tuvan shamanism, write that good results are achieved not only in the treatment of those with psychological disorders or mental illnesses, but also in the treatment of other illnesses. Of the 57 patients who came to us with problems, 49 were cured or improved after the shamanic session.

3- The shamanic profession is usually passed down through the family line. This is an indication of their current and future existence. They fought against the fires of the Inquisition courts and the isolation camps of the Soviet regime. However, this was to no avail. Even today, powerful shamans belonging to the family line continue to emerge.

Those who remain shamans are only those who have undergone shamanic illness, suffered severe psychological trauma, or experienced clinical death. It should be noted that in many centres, such as Michael Harner's Shamanism Research Centre (California, USA), thousands of people have become shamans after receiving shamanic training.

Today, it is known that there are more than 50 associations and research centres around the world that study and practise shamanism. Among these is the Foundation for the Study of Shamanism (The Foundation), established by Michael Harner in 1985. The Foundation for Shamanic Studies (FSS) and the International Society for Shamanistic Research (ISSR), established in 1988 by the International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnology in Zagreb, can be cited as examples. There is also the *Shaman* journal, published by the International Society for Shamanistic Research in 1995. Another journal is *Shaman's Drum*, edited by Timothy White.

11. Anjiganova L. V., "Sacred Foundations of the Ethnic Culture of the Khakass", [www.gov.khakassia.ru/hist/index9.htm](http://www.gov.khakassia.ru/hist/index9.htm)

These associations collect membership fees from their members. Foremost among these associations is the European Shamanic Association, known as "Where the Eagles Fly". In Turkey, there is no specific association for the small group that identifies as Shamanists. The foremost centre for research and study is The Foundation for Shamanic Studies, established in 1985 by anthropologist Michael Harner. This institution, which produces projects covering North America, Europe, Latin America and Australia, is the largest known shamanic centre.

However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, centres teaching shamanism and practising healing opened among the Yakuts in Siberia. Such centres can also be found in Tuva and Khakassia. In addition, a researcher named O. Dixon, who was a shaman, founded the Society for the Study of Ancient Cultures, called *Mezosoznanie*.

O. Dikson, a shaman, founded the Society for the Study of Ancient Culture, known as *Mezosoznanie*. It is there that traditional beliefs are learned and applied within the context of the healing system of the Turks and other peoples' shamanism. In these centres, not only are the various aspects of shamanism learned, but the traditional healing system (alternative medicine) is also successfully applied.

Therefore, it would be almost impossible to conclude that a new society—a post-Shamanic society—is emerging.

However, for us to be able to say that a society is post-Shamanic, it must possess at least six of the eight characteristics listed below.

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a- Shamanic trance, which is achieved using simple hypnosis techniques, is still valid today as a means of reaching the other world.

b- The replacement of hunting and gathering, which formed the basis of the economic life of society, with agriculture and various forms of production, replacing hunting and gathering, which formed the basis of society's economic life,

c- The emergence of diverse social classes and specialised professions within society, The development of religious and spiritual methodology,

d- Religious and spiritual methodology has been further developed and is now considered contemporary rather than archaic. This is particularly important for rituals, ceremonies, and trance techniques, which are the traditional focus of shamans.

e- Mystical ecstasy and dreams, the ups and downs of society's religious and spiritual life, are accepted as rare experiences and doctrines as important as the ecstasy of the shaman.

f- The shaman is no longer the protector of the souls of the dead who are about to pass to the other world. This role of the shaman has generally been taken over by priests who perform rituals to send the soul on its way.

g- A professional priest exists to regulate the religious life of the community.

h- Forms related to healing, divination, and counselling have replaced the Shaman, who was the primary source of such knowledge.

Post-Shamanism motifs have emerged among indigenous Europeans, Asians, Africans, and some indigenous tribes in North America. The use of the term "Post-Shamanism" facilitates the research and comparison of these similar traditions and their existence prior to Shamanism.

The reconstruction of Shamanism is observed to unite national, regional and even national communities. These communities see the path to humanity's salvation in combining their spiritual powers, striving to gather a degenerating humanity around spiritual values. Furthermore, by performing Shamanic ceremonies and presenting them to the public in a theatrical manner, the aim is to revive Shamanism and keep this tradition alive.

The emergence of post-Shamanism has been influential in the search for a new identity among the Siberian and Altai Turks, who have been assimilated into Christianity in terms of belief. Contemporary Shamanism or post-Shamanism, which has become a symbol of resistance against assimilation, is at the core of national consciousness. Indeed, phenomena such as young people in Chuvashia leaving Christianity to become Shamans, the elevation of Shamanism to the status of a national religion in Yakutia, and the adoption of the Shamanic religion in some Muslim countries (for example, it is known that nearly a thousand people in Turkey have converted to the Shamanic religion) are the result of the search for national identity or national consciousness. The belief that national identity will be formed through a national religion is at the forefront of these new religious quests. In Altai, the new Shamanism, which emerged in the early 20th century and was named Ak Din (the Shamanism institution founded by Shaman Çet Çelpen), is an indication of the gradual transformation of Shamanism and its acquisition of religious characteristics. This new interpretation and perception of Shamanism does not conform to the classical Shamanic content and is considered an attempt to create an artificial religion.

In short, today Shamanism is being promoted as a transnational culture or a transnational religion. It has been observed that some of the widespread research serves this ideology.

Although post-Shamanism and the human communities that perpetuate this phenomenon are in the minority, they possess extraordinary power in terms of sustaining their existence

However, post-Shamanism does not mean the complete revival of old Shamanic traditions. Indeed, post-Shamanism

aspect, having adopted certain elements from other religions or external influences.



by blending and harmonising the values within the religion derived from it, thereby continuing to sustain this belief.

Central Asian Shamanism (the beliefs of falbin, perihan, and bakşı) is an example of this. Indeed, shamanism is being kept alive and practised under the name of Islamic values.<sup>13</sup> Post-Shamanism has accepted all other belief systems and incorporated elements from these other religions to create a new phenomenon. While this shows that shamanism is open to development, it also causes it to increasingly stray from its original form.

The emergence of Post-Shamanism was prompted by the rise of new religious movements or irreligion in the 1960s, such as New Age, which sought salvation in the Western world. New Age is a new movement that synthesises materialistic Western culture with Eastern religions, particularly Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Shamanism, creating a mixture of philosophy and religion.

Furthermore, the works of two authors, which are a mix of novel and memoir and deal with shamanic life, magic, and shamanic initiation ceremonies, were highly influential in the formation of post-shamanism. The first of these authors wrote extensively on...

Carlos Castaneda, who has been widely discussed and written about, and Lynn Andrews, who is no less

. These two authors have played a major role in drawing humanity's attention to shamanism and in the establishment of more than 100 shamanic associations and centres in recent years. A third person must be added to this list. Michael Harner, an academic and practising shaman, turned shamanism into a way of life, an organisation. As if that were not enough, he himself became a shaman, performing healing rituals for his patients.

These three individuals took Shamanism out of a worldview that had been or was becoming a thing of the past and turned it into a living entity and experience that is practised and lived. They opened a new window for the troubled Western world to breathe.

The philosophy of post-shamanism has continued to evolve over time due to its open-ended nature. According to Turkish shamanic philosophy, the continuity of life is understood to consist of a spiral (cyclical) transformation of the processes of life and death, linked to the unity of the macrocosm and microcosm, the continuity of time, and the interconnection of all things.

and the fact that the processes of life and death consist of spiral (cyclical) change. Although very little remains of the primitive hunter-gatherer lifestyle associated with shamanism

, the above philosophical postulate has been preserved intact. Although Post-Shamanism has forgotten a series of practices, rituals, and traditions, the philosophical postulate has been carried over to the present day. A fundamental reason for Post-Shamanism coming to the fore is that in this belief system, nature and society are perceived as a whole, and all beings exist within an order.

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<sup>13</sup> During my stay in Uzbekistan between 1987 and 1990, I encountered Shamanic practices that were being practised within Islam.

The belief is that the disruption of this balance will inevitably lead to catastrophe in all circumstances. The current state of cultural ecology and economic balance also contributes to the rise of post-Shamanism.

The fact that Shamanism, the oldest known civilisation system in history, has preserved its philosophical essence unchanged for thousands of years is quite noteworthy.

The foundations of post-Shamanism are also built upon these philosophical principles.

Shamanism is not hidden in a static, unchanging system, but in the essence of dynamism. In Shamanic philosophy, everything is in motion, within a dynamic structure. The universal value and similarity of Shamanism throughout the world lies here.

## CONCLUSION

Turkish Shamanism, with its thousands of sources, large and small, is also a socio-cultural phenomenon worthy of research. This study examines the internal structure of Shamanism, known as the Shaman status, and its external structure, which includes the functions of the Shaman. The selection or becoming of a shaman is part of the composition of shamanic culture, which some European scholars have assessed as the original religion of the Turks (which is an incorrect definition). This phenomenon is from shamanism to Christianity.

It has been incorporated into Turkish culture and Islam, and among the nomadic Turks, it has transformed into popular Sufism.

Whether in pre-Islamic or post-Islamic Turkish folk literature, epics, fairy tales, legends, or tales of saints, Shamanism, which has continued to exist by merely changing form, constitutes the fundamental concept for understanding many phenomena.