SHAMAN

Articles in this volume are dedicated
to the memory of the late

Professor Catherine Uray-Kőhalmi (1926–2012),

an outstanding scholar
of Mongolian and Manchu-Tungus studies,
and a member of the Editorial Board of

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Front cover: A Reindeer Evenki shaman from the upper Amur in the 1890s.
Photo by Pëtr P. Shimkevich (from the Georg F. Heyne's archives)

Photograph from: "On the Symbolism of the Shaman's Costume among the Reindeer Evenki in Manchuria," by Georg F. Heyne

Back cover: After a Yakut (Sakha) rock drawing,
from A. P. Okladnikov, *Istoriia Iakutii*

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Shamans and Italian Healers of Today from a Comparative–Contrastive Viewpoint

CARLA CORRADI MUSI BOLOGNA, ITALY

From a comparative–contrastive viewpoint, the rituals of Italian healers of today present some relevant elements which share common ground with shamanic rituals. The similarities extend from the methods of transmission of thaumaturgic power to the recitation of secret magic-therapeutic formulae learned during initiation, from the practice of tracing circles or crosses to that of having recourse to the magic power of water and fire, and from auxiliary spirits in animal form to the paraphernalia used. Autochthony explains the strength of the survival of some forms of Indo-European magic tradition, among which are ancient therapies still practiced by today's healers. In particular, the paper, which is the result of research in loco, gives information on the exercise of magic medicine in the geographic area of Emilia Romagna, in the North of Italy. Here there are healers, prevalently women, who, without being hindered by official doctors, treat specific diseases with methods reminiscent of those of the shaman medicine men.

Recent philological and linguistic interdisciplinary research, connected with the studies of Mario Alinei, supports the thesis of the original character of the numerous typologically shamanic elements of Indo-European beliefs, including those relating to the cure of illnesses, which have until now been attributed to late oriental influences.

Mario Alinei has contrasted the original theory of the Indo-European invasions with the Paleolithic continuity theory (PCT), according to which the first Euro-Asiatic peopling by *Homo sapiens sapiens* would have been due to the arrival from Africa of the ancestors of the Indo-Europeans and other non-Indo-European peoples, among whom the peoples of the Urals. From his point of view neither the Indo-Mediterranean substratum nor the pre-Indo-European peoples existed, and there would not have been mass invasions, but only limited invasions or

local infiltrations which would not represent factors of substitution, but of hybridization. The prehistoric ethnolinguistic relationship, therefore, between the Indo-Europeans and the other peoples of Eurasia would not be superstratum/substratum, but adstratum/parastratum.[1]

In the light of this theory, antiquity and the long duration of the magic concepts of a shamanic nature in Western Europe, transmitted orally and reflected in poetic language (Costa 1998; 2000), lead one to think that it is a matter of original and not of imported beliefs. Contacts between the peoples of the Continent certainly favored the diffusion in the West of the myths of the East, and the latter, when they were shared, were adapted to native traditions through the complex processes of integration.[2]

Among the forms of the most ancient magic tradition which have survived until today are the cures still practiced by today's healers.

With reference to this, I have considered the geographic area of Emilia Romagna, in the North of Italy, where female healers are prevalently active. I have found little information about male healers, who are also scarce in most of Europe.

In the past, magic medicine was much appreciated in this region. Official medicine, however, aroused a distrust which had ancient roots. In fact it dated back to the sixteenth century, when medicine suffered a crisis because of the heated disputes between different schools. The dogmatists were opposed to the empiricists, who aimed at enriching their theoretical knowledge through new discoveries obtained from direct experience and from their understanding of popular culture. Resistance to the academic world led to different forms of parody of the doctor, which would have success in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and whose echoes would be felt even later (Giacomello 1981: 241–253). In the last century new discoveries conferred on official medicine a new authority, and traditional medicine took a step back, though without disappearing. Social psychologists point out that traditional forms of knowledge still persist in the so-called advanced societies and

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[1] Alinei 1996; 2000; cf. also the website *www.continuitas.org*.

[2] The Indo-Europeans did not fully accept some peculiar characteristics of the Finno-Ugric and Siberian system of shamanic beliefs, including the basic concept of the "double" (the immortal soul). The Western *alter ego*, in contrast with the "double," does not live an independent life but has a close relationship of interdependence with its physical form.

"run through them like Karst streams" (Speltini 2002: 92), allowing individuals to feel "at home" (Berger and Luckmann 1969).

Recently, with the arrival of global communication, an interest has spread in industrialized countries in the survival in certain areas of systems of belief like Siberian shamanism, which are still widely shared at a social level. As far as magic medicine is concerned, there are those who from a scientific point of view recognize the importance of the figure of the shaman as the Man of Medicine, who knows how to penetrate the psyche of the sick person and use suitable plants in every therapy (Pierini et al. 2007). There are psychiatrists who study on site the working methods of medicine men. For example, in Buryatia Alfredo Ancora arranged to be attended by the shaman Nadia Stepanova and was able to verify that the treatment given by the shamans is the result of rigorous learning and careful observation of the disciplines handed down from the ancestors (Ancora 2007). In his opinion, the mistake is too often made in the West of removing shamans—extraordinary figures (in the sense of "out of the ordinary")—from their social dimension and inserting them in Eurocentric and Eurocultured categories for the benefit and use of observers who are undergoing a continual identity crisis or are in search of new exoticisms. As Ancora himself has pointed out, shamans with their traditional alternative medicine are able to resolve many conditions of illness which more rigorously scientific methods of medicine do not heal. This is the case, for example, with those undiagnosed problems and disorders which accompany a state of illness whose persistence does not allow complete healing. For this reason, where the practice of shamanism still finds favor, doctors at times require the collaboration of shamans.

In the West healers, as opposed to shamans, do not exercise their skills as a profession, but only as a "gift" which they have received and put into practice when needed. Furthermore, they are specialized in the treatment of one or more specific pathologies and do not venture outside the exercise of the same. Without doubt, they do not enjoy the elevated social status of medicine men in those societies with shamanic belief; their methods are shared only by a restricted circle of sick people, many of whom are disappointed with official medicine. With a few exceptions (e.g. Alpa 2008), official doctors do not make recourse to them, but at the same time they do not obstruct them. Certain doctors will admit that some of their patients were healed after traditional therapies, but often they consider the reason for such healings as outside their sphere

of competence and as induced by simple forms of psychological suggestion which are without scientific value.

Some years ago I met a female healer, now deceased, who worked in the province of Parma, in the area of Montechiarugolo, and received patients in her house. She was an old lady, a farmer's wife, with children. She had attended school as a child for only the first three years of elementary school. She specialized in the cure of illnesses provoked by the evil eye, which she considered to be caused by the intrusion of an evil spirit into the body of a person, sent by the look of envious and wicked people, according to a concept which can be found in shamanic beliefs. She knew how to liberate the afflicted person and send the evil back to its source, i.e. to the person who had caused the evil eye, transferring it on to the person of the latter with similar procedures to those used in the shamanic area.[3] Her ritual of healing required the use of appropriate magic formulae, pronounced in dialect and learned as a young woman from the person who had transmitted this profession as an inheritance, recourse to the energies of fire, water, and metal, and the use of specific paraphernalia and special gestures. In a standing position, the woman placed a piece of wire in a ladle which was very resistant to heat and with her hands made over it three times the sign of the cross, an emblem of the center of the cosmos, where the four cardinal points meet. Then she walked three times around the patient, to stress the "centrality" of the place of the ceremony. Next, she made this wire red-hot over the flame and threw it into a container of cold water. She repeated the ritual three times in succession using three different small pieces of the wire and, concentrating her gaze on the container into which she had thrown the red-hot metal, she was able to recognize the agent of the illness, the magic formula appropriate to the case to be treated, and the type of treatment to be used. In general also, she asked the sick person to throw into the boiling water one of his items of clothing and to repeat the operation for three days in succession.

The figure of this female healer recalls the shaman of Finno-Ugric and Siberian tradition, who imagines he is performing his rituals at the center of the world and has a strong connection with fire and water.

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[3] On the Finnish *tietäjä* who, like the shaman, sent the illness back to the person who had sent it in the first place, transforming the torturer into a victim, see Siikala (2007: 123).

The shaman, like the mythical blacksmith, is the "lord of fire," the active principle of creation and transformation. Furthermore, he uses water as the "vehicle" of initiation, which he activates, in particular, to reach understanding: in the water he can see the truth when he goes into trance. The shaman, in order also to drive away the illness, uses water which, according to belief, is an indispensable prerequisite for every regeneration. It is significant, in the tradition of several Finno-Ugric and Siberian peoples, that the most suitable location for the healing of illnesses is the bathroom, including the famous Finnish sauna. Boiling water possesses greater magic properties when associated with those of fire.

Occasionally the shaman must immerse himself in a river or lake to dispel the spirit of the illness which has been transferred from the body of the sick man into his own. In such a case the immersion is equivalent to the descent into the underworld, where he abandons the evil spirit. The shaman immerses himself in order to reach the world of the dead even when in trance he tries to recover, in the underworld, the soul of the sick man which has been seized by the evil spirits (Eliade 1985: 259).

Similarly, in Western imagination water is connected with the hereafter. Therapeutic springs also are linked with the world of the dead (Susini 1981: 12). In ancient Rome, during the celebrations of the solstice of *Fors Fortuna* "Chance of Fortune," which lasted three days starting from 24th June, a ritual was practiced which has been compared with the shamanic concept of the descent along the "river of the world" as a descent into the underworld: it consisted in the descent in a boat by night on the waters of the Tiber along the section between the two temples of the goddess, situated in an "other" location, distant from the populated area, one *extra urbem* "outside the city," the other further away, actually *extra orbem* "outside the world" (Magini 2008: 205–207).

Returning to the female healer, she did not accept payment for her ritual cures and rejected every form of popularity. She preferred to act out of the public eye and, out of respect, those who knew her tried not to spread information about her. Probably she was afraid of evil tongues and protected her activities through a certain secrecy. I am not aware that she transmitted her traditional knowledge to anyone else.

Infrequent reports about other occasional healers of that period in Emilia, who were similarly reticent about their work, are referred to by Piero Camporesi. There was a female "marker" from Imola who healed burns and distortions, making circular movements on the affected part

of the body and pronouncing magic formulae three times (Camporesi 1981a: 118–121). As an adult, she had received her powers from her father at midnight on Christmas Eve. The winter solstice, when her initiation took place, was considered well-omened, as in the shamanic area. It occurs to me, for example, that on the 24th December Hungarian mothers woke up their children by touching them with birch branches, which were considered beneficial for health, according to a tradition practiced also by Mordvinian mothers on Christmas Day (Barna 1879: 43, 72).

Camporesi also made reference to some healers who worked in the province of Ravenna. There was a female "marker" from San Potito near Lugo, who, while reciting a magic formula and applying garlic, healed children suffering from worms, considered in popular imagination as a premonition of death (Camporesi 1981a: 122–123). The Mordvinians also thought that garlic possessed strong curative powers because, like millet, with its easy reproduction, it was favored by the mother goddess Ańǵe-pat'aj: they put it under the pillow of sick children, believing it kept away evil spirits and fought off illnesses.[4]

There was a male healer from Canuzzo near Cervia who, for his "markings" in cases of the "fire of St. Anthony" or forms of erysipelas, used, in particular, a gold ring put on the index finger, in addition to the necessary magic formulae (Camporesi 1981a: 124). The circular form conferred on the gold ring, a symbol at the same time of both solar luminosity and the hereafter (Propp 1977: 308–310), a special apotropaic power. It is no accident that the Capuchins in some convents in Emilia Romagna at the end of the seventeenth century gave presents of "magic" iron rings in order to keep away vertigo and muscular pains (Camporesi 1981b: 148). In the shamanic area too, amulets of metal, preferably round, were used as a defense against the evil power of death for those who had to stay in close contact with the corpses of the recently deceased (Corradi Musi 2008: 18–19).

There was a female healer from Barbiano near Cotignola who, having lit a candle and covered it with a glass, "marked" the stomach ache caused by the "fall of the soul" (Camporesi 1981a: 127). The concept of

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[4] We recall that garlic in Romanian beliefs, just as in Liguria, was used to chase away vampires (Corradi Musi 1995: 54–55).

the soul which is felt physically recalls the shamanic idea of the "bodily soul" or "living soul," which is part of the body and dies with it.[5]

From a modern ethnophilological point of view, Francesco Benozzo has recently published a study of the healing rituals of three female healers from San Cesario sul Panaro, near Modena, who practice the so-called "marking" (Benozzo 2008). He too found several common elements between the methods used by these female healers and those of the shamans.

The healers are people over 75 years of age, married with children, two of whom attended the five years of elementary school and one also three years of middle school. Two of them were farmers' wives, the other was a worker in the textile industry.

All three healers were "initiated" by female relatives in a condition of fasting on the morning of Christmas Eve.

The healers related that, until the generation preceding that of their "teachers," the transmission of powers had to be made to the seventh child, i.e. to females born after six females, or to mothers of twins. Two healers are prepared to leave their healing skills to their grandchildren; one, however, thinks she will not do this, given that in her opinion no one will believe any more in magic medicine. Although they know each other, the healers do not exchange information about their work. All three carry out their activities in their own homes. Their *sgnadùre* 'markings,' which they practice without payment, are directed exclusively at the following pathologies: childhood convulsions, persistent fevers, poisoning, sciatica, dislocations, worms, hemorrhoids, insomnia, verrucas, jaundice, "the fire of St. Anthony" (shingles) and "monkey's disease" (infantile atresia) (Benozzo 2008: 166–167).

Benozzo has transcribed six magic formulae, of which we report the one which is pronounced three times to heal persistent fever:

lévra lévra ch at pàsa la févra la lévra la vóla la tórna pió sóla ed là da la lòuna la lévra la vóla

Hare hare may the fever go away the hare flies returns more alone from beyond the moon the hare flies. (Benozzo 2008: 168)

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[5] According to the shamanic dual–pluralistic concept of the soul, the immortal "double," destined for reincarnation, is combined with one or more mortal "bodily souls" ("living souls," equivalent to the breath) (Corradi Musi 2008: 7).

The "helping animal," imagined as a hare, to which the healer gives the task of banishing beyond the moon, or the kingdom of the dead, the spirit of the illness which has invaded the body of the patient, closely recalls the auxiliary spirits of shamans, imagined with zoomorphic appearance, who carry the disease into exile in the hereafter, its place of origin, from which it should no longer be able to escape. The hare—an animal which is frequently found in the countryside and hills of the province of Modena—is, because of its speed, especially useful for the healer, who asks for prompt healing for the invalid.

The healer's capacity to communicate with the world beyond through the auxiliary spirit in animal form allows one to imagine her ecstatic skills, traces of which remain in the Italian tradition. It is sufficient to think of the transformation into animals and the magic flights during ecstasy of the Friulian *benandanti*, figures which are endowed with shamanic characteristics (Ginzburg 1979).

During the recitation of the formulae, the healers, in a standing position, place their hands on the affected part and trace markings in the air above it. If the hands are wet, the "marking" is called *avérta móia* 'wet opening'; if the hands are dry, it is called *avérta sótta* 'dry opening.' The term, used also elsewhere in the West, "could be connected with the practice, clearly more archaic with regard to the simple placing [of the hands], of 'opening' the part of the body affected by disease"; in short, the meaning of the word *avérta* would be the same as the term *sgnadùra* (dialectal form from *segnatura* 'marking'), given that the latter dates back to the Latin *signum* 'sign' (from which *signatura* > *segnatura*), derived from the Indo-European root **SEK-* 'cut' (Benozzo 2008: 166).

For the first type of "marking" the healer's hands must be washed with water from a stream or river drawn in the opposite direction to the current and boiled in a container on which two branches of vine in the form of a cross have been placed. The procedure is similar to that of the shaman who collects water from the river and boils it on birch branches in the form of a cross (Benozzo 2008: 169, 172). The magic power of water, which gives vitality and drives away disease, is enhanced by the association with the force of fire and that of plants, which are renewed seasonally.

In the second type of "marking" the healers with their hands, or with a metal object in their grip, make three crosses in the air, in a similar manner to the Parmesan healer quoted above, or three circles. To all appearances, these gestures are interchangeable. In fact, their symbol-

ism is similar: the circles, like the crosses, represent the center of the world, just as in the shamanic sphere. We cannot ignore the fact that on Siberian drums there is often marked a cross in the middle of a circle, so that the shaman does not forget that he is performing the ceremony standing at the center of the cosmos (Hoppál 2007: 20).

The paraphernalia used by the healers in their ritual gestures are made of metal because it has an apotropaic value, an observation which is confirmed, moreover, by the metallic pendants of the shamanic costumes or by the metal amulets much used in the Siberian area (Lot-Falck 1961: 98).

To make the markings in the air, one of the healers uses a small piece of iron shaped like a curled leaf, which is found, as Benozzo has noted, in the back of the traditional carts of the Modena area, where it was held in position by a screw; this had apotropaic functions against the *maledisiòun* 'curse', a term which gave it its name (Benozzo 2008: 169–170). This is a further confirmation of the fact that the practice of magic medicine is tied to the rural world and is an expression of the respective popular imagination.

The carts reveal decorations which are linked to a world vision connected with the magic of sacred flora and fauna, similar in many respects to that of the peoples of shamanic belief. Moreover, in the case of North Italian carts there often appears the representation of the mandrake, a tabooed plant par excellence, to which were attributed particular therapeutic powers.[6] This "princess of herbs," a symbolic projection of the archetypal tree, is depicted on the carts of the areas of Reggio Emilia and Mantua, sometimes associated with the snake and birds, "to witness the feeling of reverence and awe of the Po plain farmer with respect to the magic regenerative powers of natural forces" (Zanichelli Z. 1978: 78, figs. 23–24).[7]

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[6] In 1861 the inhabitants of Tosca, near Varsi in the high Ceno valley in the province of Parma, chased away the American Wolf archeological team because its members had not respected the prohibition against picking the mandrake plant (Corradi Musi 1988: 96).

[7] In the front of a cart conserved in the Museo Civico Polironiano of San Benedetto Po (in the province of Mantua) the archetypal tree protected by two monsters is depicted: the motif, apart from being an expression of the power of cosmic forces (Zanichelli Z. 1978: 78, fig. 29), reveals an initiatory meaning (Eliade 1981: 299). In Italy the tree of life is at times represented as guarded by two dragons, as in a bas-relief in the museum of the cathedral of Ferrara or in the baptistry of Parma.

In certain circumstances these healers, in a standing position and with eyes closed, strike with the right hand the base of a copper pan which they hold up in the air in front of the sick person who is lying on the ground; then they walk around him three times. The pan, when not in use, is kept hanging on the outer back wall of the house and, in case of snow, is buried under a heap of snow for three consecutive nights (Benozzo 2008: 171). This pan is used only for ritual purposes and, except when it is "beaten" for therapeutic reasons, cannot be placed inside the house of the healers, as it absorbs the spirits of the diseases and may represent a danger. The container performs the same functions as the percussion instruments of the shamans. It is not a coincidence that after each healing session the drum of Siberian shamans is carried far away from the yurt in order to remove the diseases contained in it (Hoppál 2007: 17).

The fact that the healers must also keep their eyes closed recalls the ceremonies of the shamans and their detachment during the trance from the rest of the world,[8] which can be facilitated by the use of masks without holes for the eyes (Lommel 1967: 109) or simply handkerchiefs on their faces and eyes. Isolation promotes the capacity for concentration of the shamans, who must be able to know the truth and see it through the eyes of the mind.

One of the three healers, before completing a session, increases her own concentration by consuming a drink made of alcohol and herbs that she has collected herself. Probably this is a "remnant of what in a more archaic phase could correspond with the taking of substances for ecstatic-psychogenic purposes" (Benozzo 2008: 172).

On the other hand, the sacred magic use of drugs, and in particular opium, must have had considerable importance since prehistoric times in the Indo-European area because of its sedative and narcotic effects, suited to magic practice, such as the initiatory and therapeutic incubation which was practiced at the school of Velia (a town of Lucania in

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[8] This "hiding" of the shamans has left traces also in Magyar tradition. One needs only think of the masking of the *regösök* who chanted the Christmas and New Year augural songs, inspired by the dead (Rozsnyói 2002: 45), or the ancient ritual of "standing to listen" with divinatory purpose in the Christmas period or on St George's Day (23rd April), standing in a circle or at a crossroads, with the head and eyes covered as a form of identification with the dead who believed they returned to the earth on those days (Pócs 1989: 267–269).

Magna Grecia, today Castellammare di Velia, in the province of Salerno) (Costa 2007: 92–93).

One of these three healers from the Modena area heals atresia in suckling babies in a ritual connected with bread-making: she puts the bread which she herself has "marked" in the oven, soaks it in water and wine, and passes it over the body of the child. The use of leavened flour reminds one of some shamanic healing rituals (Benozzo 2008: 175–176). The use of the oven, moreover, recalls the symbolism of the furnace of the ambivalent blacksmith-shaman, capable of destroying and creating. Significantly, in the past the healer used to place the sick baby on the bread palette and put it three times in a warm oven while reciting a formula for the disease to remain inside the oven (Di Pietro 1981: 39).

The practice of magic medicine which survives in Emilia Romagna—one whose purpose is to expel from the sick person's body the spirit of the disease, which is in contact with the "other" world or belongs there—clearly reveals numerous typological similarities with that of the shamanic area, although some differences are indicated. I do not know, for example, of cases in which the treatment includes, as in the shamanic area, the search and recovery of the "second soul" (or immortal "double"), separated from the body of the sick person, a procedure which can create serious risks for the person performing the healing work. In the available evidence, moreover, the agents of the diseases have an exclusive relationship with the primordial principle of evil, which is opposed to the good. In the imagination of the people of the Po area no traces are preserved of the Finno-Ugric and Siberian concept of the ambivalence of the spirits, according to which illness can be caused also by the breaking of a taboo related to a tendentially benevolent spirit. However, recent research reveals a mythical and magic heritage in the Indo-European area which is much richer in shamanic elements than Mircea Eliade had thought (Eliade 1985: 402). It is sufficient in this regard to think of the Etruscan–Roman myths of Fortuna, the winged goddess who becomes a bird and flies to the world beyond: they show the strong shamanic characteristics underlying the beliefs and customs which are still in use in the Western world (Magini 2008).

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On the Symbolism of the Shaman's Costume among the Reindeer Evenki in Manchuria

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The present essay is the first authentic description of the paraphernalia of shamans of the Manchurian Reindeer Evenki. For the details of his description, the author draws on the costumes and experiences of the two last traditional shamans of the Reindeer Evenki in the Greater Hinggan. He pays special attention to the symbolism of the elements constituting the shamans' outfit. At the same time he elucidates the parallel between the careful attitude taken by the members of the social group during the process of producing the costume's various elements and the training of the candidate shaman after his or her initial vocational experience.

"Properly studied, [the shaman's costume] reveals the system of shamanism as clearly as do the shamanic myths and techniques" (Eliade 1972: 145). Mircea Eliade, the eminent pioneer of shamanism research, expressed this insight already in the first French edition of his groundbreaking work in 1951. His insight coincides with the ideas of many ethnic groups of northern Eurasia among whom shamans were found or still can be found today. This can be said in particular of the Reindeer Evenki in Manchuria. For them shamanism was not an imported phenomenon, but one that had its roots in their material and spiritual culture.

Elsewhere I have written about the social significance of the shaman[1] as mediator and safety-valve in the traditional society of the Reindeer Evenki (Heyne 1999: 377–395) and also about the process of a *kamlan'e* (a Russified Turkic term for a shamanic séance) among this Tungusic group

[1] To avoid making matters too complicated, terms such as 'shaman' and 'hunter' are used inclusively for both men and women.

(Heyne 1997: 105–112). I have further pointed out the important role of the female element in their shamanism, especially in the final phase of this socioreligious phenomenon among them (Heyne 2003: 319–340).

Among some of the Tungusic and Mongolic groups in Manchuria, for example among the cattle-breeding Solons in the steppe south of the city of Hailar, who in the People's Republic of China are classed as belonging to the Evenki nationality, a reemergence of shamanism can be observed. In some cases it can be called a true renaissance of shamanic practices. Contrary to this phenomenon, no successor could be found to this date among the Reindeer Evenki for the traditional female shaman Niura Kaltakun, who died more than ten years ago. One of the reasons for this state of affairs may be found in the turbulent times and reorientation the small ethnic group had to live through in consequence of its forced resettlement in 2003.

The Reindeer Evenki of northern Manchuria are a tiny group of the reindeer-breeding Evenki who live in a large area of eastern Siberia. They are the only reindeer breeders in China. They speak an eastern dialect of the northern Tungus language and are a part of the Manchu-Tungusic populations within the Altaic group of peoples and languages.

Background: History and Beliefs of the Reindeer Evenki of Northern Manchuria

In order to portray such an important element in the shamanism of the group as the shaman's paraphernalia, it appears appropriate to first delineate the group's history up to the present and to introduce the essential elements of its world view.

Due to the pressure exerted by the expanding populous Turkic Sakha (Yakut), a number of small groups of Evenki hunters left their homelands in Yakutia, eastern Siberia, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Among them were also the first clans (*hala*) of what later became the Reindeer Evenki of Manchuria. In the course of their southward migration they crossed the Amur River (Chinese Heilongjiang), the border with China, arriving on Chinese territory around 1825. There, in the almost untouched mountain taiga in the Great Bend of the Amur and Argun rivers, they found a rich hunting territory. There they also found a sufficient amount of lichen of the genus Cladonia (Evenki *onko* or *jagel*),

the food needed for their reindeer. Soon after, other wandering groups followed the first immigrants. Barter, necessary for their living, was done with the inhabitants of the small Russian border settlements on the left riverbank because the Chinese side of the river was practically uninhabited.

For more than 125 years the Reindeer Evenki were able to live with their reindeer as hunters in freedom and self-determination in this unknown and unexplored borderland. During these years they never came to live under any state authority. Their freedom came to an end after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. In the years 1952–1953 the local cadres of the communist party began to curtail the extension of the area to be used for the wanderings of the taiga nomads and to have them become settled. In 2003 these forest dwellers living in close contact with nature had to suffer their fourth forced sedentarization and resettlement. This meant that they had reached the end of their path. The destruction of the forests in the northern Greater Hinggan by lumbering and poachers during recent decades has also contributed to destroy their Tungusic forest culture.

If one is to understand the essence of the shamanism of a small group such as the Reindeer Evenki, and in particular the meaning of the symbolism of their shaman's paraphernalia, knowledge of their world view and of their beliefs is imperative. Only with the help of such knowledge do the actions of the shamans and of the members of their groups appear to be meaningful and rational. The predecessors of the later Reindeer Evenki had nominally become members of the Russian Orthodox Church already in their Siberian homelands. Yet the Christian influence on their ancient religious beliefs, on their world view, and on their shamanism is hardly noteworthy. They were pure animists then and remain so to this day. According to their native concepts everything that existed was alive and had a soul—not only humans, animals, and plants, but also the elements fire, wind, and water, and all objects, even those made by human hands. Everything in this world was animated. In their understanding a human being was constituted by the body, the soul, and his or her name. Already in 1915, by the time Shirokogorov undertook his fieldwork in their hunting areas, he found that the Reindeer Evenki had a concept of a single soul (*om'i*). In this they differed from other Tungusic groups in their neighborhood, the Kumarchen and Birarchen (today combined into the group of Oroqen), who harbored an idea of the soul as being a

tripartite complex.[2] This idea of the soul as one may possibly go back to influences by the Russian Orthodox Church.

Among the Tungusic forest hunters of the Great Amur Bend the old simple concept of the world as divided into the three layers of sky, earth, and underworld was still widely held. In their conception, the universe (*tiru*, also *turu*) consisted of three spheres, arranged vertically one on top of the other. They were: the upper world or sky (*uyudunda*); the middle world, namely the surface of the earth (*dunda*); and the lower world (*orgudunda*). The universe was thought to be eternal, having neither a beginning nor an end.

Uyudunda, the upper world, was inhabited by *buya* (also *buga*), the deity of the upper world, his family and clan (*hala*), together with other spirits of the upper world. These upper-world spirits or sky people were the spirit masters of the stars and of the natural phenomena in the sky.[3] In addition to the spirit masters of the sun (*s'ihun*) and the moon (*bēga*), those of Venus (*čālbōn*; also *čolbon*), who is visible in the sky as the morning or evening star, and those of the constellation Orion (*maŋgi*) and the Great Bear (*heglen*), were significant for the symbolism of the shaman's costume among the Reindeer Evenki. The spirit masters of such heavenly phenomena as thunderstorm (*agdi*) and rainbow (*serun*), too, were a part of this realm.

In Reindeer Evenki thinking *buya* was an omnipotent and omniscient being who lives eternally. He was the creator of all things, of the elements and laws of nature in the whole cosmos. However, in the daily life of humans he was of no significance. As the most supreme spirit being he had neither human nor animal form; there were no representations of him and no places for localization in the form of idols. The Reindeer Evenki approached this superior deity only in matters of existential importance for the whole ethnic group, for example at the division of a clan.

Dunda, the middle world, was the relatively flat and solid surface of the earth inhabited by humans, animals, and plants, but also by various kinds of spirit beings. This world did not have a fixed form. No superior spirit ruled over it, but *mahun* (also *mayun, mahin*), the spirit of the hunt, played a somewhat superior role for the Reindeer Evenki,

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[2] See Shirokogoroff 1935: 53; also Paulson 1958: 112, 114.

[3] Uray-Kőhalmi (1997) is a rich source of information concerning the spirits in each of these cosmic spheres.

hunters in the mountains of the Greater Hinggan, as Master of the wild animals. He was also thought to be the owner spirit of all rivers, mountains, and so forth. He was, therefore, thought to be the Master of all of nature. This spirit was also thought of as being the guardian spirit of the family. He had a wife (*on'i burkan*), who was the mother of three sons (*huta burkan* or *uta burkan*).[4] In addition, the Reindeer Evenki conceived of master spirits of various kinds of animals. These spirits were subordinate to *mahun*, the spirit of the hunt.

The lower world *orgudunda* was ruled by *irlinkan*, the spirit of the underworld. The land of the dead, *buni* (or *buno*), also was located in this world. *Buni* was the land where the souls of dead people, but also the souls of animals who were killed on earth, (the middle world) dwelled. This was logical because there too the dead went hunting. The Reindeer Evenki imagined *buni* as a hunting ground rich in excellent game whose amount never diminished. The life of the souls in the hunting grounds of the other world resembled life in the human world except that shortage was unknown. The dead lived there in the same social order and under the same clan conditions as on earth.

These three rotating cosmic spheres were linked with one another in the center by a vertical axis in the form of a huge tree. By its roots this "world tree" was grounded in the lower world and its top projected into the sky, into the upper world. For the Reindeer Evenki the image of a central world tree, the support of and link between spheres, was linked to the constant position of the polar star, which they called "world center" (*buyadulin*). In their understanding there was an opening at this cosmic center, which allowed passage between the various world spheres.

The Shaman in Reindeer Evenki Society

Such a passage, however, was not possible for ordinary human beings but in certain cases for shamans only. In appropriate séances their soul would pass into the upper (*uyisk'i-* 'to shamanize into the upper world') or into the lower world (*örgisk'i-* 'to shamanize into the lower world'). It goes without saying that this route was also open to deities and spirit beings. In the ordinary traditional tent (*dju*) of the Reindeer Evenki the central

[4] See Shirokogoroff 1935: 127; Doerfer 2004: 385, 530.

pole (*simka*) symbolically represented the world tree. When for certain cosmic soul journeys of the shaman during great rituals a special tent (*nimnganjak dju,* literally, 'a tent for shamanizing') was erected for the shaman, a larch or birch tree was erected in the tent's center. Some branches at the top of this tree were left and protruded through the opening for the smoke. Because the connection between the three worlds was located in the center, it was the only location where a passage was possible.

Due to his calling and initiation, and with the assistance of his special helping spirits, the shaman was in a position to cross these world borders, because he could leave his human condition of his own will and also return to it. In a way he became a spirit being and climbed the world tree from one branch to the next, from one world to the next. The concept of a three-part cosmos arranged vertically in layers, where the different worlds were linked with one another by means of the world tree as their central axis, constituted the basis for the shamanism of the Reindeer Evenki. Next to a great number of social activities for his community, the spiritual journey of his soul to the upper or lower world was one of the shaman's most important activities. It was carried out in order to bring back the soul of a member of the group who had fallen sick or in order to accompany the souls of deceased persons to the place destined for them in the land of the dead (*buni*). Curing the sick was by far the most important task of a Reindeer Evenki shaman. The Reindeer Evenki thought that the cause of an illness, in particular a psychic illness, was soul loss, for example in the case where the soul (*om'i*) had been abducted by a malevolent spirit. Such an illness could be cured only by a shaman because he knew the intricate paths of the spirits.

The first goal of a Reindeer Evenki shaman was, therefore, to reestablish people's mental balance. The balance was thought to be disturbed by illness, an epidemic, mishaps and the threat of danger, but also by scarcity of game. Such a situation would not only threaten the affected individual but the whole group. As a consequence, the absence of a shaman was a vital threat to the community. For that reason the group had often to suffer a severe crisis in the time between the death of the old and the initiation of a new shaman. During that period there was no longer anyone to mediate between humans and the transcendent spirit world. The crisis could worsen and reach threatening dimensions because of the lack of success at the hunt, increased incidences of illness, suicide, and other causes of death including deadly conflicts in their

groups.[5] In such a period without a shaman the affected society found itself, so to speak, in a state of emergency. This kind of fundamental threat to the continued existence of the community could be resolved only through the initiation of a new shaman candidate. Yet the period immediately following the new shaman's formation and training was full of danger not only for the shaman but also for the whole community.

Nobody can become a shaman by his own choice. In addition to having a particular disposition, a person can be called to be a shaman only by the spirits. Most often a direct descendant of the deceased shaman or somebody with a shaman among his ancestors would suddenly come down with a severe psychic disorder. The person became depressive, absent-minded, introverted, melancholy, and unsociable and often absconded into the forest. The members of the group saw this as an indication of the person being called by a shaman's ancestral spirits (*seven*)[6] and of being chosen and tormented as their victim. The person was afflicted by the so-called shamanic illness.[7] In most cases the person's condition worsened dramatically. He could neither sleep nor eat, and contracted a high fever accompanied by delirious states and the loss of consciousness. In the evening or at night he might at times suffer a serious attack, shake and jump around. If a drum of the deceased shaman was left, it was given to that person to use. Sometimes, another instrument was given in its stead, such as a kettle or a bowl. By using such an instrument the person could make himself fall in a trance and begin to shamanize.

When the spirit had finally entered the person he fell into a state of trance similar to one of unconsciousness. It could happen that several persons from a group of possible candidates became simultaneously afflicted by shamanic sickness. Once, however, the spirits had chosen one of the potential candidates, the other "sick" were released from the spirit's control. They recovered and returned to their former ordinary life. The

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[5] After the death of the female shaman Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina in 1944, even cases of traditional blood revenge broke out although it had been assumed that the phenomenon was a matter of the distant past. The outbreak happened because the group now lacked protection against the spirits. This sort of violence began to recede only once the new and already initiated shaman Niura Kaltakun became active. It finally disappeared in 1953 (Heyne 2007: 165–178).

[6] *Seven*s are spirits proper to shamans.

[7] The charisma to be a shaman was transmitted among the Reindeer Evenki in the patri- as well as the matriline.

person chosen by the spirits also gradually calmed down and, in the following days, he tried at times to shamanize (*nimnganjära-*). These events of the shamanic calling and initiation often took place without any witness and without the help of any other person deep in the taiga, where the shaman candidate had fled while beset by the ancestral spirits.

The Reindeer Evenki shaman candidate calling and initiation were not understood as two clearly distinct facts, rather they blended into one another.[8] After such a crisis and an experience threatening his very existence by bringing him close to death, the candidate's health usually improved. He undertook his first soul journey, in the course of which he became acquainted with predominantly animal-shaped spirits (his future advisers), in particular his future guardian and main helping spirit (chief *seven*).[9] This latter spirit presented the shaman in trance with his other helping spirits. They endowed the shaman with their respective faculties and enabled him to go on a journey into the other world and, most important, to return from it.[10] Among these soul journeys, the journey into the lower world was considered to be the most difficult. The shaman could undertake it only at night. Symbolic expressions of these spirits, of the world view and of the concepts related to them were found, as we will see below, in the shaman's paraphernalia.

The helping spirits were not instruments for easy use by the shaman. Often they were of an unpredictable, disobedient, and cruel character. As a result, the relations of the shaman with his helping spirits were ambiguous. In order to receive their support he needed to beg or often even to implore them; he needed to offer them sacrifices. Sometimes he could also force

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[8] Unfortunately it was not possible any more for me to get information in the cases of Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina and also of Niura Kaltakun about visions of the body being cut into pieces and reduced to its skeleton by the spirits at an initiation of a Reindeer Evenki shaman candidate. Nevertheless, metallic representations of bones on the costumes of the two shamans suggested the possibility of such visions. Concepts related to this phenomenon were complex. In any case, the representation of a skeleton on the shaman's costume symbolized the impression made on the candidate by an experience of death and rebirth while being initiated by the shamanic spirits.

[9] One, or at the most two, localizations of this chief *seven* are to be found on the shaman's costume or other individual parts of his paraphernalia.

[10] Among the Reindeer Evenki it might even happen that a shaman candidate was called by a Sakha spirit, i.e., the spirit of a different ethnic group. Such could happen, because in their ancient homelands the Reindeer Evenki had lived in ethnic and cultural contact with the Sakha.

them. In any case, the initiated shaman of the Reindeer Evenki was not a medium possessed by the spirits—he was a quite active and equal partner of the spirits and always retained his personal identity. When he imitated the voices of his animal spirit helpers during a shamanic séance, it always meant that he was engaged in a dialog with his helpers from the spirit world.

At the beginning of his career a shaman of the Reindeer Evenki needed to control from five to six spirits, but later he must control all of them, either directly or with help from other spirits. Especially, familiarity with the master spirits of illnesses was most important for the shaman. If a woman became a shaman after her marriage, she needed to control both the spirits of her own clan and those of her husband's clan.

Following initiation, a neophyte had to undergo training for several years by an experienced shaman of the local group but of a different clan. From this mentor the new shaman learned the techniques of ecstasy. He also acquired the ability to make the various spirits serve him and comply with his intentions as needs demanded. Furthermore, he learned how to direct the process of séances held for a variety of purposes. In practice this meant learning how to control the conscious induction and termination of an extraordinary state of mind. The correct beating of the drum was another part of this training program. Although drumming appears to be a simple enough action, it requires a certain degree of skill so that the novice needed to spend some time until he commanded this art with some perfection. The same can be said about his singing and dancing during the shamanic séances. He got to know the various sicknesses and their symptoms, together with the methods required for their curing. He also became familiar with the topography of the upper and the lower worlds and with the various paths of the spirits. His teacher transmitted to him also knowledge of the traditions and of the history of his ethnic group.

At the time when the Reindeer Evenki immigrated into the region of the Great Amur Bend, each clan still had its own shaman. The later decline of clan organization and the reduction in population brought it about that not every clan had its own shaman any more. Around the beginning of the twentieth century a shaman was active only in regionally organized groups composed of members from different clans. From the mid-1930s, finally, only one true and powerful woman shaman remained among the Reindeer Evenki, Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina (1890–1944). The

shaman Innokentiĭ Ivanovich Kudrin (1891–1966), a cousin on the father's side of Olga, apparently was not considered a true shaman at that time.[11]

When Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina was initiated in 1923, no shaman capable of transmitting to her the necessary esoteric knowledge was living any more in the group of her region. She, therefore, approached a shaman of the Kumarchen,[12] a population living by the River Kumara (Chinese Huma Ho), to be her teacher. This man was Ninchan (also Nichian), who was considered to be a great shaman and had friendly relations with many Reindeer Evenki; in particular he was linked with Olga's husband, Nikolaĭ Larionovich Buldotin, by a friendship of many years.

The last female shaman of the Reindeer Evenki, Niura Kaltakun (1912–1998), who experienced her calling and was initiated when she was sixteen years old, was introduced later on into the mysteries of shamanism by the same Kumarchen shaman, as we will see later.

The training of a neophyte shaman by his teacher was very intensive as well as extensive and usually lasted for about three years. The two met with one another frequently during the year, also in order to celebrate together solemn sacrifices that lasted for several days. On such an occasion, two tall shaman trees (*turu*) were erected on the northern side of the fireplace in the tent (*dju*), with a larch tree on the left and a birch tree on the right side. A leather rope was stretched between the two trees on which the heart, lung, liver, and esophagus of a red deer (*Cervus elaphus xanthopygus,* in Russian *iziubr'*) or of an elk killed in a hunt were hung up as an offering to the ancestral spirits of the apprentice shaman. In front of these trees two smaller trees were erected, again a larch and a birch. They were smeared with the blood of the sacrificial animal, either an elk or a deer. At the western side, on the inside of the tent's covering, a wooden representation of the moon (*bēga*) was hung up, and on the eastern side an image of the sun (*s'ihun*). In addition, wooden figures respectively of a cuckoo and a wild goose were attached to each side. At these sacrificial ceremonies lasting for several days (three days at least) disciple and teacher danced together. They offered an opportunity for the disciple to acquire in particular the necessary knowledge of the songs of a shaman.

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[11] A strong rivalry possibly existed between him and his cousin Olga, although this was never explicitly mentioned (personal information by Mania N. Kudrina 2003).

[12] In the People's Republic of China the Kumarchen are integrated into the Oroqen nationality. See Noll and Shi (2009) on the last Kumarchen shaman.

Parallel in time with this "apprenticeship," the shaman's paraphernalia were made. The training period ended in its fourth year with a kind of consecration ceremony. This was a formal closing element, where the new shaman, before the eyes of members of his group and in the presence and under the direction of his shaman teacher, demonstrated his knowledge by performing shamanic rituals, especially the sacrificial ritual *ominan* and a shamanic séance (Evenki *nimnganjära-* 'to shamanize'). The sacrifice of a deer or an elk (if game was scarce, as an exception a reindeer might be sacrificed) provided the ritual with a special solemn touch as a religious event.

Among the Reindeer Evenki the consecration (*jide*) of a shaman always took place during the spring festival and included the first animation of the shaman's outfit. The spring festival was a meeting of the hunter families, bringing together almost all families, even those from local groups in distant hunting areas. It was held at the end of April or the beginning of May, at the time when the first green appeared, a fact that was significant for the consecration of the shaman. Once the leaves and needles of the trees were fully grown, the introductory ceremony for a new shaman could no longer be held.[13] With the celebration of the *jide* ceremony, the acknowledgement of the new shaman by his group was completed, so that from then on the shaman was in a position to perform all shamanic activities independently and on his own. The individual pieces of his paraphernalia had now become sacred objects.

The Reindeer Evenki Shaman's Costume and Drum

With this we arrive at the main topic of this article, a description of the shaman's outfit and its symbolism among the Reindeer Evenki. The manufacturing of the outfit occurred, in terms of the time when it occurred and of the actions it necessitated, in a special ritual relationship with the process of the person becoming a shaman. The paraphernalia of a Reindeer Evenki shaman in Manchuria consisted of six main elements: the costume proper (*sa'manŋik*), including the caftan-like coat

[13] Analogous conceptions can be found among the Sakha (Yakut), see Findeisen 1957: 67–68 (following Ksenofontov). It may, therefore, be possible that here we have to do with a borrowing of Sakha ideas.

(*nejama*), the shoulder collar (*arkalan*), the hip skirt (*sabda'ptun*), and the chest cover or chest armor (*nalbaptun*). Further indispensable elements were the head cover (*derbo'ki*) and the shaman's drum (*untewun*) together with the drum stick (*gis*). Special boots used by shamans among other Evenki groups in Siberia were not generally used here. However, whenever possible, Reindeer Evenki shamans put on fresh socks and new, hitherto unused boots (*dinki*) made of buckskin.

As a matter of course the traditional main elements of a shaman's outfit did allow the individual shaman to include local clan variations or individually different and special elements. Such variations were due, in part, to the various conceptions and knowledge of those members of a group who manufactured the outfit.

The outfit of a Reindeer Evenki shaman carried ritual and symbolic meaning to a high degree. On the one hand it represented a spiritual microcosm, while on the other hand it was the seat of the shaman's spirits (*seven*), especially of his theriomorphic chief helping spirit. When the shaman donned his shamanic costume he crossed the border between the visible world and the transcendent realms of the Upper and Lower World. Furthermore, the spiritual rank of a shaman could be recognized through his outfit. The ritual clothes of the shaman were also a kind of armor protecting him, for example, against attacks by inimical spirits and demons during his journeying through the other world. This armor served as a camouflage to hide him. The localizations of helpful spirits attached to his costume supported the shaman in various ways in executing his tasks. They gave him strength, transported him on his soul journeys, or they dispelled noxious forces. The spiritual forces inherent in the paraphernalia could, however, be used and mastered only by the shaman himself. For all others it was thought to be dangerous to touch a part of the shaman outfit. A woman shaman did not touch the localizations of spirits on her costume during her menstruation period. For the same reason, at a shaman's funeral his ritual costume was, as a rule, hung up on a tree close to the tomb or it was placed in a storehouse (*kolbo*) especially built for the purpose. When the group moved to a new campsite, the shaman's outfit was transported on a special pack-reindeer (*maluyan*). Sometimes two reindeer were exclusively selected for the purpose. Preferably their fur should be of a white or at least a light color.

Now we return to the making of the shaman's outfit. It took place, as already mentioned, parallel in time with the three-year formation of the neophyte.

Formerly, the clan was responsible for manufacturing the paraphernalia, but in more recent times this responsibility was taken over by the local group. Everything was done under the guidance or following the special demands of the new shaman. Every member of the community endeavored to take part in the work, because in this manner a person could directly participate in the making of a shaman, the protector of the local group.

The parts of the ritual costume that were made of the dressed hide of a red deer or elk, as well as the attached items made of leather and cloth, were all manufactured and sewn by women, if possible by such women who had passed their climacteric. If no women of this age were in the group, the work could be done by other women. In that case, however, the finished costume absolutely had to be purified by the smoke of certain plants, such as wild rosemary (Marsh Tea, *Ledum palustre,* in Evenki *tyónkirä*) and juniper (*tav'in*). Fumigation was always done whenever a new outfit was completed. Often it was purified in the smoke of wild rosemary before the beginning of a séance, because the outfit needed to be cleansed whenever the shaman put it on or used it otherwise. The shaman himself sometimes inhaled the smoke of wild rosemary or of another plant with a pleasant smell, such as conifers, in order to purify also the inside of his body. The wooden and metallic items on the costume were manufactured by blacksmiths (*tav'in*). The blacksmiths of the Reindeer Evenki were well known for their professional skill. However, up to the beginning of the 1950s the Reindeer Evenki received small bells of various sizes, metal hooks and hoops from their mainly Russian trading partners (*andaki*) on the occasion of meetings arranged several times a year for the purpose of barter (*bogžor*).[14]

The drum (*untewun* or *untuvun*), together with the drumstick (*gis* or *ges*), was the most important element of the shaman's paraphernalia. A séance (*nimnganjära*) would not have been possible without them. Beaten rhythmically, the drum helped the shaman to fall into ecstasy. Its sound summoned the spirits so that the shaman was able to communicate with them. A mystic relationship existed, therefore, from

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[14] For discussions of these trading relations see Lindgren 1938; Kaĭgorodov 1968; and Heyne 1992; 1993.

the outset between the manufacture of the drum by the social group and the shaman. Gathering the material and making the drum were the exclusive task of the clan's or the group's menfolk. It was a task of utmost importance because not only the personal success of the shaman, but also the life and well-being of each individual group member, depended on its later effective use. For such reasons it is understandable that in the making of such an important instrument, whose effect reached the sky as well as the realm of the dead, each step had to be taken by solemnly following the directions given by the new shaman because he had received them from the spirit who initiated him. From the outset, therefore, there existed a three-fold link between community, shaman, and drum.

Neither the tree whose wood was used for the drum frame, nor the animal that continued to live and sound in the drum's membrane, provided mere material matter; rather, they were seen as sacrificial and spiritual beings whose existence was not terminated by felling or killing. Wood from the larch tree was mostly used in manufacturing the drum frame. The membrane was made from deer or elk hide, but exclusively from that of a male animal. When the muffled sound of the drum carried the shaman away, the drum became his powerful mount. On this mount the shaman could reach any of the transcendental worlds. The drum became a magic elk or deer depending on which one of the two animals' hides had been used for the membrane according to the will of the spirits. The drum stick was the whip. This kind of idea was widespread all over Siberia. For the drum to fully respond to its function as the mount of the shaman the membrane needed to come from an animal that in terms of age and physical constitution was in a position to fulfill such a task. The Reindeer Evenki preferred the hide of a two-year old elk or red deer, because it produced a better sound than the thicker hide of an older animal. The hunter who was to kill the desired animal was chosen by the shaman and had to concentrate exclusively on this task. The soul of the animal killed became the guardian spirit of the drum. Many shamans of the Reindeer Evenki had two drums.

That the outfit of a shaman could not be completed as one finished set and in a short time was mainly due to the high social and ritual meaning the Reindeer Evenki attributed to it. The various steps of the manufacturing process progressed, with occasional breaks, one after another, as the makers quietly and with great concentration followed the shaman's directions and control. Every year the work started in spring after the first

call of the cuckoo and ended when the leaves began to fall in autumn. The leftovers from the work (leather, cloth, wood, and iron) were not simply tossed away. They were collected and especially stored until the whole outfit was completed. At that point they were finally given a ritual burial accompanied by prayers to the spirits of the materials.

There remains almost no evidence of the paraphernalia of a Reindeer Evenki shaman. The only complete outfit remaining today is kept at the regional Committee of Nationalities in Hailar, where it finally arrived after it had experienced many bureaucratic detours and many disputes about who should be responsible for it. This outfit was not accessible to the general public. Originally it had belonged to the female shaman Niura Kaltakun. At the time of the Cultural Revolution it was confiscated by fanaticized ultra-leftist elements and brought to the provincial museum in Harbin. An order issued to Niura absolutely prohibited her to shamanize. After 1979, in the course of a certain degree of liberalization in the policies of the People's Republic of China toward the nationalities, an offer was made to Niura to return the outfit, but she refused to accept it. In her eyes the sacred objects had been desecrated by what had happened to them earlier and, therefore, could no longer be used for shamanic purposes.

In 1993 I was able to view the outfit in Hailar. The Committee of Nationalities even allowed me to take notes, but not photographs. Later I succeeded in acquiring some photos of Niura's outfit. In addition to these, there are some historic photographs of the shaman Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina dressed in her shamanic dress. They were taken by Oscar Mamen, the husband of the ethnologist Ethel J. Lindgren, in the morning of 26 November 1931 after a séance that had taken place the previous night. A photograph taken in the 1890s of an Evenki female shaman from the upper Amur shows the woman in costume with her drum but without headgear (fig. 1). It was probably taken by the Russian ethnographer Pëtr P. Shimkevich. The eminent Russian researcher of the Tungus, Sergeĭ Mikhaĭlovich Shirokogorov (1887–1939), visited the small group of Evenki reindeer riders of the Great Amur Bend together with his wife Elisaveta Nikolaevna Shirokogorova (1884–1943) in 1915. We owe to him a great deal of most important information concerning the cultural history and language of the Tungus, but on his expedition he had no opportunity to meet one of their shamans and to see the outfit of a shaman.

Fig. 1. A Reindeer Evenki shaman from the upper Amur in the 1890s.
Photo: perhaps Pëtr P. Shimkevich (from the author's archives).

Shaman Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina

THE COSTUME

In the following we first introduce the shamanic costume of the eminent shaman Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina (fig. 2). During her life Olga enjoyed great prestige among the Reindeer Evenki and was much liked by them. Among the former hunters in the forests of the Hinggan taiga her memory is still very much alive today. Unfortunately, her shamanic outfit has to be considered missing since her death although it was not left close to her tomb as was usually done on the death of a shaman. Olga died in fall 1944 on the way to meeting her Russian trading partners (*andaki*) on the upper Derbul River in the Three River Area. There she was buried by her two adopted children Katia and Iakov, who had accompanied her (Heyne 2009: 71). Her shamanic outfit had been left behind in one of her storehouses (*kolbo* or also *sajva*) in the upriver area of the Nizhnaia Ulugicha.[15] It is, therefore, not possible to describe Olga's shamanic outfit based on objective evidence. Instead we have to rely on the photographs and the information from Ethel J. Lindgren and Anatoliĭ Makarovich Kaĭgorodov. Their material is used for the description that follows.[16]

Like those of other shamans, Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina's shamanic outfit (fig. 2) was made by members of her social group working as a team. The main person in the team was her elder brother Aleksandr Dmitrievich Kudrin, who at the time was considered to be the most skilled black-

[15] In the fall of 1993 some Evenki hunters reported to me that they had seen Olga's storehouse (*kolbo*) still intact in the 1970s. My informant Mania Nikolaevna Kudrin tried, at my request, to find the storehouse in the wilderness, but unfortunately without success.

[16] Especially Lindgren (1936: 218–229; n.d.) and information gained from both the correspondence and conversations with Kaĭgorodov (n.d.) are used. I received additional information from some elderly Reindeer Evenki, who had known Olga D. Kudrina, in personal conversations at their place in Manchuria,.

Fig. 2. Shaman Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina (1890–1944) in her complete shaman's costume. Photo: Oscar Mamen, November 1931.

smith (*tav'in*) among the Reindeer Evenki.[17] He made the metal parts and carved the wooden items on Olga's costume. The needlework was done by Akulina Ivanovna Sologon, who became known as a woman hunter. She also made most of the cloth items. Bells (*borgilán*) and small bells, loops (*ilbi*), and the necessary raw iron were procured and put at the family's disposal by their Russian trading partner (*andak*) Gavril Lavrentevich Molokov. Unfortunately, the sources do not offer concrete information about the other persons who participated in making the outfit. However, we can safely assume that there were other contributors.

It was an absolute rule that no shaman was to take part in the preparation of his paraphernalia—everything had to be done exclusively by members of his group.

Olga's shamanic costume consisted of the main caftan and the outer garment, which as the outfit's basic elements were both made of red deer (*na'jaha*) hide tanned into light-brown buckskin. By following Olga's directions, both these elements were called *sa'maŋik* or *sa'maŋik-na'jaman'*. The latter name means something like 'shaman costume made of buckskin'. In the photographs of the Lindgren collection it can be seen that the main caftan, meaning 'the inner costume,' consisted of the shaman's coat and of a chest piece attached to it so that they constituted one piece. The shoulder collar and the hip skirt also formed one piece and constituted the outer garment. Plenty of fringes (*nēlbil*) were attached to both of these basic elements of the garment. Broad red, white, and blue cloth strips (symbols of the rainbow) were sewn on to the shoulder collar (*arkalan*) of the outer garment. They ran down over both sides of the back to the elbows. Ribbons made of leather and covered with cloth (*boltoktá*) were attached all around the shamanic costume, in the same way as black cloth strips (*koptaka*). Olga called

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[17] Blacksmithing, in the view of the Reindeer Evenki, was not simply a craft, but at the same time was a calling transmitted in certain families from generation to generation, similar to a shaman's charisma. As a master of the fire and by his handling of the magic material iron, the blacksmith, too, cultivated an immediate relationship with the spirits. The Sakha (Yakut), who were considered to once have been the neighbors of the Reindeer Evenki's ancestors in their ancient homeland in Siberia, have proverbs about the blacksmith such as "Blacksmiths and shamans are of the same nest" and "The blacksmith is the shaman's older brother." That was exactly the case for Olga and her brother, Aleksandr. According to Reindeer Evenki opinion a blacksmith who had blacksmith ancestors of nine generations was able to cure and to divine and did not need to fear the spirits any longer.

the black and red cloth strips that represented snake spirits *arkjuki*, while the ordinary name for snakes was *kulin*. Two strips of buckskin were hanging left and right on the front of the main garment. They were embroidered with ornaments and their upper part was lined with otter fur. Iron localizations of animal spirits were fastened to various places of Olga's costume. They were, among others, of the bear (*be'ren* 'brown bear'; *ber'in* 'female bear'),[18] the wolf (*guska*), the raven (*oli*),[19] the cuckoo (*kukgu*), many ducks (*nik'i*) and other birds, and an elk with three-pronged palmed antlers (*toki ijētši ēlanman'*). Pointed iron pieces, representing fish (*nēru*), were hung everywhere. Above the level of her chest several round mirrors (*tōli* or *toli*) were fastened to Olga's garment on both the front and the rear side. They served the shaman as shields to fend off enemy spirits or the spirits of foreign enemy shamans.

In Lindgren's material (see list of references) related to the shaman Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina we do not find concrete information concerning such initiation visions as of the candidate being cut into pieces and reduced to a skeleton by spirit beings as we find in the traditions especially of the Sakha but also of some Evenki groups living in Siberia. Nor could Kaĭgorodov give me any pertinent information concerning this point. Nevertheless, the iron reproductions of various bones on the costume as seen in several photographs clearly point to another situation. The rounded flat iron strips on shoulders, elbows, and hand wrists of the costume symbolically express the corresponding joints (*dʒalagiptun*; also *dzalagiptun*, *dzalan*, personal communication by the shaman Niura Kaltakun). Iron representations of the bones of the upper arm and forearm (*kare*) also were fastened to the sleeves of the garment. Furthermore, the breastbone (*nel*) and ribs (*evti'la*), made of iron, were applied at their appropriate locations on the costume. Forms of the neck bones (*hoto'ka*) and of the lower section of the spine (*ni'ri*) were attached the backside of the garment. Basically, Olga's garment represented in an impressive manner not only the seats of various of the shaman's spirits, but also the entire human skeleton (Olga's skeleton!). These figures directly demonstrated the drama of death and rebirth before the eyes of the participants whenever the shaman performed a séance.

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[18] The bear was also Olga's main helping spirit. The Reindeer Evenki thought of bear spirits as being the strongest helping spirits.

[19] According to a proverb of the Reindeer Evenki, wolf and raven wander together. The raven is the wolf's scout and later demands his share of the prey.

The headgear (*derbo'ki*, also *derbe'ki*) of the shaman Olga consisted of two parts. Upon an inner cap-like part made of chamois leather an iron stand was fastened. A miniature replica of antlers with the five points of a red deer was attached to each side of the top of the stand. At a shamanic séance new cloth ribbons would often be bound to the points, one ribbon to each of the points, alternating in red and white color. On the front of a kind of veil (*sacharingi*) formed by a row of fringes was attached to the rim of the cap. The fringes were adorned with pieces of squirrel fur in such a way that white pieces alternated with grey ones. Each fringe ended in a tassel at the level of the shaman's breast. The veil of fringes hid the face of the shaman. On the one side this was to increase the shaman's ability for inner concentration, while on the other it camouflaged the shaman from hostile spirits and protected him against them. To the back of Olga's headgear a broad strip made of leather and decorated with ornaments was attached. It reached down to the shaman's waist and had a sledge bell fastened to its end. This item was called the cap's tail *horogōptan*.

THE DRUM

The special significance the drum (*untewun*) commanded among the Reindeer Evenki shaman's paraphernalia has already been mentioned.[20] Without the drum, an instrument rich in symbolism, neither a sacrifice nor any incantation could be performed. The drum provided the rhythmic and musical accompaniment of the séance; it helped the shaman

[20] The drum is taken to be the characteristic element of classic shamanism in Eurasia and the American Arctic. In numerous groups of Siberian Evenki many shamans no longer possessed a shamanic costume in the 1920s and 1930s because of antireligious political tendencies. A male shaman put on an ordinary Russian peaked cap, decorated with a colored ribbon or a tassel, while a female shaman often used a special headband or cloth instead of the former costume. The drum, however, has always been present. The female shaman Niura Kaltakun of the Reindeer Evenki, who had been robbed of her shaman's outfit at the time of the Cultural Revolution, secretly shamanized in those times without a costume. On such occasions she used her second drum, which had not been confiscated, or, as an absolute expedient, simply her shamanic staff (Niura Kaltakun, personal communication). When she again shamanized for the first time after an extended pause, the spirits entered her so violently that she fell and injured her face. About the Sami shamans, the *noaidi,* in the European high north, reports of a special ritual costume are rare, but for them, too, the drum played an absolutely dominant role in their magico-religious customs (see Manker 1938 and 1950).

to fall into trance; and was an indispensable audio-spiritual means for the communication between shaman and spirits at a shamanic séance (*nimnganjära*). Among the Reindeer Evenki a shaman may own several drums. The shaman Olga had two drums at her disposition. The one Ethel J. Lindgren saw (1936: 227–229) had an egg-shaped frame made of bent larch wood. For its membrane the hide of a two-year old red deer was used. The deer had been killed in spring when its antlers were still in velvet.[21] The handle in the back of the drum was made from iron in the form of a cross. Each one of its arms was solidly fastened to the wooden frame by a double leather strap. A few resonators were also plugged into the outer side of the frame. The upper side of the membrane was painted in two colors, the center in green being surrounded by a broad red circle. Special ornamentation or figurative designs of the kind often encountered on drums of certain groups of Siberian Evenki were not in use among the Reindeer Evenki.

As has already been mentioned briefly, the whole process of manufacturing the drum for a shaman of the Reindeer Evenki in the Hinggan was accompanied to an important degree by sacred activities. After all, the purpose was not to produce a profane object; quite the contrary, it was to produce an instrument that later would become imbued with a spiritual power whose effectiveness extended even to the otherworld.

After the hunter chosen by Olga had killed the desired two-year-old red deer according to her instructions, the deer's hide was dried on a specially prepared drying rack. Once the drying process was finished, a small ceremony took place in the shaman's tent, in which, besides Olga and the hunter, one more assistant took part. At the outset, the dried raw skin was leaned against the eastern inside wall of the tent and the two specialists sat down close to the entrance. The shaman went to the

[21] At that time the colb-antlers of the red deer played a not-to-be-disregarded role in the barter of the Reindeer Evenki with their Russian trading partners (*andaki*). Often they were the reason for a special trading event (*bogžor*) held in spring. By selling velvet antlers a Reindeer Evenki hunter could secure a good additional income. The Russians, in turn, could sell these antlers on as *panty* to Chinese wholesale buyers. Finally they were used in Chinese medicine as an invigorating drug or an aphrodisiac (Heyne 1992: 100).

area opposite the entrance, where the *malu*,[22] a sacred area of the tent, was installed. There she began to sing and dance in the area between the *malu* and the western section of the tent. After a good while had passed she shouted in a high voice "shot" (*rakal*). This was the moment when the two assistants threw the skin scraper each had been carrying in his hand on to the dried deer skin. That was the end of the ceremony. It now fell to the two assistants to manufacture and complete the shaman drum (Lindgren 1936: 181, 182).

To the drum belonged a drum stick (*gis*) that was made at the same time as the drum. Olga's drum stick was made from larch wood. It was a little bit curved. The handle was round and decorated with carvings. Its top end was carved into the head of a bear (Olga's tutelary spirit). The underside of the stick was broader and also flatter than the handle. It was covered with the undressed hide of a roe deer tightly fixed to it. The hide served to protect the membrane of the drum, but also to produce the special sound desired. The Hinggan Evenki thought of the drum stick as of a kind of whip. With its help the speed of the shaman's spiritual mount could be controlled on the journey to the transcendental worlds. Furthermore, it served as a means for divination. For that purpose it was thrown on the ground, and from the position into which it fell a positive or negative prediction could be made. This kind of divination, a drum stick oracle, most often took place during a séance in order to gain an answer to certain questions, for example questions concerning game animals. For such a divination the shaman threw the drum stick several times at the wall in the rear section (the *malu* area) of the tent. If it came to lie on the ground with its curved side up (*naptargaran*), the prophecy was judged to be positive. When the curved side was underneath (*mokchōrgoron*) the answer was negative.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS FOR COSTUME AND DRUM

Usually Olga's shamanic outfit was packed up and stored along with the loads to be carried by the reindeer that were lined up on the right

[22] The Reindeer Evenki used the term *malu* for the spirits of their clans, the sacred area at the back of the tent opposite the entrance, and also for all things and areas set apart and considered to be sacred. The zone behind the tents was *malu*, too. It was, therefore, forbidden (tabu) for women, especially those of childbearing age.

and left sides of the tent. The package containing the outfit was usually placed at the end of these loads, at the edge of the sacred area (*malu*) behind the tents. The loads were placed either on two parallel larch trunks lying on the ground or on a specially constructed stand (in the case of an extended sojourn). The shaman costume (*sa'maŋik*) was stored in two large bags of leather or hide (*poty*). The headgear (*derbo'ki*) was placed in a round basket-like box made from birch bark. It had no lid (*muruchun*), but was covered on top with hide or cloth. Drum (*untewun*) and drum stick (*gis*) were put into a drum-shaped container of chamois leather (*tep'kun*). The careful packing was a consequence of the intention to keep the costume and drum from any defilement so that they would not lose their power. For the move to a new campsite the sacred outfit of the shaman was loaded on to one or two reindeer (*maluyan*) of white hide or of a hide of otherwise light color. These animals were made to follow at the end of the line of pack animals (*argiš*). They were also not used for ordinary work. In general, the Reindeer Evenki thought of white reindeer as highly sacred beings.

Shaman Niura Kaltakun

CALLING AND INITIATION

Now we turn to the process of how the last female shaman of the Reindeer Evenki, Niura Kaltakun, became a shaman and to a description of her shamanic paraphernalia. For this purpose I use as sources primarily the information I received directly from Niura in personal conversations and also that obtained indirectly from my Evenki informant Mania Nikolaevna Kudrina.

Niura was born around 1912 on the left (Russian) side of the Amur, the Black Dragon River, in an Evenki hunter camp. At that time her wandering group (*urilen*) was roaming the hunting grounds in the Amazar taiga of Siberia. In Niura's childhood her family, searching for a new hunting area, came to the Chinese side of the frontier-river, where initially it roamed in the headwater area of the River Albazicha (this was probably around 1922–1923, either at the end of the Russian civil war in Transbaikalia or shortly after). Niura also counted shamans among her ancestors. Her grandmother on the father's side and her older brother,

who died early, had been shamans. At the age of fourteen she began to suffer from psychic troubles which worsened more and more until they reached such a frightening degree that her parents were obliged to call on a shaman for help. The shaman was Filip Vasilevich Sologon, who at the time was responsible for the Reindeer Evenki's hunting in the area of the River Albazicha. In his local group he had the reputation of being a successful and great shaman and healer. Filip was able to cure the still adolescent Niura.

After a time, however, her psychic health problems reappeared. Filip recognized that his young patient was suffering from the "shaman's illness" and was under pressure from the shamanic spirits of her ancestors. At the age of sixteen Niura had the experience of her calling, which predestined her for a career as shaman. Her initiation took place as a self-initiation away from the campsite of her hunting group (*urilen*), at a place deep in the taiga to which she had withdrawn. In a vision during a dream a former helping spirit of her grandmother in the patriline, Maria Kaltakun, manifested itself in the shape of a female elk, urged her to become a shaman, and declared itself as her tutelary spirit.[23] In the visions that followed Niura got to know other spirits of her dead shaman ancestress through her main helping spirit, the one in the shape of an elk. Thereafter she began to sing and dance, i.e., she began to shamanize.

All of this happened at the time when her family together with her *urilen* (wandering community) moved from the hunting area on the River Albazicha into the upriver regions of the River Bystraia. In this area the young shamanic candidate became acquainted with the shaman Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina, who was already active in the local group. With Olga's mediation, her own former shaman teacher, the old and famous Kumarchen shaman, agreed to instruct Niura in techniques of ecstasy and on how to deal with spirit beings. This man shared the nomadic life of his group of horse herders on the upper reaches of the River Kumara. With him, young Niura underwent a hard, three-year-long training complemented with further important spiritual and

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[23] The example of the shaman Niura Kaltakun shows clearly that calling, shamanic illness, and initiation together constitute a unit and together create an extraordinary personality with special powers and faculties out of a hitherto average human being. This fact was already recognized more than half a century ago by Hans Findeisen (1957: 34–60 and 1957a), one of the pioneers in the research on shamanism.

group-specific advice from the older and already officially acknowledged Reindeer Evenki shaman Olga.

At the spring festival three years later, where she performed the sacrificial rite (*ominan*), Niura, at the age of nineteen, was acknowledged as a full shaman by the Reindeer Evenki families gathered for the event. On this occasion she performed the necessary rituals together with Olga and the Kumarchen shaman teacher. But during the time following the event Niura practiced as a shaman only within the limits of her own *urilen* (wandering group) because she was still very young and because the older and highly respected Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina was at the time already active among the Reindeer Evenki of the area. Whenever Niura shamanized at that time it gave her psychic relief, she told me. It was only a few years after Olga's death in 1944, and after she had been initiated a second time by her spirits, that she began to follow her calling without restriction. Until her death in 1998 she was the only true shaman acknowledged by all Reindeer Evenki living in the Great Amur Bend.

The beginning of the 1950s was a difficult time for Niura. The shaman spirits of Olga, now free after her death, were causing mischief. They were the authors of cruel vendetta-like murders (Heyne 2007) among the Reindeer Evenki. On top of that, the new authorities in the young People's Republic of China began their sociopolitical experiments. Only after Niura succeeded in catching the spirits of her dead predecessor Olga and brought them under her sway did peace return to the community of the group of Tungus hunters in the Greater Hinggan.

Because Niura apparently had not responded absolutely, immediately and without restriction, to the call of her ancestor spirits to become a shaman, she had to undergo particularly severe trials after her second initiation: the spirits demanded the lives of her seven sons and even those

of her two sons-in-law, who all died before their time.[24] The deaths of Niura's male descendants in relation to her second initiation are another reminder that the body of the shaman is cut up, reduced to a skeleton, and reconstituted. The bones symbolically represent individual members of the shaman's group of relatives. Because of the patrilineal organization of Reindeer Evenki society, the victims were mostly or even exclusively male relatives. It can further be said that the skeleton of the shaman represented the clan or the local group, because the sons-in-law were victimized, too. The meaning attributed to the bones points to a very old world of beliefs among the Reindeer Evenki that is related to the hunt. In this view they saw in the bones and the skeleton a force of life enduring beyond death, a view to be recognized also in the burial accorded to the bones of bears, elk, and deer killed in the hunt. In principle, the idea underlying this process was that the container, i.e., the body, had to be destroyed in order to have the soul of the shaman establish a relation based on equal terms with the spirits. Like the bear and other animals, the shaman was capable of coming to life again if only the bones were retained. For that reason the bear ceremony ending with the final burial, a wind burial (*čuki*), of the bear's unbroken bones was an event of such importance for the Reindeer Evenki. In this a relationship with the shaman's burial is obvious.[25] The process undergone by Niura Kaltakun to become a shaman clearly reveals still another point, namely the fact that nobody could escape without punishment from being chosen by the shaman spirits.

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[24] Personal communication from Niura Kaltakun and her oldest daughter Pelagaia (born 1942), whose husband had become one of the victims in the heavy toll in lives paid to the shaman spirits. In the well-known work of Hans Findeisen (1957: 61), who has done intensive research into the problems related to this phenomenon, one can find evident parallels. He writes: "it is said that all of the shaman's closer relatives are devoured by the spirit of the shaman ancestor in punishment for the fact that the one called by the ancestral spirit has initially refused to become a shaman . . . . In the case of a great shaman a person from the group of his blood relatives has to die as a replacement for each bone of his body. For the eight tubular bones eight humans have to die, another for the skull, so that for the nine main bones of a person nine humans have to die." (Translation from the German original by Peter Knecht.) For further examples see Friedrich and Budruss (1955: 131–155, translation of tales collected by G. V. Ksenofontov).

[25] It is said of the Sakha (Yakut) shamans: "famous shamans undergo dismemberment three times, small ones only once" (Findeisen 1957a: 8, following Ksenofontov).

THE COSTUME

Now we turn to describing the outfit of the shaman Niura Kaltakun (figs. 3–8). For our description we refer to her preserved first outfit. This happens to be the only remaining outfit of a Reindeer Evenki shaman.

Niura's shamanic outfit was manufactured in teamwork by members of her social group in the years from 1928 to 1931, in parallel with the three years of her spiritual training by the Kumarchen shaman Ninchan (Ninchian). A total of fourteen persons shared the artistic and handicrafting task. Nine women did the needlework and embroidering, and five skillful blacksmiths[26] fabricated the iron parts and copper mirrors, as well as pieces made of wood such as buttons, the frame of the drum, the drum stick, and the drum resonators.

The basic material used for Niura's shamanic costume (*sa'maŋik*) was elk leather dressed to make it soft (a female elk was Niura's main helping spirit). The shaman herself offered the following basic information about her outfit (personal communication from Niura Kaltakun). The various parts and figures on the costume were models made to reflect the world view and the cultural-religious thought of the Reindeer Evenki. The sacral outfit as a whole was, as has been mentioned already, of symbolic significance. In the course of a shamanic séance these various items became inhabited by helping spirits who supported the shaman in fulfilling her task. The various spiritual forces inhabiting the paraphernalia could be mastered and directed only by the shaman herself. If ordinary humans were to touch these items they were in danger from these spirit beings. An inappropriate handling of the shamanic outfit might even result in it losing its power completely. That happened in Niura's case when, during the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guards confiscated her outfit and brought it to a museum.

Next we consider the individual elements of Niura's shamanic outfit, beginning with the headgear.

The shaman's cap (*derbo'ki*) consisted of two parts (fig. 5 *i*). One was the cap itself, made of elk leather. It was decorated with colored stripes in red, yellow, and blue, and it had a veil (*sacharingi*) of fringes (*tšuragta*)

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[26] Every male Reindeer Evenki had some knowledge of metalwork. In the Tungus populations the blacksmith played an important and positive role in their day-by-day cultural activities as well as in their mythology. The same can be said of the role of iron (see Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 55, 125).

Fig. 3. The shaman's costume of Niura Kaltakun (1912–1998), shown from the front. Photo: Bu Lingli, around 1990.

attached to its front and a tail (*irgivlan* or *horogōptan*) at its back. The other part was a structure placed on the cap. This resembled a crown and was made of iron (*modan*). The "iron crown" consisted of a narrow head band and an iron band attached to it that ran from one temple to the other, forming an arc. An iron replica of a deer's antlers (*ija'l*), with two prongs of an identical number of points, was attached to this band. According to Niura these prongs were called the *malu* of the shaman.[27] On the one hand the antlers symbolized a helping spirit in the shape of a deer and, in shaman Niura's case, her ability to move as swiftly as a red deer. On the other hand, the antlers especially demonstrated—combined with the richness of the whole costume—the power and force of the shaman. The number of points on the antlers revealed the shaman's experience, his or her magic abilities, and rank. A beginner shaman of the Reindeer Evenki initially had antlers with three points. An older shaman, one with great experience and solid knowledge, could wear antlers with six points. A shaman, finally, who commanded the highest degree of shamanic and ecstatic ability had antlers with nine points on his sacred cap. Niura, who had performed several difficult séances and sacrificial rituals, carried antlers with six points on her head gear. She explained to me (in 1993) that for a long time there had been no shamans so great as to be entitled to carry antlers with nine points. Filip Vasilevich Sologon, a member of the former Moche group, may perhaps have been the last of such powerful shamans in Manchuria.

The basic material for the cover or armor of the chest (*nalbaptun*) on Niura's costume was also elk leather (fig. 5 *ii*). It had an inset decorated with embroidery. Eight twisted fringes in two colors (red and blue) were fastened to its lower rim. The four fringes in the middle ended in tassels. On the upper part of the chest cover there were two figures of swans (*gaya* also *gaha*; *gahi,* in the plural) flying upwards. They were made of sheet iron and represented the shaman's mounts on her soul journeys into the upper world (*uyudunda*) and to the spirits of the sky. Beneath the two swans iron ducks (*tagsa*) were sewn to the cover in two rows, eighteen of them in one row. They represented theriomorphic localizations of fairy-like spirit women from the upper world. They were ordered by the sky god (*buya* or *buga*) to assist the shaman during a shamanic séance with ritual dances and to heighten the sacred atmo-

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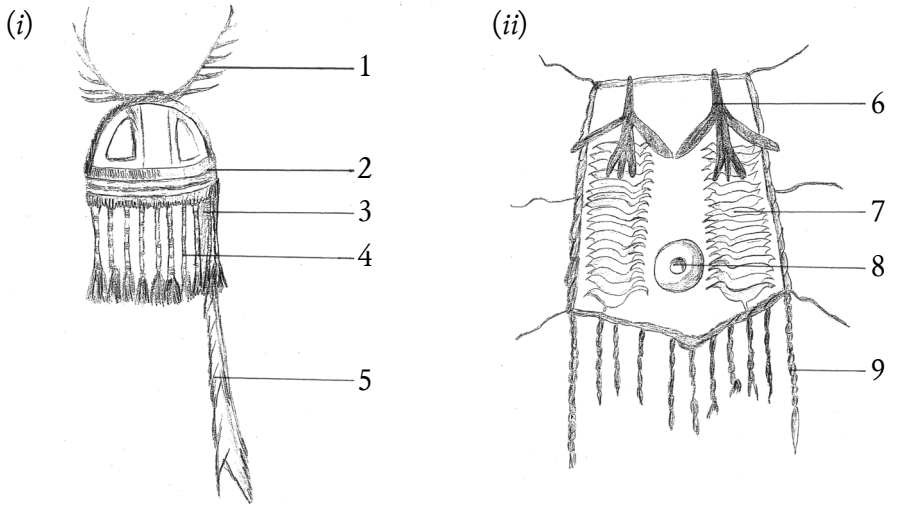
[27] All sacred areas or things were designated as being *malu*, see note 22.

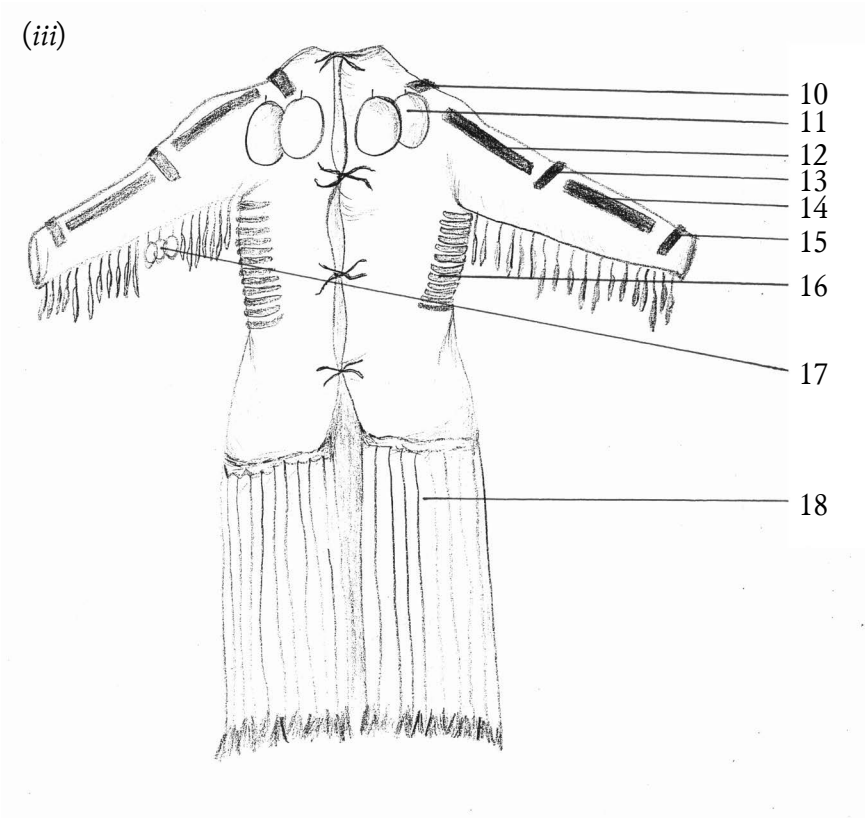
Fig. 4. The shaman's costume of Niura Kaltakun (1912–1998), seen from the back, together with her drum and drum stick. Photo: Bu Lingli, around 1990.



(*i*) *derbo'ki* (shaman's cap)
(1) *ija'l* (antlers)
(2) *modan* (iron crown)
(3) *sacharingi* (veil)
(4) *tšuragta* (fringes)
(5) *irgivlan* (*horogōptan*) (tail)

(*ii*) *nalbaptun* (chest armor)
(6) *gaya* (*gaha*) (swan)
(7) *tagsa* (duck)
(8) *tšunguruk* (the shaman's navel)
(9) *onikta* (*sunmakta*)
(the shaman's arteries)

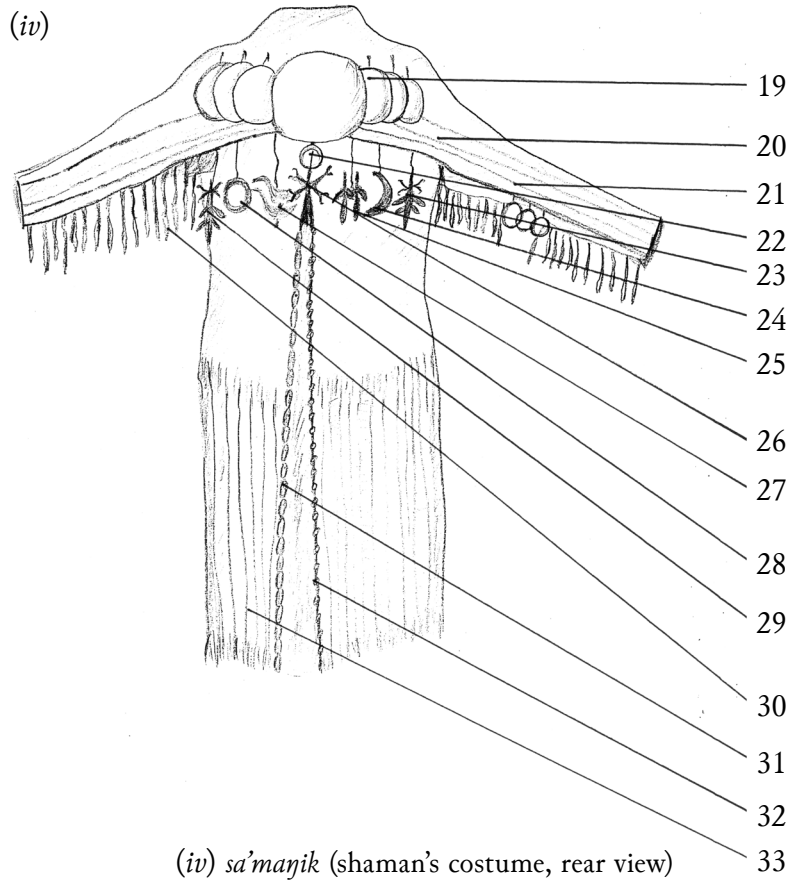
Fig 5. Details of Niura Kaltakun's shamanic cap and chest armor.
Drawings by the author.



(*iii*) *sa'maŋik* (shaman costume, front view)

(10) *dzalan* (shoulder joint)
(11) *toli* (copper mirror)
(12) *umiki* (upper arm bone)
(13) *dzalan* (elbow joint)
(14) *karan* (forearm bone)
(15) *dzalan* (wrist)
(16) *avtilan* (rib bones)
(17) *maŋgi* (Orion)
(18) *nelba* (long leather fringes)

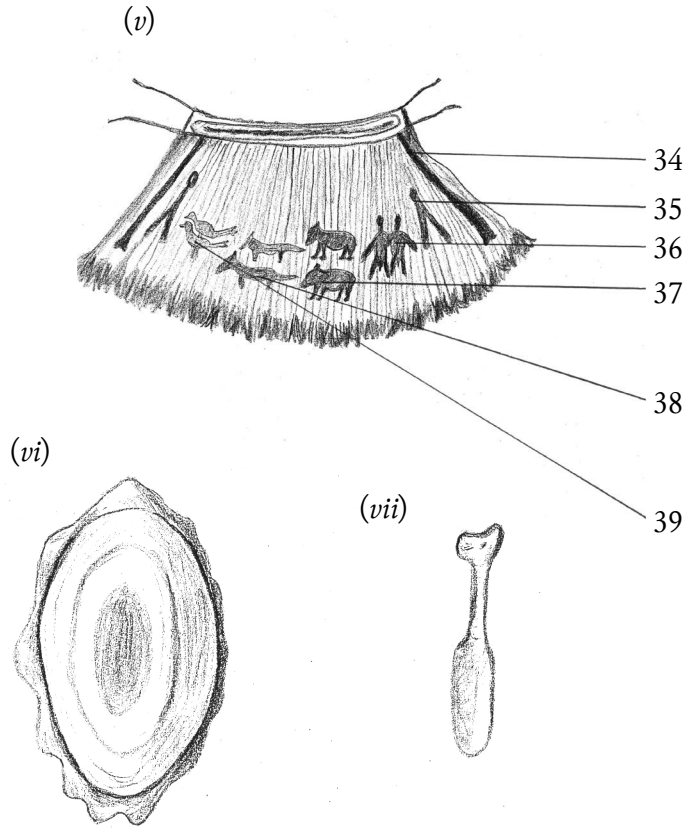
Fig 6. Details of the front of Niura Kaltakun's shamanic costume.
Drawing by the author.



(*iv*) *sa'maŋik* (shaman's costume, rear view)

(19) *toli* (copper mirror)
(20) *arkalan* (shoulder collar)
(21) *seerun* (rainbow)
(22) *čālbon* (*čolbon*) (Morning Star, Venus)
(23) *agdi* (spirit of thunder)
(24) *bēga* (moon)
(25) *kukgu* (cuckoo)
(26) *šeli* (horned snake spirit)
(27) *gaya, gaha* (swan)
(28) *s'ibun* (sun)
(29) *agdi* (spirit of thunder)
(30) *neru, niru* (fish)
(31) *niri* (shaman's spinal column)
(32) *chutuka, xutuka* (spinal cord)
(33) *nelba* (long leather fringes)

Fig 7. Details of the back of Niura Kaltakun's shamanic costume.
Drawing by the author.



(*v*) *sabda'ptun* (hip skirt)

(34) *umaki* (thigh bone)
(35) *kiptil* (scissors)
(36) *lutu* (wild pigeon)
(37) *satimar* (bear)
(38) *sinmayki* (wolf)
(39) *čičakun* (wagtail)

(*vi*) *untewun* (shaman's drum)

(*vii*) *gis* (drum stick)

Fig 8. Details of Niura Kaltakun's hip skirt, drum, and drum stick. Drawings by the author.

sphere. Their animal shape demonstrated at the same time how close these spirit beings from the upper world were to nature.[28]

To the lower section of the chest cover, a round brass plate was fastened between the two rows of iron ducks. In the center of this plate an embossed hemispherical elevation was inserted, made from a czarist five-kopek piece of copper. This represented the navel (*tšunguruk*) of the shaman and was at the same time a symbol of the shaman's relationship with her main helping spirit in the form of the female elk who once had called her to be a shaman.

On the upper rim of the chest cover a chain was attached to both the right and left sides. The chains protruded from the lower rim of the chest cover for about one-third of its total length. They represented the shaman's arteries (*onikta;* [*sunmakta*?]).

Now we turn to the caftan-like main costume of the shaman (figs. 6-7). It was made of elk leather in two halves sewn together. On each side, under the armpit, a place was left open. These openings, common among the Reindeer Evenki, served the purpose of allowing the shaman's spirits to circulate without hindrance. The back upper section of the costume was covered with seven round and flat copper mirrors (*toli* or *tōli*) fastened to leather straps hanging over the shoulder collar. The disk in the middle was clearly larger, about twice as large as the other six. These copper disks served various purposes. On one hand they were there to increase the shaman's ability to concentrate. On the other, they could also be used by the shaman to catch new spirits in order to deal with them and to subdue them, if necessary. Malevolent spirits were chased away during the shaman's dancing by the clatter of the mirrors banging on one another.[29]

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[28] Ducks and swans were sacred birds and, in the opinion of the Reindeer Evenki, they were inhabitants of the sky. The reason for such a view was that the swans flew very high and that the various kinds of duck in their colorful plumage landed in large swarms on the lakes of the Hinggan taiga as if they had literally come from the sky. In the mythology of the Tungus populations swans were often magically transformed heroes or heroines and also daughters of the sun (cf. Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 58, 127, 128, 135, 136).

[29] The use of metal mirrors originated in the conceptual world of the Far East, from where it probably reached the shamans of the Reindeer Evenki. Mirrors were also fastened to the shaman's costume of the other two Tungusic populations of hunters and fishers in Manchuria, the Oroqen and Hezhen. They are also found on similar costumes of Manchu shamans.

From the middle of the back, in its upper section, hung a chain made of small oval plates attached to one another. This represented the shaman's spinal column (*niri*, also *niarila* [?]), which consisted of twenty-four parts. Next to it there was another chain made of connected hooklets. They symbolized the interarticular disks and the spinal cord (*chutuka*, also *xutuka, hotoká*) of the shaman. The lower half of the shaman's costume consisted of long leather fringes (*nelba, nelbi* in the plural).

On the front (fig. 6 *iii*) of the spirit costume four copper mirrors (*toli*) were attached to the upper part. On each shoulder there was the replica of a bone of the shoulder joint (*dzalan*), and on each of the upper arms an iron replica of an upper arm bone (*umiki*). This was then followed by the elbow joint (*dzalan*), the forearm bones (*karan*), and the two wrists (*dzalan*), all of these made of iron.

On each of the two sides, under the sleeves, twelve iron replicas of the rib bones (*avtilan*) were sewn on to the costume. The lower half of the costume's front ended, in the same way as on the back, in long leather fringes (*nelba*). The shamanic costume was closed in the middle of its front with four leather cords. Leather fringes (*nelba*) were also sewn to the lower rim of the sleeves. On the right sleeve, close to its middle section at a place a little below the elbow joint, three additional rings made of copper were attached. They represented the constellation Orion (*maŋgi*).[30]

To the back of Niura's caftan-like shaman costume (fig. 7 *iv*), a piece of elk leather was attached. It reached from the shoulders to the wrists, and was removable. This shoulder collar (*arkalan*) had red, yellow, and blue stripes sewn to it along its length, representing the rainbow (*seerun*). According to the ancient shamanic conceptions of the Reindeer Evenki, the rainbow was a kind of heavenly bridge for the spirits of the upper world to pass over and come to the human beings in the middle

[30] Maŋgi played an important role in the myths of the various Evenki groups in Siberia and Manchuria. Often he was thought to be a simple-minded and doltish giant, yet he was also a demiurge and a participant in the cosmic hunt related to the constellation of the Great Bear (Ursa Major) and the Milky Way. Mania Nikolaevna Kudrina, the granddaughter of the shaman Innokentiĭ Ivanovich Kudrin, told me the Reindeer Evenki version of this myth in September 2003. According to this version it was the responsibility of Maŋgi to see to it that there were elks on earth. The Reindeer Evenki imagined Maŋgi as a being with three heads (possibly as a consequence of Mongol influence) and thought that this was made visible as the three stars in the girdle of Orion. The three copper rings on Niura's shamanic costume corresponded to this.

world (*dunda*).[31] For that reason the iron localizations of the shaman's most important spirits (in particular of the cosmic spirit beings) were fixed on this piece of the outfit.

A representation of the horned snake spirit (*šeli*) hung in the middle of the shoulder collar. According to Reindeer Evenki conceptions, the snake spirit was responsible for the curing of various different illnesses.[32] If somebody fell sick, Niura would be asked to invoke the snake spirit in a shamanic séance and to implore it to restore the patient's health. The snake spirit could also be called upon by the shaman for prophylactic protection of people and animals against sickness.

On top of the snake spirit was suspended an iron ring. This was a symbol of Venus as the Morning Star (*čālbon,* also *čolbon*). In the thinking of the Reindeer Evenki *čālbon* was the master spirit of all stars[33] and responsible for dispelling the dark of the night. A shamanic séance often began, therefore, in the middle of the night. The shaman danced until daybreak when *čālbon* had finally succeeded in dispelling the darkness and was able to greet the new day.

A pair of swans (*gaya*) was attached to the left of the snake spirit. On the right side two cuckoos (*kukgu*), in a position of flying upward, were hanging.[34] Because swans can fly very high and far they are symbols, in this context, of the boundless expanse and size of the taiga, the home of the Reindeer Evenki. Cuckoos with their characteristic call, however, were thought to awaken nature and announce the event in spring on their return to the Hinggan taiga from their winter quarters. The Rein-

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[31] The idea of the rainbow as a heavenly bridge is widely distributed. In ancient Europe it can be found with the Greeks and Romans, but also with the Vikings. It is also known in Japan and among the Tibetans of Amdo, China. The Gypsies believed that the person who found the end of a rainbow at Pentecost could climb it to the sky and from there bring back beauty and health (see Bächtold-Stäubli [ed.] 1927–1942, 7: 7).

[32] *Šeli* can also be found in the complex of clan spirits (*malu*). There it is a pair of snake spirits, a man and a woman (see Heyne 2003: 327). The common snake is called *kulin* (or *kolin*). Snakes were ranked under the mythic animals of the Tungusic populations. They had the power to cure and, in general, were harbingers of good fortune (cf. Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 124).

[33] Some Evenki groups distinguished the Venus star seen in the evening from that seen in the morning (see Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 47, 48, 106).

[34] The significance of swans as sacred birds as beings of the upper world has already been mentioned (see note 28).

deer Evenki also attributed a certain divinatory ability to them which could be used by the shaman.

At the left side of the two swans a representation of the sun (*s'ihun*) was added, and to the right of the pair of cuckoos was hung a representation of the sickle moon (*bēga*). In the conception of the Reindeer Evenki the sun was female, she was the mother sun. At the same time she was the wife of the moon, who was thought to be male, the old man moon. The sun mother bestowed warmth upon humans, animals, and plants to enable them to grow and develop. The moon man lighted up the dark of the night with his light. Sun and moon were further vitally important as the givers of game. The spirit of the hunt (*mahun*), however, was responsible for granting good luck in the hunt. When game became scarce to a degree that endangered people's existence, the shaman was asked by the community to perform a shamanic séance in order to implore the spirits of sun and moon to send game animals (personal communication by Niura Kaltakun). The sun woman and the moon man were therefore first of all the spirits who provided food to the people in the taiga.

Left of the sun and right of the moon hung localizations of the spirit of thunder (*agdi*). The Reindeer Evenki thought of this spirit as a large horned bird of iron with fiery eyes. During a thunderstorm, it was thought that flashes of lightning shot out of its eyes and that the flapping of its wings caused the sound of thunder.[35] *Agdi* (plural *agdil*) served the shaman Niura to dispel evil influences coming from outside. When, for example, foreign baneful spirits and demons attempted to cause misfortune for the communities of Evenki hunter-nomads, the shaman could call upon the thunder spirit to have it chase away the misfortune-causing spirit forces. Because these forces feared thunder and lightning very much, they tried to hide in rock caves in order to avoid the precise attacks and deadly flashes of lightning of the thunder spirit.

Along the lower rim of the shoulder collar thirty-six small stylized fish made of iron (*neru,* also *niru* 'grayling, *Salmo thymallus*') were attached. These were localizations of water spirits. When the shaman had to go to the lower realm of water in pursuit of her task, these spirit fish could serve as her mount or means of transportation. Furthermore, the fish were her informants for matters concerning the world of the wet element. Therefore, the Reindeer Evenki would sometimes carve a

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[35] See Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 30, 31, 51, 52.

life-size representation of a salmon trout (in Evenki *ǰeli,* also *djéli* 'Tajmen salmon, *Hucho taimen*')[36] to be used at the shamanic séance.

A further element of Niura's shamanic outfit was a hip skirt (*sabda'ptun*) (fig. 8 *v*). This consisted of a broad belt of chamois leather adorned with blue and red stripes, which the shaman wore around her hips. All around the skirt strips of chamois leather were attached. They were decorated with thin, colored cross-lines, alternating between blue and red. Spirit localizations of four animals in pairs, made of iron, were also fastened to the hip skirt. These were two pairs each of land animals and birds. The land animals represented a pair (male and female) of bear spirits and wolf spirits.

The Reindeer Evenki thought of the bear (*satimar*) as an ancestor. In their tradition the bear had once been the black-faced assistant of the creator deity *buya* in the upper world (*uyudunda*). However, when the bear once arrogantly sat on *buya*'s throne, *buya* sent him in punishment for this deed to the middle world (*dunda*), where the Evenki were allowed to hunt him. Yet, there he did not belong to ordinary game because he was considered to be a creature with supernatural power and the gift of clairvoyance. For that reason the bear hunt, which usually took place at the end of winter, was accompanied by many rites. Rites were also needed when preparing and eating bear meat. At the end of the meal, the skull and the other bones of the bear had to be given a wind funeral (*čuki*) and were placed at a height of 2 to 2.5m above the ground.[37] As a consequence of the bear's gift of clairvoyance, the hunters were not to call it by its ordinary name during the hunt; they had to use various descriptions, such as "old woman," "grandmother" (*atirkan*), or "old man," "grandfather" (*ätirkan*), depending on the sex of the bear. Because of its strength the Reindeer Evenki considered it to be the king of the forest, to whom they paid great respect and reverence. In particular, they held those bears that did not attack either humans or reindeer in great respect. These circumstances show that the figures representing pairs of bears on Niura's hip skirt were symbols of very important helping spirits. With their help the shaman was able to take the shape of a bear when that should be needed during her soul journey

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[36] See also Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 62.

[37] For the bear ceremony of the Reindeer Evenki see Heyne 1994: 122–135, and cf. also Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 36–39. A comprehensive and well-documented study about the rites of the bear hunt and the bear festivals among the various Tungusic peoples is Paproth 1976.

in order to fulfill her task. The iron representations of bear spirits on Niura's hip skirt were also meant to defend the members of her group and the reindeer against bear attacks.

The Reindeer Evenki thought of wolves as sacred animals. But their relationship with the wolf (*sinmayki,* a taboo word) was at the same time ambiguous, because many reindeer (*orōn*) fell prey to hungry wolves during the winter season. In the summer season, however, wolves did not pose a danger because they had sufficient other food and so left the reindeer of the Evenki grazing in the Hinggan taiga in peace. In order to protect the reindeer against wolves Niura made use of the localizations of wolf spirits hanging on her hip skirt. She told me: "The wolf is *buya*'s (the sky god) eldest son. When I dance [during a shamanic séance] to look for missing reindeer, my wolf-shaped helping spirit assists in chasing the animals that have gone astray back to the camp."[38]

The iron pair of wild pigeons (*lutu*) hanging to the right of the bear spirits represented important bird spirits. The mating cries of the pigeon provided a model for many melodies and rhythms of the songs that Niura used in her séances. The iron pair of wagtails (*čičakun*), placed on the opposite side of the hip skirt next to the wolves, represented the spirits that helped her dancing. Because the wagtail is very lively and makes swift jumps and movements, the shaman imitated this bird in many steps of her dancing at a séance.

Next to the row of animal spirits, on each side of the hip skirt, an iron object in the form of scissors was hanging. In daily life the scissors (*kiptil*) were a women's tool. Their place on the costume was intended to signify that the shaman could use the scissors, i.e., their spiritual power, in a séance held to cure a sick person. With the power of the scissors the shaman could cut a sickness, considered to have been caused by malevolent spiritual forces, out of the body of the afflicted member of her group. On the outermost rims of the hip skirt, right and left, there were fixed the iron imitations of the thigh bones (*umaki*).

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[38] Niura Kaltakun, personal communication September 1993. The Sakha thought of the wolf as being the son of their ancient strict deity *uluu-tojon* (see Bibikow 1990: 166). The conception of a divine origin of the wolf among the Reindeer Evenki may possibly have been borrowed from the Sakha. Cf. also Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 150.

THE DRUM

Niura's shamanic drum (fig. 8 *vi*) was a frame-drum typical for the northern Tungus. It was made from natural material of impeccable quality. The frame was made from larch wood without any trace of the boughs. The wood was bent into oval form—into "the form of a duck egg," as the shaman said. The membrane was fashioned from the hide of a two-year-old elk and fixed all around on the drum's under side. A total of twelve resonators were pegged in between membrane and frame. They too were made from larch wood and served to improve the sound of the drum. Five of these wooden resonators were pegged in on each one of the drum's long sides, the other two at its top and bottom. The iron handle, in the shape of a cross, was fastened with strong leather straps to the rim of the drum's underside. On the upper side of the oval membrane a cosmological design was painted, representing a stylized map of the world. The center was colored in dark blue and surrounded by a zone in light blue. The latter was bordered by a red line that followed the shape of the drum. The circles and the colored spaces between them symbolized in a simple and abstract manner the universe (*tiru*) as the Reindeer Evenki imagine it. The blue center, surrounded by a dark blue circle, represented the upper world (*uyudunda*), the light blue section between the dark blue circle and the red circle showed the middle world (*dunda*), and the red circle marked the border to the lower world (*orgudunda*). This world extended from the red circle to the rim of the drum.

Niura explained to me the preeminent role the drum played among the shamanic paraphernalia. She said: "The drum transmits messages. Through the drum's 'voice' the spirits recognize what I ask them for. But I myself can, by the kind of sound the drum makes in a séance, hear the respective spirit and recognize what their answers are." In addition to this the drum could, in certain cases, become the shaman's mount, namely a magic elk. Or the shaman could ride the drum like a boat and cross the waters in the transcendental realms. When the drum became an elk for the shaman to ride on during her soul journeys, then the drum stick (*gis,* fig. 8 *vii*) was a kind of whip or pole (*tijavun*) used to direct the animal mount. The stick of Niura's drum was made of larch wood. Its underside was covered with elk hide in order to muffle the tone of the drum and at the same time protect the membrane. The handle ended in a carving resembling the stylized head of a bear. A special cover made of chamois leather (*tep'kun*) served to store both drum and stick.

Concluding Remarks

We have attempted to describe the most important elements of a Reindeer Evenki shaman's paraphernalia and to highlight their symbolic meaning by using the costume and the drum of the two last active shamans, Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina and Niura Kaltakun, as examples. A final addition has to be made. When I became acquainted with the shaman Niura Kaltakun in 1993 in a hunting camp by the River Albazicha in the Hinggan taiga, she was already more than eighty years old and had great difficulty walking (fig. 9). A solid wooden staff served her as a support for walking and standing up. Close observation of the staff showed that its handle, attached at a right-angle, was carefully carved in the form of the head of a female elk. When I asked her about this, she explained that the Evenki hunter Vladimir Kaltakun (1922–1997), a man very conscious of tradition, had made it for her. Because a female elk was her main helping spirit, this staff allowed her to always carry its localization with her and to be able to communicate with the spirit whenever there should be need for it. It

Fig. 9. Niura Kaltakun with the author at a campfire in a Reindeer Evenki hunting camp at the upper reaches of the River Albazicha (albadati, albadachti). In his right hand the author has Niura's shaman staff with an elk head handle. Photo: Ingo Nentwig, 1993.

can be said, therefore, that the shamanic staff had the same usefulness for the shaman in the world of spirits as a mobile telephone for a manager in our modern economic world. Consequently, the staff had, in Niura's case, served for a long time as a kind of substitute for the shaman's paraphernalia and drum. This can certainly be said of the time of suppression suffered during the Cultural Revolution in China, but also of the time that followed it. Proof of this can be seen in the fact that the Reindeer Evenki began only in the 1980s to manufacture a new shamanic outfit for their old "surviving" shaman. When the outfit was ready, it was used for the first time in a consecration ceremony. Where worn-out parts of the shaman outfit had been replaced with new ones, these parts were ritually consecrated in an appropriate shamanic séance.

Niura Kaltakun was the last shaman active among the small group of Tungus nomadic reindeer herders in northern Manchuria. Like her predecessor she was a most intelligent, sensitive person, conscious of her responsibility and with a clear sense of the ethos of her vocation. She pursued her often difficult socioreligious tasks and her function as a healer in a most altruistic manner. She was highly regarded and accepted by her group. Her richly ornamented and carefully manufactured outfit clearly documents her importance as shaman. It was an observable demonstration of the degree of Niura's shamanic abilities, just as hers was for the shaman Olga Dmitrievna Kudrina.

Basically, the complex costumes of the two shamans were both of the same type, and they were both an expression of a common basic idea. The additional accoutrements, among them the iron localizations of the helping spirits, could vary significantly between the two depending on the individuality of the bearer's path to becoming a shaman.

Because most of these additional items on both shamans' costumes were made of iron, the magic significance of this metal appears clearly. During a shamanic séance the clatter of these things contributed, together with the muffled sound of the drum and the shaman's singing, to creating a mysterious atmosphere and had a stimulating effect on those participating in the ceremony. There is therefore a certain justification in speaking of "iron shamanism" when we speak of Reindeer Evenki shamanism. With the term "iron shamanism" I wish to draw attention to the particular profession of the Reindeer Evenki shamans. In terms of type, I would, on the basis of the known outfits as they are described above, consider the shamanic costume of the Reindeer Evenki as being of a mixed type, a mixture of deer-type and bird-type.

Fig. 10. The shaman Niura Kaltakun in her tent (dju) with the author's Reindeer Evenki informer, Mania Nikolaevna Kudrina. Photo: photographer unknown, 1994 (from the author's archives).

If I have succeeded in this study in transmitting an impression of the purpose and symbolic meaning of the Reindeer Evenki shaman, and by means of this study to contribute to the research on shamanism, the goal I have set for myself has been reached. The original plan was to write this essay for the festschrift on the occasion of the 85th birthday of my esteemed colleague and friend, Professor Dr Käthe Uray-Kőhalmi. Because of her unexpected death the essay has become part of the commemorative volume for her. Although filled with grief, I fondly recall Käthe's friendly and kind attitude and her cheerful character. With her departure an eminent scholar of culture has left us, and we will miss her greatly.

Acknowledgements

One, and not the least, of the reasons why this article could be written is the expert knowledge and to-the-point information provided by the late Reindeer Evenki shaman Niura Kaltakun in personal conversations with the author that took place in the taiga of northern Manchuria in

September 1993. Additional pertinent information was provided by the Reindeer Evenki woman Mania Nikolaevna Kudrina (born 1951) when she stayed at the author's house in Bielefeld in September 2003. Ms Kudrina is a granddaughter of the shaman Innokentiĭ Ivanovich Kudrin. She had interviewed the shaman Niura Kaltakun on my behalf and has put parts of her own relevant research material at my disposal. For all of this I am grateful to her (fig. 10). I also owe gratitude to my research colleague and friend Anatoliĭ Makarovich Kaĭgorodov (1927–1998) for his most helpful explanations of relevant matters offered in correspondence and in personal discussions. To Peter Knecht (Nagoya) I extend sincere thanks for his translating the article into English.

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Legitimization of the Shamanic Calling among the Sibe

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The article provides some data on the initiation ritual of the Manchu-speaking Sibe shamans, the so-called "Golden Ladder" ritual. The Sibe used to have two types of shamans among them: the butu *and* iletu *shamans. To become an* iletu *'real' shaman one had to climb the Golden Ladder, which symbolized a journey to the spirit* Isanju Mama *who granted them the right to heal people. The last known shaman to be initiated this way was Morniang in 1928. The authors present an interview with an eyewitness of the ritual published by Chinese scholars. The ritual texts of shamanic ceremony were published in a famous book called* Saman Jarin, *in which the prayer of the Golden Ladder can also be found. Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi visited the Chapchal Sibe Autonomous County where she interviewed a* butu, *a shaman who has not been initiated. The article discusses how the changing tradition and the lack of initiation rituals determine the function and legitimacy of the shamans in modern Sibe society.*

Sinologist Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi and Turkologist and Mongolist Dávid Somfai Kara, the two authors of this article, were both students of the late Katalin Uray-Kőhalmi, who taught them Manchu and inspired them to undertake research on the Sibe people. We dedicate this article to her memory.

The Sibe people (Manchu *Sibe,* English spelling Shibe, Chinese 锡伯 *Xibo*) were probably a Jurchen-speaking tribe who lived under the rule of the Khorchin Mongols until the end of the sixteenth century. They originally lived by the Nonni (Nenjiang) and Sungari (Songhuajiang) rivers. In 1593 they were defeated by the Manchu ruler Nurhachi at the Battle of Gure. After the Khorchin submitted to Manchu rule in 1624, they dedicated the Sibe people to the Manchu (1692). The Sibe became part of the Eight Banners (Manchu *jakūn gūsa*, Chinese 八旗 *baqi*) and

they were stationed around Chichigar (Chinese 齐齐哈尔 *Qiqiha'er*). After the Manchu conquered East Turkestan (Xinjiang), Emperor Qianlong sent some Sibe to the valley of the Ile River (Yili) in 1764. Other Sibe were settled around Mukden (Shenyang) as imperial guards. Nowadays the Sibe population in China is around 190,000, but only the Sibe of Chapchal[1] (around 40,000) preserved their ethnic culture and their Manchu dialect.

The Sibe of Chapchal preserved their rich shamanic traditions, some of which were recorded in a famous book called *Saman Jarin*, at the end of the nineteenth century. This book was discovered at the end of the twentieth century and the original Manchu texts were published with a Chinese translation.[2] It is a treasure-house of Sibe shamanic traditions from the nineteenth century. Nowadays this book is not only a major source for Sibe intellectuals who wish to revive their shamanic traditions, but it also offers an insight for ethnologists into the nineteenth century state of Sibe shamanism.

Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi conducted six months of fieldwork among various Sibe groups of China in 2010. The present article is mainly based on the materials collected by her, while the texts quoted from *Saman Jarin* have been translated from the Manchu original by Dávid Somfai Kara.

Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi visited six provinces, notably in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, where she made interviews with several religious specialists in the Chapchal Sibe Autonomous County, including Fu Shou (figs. 1, 2) from the Fucha clan (Manchu *hala*). Fu Shou is a "*butu* shaman," which means that he did not go through a proper initiation ritual. Based on the interview with shaman Fu Shou, the authors wish to provide some data on Sibe shamanic traditions and to show how the local community legitimizes shamanic abilities. The lack

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[1] Chapchal Sibe Autonomous County (Cabcal Sibe Beye-dasangga Siyan, Chinese 察布查尔锡伯自治县 *Chabucha'er Xibo Zizhixian*) was founded in 1954 on the southern side of the Ile (Yili) River close to Ghulja City.

[2] In the summer of 1980 two Chinese scholars, Mandurtu and Xia Zhiqian, found a manuscript book, a sort of manual for conducting shamanic rituals, during their fieldwork in Chapchal. This Sibe text was translated into Chinese by Qi Cheshan et al. 1987 and Yong Zhijian (Nara and Yong 1992). It was also published in Manchu (Jalungga and Hewenjiyun [eds] 1990), and a German translation was published by Stary (1992). For details of this important manuscript, its editions and translations, see also Pang 1994/2007 and Qi Cheshan 1997, especially 71–74.

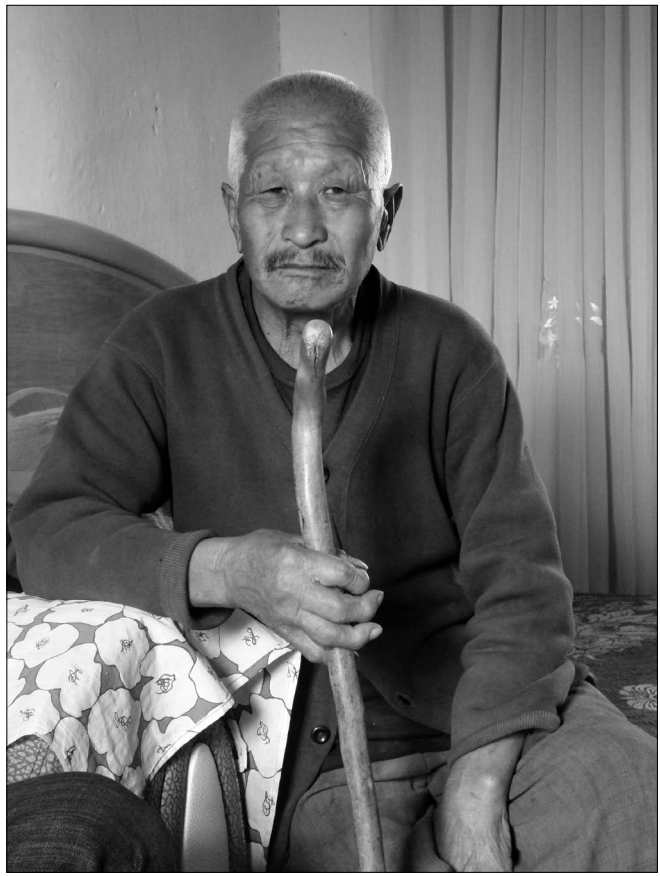

Fig. 1. Shaman Fu Shou in his house.
Photo: Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi, 2010.

of the initiation ritual illustrates well the changes that have occurred in Sibe shamanic traditions in recent years.

Fu Shou lives in the fourth division (*duiči niru*)[3] of Chapchal County, and he was 80 years old at the time of the interview.[4] He was interviewed

[3] The Chapchal Sibe County has eight divisions (*niru* 'arrow', compare Mongol *sumun*). These derive from the military unit of the Manchu Eight Banner military system.

[4] The interview with Fu Shou was recorded on October 15, 2010.

in his own home by Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi, who was accompanied by A Su, a correspondent of the local Sibe-language newspaper of Chapchal, and who translated Fu Shou's words from Sibe into Chinese. Fu Shou is a religious specialist in whose family shamanic ability was inherited through many generations. His grandfather, Yu shaman from the Fucha clan (*bala*), was considered to be one of the strongest shamans in Chapchal, and his shamanic garment and paraphernalia have been preserved by the family.[5] Fu Shou was also interviewed by a Chinese scholar, Meng Huiying, as early as in 1993. Meng would have liked to see the paraphernalia kept by the family, but Fu Shou never permitted this.

According to Fu Shou, he was 15 years old when he first "encountered the spirits." He got his shamanic ability from a spirit during a dream.[6] The spirit appeared in the form of a woman, who taught him and has been helping him ever since. Let us cite Fu Shou' words here, as recorded by Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi:

> His shamanic ancestor is a spirit . . . she is his master. She explained how to heal . . . explained to him in a dream. The shaman's road did not open for him, so he could not heal. He was initiated in the dream, but his road was not opened so he could not heal. He could not walk the shaman's path.

The "road" not opened for Fu Shou is probably the same road that the Sibe shamans undertake during the climbing of the knife-ladder which—according to the belief of the Sibe—leads to the court of Isanju Mama. In Sibe shamanic traditions the shaman's helping spirits are called *mafari wecen* (ancestor spirits). The word *wecen* or *weceku* means 'spirit' or 'a sacrifice to the spirits'. During initiation, while the shaman's body is possessed by the spirits, the shaman's soul (*fainggo*) leaves his or her body and travels to the spiritual world. It is the spirit (*wecen*) of Isanju Mama[7] who decides whether the shaman successfully accomplishes the initiation.

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[5] On Meng Huiying's visit to Fu Shou, see Meng (2004: 62–64).

[6] Sibe shamans legitimize their abilities through dreams and their ability to understand the meaning of dreams. The significance of this is mentioned several times during the interview conducted by Meng Huiying (2004: 53) in Chapchal in 1993.

[7] The name Isanju Mama probably originates from the famous Manchu shaman's name Nišan/Nisan or Isan (see Uray-Kőhalmi 1997: 86, 110–111).

The eighteen steps of the knife-ladder (*juwan jakūn karun*) were the major initiation ritual, in which the new shaman had to climb a symbolic ladder (*bilheri*). The steps symbolize the eighteen check points (*karun*) of the shaman's symbolic journey in the spirit world. The ladder is also called *cakūran* (sandalwood), a sacred wood from Buddhist mythology. Another name is *aisin wan* (Golden Ladder) which symbolizes the "Magic Tree" connecting the three layers of the World in Sibe mythology. Here follows the Golden Ladder[8] prayer from the book of *Saman Jarin*, which describes the above-mentioned "Magic Tree" very well (Nara and Yong 1992: 72):

Genggiyen senggi-de getukeleki!	In pure blood you will be cleansed
Šayan sile-de šataki!	In white soup they should be cooked.[9]
Šaldan temen-de tengnebuki!	Unharnessed[10] camel they should mount,
Šayan iha-de yalubuki!	The white ox they should ride
Abka, na-i acan-de	Where Sky and Earth meet,[11]
Aisin wan-be ayabuki!	A golden ladder you should make!
Šun, biya-i siden-de	Between the Sun and the Moon,
Siren wan-be ilibuki!	Rope-ladder let them raise!
Nara hala-i boigon-ni	From the Nara clan's family
Muduri ani-ngge enenbe	Child born in Dragon's year
Aisin wan-de ayabuki!	Put him on the golden ladder,
Menggun wan-de mukdebuki!	By the silver ladder he should ascend,
Urgun sebjen-i wasibuki!	With joy and happiness he should go up
Yang-ni jalan-de ulabuki!	And bring it back to our World.

The climbing of the knife-ladder is a legitimizing rite of the Sibe shamans (He Ling [ed.] 1995: 242). Only shamans initiated this way can become *iletu* 'real' shamans. During that initiation rite they prove that they are capable of mediating between the human and spiritual worlds

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[8] The steps of Golden Ladder consist of knife-blades that the shaman must climb during the initiation ceremony.

[9] Chinese *cuihuo* 淬火 means 'to extinguish, to cool down'.

[10] Manchu *šaldan* 'unharnessed, without a saddle', is from Mongol *šaldang* 'naked'.

[11] This is the place where the shamanic tree or ladder can be found.

Fig. 2. Shaman Fu Shou with his wife.
Photo: Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi, 2010.

by obtaining the blessing of Isanju Mama to be able to heal. Those shamans without this initiation are called *butu*[12] 'assistant' shamans.

The climbing of the knife-ladder among the Sibe was first described by N. N. Krotkov (1912), who conducted fieldwork among the Sibe and saw the ritual himself.[13] Even though the ritual changed slightly through time, basically it remained the same. The most thorough description of the ritual was recorded by He Ling (2009), who made

[12] There were two types of shamans among the Sibe, designated by the words *iletu* and *butu* (Mongolian *iletü* 'open' and *bitegü* or *bütegü* 'closed', see Pang 1994: 61; Second Edition, Revised and Expanded: 2007: 109).

[13] The original Russian version is in Krotkov (1912); for the German translation see Stary (1985) and for the Chinese translation see Tong (2009).

an interview with an eyewitness, He Shuangxin.[14] In this interview the informant said the following about Morniang, the last shaman who performed the climbing of the knife-ladder:

Forty days before the climbing of the knife-ladder I heard that adults were talking about Morniang Mama wanted to climb it . . . I know it from my father's account that Morniang was often sick in her childhood, sometimes being sick for several months. Her character was quite masculine and introverted. [. . .] She started to learn under Pa shaman[15] and soon her sickness passed away [. . .] She was learning for three years under Pa shaman. Pa shaman was an ordinary man, worked as a farmer and he had his own household. He used to teach only in the evenings using his paraphernalia. After three years, at the beginning of 1928, news spread that Morniang was preparing to climb the Ladder. Pa shaman originally wanted Morniang to climb a horizontal ladder, but she did not agree to that.[16] [. . .] She wanted to have an initiation similar to that of the male shamans with no less than eighteen steps. Finally Pa shaman had to agree to set up a vertical ladder. [. . .] In forty days the news spread throughout the whole Sibe County (Banner) that there would be a ceremony in *uju-i niru* (the first division). A couple of days before the ceremony Pa shaman had personally chosen five or six healthy young men from his clan to prepare the shaman-courtyard.[17] [. . .] The knife-ladder with eighteen steps was set up in the very centre of Morniang's courtyard [. . .] A deep hole was excavated on the northern side of the ladder and filled with wheat straw. Around the knife-ladder twenty wooden columns were also set up. The columns were over one-metre high and were tied by two ropes decorated by coloured ribbons and paper cuts of sitting Buddha and other human beings. [. . .] When the sun set Pa shaman ordered some young men to put candles on the columns. [. . .] Old people use to call this the "Shaman's courtyard." [. . .]

On the second day before noon all the horse and ox carts had been stopped in the *niru,* only people were on the streets. [. . .] Even the branches of the trees were full of people. Some old trees were climbed by 11–20 people. [. . .] The ladder was standing in the middle of the shaman's courtyard, so the candles could not illuminate the top of the ladder in the dark. It looked as if

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[14] The informant was less than ten years old at the time of the ritual (1928).

[15] Pa shaman was the disciple of Elsi shaman from the Nara clan.

[16] According to some traditions female shamans had to climb a horizontal ladder (He Ling 1995: 243).

[17] In Sibe *saman kūwaran*.

a huge celestial tree was reaching up to the dark sky. [. . .] A goat was tied to the northern side of the knife-ladder [and] next to it was a frying pan full of oil over a fire. Soon Pa shaman appeared from the hut. [. . .] Another shaman from a different *niru* took a bottle of liquor from the table of the "Eight Immortals"[18] and poured some into a glass for Pa shaman. [. . .] Pa shaman took the glass and suddenly shouted "ha" and sprayed the liquor and started to dance. The other two shamans from different *niru*-divisions joined his dance around the table of the "Eight Immortals." They jumped to the other side of the knife-ladder with drums in their hands and fell into trance with Pa shaman. [. . .] After about half hour of ecstasy Pa shaman entered the house and came back with Morniang. [. . .] They started to fall into trance together. Pa shaman suddenly shouted "ha" again and put down his drum and grabbed his spear. He ran to the goat and stabbed its neck. The blood running out of it was poured into a crock. Morniang ran up to him and drank out the blood in one go. [. . .] After this Pa shaman took his drum and started to drum and dance with the two other shamans. Morniang turned her face from north to south and stepped to the ladder. When she reached the ladder the three shamans started to jump and shout together: "Ha, ha, ha!" Then Morniang started to climb the ladder. Every time she climbed one step further the shamans shouted: "Ha, ha, ha!" Morniang reached the top of the ladder quickly and without fear. She grabbed the highest step of the ladder and gazed into the dark facing south. After a couple of seconds Pa shaman shouted at her:

"What have you seen in the South?"

"I have seen Isanju Mama's courtyard!" she answered.

"What have you seen in the West?"

"I have seen Burkan bakshi's[19] courtyard!"

"What have you seen in the East?"

"I have seen Ibagan's[20] courtyard!"

Finally Pa shaman shouted in an even louder voice:

"Look north!"[21]

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[18] The Eight Immortals (Chinese 八仙 *baxian*) or the Eight Celestials are a group of legendary transcendental beings in Chinese mythology. The Eight Immortals table (Chinese 八仙桌 *baxianzhuo*) is a big square table around which eight people can sit, with two at each side 八仙桌.

[19] *Burkan baksi mafa* means Buddha the master.

[20] *Ibagan* is a demon that causes illness.

[21] The Sibe believe that the dead go to the North (Qi Cheshan 1997: 81).

Then the three shamans started to dance more fiercely while Pa shaman took the filled cup again. He shouted and sprayed the liquor towards the sky and said in a loud voice:

"After climbing she should jump!"

Morniang shaman looked upward and her body fell down slowly right into the padded pit. [. . .] According to Pa shaman's instructions she was wrapped in a quilt and four young men took her into the house. After a couple of minutes Pa shaman led her out of the house and took her in front of the people. He took the *toli* (shamanic mirror)[22] from her neck and dipped it into the goat's blood and hung it back on Morniang' neck. Then he announced to the people: "The Morniang from *uju-i niru* was accepted as an *iletu* shaman by Isanju Mama!"[23]

Morniang, who died in 1976, was the last person to be regarded as an *iletu* shaman. Fu Shou's grandfather was also one of the *iletu* shamans, but his knowledge was not inherited completely by his grandson. Without climbing the knife-ladder he could not visit the spirit Isanju Mama to become an *iletu* shaman himself. He did not know the way to the spirits either. Let us cite again Fu Shou's words recorded by Ildikó Gyöngyvér Sárközi:

I am not going to lie. I will not speak about things I do not know.

He only hopes that he will not be the last generation of shamans in his family. Fu Shou shaman believes that even though his children are not shamans, they will pass on shamanic ability to the next generation, just as his father passed it on to him. He wants to choose one of his grandchildren to become a shaman.

After the fall of the Qing Dynasty, the changes in their society and economy, among other things, influenced the religious traditions of the Sibe, but we cannot state that shamanic traditions are only "historic relics" (He Ling [ed.] 1995: 43). As we see in the case of shaman Fu Shou, although Sibe shamanic culture ceased to exist in its formal "authentic" form, still, some of its elements survive and form a part of their modern religious traditions. We can better understand the shaman's personal

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[22] Shamanic mirror (*toli*) made of copper about 10 cm in diameter. The old shaman dedicates it to the disciple after initiation. It helps the shaman to make connection with the spiritual world and fight the demons (Nara and Yong 1992: 130–131).

[23] Extracts from an interview by He Ling (2009: 222–224).

and social behavior by analyzing the role of living religious traditions in narrow and wider circles of the society.

Considering these data, a substantial question arises: how do Sibe communities legitimize their shamans' activities? The Daur of Khailaar (Khölön-Buir) and Butkha (Morin-Dawaa) also lost their initiated shamans during the Cultural Revolution. But at the beginning of the twenty-first century Sechengua from Khailaar revitalized the *onimaan* initiation rite and legitimized herself as an *iletu saman* (Daur *yadgan*). Nowadays shamans of other regions and ethnic groups go through initiations with her assistance (Somfai Kara and Hoppál 2009). The Sibe *butu saman* is a person who has the shamanic ability but cannot use it fully due to the lack of initiation. Recent data suggest that some Sibe shamans have started to heal by saying that they have climbed the Golden Ladder in a dream.

Only time can tell if the Sibe initiation rite (*bilheri*) will be revitalized and that thus Sibe shamans can fully legitimize their shamanic activities. But they are in a more complicated situation since the Sibe of Chapchal are surrounded by Muslim communities (Uyghur, Kazakh) and political and religious control is much tighter in Xinjiang. The acceptance of shamanic traditions is still a long way off in this part of the country.

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Shamanic Influences on Korean Protestant Practices as Modulated by Confucianism

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The fusion of religion with shamanism has been occurring constantly throughout Korean history. Christianity, despite a short period of dissemination not exceeding 200 years, has also developed much faster in Korea than in Christian countries in the West, but surprisingly shamanic influences are also noticed in the relationship with Christianity. Such tendencies are mainly noticed in Pentecostal churches, which emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit and the direct experience of the presence of God by the believer. Korean folk Christianity has a diversified understanding of the devil or Satan, normally classifying such beings into groups such as devils of illness, of misfortune, of arrogance, etc., and ascribing all suffering to the consequences of satanic deeds. The experience of the Holy Spirit, similar in fashion to possession by a spirit in shamanism, as well as other mystical elements, such as craving for fortune and blessing in this world, are more important than salvation and eternal life. Behavior similar to that of Korean shamanism is often observed during the services of Protestant Churches, especially during special services like overnight prayer meetings and the revival assembly. Some reputed ministers lay emphasis on full possession by the Holy Spirit, demonstrating a number of mystic actions similar to shamanic activities, for example exorcism, expelling evil spirits, miraculous healing, etc., which are sometimes considered a standard by which to measure a minister's spiritual efficacy. The aforementioned customs of folk Christianity exist on the boundary of Christianity; and participation is encouraged by official Christianity, which admit them as "meaningful" and "legitimate" practices. I intend to analyze the relationship between Christianity and shamanism, a Korean cultural substratum, by illuminating the role of Confucianism—specifically the derived or "secondary" Confucianism as it percolated through shamanism in a modified form—in order to understand the influx of shamanic behavioral elements into Christianity.

Shamanic Influences on Korean Protestant Practices as Introduction: Shamanism, Confucianism and Christianity in Korea[1]

Korea is a country with a diversity of faces. A variety of philosophies and religions imported from abroad prosper in Korea, preserved in more intrinsic forms than in their countries of origin. For example, Buddhism, which originated in India, was born again as Zen Buddhism, acclimatized to the conditions of Korean and Chinese Confucianism and developed into an advanced format by the Korean people, who deny blind adherence to the traditional rhetoric proclaimed by Confucius or Zhuxi. Christianity, despite a short period of dissemination not exceeding 200 years, has also developed much faster in Korea than in Christian countries in the West and now dispatches the biggest number of missionaries abroad after the USA. Among the religions mentioned, the influence of shamanism is salient in the history of Korean culture. Korean shamanism has also exchanged influences with the representative foreign religions established on Korean soil, such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, passing through phases of confrontation, collision and finally concord. Surprisingly, such tendencies are also noticed in the relationship with Christianity, which has fortified its position recently as well as historically.

The affiliation between monotheistic Christianity and polytheistic shamanism seems dubious. Christianity and Korean shamanism look incompatible, and their affiliation has attracted the attention of theologians and folklorists. Many theses analyzing the substantial bond between Korean shamans and the Korean Church have already been published in academic circles. Some reputed ministers lay emphasis on full possession by the Holy Spirit, demonstrating a number of mystic actions similar to shamanic activities, for example exorcism, expelling evil spirits, miraculous healing, etc., which are sometimes considered a standard by which to measure a minister's spiritual efficacy.

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[1] In this paper, except for some globalized surnames like Kim and Park, the revised Romanization rule for writing Korean names released in 2000 will be followed unless a personalized variant of the author is indicated in the text.

When considering the background of the rapid growth of Christianity in Korea in spite of its short history, the influence of shamanism, which was a cultural substratum ingrained in the nature of the Korean people, was inevitable. Nevertheless, the incorporation into Christian worship of shaman-like performances and ceremonies that stimulate the temperament of Korean people is not the main factor accounting for the rapid growth of believers. The role of Confucianism, which occupies a significant place in Korean society as another cultural substratum, is also immense. In other words, a derived form of Confucian discipline was established within Korean shamanism under intimate discourse between the two, which finally exerted influence on Christianity, which was introduced afterwards. The inflow of Korean shamanism into the behavioral culture of Korean Christianity, which are outwardly incompatible with each other, was mediated by the ethical rhetoric of Confucianism. I intend to analyze the relationship between Christianity and shamanism as a Korean cultural substratum by illuminating the role of Confucianism—specifically the derived or "secondary" Confucianism as it percolated through shamanism in modified form—in order to understand the influx of shamanic behavioral elements into Christianity.

The Collision between Protestantism and the Traditional Culture of Korea

An important point to specify before this synthetic analysis is that the Christianity to be dealt with in this paper is Protestantism, which has developed explosively in South Korea since the Korean War, especially in recent decades. Believers in Christianity in Korea have an inclination to separate rigidly as Protestants and Catholics; thus intercourse or integration between them rarely happens. The tendency of separation is salient especially for Protestants, who strongly believe that they inherited the more archetypal orthodox teachings of Jesus Christ than Catholics. As is well known, Protestantism is the result of the division of Christianity that was begun by iconic figures of the Reformation, such as Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin. There are certain doctrines are accepted as common to both Protestantism and Catholicism: the Trinity, man as sinner, the saving work of Christ, justification by faith. However, Protestants formulated these doctrines

according to their own interpretation, differently from Catholicism (Dunstan 1962: 91).

Protestantism was introduced to Korea beginning in 1881 by missionaries of the Northern Methodist Church and Northern Presbyterian Church. This is more recent than Catholicism, which was introduced in 1603 by Yi Gwang-jeong, a Korean diplomat returned from Beijing carrying a world atlas and several theological books written by Matteo Ricci. The dissemination of Catholicism was ineffective because it was unknown to all but a handful of scholars who had contact with it as a branch of new study from the West. In contrast, Protestant missionaries had great interest in disseminating Christianity to the general public and used many "people-centered" methods: the translation of the Bible using the Korean alphabet, education and medical services, etc. Christianity has the shortest history among other religions introduced to Korea, with a quarter of the population of South Korea already classified as believers. According to statistics provided by the National Statistical Office of Korea, approximately half of the South Korean population has a religion, out of which the percentage of Christians (Protestants and Catholics combined) is estimated to be as high as 50%, with 35% being Protestant[2]; however their influence on society and culture already outstrips that of Buddhism and Confucianism.

Korean Protestantism has been at odds with religions based on polytheism and a plurality of spirits, primarily with shamanism. Protestants still have a tendency to condemn all Korean traditional customs as pagan attributes to be disdained. The ancestor worship ceremony called *jesa* is prohibited; and all implements with shamanic attributes, such as the altar and shrine to house gods, have been neglected or destroyed.

An understanding of Confucianism, however, is crucial for understanding contemporary Korean society, as well as all former dynasties on the Korean peninsula since the beginning of Korean history; and the contribution of Confucianism should not be overlooked in an account of the development of Protestantism in Korea. Protestants have found similarities between Christian and Confucian rhetoric. For example, the facts that good relationships between human beings are emphasized in the fifth commandment and that Jesus Christ stressed filial piety and affection for neighbors give grounds for the possibility of harmony with

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[2] Korean statistical information service http://kosis.kr (accessed December 16, 2011).

Confucianism. Instead of *jesa*, a special worship service commemorating deceased family members is organized by Protestant believers for the memorial days, but without the preparation of food and bowing that traditionally takes place beforehand. Protestant believers pay a visit to church elders on national holidays, moreover, and are encouraged to take part in community service for the benefit of neighbors. On the whole, the Confucian code for behavior is still observed by the majority of Protestants. Even though it appears that Korean Protestantism appears to have employed only Western modes of expression, it has actually maintained accord with the traditional Korean principles based on the Confucian tradition.

Seen from this perspective, Protestantism looks remote from the shamanic tradition and in some ways close to the Confucian tradition. Nonetheless, the influence of shamanism as a substratum of Korean culture is still very evident in Korean Protestantism. In fact, traits of Confucianism and shamanism are found almost equally in Korean Protestant culture. Actually, many scholars lay more stress on the impact of shamanism than Confucianism on the reality of Protestant practice. The Christian culture of Korea looks quite Westernized in terms of church architecture, music and language adopted from Western Christianity; but it rests on a substratum apparently rooted in shamanic behavior and ethnic culture.

> The environment in which Korean people began accepting God as a being with a personality should be attributed more to the role of Korean traditional shamanism than to Neo-Confucianism. (Yu 1965: 93)

Official Christianity and Folk Christianity: Shamanic Behavior in the Korean Church

Jang Namhyeok has classified the Protestantism of Korea as follows: official Christianity operating on the basis of faith and disciplines decreed by an institute or system initiated and directed by a group of religious specialists, and folk Christianity based on activities or religious behavior maintained regardless of the direction of specialists, including behavior that is somewhat emancipated from the intermediation of an institutional authority. The folk Christianity of Korea involves

belief or activity managed by lay people without special status verified by a denomination or seminary. Followers of folk Christianity are more interested in obtaining spiritual power and assistance from religion than in contemplation or obeying legitimate disciplines (Jang 2002: 58). While official Christianity fulfills all processes based on creeds legitimated in seminaries, which leads to trust in the truthfulness of every expression and word in the Bible, folk Christianity accents the personal experiences of lay people, which generates a format similar to Korean shamanism.

REVIVAL MEETING AT PRAYER HOUSES AND THE TRADITION OF SHAMANISM

Jang asserts that the proliferation of folk Christianity is bolstered mainly by the so-called "revival meeting," which encourages people to experience Baptism of the Holy Spirit, along with other prayer meetings organized at places like mountain prayer houses or as daybreak prayer meetings which are believed to have been adopted from prayer rites on mountains occupied by shamans (Jang 2002: 67). The prayer house is a unique religious institution found only in Korea. It is frequently visited by lay people and religious leaders when they have a special wish to accomplish or when they want to experience personal Baptism of the Holy Spirit individually or in groups organized by churches or Christian gatherings. There are a couple of globally renowned prayer houses, such as the Choi Jasil Memorial Fast Prayer House in Osalli and the Haneolsan Prayer House; however, it is extremely difficult to calculate the exact number because of the increasing number of such houses across South Korea and the fact that they are not registered by the government.

According to No Bongok, the first prayer house in the present form was Geumgangsan Gidokgyosuryeonwon (The Christian Training Centre at Geumgang Mountain) established in 1925. CTCG is the first prayer house in history that is meant for religious leaders or young people to cultivate their minds and has facilities for large-scale accommodation. The establishment of CTCG signaled the establishment of prayer houses in the Protestant Church of Korea similar to the cloisters of Europe. While Catholic cloisters accented lifelong spiritual devotion and rigid lifestyles, Korean prayer houses have aimed mainly to provide

lay people and pastors with spaces to concentrate on intensive prayer for the short term. At the same time,, the social and economical disorders of the 1920s drove people to conversion and mysticism to gain spiritual comfort as a withdrawal from reality. Such unfavorable conditions for Christianity during the occupation made Christians seek seclusion and devote themselves to prayer (No 2001: 28). They would make dugouts in the countryside or mountains in order to devote themselves only to the religious life in seclusion from ordinary churches. The Korean Church, which finally surrendered to Japanese colonialists by adopting the compulsory visit to the Japanese Shinto shrine in 1938, urged many sincere Christians against the decision to leave the Church and maintain religious belief by way of individual prayer. There followed a persecution or execution of Christians who did so. The tradition of prayer houses has more similarities with Korean shamanism than with the cloisters of Europe. Shamans traditionally visit an auspicious site in the mountains for prayer or to experience possession by gods. They visit mountains in order to experience a more individual encounter with gods or to pray for a customer with a problem or a desire. The mountains visits differ depending on the gods each shaman serves, but there are a few renowned mountains amongst shamans. The method of prayer is not prescribed concretely. One can employ meditation as prayer, sometimes while using basic instruments, especially when shamans gather to determine whether a person is destined to become a shaman.

Prayer in the mountains can be interpreted positively as a form of Koreanized Christian culture, a mixture between the teachings of the Bible, where a number of passages record that Jesus Christ prayed on a mountain, and the traditional belief of the Korean people who have constantly held mountains in awe. Nonetheless, prayer houses became the main places where the rituals of folk Christianity were organized without official Christian recognition. In the worship of prayer houses, various phenomena similar to Korean shamanism can frequently be detected. It is presided over by renowned ministers who borrow elements from shamanic rituals such as exorcism, prophecy and possession by spirits.

> They repeat the same hymn several times with eyes closed swinging their bodies back and forth or right and left. After a long hymn is sung, clamorous prayers are started and the "Holy Tongue" bursts out; then they fall into a state of trance, shouting unfathomable words as if they were bestowed by all the blessings from Heaven. (Choi 1995: 64)

In shamanic rituals, shamans are masters who preside over ceremonies observed by participants as audience. Similarly, the representative form of worship in prayer houses is that ministers with strong spiritual power are invited to preside over a ceremony in which believers participate. When the worship service begins, the blaring sounds of percussion instruments, other musical instruments and song lead participants into a state of trance or ecstasy as during a shamanic ritual.

Song and dance are the most important ingredients of shamanism. One can encounter gods while singing and dancing, which at the same time serve as means to lead participants into a trance. This takes places in the prayer houses as well, where clapping, percussion music and trance dance are stimulated and interpreted as a sign of Baptism by the Holy Spirit. Such worship is organized mainly in prayer houses, although parallel forms of worship are held in official Christianity as well under the name of *buheunghwe* (revival meeting). They offer lay people the chance to experience Baptism by the Holy Spirit in every season accompanied by such shamanic behavior.

THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SPIRITS

The rhetoric of shamanism is centered on the concept of ghosts or spirits, which coincides with the exorcism and miraculous healing accented in the Bible. There are several accounts in the Bible of Jesus Christ healing a patient possessed by an evil spirit, and exorcism and miraculous healing by spiritual power are heavily accented in Christianity, the main rhetoric of which emphasizes the confrontation of good, represented by God, and evil represented by Satan. According to the Bible, evil spirits were expelled by ordinary people like Jesus' disciples, too (see Acts 5: 12 and 19: 12). Under the influence of the concepts of spirits and the method of exorcism within Korean shamanism, Korean folk Christianity has formed an original conception of spirits mixed with shamanism. Shamanism has an understanding of the devil or Satan as diverse, normally classifying evil into groups such as devils or illnesses of misfortune or arrogance, etc., and ascribes all suffering to the consequences of satanic deeds. According to the traditional shamanic understanding, spirits who had unsolved agony or died unfairly and thus failed in reconciliation with the community, can wander the world and cause suffering to people. Therefore, misfortune and illness are related to special

spirits who are eventually the keys to solving problems. The association between the cause of misfortune and illness with deeds of evil spirits often appears in Bible, too; Evil spirits that cause disease and sickness (Matthew 10: 1), deceiving spirits (1 Timothy 4: 1), a fortune telling spirit (Acts 16: 16), a legion of demons (Luke 8: 30), etc. Some kinship is thus found with Korean shamanism. Illness is ascribed to the working of an evil spirit from outside in the same way that shamans assign an illness to the result of the anger of a mountain god, a grudge born by ancestors, the breaking of a taboo, or fate caused by exterior and supernatural factors. The names of evil spirits uttered from the mouths of lay people in the Korean Church feel more shamanic than biblical. All sorts of evil spirits, such as the spirit of the deceased mother-in-law, that of a virgin who never married, of a murdered shaman, a widow, of a beggar starved to death. All these reflect exactly a shamanic point of view about the divine world (Choi 1995: 66).

BAPTISM BY THE HOLY SPIRIT AND DELIVERY OF THE HOLY MESSAGE

The relationship between people and the gods of Korean shamanism is more private than in conventional religions in that mediation is mainly intended for encounters with spirits who want to reconcile their relationship with the community or with a particular god who is served by a shaman, not the supernatural being in charge of salvation or the afterlife. In case of Christianity, the individual encounter with God might not be so important because the relationship with the spiritual realm is mediated by the clergy; lay people need only to follow their words. After the Ascension of Jesus Christ, however, the Holy Spirit came into the world; and people were given a way of comprehending God through personal experience of the Holy Spirit. In this way, the relationship with the Holy Spirit became more individualized. Baptism by the Holy Spirit is emphasized in prayer houses or revival meetings. The main peculiarities are experienced in Baptism by the Holy Spirit are described by Christians: they feel a fire burning inside during prayer; they see the shape of God; they start to speak in a Holy Tongue; they are granted the ability to heal patients or are invited into a spiritual realm. All of these are extremely similar to the state of trance experienced by shamans when possessed by spirits or gods.

Minister Yu Changsu (Curate of Dongsan Church, Th. M. Soongsil University) has asserted that some Korean churches tend to consider the mystical phenomenon experienced during revival meetings as Baptism by the Holy Spirit. Yu categorized the distinctive features of Baptism by the Holy Spirit described in the Bible as: a special ability, prophecy, ecstasy, talent, wisdom, speaking a Holy Tongue, fantasy, voice, trembling, the sound of a shift, or a strong wind. He points out that today only some phenomena, like falling down, the sound of laughter, the sound of animals, screams and the illusion of fire are generally experienced. According to him, the latter are different from the real phenomena of possession by the Holy Spirit as described in the Bible.[3] The delivery of messages from god, called *gongsu* in Korean, is another aspect of encounters with the gods. *Gongsu* refers to messages delivered by shamans in a state of trance during rituals. The messages can concern the welfare of the family or consist of a prophecy relating to a living person that deceased ancestors want to deliver to their descendants; they are thus ultimately considered to be the words of the gods. To receive *gongsu* is one of the most important reasons to hold a shamanic ritual. Even though the formality of a ritual may be reduced, the *gongsu* cannot be omitted. Such a tendency is also detected in the Korean Church, where too much focus is laid on the sermon during the service. Korean Protestants are generally inclined toward an extreme fundamentalism and consider every word and expression in the Bible as The Truth, strongly believing that the contents of sermons delivered by ministers are the *logos* given by God. The preaching of a minister thus has an authority and function parallel to messages spoken by shamans.

The activity of delivering God's words heard during an individual encounter is exemplified by Song Myeonghee, a Protestant poet. Song is a female poet with cerebral palsy who created many poems on the basis of words given by God Himself. Dozens of her poems have been composed into gospels. She has stated that she can communicate with God in many situations, and her poems are considered to be real words from God.

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[3] The article "The presence of the Holy Spirit and shamanic possession are not differentiated in some churches," see http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=253660 (accessed March 04, 2012).

Recently she published a novel about the apocalypse according to Biblical eschatology with title of *The Sign* and said in the foreword that her book was based on a message delivered by God privately, as with her previous publications.

> One day I could not sleep for the pain in the whole body and tried to sleep with tranquilizers, but the Lord whispered into my ears, grabbing my sleeves.
>
> "My daughter! Listen to me. We have to talk!"
>
> "I have to sleep. Please, stop."
>
> "No, you have to listen to me."
>
> He continued to tell me a story repeatedly, even when I went to the toilet accompanied by my parents, but still couldn't urinate, so finally felt really vexed and irritated by having to listen to His words.
>
> "Are you keeping me awake to talk of such things? I already know them all." (Song 2004: 11–12)

Her latest book was chosen as a must-read for Christians by Christian media.

CRAVING FOR FORTUNE IN THIS LIFE

The act of offering is heavily emphasized in the Korean Church. The history of offering can be traced back to the period of the Old Testament, so its relationship with Christianity is inevitable. However, the behavior and the custom of offering in Korea are believed to have originated, rather, in the traditional understanding of shamanism, which emphasizes physical wellbeing in this life rather than salvation in the afterlife. There are special offerings for important occasions to insure success. Special prayer meetings are held during the period of university entrance examinations, or even held for a special political purpose, for instance to support a political party or political ideology. Similarly, just as shamans used to visit houses of the district controlled by them to wish fortune to residents, lay people of the Korean church are fond of the personal visits by pastors called *shimbang*, which are held regularly every season. The people ask them to pray for assistance with their wishes and concerns during their visit. On the whole, the way of thinking based on shamanic experience has urged Korean Protestants to have awe for God and constantly maintain their relationship with Him.

Korean Protestants, especially those of the older generation, still have a strong tendency to believe that the insincere fulfillment of the obligation to participate in church events can bring misfortune.

In part contrary to these tendencies, the notion that "God is good" invoked by Minister Cho Yong-gi emancipated Korean Protestants from the yoke of obligation toward the gods that originated from Confucianism and shamanism. It contributed to the development of Protestantism in Korea by realigning the relationship between human beings and God. He established the Yoido Full Gospel Church, the largest church in the world by congregation, which has initiated many Pentecostal movements considered to be suitable for Koreans, who are accustomed to mysticism and faith in blessing in this life. This church originated from shamanic behavior and has developed into a representative model of worship employed by the majority of Protestant churches in Korea, such as the Presbyterian, Methodist and Holiness Churches which cut across the boundary of Pentecostal churches. Cho stressed that, unlike shamanic gods, the nature of the God of Christianity is that of the God of peace and love who always cares and gives blessings and graces to people and does not demand the repetition of ceremonies or rites.

> While Buddhism talks about futility, Confucianism about ethics, morality and tradition, and Christianity about the rigor of God, Cho broke with the traditional point of view on gods, proclaiming "the good nature of God" who provided people in the darkness of despair with a chance to meet with God of love like a mother. (Lee 2006: 86)

> Probably the word karma was not new to Minister Cho, who grew up in a Buddhist family. Karma is a Buddhist term meaning the retribution for the deeds of a former life. Since he grew up in this background, he became convinced that God does not evaluate us by the deeds of a former life once we have accepted Jesus Christ as savior. He believed that if one accepts Jesus Christ, Jesus saves us from our sins and gives his beloved people only the best things in this life as well as in the World of God that will come in the future. (Eim 2006: 61)

Still, however, Cho's original theory also sows the seeds of the Gospel in shamanic soil; for he accents only the earthly good life, paving the way for the Korean people to accept Christianity without compunction. As a consequence, he was harshly criticized by many theologians, such as Harvey G. Cox (1995) and Walter J. Hollenweger (1997), as being a

product of shamanism that follows the old shamanic view that exaggerates the craving for welfare in this life.

HEAVEN AND HELL OBSERVED BY THE DEACONESS GU SUNYEON

In 2011 a book named *Heaven and Hell Observed by the Deaconess Gu Sunyeon* was published (Gu 2011). The book is a testimony of adeaconess who declared she had been invited to Heaven and Hell by a divine power, and it contains a great variety of the aforementioned shamanic elements found in Korean folk Christianity. Gu says that she was led by two angels while praying after the serious injury of her husband in a car accident that was allegedly caused because he went to a ski resort instead of church on Sunday. She describes the thrilling scenes observed during the unearthly journey.

> Then I was walking with angels on the golden path to meet the Lord. Oh God, the flowers around us began to sing praises and talk to us! While I was thinking "by what miracle could the flowers talk?" an angel realized my thoughts and said: "The flowers of the world where you live blossom, fade and fall, but the flowers of Heaven never fall and praise God eternally." "Yes. I understood." (Gu 2011: 29)

The author is a deaconess without a status legitimized by Protestant authorities, but her experience is accepted as a real and legitimate testimony. She thus leads prayer meetings organized by official churches in which she gives her testimony.

> As everybody knows, I am an "ignorant" deaconess who didn't even cross the threshold of a seminary. I am incapable of answering, if questioned by ministers or theologians of great learning and experience with their theological standards (In the foreword, ibid: 9).

In her book, the following fundamental shamanic attributes representative to folk Christianity can be detected:

(1) The personal encounter with God in a state similar to trance,
(2) The delivery of messages from God,
(3) The unconditional charisma of her words as *gongsu*,

(4) Craving for physical fortune and the belief that the failure to fulfill obligations can cause misfortune.

Gu's testimony has been condemned by many theologians, and participation in her meetings have been banned by the General Assembly of Presbyterian Churches of Korea for the following reason:

> Her testimony is illogical and unbiblical. Gu says that there are social classes and discrimination against residents in Heaven based on the amount of offerings and effort to disseminate the Gospel that they gave while on earth. Her assertion about Heaven is overwhelmingly related with the notion of "give and take" and craving for material fortune in this world. The idea that God's blessing and salvation are given as compensation for good deeds is against the teaching of the Gospel. Her remembrance of Heaven as having flowers that talk and donkeys that sing "Joy to the World" in unmeasured rhythm and melody is childish. For its part, Hell, described by her as a place where hands are cut off for theft and as an area divided into various sections according to crimes committed, such as for drinking, for smoking, for having drugs, is highly exaggerated and retaliatory. Be that as it may, her childish and unbiblical testimony have gained a high reputation because she preaches such simple messages as "to serve ministers and make offerings as often as possible" in a highly elated atmosphere filled with song and dance.[4]

Nevertheless, because of the opposition of other churches, the General Assembly is still reluctant to execute its decision to ban her meetings.

SHAMANISM AND COMMUNAL SPIRIT

The interaction of shamanism with other religions has been occurring constantly throughout Korean history. Korean shamanism was able to co-exist without special conflict with Buddhism, which dominated Korean culture from the period of Three Kingdoms (57–668) until the Goryeo Dynasty (918–1392); but antagonism towards shamanism

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[4] The article "The General Assemly of Prebysterian churches condemns Gu to be a heretic." http://www.amennews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=11562 (accessed February 2, 2012).

rose to a climax in the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1897), when Confucianism was adopted as the official political philosophy. Confucianism had also been introduced into Korea at the time of the Three Kingdoms (4 B.C.–7 A.D.), but when it came to dominate Joseon culture as a rigid philosophical regime, it made shamanism an object of persecution. Shamans were then allocated the lowest status and suffered from many social restrictions. Shamanism was officially banned in laws prohibiting it and expelling shamans from the city. It was difficult to root it out, however, because it has served as a basic substratum of Korean culture for millennia. Korean people had a tendency to rely on shamanism and gods regardless of social status. For ages, they had organized rites for divine trees in towns, which eventually evolved into the communal festival worshiping mountain gods that includes prayers for blessings (Yu 1975: 214).

Kim Taegon, a prominent folklorist in the field of Korean shamanism, has attempted to conceptualize the essence of shamanic rites in terms of the eternal maintenance of existence.

> The purpose of rituals is to send the souls of people out to the afterworld because the soul inside a body never disappears, even though the body ceases to exist after death. During the life, the body, which is of a material nature with physical dimensions, has a momentary, tangible existence that can last only for a limited time, while the soul has an intangible eternal existence that exists forever, regardless of the extinction of its bodily, spatial attributes. Therefore, man is divided into two parts, body and soul. The status when the soul is inside the body is called survival, and the status when the soul is separated from the body is called death. The soul, a person's intangible existence, is thus the archetype of the body, one's tangible existence. The separation of the body from space is death, through which man returns to intangible existence and the archetype achieves eternal existence. I believe that the change of the soul into intangible existence amounts to the return to "chaos," the archetype of tangible existence transcending temporality through the extinction of bodily extensity and tangible spatial existence. (Kim 1997: 296)

The eternal maintenance of existence is not confined only to the personal. Traditional Korean shamanic festivals predominantly stress reconciliation with the community and ancestors. The welfare of a family and its descendants is secured by seeking an auspicious abode for the ancestors, while evil spirits are cast out from the village during

communal ceremonies or festivals that secure the welfare of the entire community. In comparison with other countries, the function of maintaining the community is more prominent in Korean shamanism than the function of mediating between the divine and human realms. Rites for casting out evil spirits or healing people are epitomized not only by a process of personal interaction with spirits. More important is the process of seeking the reason for the damaged relationship in order to solve the problems and send deadly spirits away. At the heart of Korean shamanism, moreover, can also be found the notion of communal spirits. Persons' relationship with their surroundings that is family members, community and ancestors, is always stressed; and attempts to understand the details of spirit activity are in this context. As pointed out by Don Baker, Koreans have tended to seek solutions to ubiquitous human problems by transcending individuality through identification with a larger community (Baker 2008: 8). Despite its rejection by Confucian officialdom, the tendency of shamanism to stress the maintenance of community's welfare actually amounts to a common denominator with the Confucianism that was the dominant cultural force during the Joseon Dynasty. It allowed shamanism to maintain its position as cultural substratum even during that era.

SHAMANISM AND CONFUCIAN RITUAL

During the Joseon Dynasty, Confucian scholars were irritated by the custom of ancestor worship just as Christian officials came to be later. From antiquity, Koreans had followed the custom of organizing the ceremony called *jesa* to commemorate their ancestors, as well as a variety of shamanic rituals to escort souls to Heaven; and these could not be abolished by any means. Though Neo-Confucian scholars strongly believed that souls vanish immediately after death, they inevitable had to draw a compromise with the tradition rather than deny it. Classical Confucian philosophers were more skeptical, but Neo-Confucian scholars reasoned that the presence or absence of ancestral spirits was less important than whether participants in the ceremony were sincere in their displays of reverence for their parents and grandparents, or whether participation in the ceremony stimulated feelings of gratitude among the living toward the departed. In other words, what the par-

ticipants did and felt in a ritual was more important than what they believed (Baker 2008: 60).

An understanding of the behavior related with ancestor worship and the manner of carrying out that duty is related with "*li*" (禮), commonly translated as 'rites,' as a method of achieving the ultimate destiny of *ren* (仁). The notion of *ren* lies at the core of Confucianism from its first introduction into Korea in the ancient period of the Three Kingdoms. It is very hard to define the concept of *ren* with an English translation, but Dian L. Rainey proposed 'humanity' as the most appropriate translation because it is the most common one and comes closer to expressing what the term means.

> Humanity is a moral attitude. Humanity is the umbrella that includes all the virtues—being honest, sincere, wise, courageous, practicing filial piety, and sympathy toward others. All of these moral building blocks bring us to the attitude of humanity. (Rainy 2010: 34)

To practice this humanity for life is the ideal of human behavior; but because the meaning of *ren* is obscure and its definition ambiguous, Confucius attempted to help people approach the core of its meaning by setting standardized patterns of appropriate behavior. This code of behavior is called *li* (rites). For Confucius, rites are the external manifestation of inner morality. Rites give us socially acceptable ways of behaving well. However, they are not performed just for ritual's sake: there must be an inner moral component (ibid.: 2010: 39). The term *li* can be translated as "humankind's behavior in an official context." The *Routledge Curzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism* gives the definition for this notion using English words like 'ritual, rite, decorum, propriety, code of conduct' (Yao 2003). For Confucius, rites were not a meaningless formality; they had to be fulfilled with kind-heartedness to obtain their full meaning. An outer guideline (*li*) without an inner spirit (*ren*) would be useless. Rites performed without a kind-hearted spirit were meaningless. Nevertheless, a personal attitude of kind-heartedness without outer guidelines (rites and etiquette) would lead to confusion and chaos. Both, therefore, had to be combined. Rites were the standard for human behavior, and the latter was the spirit of all ritual behavior. Each and every social encounter is accompanied by the performance of certain rituals; all seeing, hearing, speaking and doing involves in eti-

quette. Rituals therefore play an important role in the private, as well as the political sphere.[5]

In Korea, the concept of *li* was disseminated to all persons, irrespective of social classes; and it still exerts an enormous influence in modern Korean society. It was thus inevitable for shamanism and Confucianism to seek reconciliation, which took the form of many Confucian marks in shamanic rites. In fact, the rites and ceremonies of Korean shamanism constitute part of the process of reaching the ultimate purpose of humanity, *ren* and *li*, a form of ritual activity that has long exerted an enormous influence on Korean society as a cultural substratum. Jeong Jinhong asserts that the phenomenon of Korea shamanism is not limited only to its dimensions as cognitive or tangible attributes of Korean culture. It is significant because it became a normative law of behavior for Koreans people (Jeong 2004: 12).

SHAMANISM AND THE KOREAN SENE OF OBLIGATION, *UIMU*

The Korean term, *uimu* (의무) means the duty or obligation to maintain the relationship with community members. An analogous concept was defined by Ruth Benedict, who conducted a study on the behavior of Japanese people during World War II. She called attention to the Japanese notion of *on*, which is translated as 'indebtedness'. It is similar to obligation, but with Japanese sub-notions of *gimu* and *giri*, the way to repay indebtedness. *On* is a debt or obligation passively incurred or from the point of view of the recipient. From the point of view of active repayment, the recipient then "pays" one's debts or "returns these obligations." The limitless repayments of indebtedness are called *gimu*, while an obligation that exists among individuals in either hierarchical or egalitarian relationships is *giri* (Benedict 1946: 116). The term *uimu* is the Korean variation of *gimu*, using the same Chinese characters, but pronounced differently according to Korean phonetics. *Uimu* can be said to be a Korean parallel of the obligation to repay a debt, as outlined by

[5] Chinese Thought and Philosophy, subsection on Confucius and Confucianism http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/confucius.html. For more details, see Li 1998; Rainey 2010.

Benedict, but Korean patterns of behavior reveal how the notion got expanded in Korea.

As mentioned before, Korean shamanism also lays focus on the maintenance of community. Even a rite with an individual purpose, such as wishes for enhanced welfare or recovery from an illness or injury is actually meant to normalize the relationship with ancestors or spirits. In the case of healing rites, the purpose is not confined to simply casting out the origin of disease or misfortune. Priority is given to reconciliation of the relationship between the person involved and the ghost or spirit who is believed to be the source of the misfortune. According to Korean folk belief, souls of the deceased who have failed to establish a proper relationship with people during their life are destined to wander in the world as a ghost until the relationship is reconciled. In most cases this happens if there is an obligation left unfulfilled in the family or if there remains an individual grudge against someone. Such a grudge is mainly linked to the relationship between people, which is the primary factor to consider in ensuring that the soul reaches the afterworld. *Cheondogut* (the rite leading the soul to a better place) provides a meaningful opportunity for descendants to fulfill their *uimu* toward their deceased ancestors and thus prevent the ill fortune which might occur due to an unfulfilled *uimu*.

The shamanic lyrical epic *The Princess Bari,* which describes the life of Princess Bari, the guardian god of shamans who leads souls to Heaven. According to this epic, the souls of persons who died without offspring and so are not given a *Cheondogut* are depicted as souls who are deemed to wander aimlessly. This illustrates the notion that a person who has deviated from obligatory relationships forfeits the basic right to reach Heaven. The epic describes the souls observed by Bari on her way back from the afterworld as follows:

> She asks "those bottomless boats upon the Sea of Blood, crying like summer frogs as they go, what boats are they?" "Those carry souls who in the former life were unfaithful, betrayed the state, didn't love their brothers, gave with small measure and took with large measure, gave bad rice for alms and harmed others. Now those boats carry their souls crying to the hundred million four thousand hells."
>
> "And what are those boats without rowers?"
>
> "Those are the boats of souls who in the former life had no offspring, and now drift on the sea." (Seo 2000: 143–144)

Boats of souls who committed unrighteous deeds in their lives fall down to Hell, while those of souls without any offspring to offer them a ceremony don't even have oars with which to steer and are doomed to wander eternally with no destination. People without offspring are deprived of the chance to have the rites and ceremonies organized according to the obligations of family relationships.

Korean shamanism doesn't have many set values or an elaborate ethical structure. Good gods bestow good fortune and evil gods misfortune, although Koreans have strongly believed that even good gods could bring about a misfortune if not treated well. In fact, the difference between good gods and evil gods is so vague that it is impossible to draw a clear line between them (Yi 1991: 100). Therefore, shamanic rites aim to maintain the welfare of a family and community by way of reconciling relationships between human beings and gods. Against this background, the maintenance of the relationship between people and gods was seen as an obligatory duty needed to prevent possible future misfortune. Good consequences are secured if the obligation is faithfully carried out; otherwise serious punishment will follow. A similar example of obligation in relationships appears in the Korean Church. Korean Protestants, in their reliance on the traditional shamanic view of gods and spirits, could not comprehend the essence of the God of the Bible. The way of thinking based on shamanic experience urged Korean Protestants to have awe for God and to constantly maintain their relationship with Him as discussed in the section "Craving for fortune in this Life" above.

Secondary Confucianism in Korean Shamanism

The Confucianism of the Joseon Dynasty was the Neo-Confucianism which developed under the influence of Buddhism and Daoism. Neo-Confucianism is a branch of Confucianism that laid more emphasis on mental cultivation than former Confucian scholars devoted to the study of *li* (理)[6] as a normative principle and natural law with which to real-

[6] *Li* (理) differs from *li* (禮), ritual. In the context of Korean Neo-Confucianism, it is "the pattern or principle connecting the natural and social worlds, the foundation for unity between Heaven and humanity." It became the "keynote of the philosophical, cultural, and spiritual revival" of Neo-Confucianism, where it is a "self-demonstrating concept, like the idea of an idea, but firmly grounded in the specific actuality of things and events." (Yao 2003: 355)

ize its ends. Its theories were influenced by Buddhism and partially by Daoism. A new form of Confucianism, it began with the purpose of overcoming the impact of Buddhism, but it actually absorbed some of the philosophy and inclinations of Buddhism (Yun 2004: 259–260). Korean Neo-Confucianism abided by the concept of *li* (禮, ritual) in such a way that it might seem to be a process of study and realization of that concept. There is nothing comparable in Japan, and only a few similar ideas are found in China, such as the trend of esteeming ritual as sometimes so seriously sanctified as to merit the sacrifice of one's life (ibid.: 271).

A new, secondary form of Confucianism came to appear within the structures of shamanism during the course of the mergence and transformation of the one with the other. It was impossible for the Neo-Confucianism of the Joseon Dynasty to interact directly with Christianity, which opposed the class society then so ingrained with male chauvinism that constituted one of the main foundations of that dynasty. It did so, however, in the form it took when fused with shamanism. Korean Protestants accustomed to the long shamanic tradition of exorcism, emphasizing individual experience of gods and souls, unwittingly introduced elements of shamanism while molding the Protestant setting on Korean soil. After the Korean War in the 1950s, moreover, they came to employ something of the modified, "secondary" form of Confucianism that had become a part of Korean shamanism during the Joseon Dynasty. That "secondary" Confucianism as percolated through shamanism is marked by three concrete methods for relieving believers from the obligatory relationship demanded in various situations with gods, ancestors and other people: formal procedures; community administration; and charismatic leadership.

FORMAL PROCEDURES: THE FULFILLMENT OF OBLIGATION

The procedures of shamanic rites are quite complicated. Long preparation and participation from the beginning to the end are required, regardless of region and function. Shamanic rites, called *gut* in Korean, are performed by community members together or, if for a deceased person, by a group of shamans and his/her helpers. With very few exceptions, rites are performed as a communal activity, with many formalities and procedures required for the preparation and execution. How formalities are conducted is important. Probably in line with the normal Korean inclination to emphasize formalities and procedures, *gut*

used to require preparation that took from one day to a few weeks; but due to the simplification that has come about in according with modern lifestyle, the duration of rites now rarely exceeds a day, which might seem to indicate the declining significance of *li* (禮, ritual). We cannot deny the occurrence of supernatural phenomena during *gut,* however the majority of the procedures used in preparation for *gut* are more significant as symbols and actions representing the supernatural realm than as means to insure real participation by a divine being.

According to the understanding of *li* (ritual) as explained above, more important than the procedures themselves is the attitude of participants. More important is *gut*'s symbolic purpose of memorializing respect for parents and ancestors—and in this way carrying out one's *uimu* (obligation to maintain relationships). By enacting a *gut* to transfer the soul of a deceased to the other world, moreover, persons performing the rite can comprehend the traditional philosophy about death and the afterlife more easily. Shaman Yi Yongbun (55) of Bucheon City has been engaged in shamanic work for 15 years. She experienced possession by a spirit when she was 19 years old. After long, unsuccessful resistance to the calling from a god, she finally took up this work at the age of 28, but became intensively engaged in her career only 15 years ago. She speaks of the main idea of *Cheondogut*, the ritual to lead souls to the afterworld, as follows:

> I am not sure if a misfortune will be caused only because the C*heondogut* was missed. After parents die, they can show up in the dreams of children who really cared about them to demand something. There is no child without roots. Nobody was born out of nowhere, as if they fell from the sky. Everyone has their parents. If children miss a rite for parents who lived a hard life, they cannot be relieved of worry. The most important idea of *Cheondogut* is for people to comfort themselves after sending their parents to the afterworld and paradise. I think this is an expression of filial piety.[7]

COMMUNITY ADMINISTRATION

Healing disease and the maintenance of order in a community used to be tasks for shamans before the medical and natural sciences were developed.

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[7] According to personal interview, at her shrine, December 05, 2011

As witnessed by many historical records, a shaman was summoned if an epidemic spread or an omen of bad luck appeared. The status of shamans was among the lowest social class in ancient Korean society; but their service was believed to be indispensible; and they were granted almost absolute power, especially when delivering a message from the ancestors or gods. The advice and experience of shamans played important roles in carrying out all sorts of village matters and individual ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, and even house building. Therefore, in addition to the official bureaucracy, a religious bureaucracy centered on shamans had an enormous significance in Korea.

The authority of the shaman is illustrated by the system called *dangol*. This refers to the system by which a district is looked after by a shaman, something like a priest or clergyman. There are two categories of shamans in Korea according to the way of being initiated into shamanhood. First is *gangsinmu*, spirit shaman, one who becomes a shaman after being miraculously possessed by a spirit. The second is *seseupmu*, heredity shaman, one who inherits the job from a family member. Kim Taegon maintains that the number of spirit shamans is continuously shrinking in Korea.

In any case, Kim maintains that traditionally the northern part of Korean peninsula, where the natural environment was barren and many invasions were experienced, was dominated by spirit shamans, while the number of heredity shamans grew in the southern part, where society is more stable and civilized (Kim 1991: 16). The process of the shift in the center of shamanism from spirit shamans to hereditary shamans because of this social change before the formation of the modern Korea as proposed by Kim displays the extent to which bureaucratic structures originating in official Confucianism influenced the structure of shamanism.

From the diachronic perspectives of culture study religious study, using the materials collected during fieldwork, we see that at the very beginning a person was appointed a shaman according to the degree of miraculous power shown in the individual trial of sorcery. The new shaman relies on the mental state of community members. Having a primitive religious inclination, the shaman improves the technique of sorcery or miraculous power voluntarily or when stimulated by other people. When the technique of sorcery improves under the influence of the mental state of the community, the shaman takes on charismatic leadership with a social dimension. This is the basis on which a shaman

solidifies his or her official status in the social context. Thus shamanism with a social foundation formalized by religious power systemizes and reinforces the lineage and finally settles its position in society.

I believe that in the end the meaning of miraculous power died out, after shamanic authority was systemized and transmitted hereditarily, so the necessity to demonstrate or disguise power and compete with others disappeared. (Kim 1981: 442–443)

While going through these processes, a shamanic structural system was formed in towns and villages. This system is more clear cut in the countryside, where direct intervention from the government was rather rare. In a *dangol* district, clerical authority was systemized and transmitted hereditarily. Shamans were obliged to take part in and carry out all sorts of rites, irrespective of the amount of remuneration, should something relevant happen in his/her district.

CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP: TRANSITION FROM SORCERY TO SHAMANIC AUTHORITY

As a result, Korean shamans obtained a privilege to execute the traditional *uimu* on the behalf of Korean people and finally got endowed with religious charisma which helped shamanism to be positioned as one of elements composing social and cultural strata in Korea.

Since the Joseon Dynasty Confucianism was employed for the purpose of the maintenance of the authority of governors as well as for the welfare of the community. It instilled a veneration of hierarchy and encouraged rationality through teaching elementary ethics. This tradition yielded a tendency to unconditional obedience and loyalty to one's elders and superiors. In modern Korea during the regime of authoritative governments following after Korean War, special courses were arranged in schools and workplaces to encourage loyalty to the government and patriotism in order to maintain confidence in authority when industrialization policies were carried out. The long endurance of the regime of North Korea, where dictatorship based on the hereditary transmission of power lingers, can be interpreted as a consequence of manipulating the Confucianism inherent in Korean tradition. Shamanism, with its roots in Confucian society where hierarchical structure is emphasized, could not avoid this influence.

As the main order of folk Confucianism became formulated through many processes during the changeover to the *dangol* system. Shamans obtained a religious charisma. They came to obtain this charismatic power when delivering message from the deceased or the gods, or when casting out evil spirits.

The Confucianism as Percolated through Shamanism in the Folk Christianity of Korea

As was noted above, the procedures of shamanic rituals were previously perceived as a venue for substantive contact with spirits and souls from a different realm, although during transition periods the significance of miraculous power was denied and the procedures were simplified, thus duties and obligations as a discipline of *li* (禮, ritual) was highlighted rather than the intrinsic meaning of the procedures. These procedures became the means by which to realize *uimu*, the obligatory elements of relationships with other community members, rather than as a means to contact the gods. I would like to suggest that the elements of Confucianism described in the previous part that percolated through shamanism still exists in the community spirit of Protestantism. Elements of shamanism relating to polytheism have been neglected or banned; but other elements. For example mysticism, exorcism, and possession by spirits, were introduced into the customs of Protestantism. At the same time, secondary Confucianism also began to exert an influence. Elements of shamanic mysticism are dominant in folk Christianity, yet elements of secondary Confucianism are also a part of official Christianity. They serve to justify and systemize Christian authority through spiritual leaders with shamanic charisma.

FORMAL PROCEDURES

In comparison with shamanic rites, which require from half a day to a few days, the rites of Protestant worship and chapel attendance do not take much time and are very simple in form. In addition, characteristics of secondary Confucianism appear in ways other than worship itself. As discussed in the part "craving for fortune in this life" Korean

Christians had a strong tendency to believe that the insincere fulfillment of the obligation to participate in church events can bring misfortune under the influence from a traditional belief that they should constantly maintain a good relationship with gods. Such behavior can be explained in the respect of fulfillment of *uimu* to protect a community or a family from a potential misfortune with emphasizing the significance of participation. Although the notion of "God is Good" invoked by minister Cho lifted the traditional burden to maintain the *uimu* from lay people and facilitated them to approach to Christian God, it could not resolve the behavior to emphasize the significance of ritual and participation.

The Protestant culture of Korea involves many activities besides Sunday worship. Meetings and services are organized several times a week to encourage the participation of lay people, such as dawn prayer meetings, overnight Friday prayer meetings, cell meetings, the midweek Wednesday chapel services, mission work on the streets, and other social service activities. The frequency of participation in such meetings is not directly connected with salvation according to the Bible; but they are very frequently accompanied by elements of folk Christian mysticism such as experience of the Holy Spirit of God, exorcism, and miraculous healing, etc.

During the first session at the seminar entitled "How to Renew the Customs of Worship in the Korean Church," given by the Academy of Korean Church Development, discussion focused on the variety of worship forms which used to be seen as a positive stimulus to Korean church development, but which now are seen as demanding too much energy and need reconsideration. According to information for the press, Kim Gyeongjin, professor of the theory of preaching and worship at Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary,) argues that many of the forms of prayers formulated during the indigenization of Christianity functioned as a channel for shamanic theology, accenting blessings and fortune in this life in such a way that it intruded into Korean Christianity.[8]

The tendency of Protestants to lay emphasis on the participation in Church activities is the blend among the traditional shamanic view on *uimu* and the Confucian *li* (禮).

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[8] The article "Korean Church Exhausted from Worship," http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=250799 (accessed December 29, 2011).

COMMUNITY ADMINISTRATION

The Korean substratum that lays emphasis on the value of community led to Koreanized customs within Protestantism. In some ways different from the *dangol* system of Korean shamans, Korean church activities are not confined to a certain district or region. Thanks to the development of transportation, Protestant believers came to have the possibility of selecting a church with a more "powerful minister" or better "blessing atmosphere"; and ministers are no longer blessed with the charismatic authoritarianism that used to be bestowed upon shamans.

A new custom was devised on the basis of traditional community spirit in order to cope with the rise of individualism among lay people and the decline in church attendance—as in Europe or the USA where churches are rarely visited except on Christian holidays. This custom takes the form of cell meetings (a.k.a. cell groups, home groups, home fellowship, etc.). Initiated by minister Cho Yong-gi, church members are divided into cell groups according to the locations where they live and encourage the member of a cell headed by a lay person to have a service on workdays. The cell structure is intended to recreate the atmosphere of a church and to activate missionary meetings or Bible study. The intention is also to help prevent the decline in church authority and the decreasing number of church-goers.

One of the primary reasons for the explosive growth of the Pentecostal movement lies in the cell group system. This movement has its roots, not only in secondary Confucianism, but also in the Christian community of the early church, where meeting in houses was one of the foundations of growth. Through their small group meetings, Christians in the first century had access to fellowship, Bible study, and communion services (Lee 2009: 105). This method was employed later by John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church. A cell is formed by uniting a couple of adjacent urban districts and appointing a lay person as leader. This person is then responsible for organizing chapel worship and other prayer meetings without the interference of ministers. A feature of the Korean Holy Spirit Movement is the cell group meeting. The Yoido Full Gospel Church, headed by minister Cho, attained 20 to 30 per cent annual growth during the first three decades after its establishment because of its well-structured cell group ministries. Most Korean churches have adopted this system and employ the cell group system as a fundamental source of church growth (ibid.: 135–136). This

format promotes community spirit and spontaneously establishes a hierarchy between ministers and lay people. A special visit by ministers to the houses of church members, called *simbang* in Korean, is arranged a couple of times a year, with the visits planned according to the division of cell districts. During these visits, the minister listen to matters related to the family, gives a prayer for the family members, and holds a short worship service. Though modern Protestantism distances itself from the traditional shamanic *dangol* practice in that believers are free to go beyond their own locality to seek places of worship, it has been suggested that the Korean Church cherishes these visits because, by custom the Korean people were continuously visited by the shaman in charge of a *dangol* district (Yi 1991: 103).

CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

While the lay people were liberated from the traditional obligatory relationship with gods and many functions and systems of shamanism like *simbang,* similar to *dangol,* and community spirits were applied to administrate churches, Protestant ministers obtained a religious charisma which was formed for heredity shamans. The words of ministers were regarded in the same light with *gongsu* and finally granted ministers with the superiority over lay people. Moreover, Korean Protestantism becomes alike to system of heredity shamans examined by Kim Taegon in the respect that the number of churches where sons take over the duty of fathers and become ministers in the church is increasing since 1990-s.

As with shamanism, the Korean Church has no single institute to control and supervise the behavior and decisions of ministers. Every diocese has a center, but there is no centralized official body that can systematically examine and control how reliable and reasonable from the perspective of the Bible are such phenomena of folk Christianity as the journey to Heaven and Hell, Baptism by the Holy Spirit, mystical experiences, and the insistence on personal opinion in the name of God. In these conditions, the Korean Church has been inclined to divinize its leaders. The number of religious institutions divinizing their leaders within the system of Koreanized Protestantism surpasses the global average. According to the research of Tak Ji-il, who devoted his life to the study of Korean Christian heresy, the number of heretic Protestant churches registered as official Christian denominations is 45; and the

number of leaders of unregistered institutions who regard themselves as incarnations of God or Jesus Christ is still uncounted.[9]

SYSTEMIZATION PROCESSES OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

The current situation within the Korean Church is similar to the transition process that occurred within the shamanic system—transformation from the domination of spirit shamans to heredity shamans, as asserted by Kim Taegon. As was noted above, however, one can doubt this assertion because, in fact, the number of heredity shamans has abruptly deceased, whereas spirit shamans are increasing due to the social transition. One can doubt this assertion because, in fact, the number of heredity shamans has abruptly decreased, whereas spiritual shamans are increasing due to the social transition. Today, hereditary shamans are rarely found, and shamans say that even hereditary shamans cannot work without spiritual possession. It should be pointed out that already a few decades have passed since Kim Taegon conducted the research on the systemization of structure of shamanism, and the number of spiritual shamans is increasing again like mushrooms after rain during recent decades.

The cause can be explained in a number of respects such as the liberty of religions consolidated since the division of peninsula and increase of social uncertainty, etc. However very clearly the inclination to the techniques of sorcery and miraculous power in shamanic practice is still strong today. It is possible to say that the temporary period of transition from sorcery to a systemized shamanic authority based on region until the collapse of the Joseon Dynasty had already finished when intensive industrialization and westernization then began in modern Korean society after Korean War. However, the inclination of the people has been to return to the period of sorcery, although the shamans were automatically given religious charisma formed during the period of transition to charismatic leadership granted that the miraculous power was guaranteed.

Likewise, the Church ministers have been granted spiritual authority similar to shamanic authority because of this cultural background. As

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[9] See Tak 2009.

with Korean shamans, ministers whose miraculous ability is acknowledged by lay people are automatically granted systemized authority.

TABLE 1. Comparison of systemization processes of religious authority

<table>
<tr><th>SHAMANISM</th><th>PROTESTANTISM</th></tr>
<tr><td>Evaluation by miraculous ability and the formation of charismatic leadership</td><td rowspan="4">The formation of Korean Protestantism under the overall influence of traditional shamanic practices as a cultural substratum</td></tr>
<tr><td>The intervention of Confucianism</td></tr>
<tr><td>The setting up of dangol and solidification of official status</td></tr>
<tr><td>Temporarily systemized shamanic authority based on districts</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">INTENSE SOCIAL TRANSITION DURING THE PERIOD OF INDUSTRIALIZATION AFTER KOREAN WAR</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">The collapse of the dangol system</td><td>Evaluation of ministers in terms of their spiritual and the formation of religious leadership</td></tr>
<tr><td>Intervention of secondary Confucianism as percolated through shamanism</td></tr>
<tr><td>Voluntary visits by worshippers seeking techniques of sorcery</td><td>Voluntary visits by lay people seeking a religious leader and the arrangement of districts in terms of cell meetings</td></tr>
<tr><td>Systemized shamanic authority</td><td>The systemized authority of religious leaders</td></tr>
</table>

In present-day Korea, the spiritual power of Protestant ministers which has grown in the mental soil of the Korean people, with their traditional preference for mystical experience, has come to be marked by charismatic leadership. In the process, some formalities of secondary Confucianism as percolated through shamanism have exerted a great deal of influence on the naturalization of Protestant culture in Korea.

Conclusion

The inclination to Westernization and the indigenous shamanic tradition exists like two blades of a sword in South Korea, which succeeded in the fastest industrialization in Asia. Shamanism, which exerted an enormous influence on the attitudes of the Korean people for millennia as a social substratum, was actually conciliatory towards foreign religions and philosophies such as Confucianism and Buddhism to blend with worldview of Korean people in the end, although it suffered constantly from the repression. Christianity was potentially no exception; but in the 1939 novel *The Portrait of a Shaman,* the Korean writer Kim Dongli attempted to describe the confrontation between shamanism and Christianity as the latter expanded its number from the beginning of the twentieth century, the heroin, a shaman called Mohwa, had a son called Uk and daughter called Nang with different family names. Nang, a mute, was good at painting. Uk, who ran away to the city, came back as a Protestant. Mohwa loved the son, but could not put up with the new religion. After some days Uk found his mother burning the Bible in the kitchen, dancing the shaman dance to cast the Christian ghost out from her home. While trying to stop her, Uk was accidentally stabbed by his mother with the sword used for the rite, and died. After his death a church was built at the village. Later Mohwa, when asked to perform a rite for a man drowned in a river, also drowned while in a state of trance (Kim 2010; Han 2000). After the success of this novel, Kim wrote a series of novels with similar plots in which shamanism and Christianity seem incompatible. For Mohwa, the God of Christianity in whom the son believed was nothing but one of the number of the gods she was serving. Furthermore, Christianity was perceived as a foreign ghost attempting to invade the religious purity of Korea, with its foundation on shamanism. In the novel, all the protagonists ultimately perish without a winner or loser.

Kim's novel, though created by a literary writer, not a sociologist, makes many important points about the Korean people. For a while the greatest obstacles for Protestants were confined to individual matters such as participation in the family rite for ancestor worship or the need to abstain from drinking and smoking, which are seen as sins by the majority of believers. However, with the rise of the authority and power of Protestantism in society, violent physical conflict could be anticipated.

Formulated on the relationship with more basic cultural substrata, Korean Protestantism is even gaining political weight with a growing number of Protestant politicians and economists. This is also partially encouraged by rhetoric supported by the logic of "the will of Lord." One who accepts Christianity in a non-Christian country has to be aware that it represents confrontation with tradition. Christians cannot but help being isolated or distanced from the traditional Korean lifestyle and cultural sphere. They are thus a minority; but they try to "Christianize" the entire culture so that the Christian lifestyle becomes generally accepted by society at large. They do so with the belief that such behavior is in accord with their dogmatic beliefs. Finally, being a Christian becomes a basic condition for achieving fame and prestige in society (Seo 2004: 625). As observed in history, the philosophies and religions introduced to Korea from abroad have tended to develop much faster than in their countries of origin, even to the point of developing a new improved format found nowhere else. This tendency will definitely be repeated in the case of Christianity. Throughout, the substratum of shamanism was in the background. Research into the relationship between Korean Protestantism and shamanism has been carried out in various fields. First of all, it was done by Christian seminaries, mainly with the purpose of preserving the purity of their faith by eliminating elements of shamanism. It has then been done by ethnologist to assert the existence of shamanic elements in the system of Protestantism and to reveal the character of shamanism as a substratum of Korea. In other words, one side had the idea that anything connected with shamanism is an obstacle; the other tried to cope with shamanic tradition by showing how it has actually become incorporated into Christianity. Since the format and pattern of shamanism originated on the basis of customs and habits spontaneously generated by the natural environment and cultural circumstances spontaneously, there is room to improve the confrontational relationship and provide motivation to accept the merits of others' religious practices and thus create a new cultural phenomenon It is undeniable that shamanism still has some unacceptable elements for Christians, such as exorcism and trance, although the using dance and song to express faith might be the most suitable mode of worship for the Korean people. It might be high time to remedy the stereotypical view that architecture and hymns in the Western style are more sacred than songs performed by Korean peasants to express their joy at life or houses built in the Korean style that blend in with the natural surroundings.

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Shirokogoroff's "Psychomental Complex" as a Context for Analyzing Shamanic Mediations in Medicine and Law (Tuva, Siberia)

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This article revisits Sergei Shirokogoroff's massive ethnography of Tungus/Manchu shamanism, aiming to demonstrate its continuing relevance for an analysis of Siberian "shamanic revival" at the vanguard of recent anthropological research in medicine, law and governance. With his Psychomental Complex of the Tungus *Shirokogoroff probed beneath the surface reality of ritual performances, revealing how Tungus shamans in the early twentieth century governed epidemics of spirit-induced psychosis in native north Asia by means of specialized tools and techniques. The article argues that this governmental skill of shamans has been intrinsic in two different periods in the history of Siberian shamanism, as these were recorded by Shirokogoroff (for the Tungus) and by the author (for post-Soviet Tuva) respectively. Drawing on the author's research on shamanic retaliatory rituals of countercursing, this article offers an unusual analysis of what "shamanic revival" means to those involved in it: that is, clients (victims) and shamanic specialists (as undoers of curse afflictions). Consultations of countercursing cut across the official medical and judicial organization of the city by recovering the missing link: that is, culturally patterned forensic evidence for real crimes perpetrated by vicious shamanic killers. Shamans thus, either as arbiters of justice or as catalysts of injustice, pave the way toward new avenues of (il-)legality and criminal anthropology in the North.*

One of the most heated moments of my fieldwork with shamans and their clients in the Republic of Tuva (Russia) involved a debate between two shamans who were both members of an "Association [traditional

clinic] of Shamans" in Tuva's capital city, Kyzyl.[1] As no clients were present, the two practitioners greeted each other after a long period of absence (one of them had returned from several remote areas of Tuva, where he offered ritual services on his association's behalf[2]). However, their dialog soon drifted into an argument about whether shamanism and Buddhism, the two indigenous religions of Tuva, complemented—or excluded—each other. While both shamans and lamas were singled out as class enemies by the Stalinist regime in this borderline region of Siberia, the post-1990s restoration of these traditions entailed different trajectories and patterns of morality for each: that is, whereas Buddhism prevailed as the nation's representative religion and ethical doctrine, "shamanism" was dispersed in interpersonal conflicts related to crimes of curse (and sorcery) affliction. In this paper, I shall estimate the incidence of this operation of crime and punishment in Kyzyl, and analyze the role that a new class of shamanic specialists play in it.

The Ethnographic Context: Shamanism as a Mass Phenomenon

Arguments like the above were not unusual in 2003, despite Tuva's post-Soviet revival of shamanism as a national religion (see Lindquist 2005; 2006; 2008; Mongush 2006; Pimenova 2009; Zorbas 2011) and as a widely practiced "ethnic medicine." In fact, definitions of "shamanism" were central to scholarly representations of indigenous religiosity: for instance, one of Tuva's foremost scholars on Buddhism, Prof. Nikolaĭ

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[1] My fieldwork in Tuva lasted one year, in 2002–2003. As of 2003, Kyzyl had four associations of shamans, and a few more existed in the provinces. I do not disclose the name of the Association where I did fieldwork (although I am certain that most of the shamans there would not object to their names being cited).

[2] It was not uncommon for these associations to dispatch their shamans to remote regions. For instance, the association (my field site) had sixteen shamans registered, although its daily task force numbered no more than eight. There were no fixed hours of attendance, and the schedule of work was informal and flexible. Rules of conduct stood in effect during rituals for clients: once, a shaman-apprentice carelessly entered the room where the Association's headman was treating a client, only to be admonished by the chief on the spot.

Abaev, argued that—as a primeval cult that it is—shamanism applies more to the small-scale tribal groups of the Tungus (northeast Siberia) than to the elaborate, heaven-oriented religious cosmologies of central Asia; Tuva or Buryat religion, according to this, contain a repertoire of symbols and rites (e.g. ritual trees across the landscape) that signify a cultural pattern of worshipping the sky.[3]

Of course, shamanic practices and genealogies in Tuva have roots in the pre-Soviet period of nomadic living and ancestor-worship cults, as Tuva's foremost authority on shamanism, Mongush Kenin-Lopsan, has shown in his various folklore collections (for instance, 1995; 2002). Modern shamans also, especially those who are senior members of the associations in Kyzyl, emphasize a continuity in Tuvan shamanism, in terms of individual experiences of a terrible—but also enchanting—"gift" which was bestowed on them along a path of shamanic ancestors, real or imagined. Ulla Johansen rightly argues for the Tuva that concepts like "soul" (versus the body) hardly grasp the content of meanings that these people traditionally attached to the human person as constituted of natural forces ("breath", *tyn*, in Tuvan) and "intellect," *sagysh* (2003: 40).

I would suggest that a similar constitution of personhood holds for shamans and that their genealogies comprise the totality of their traits and particular shamanic tendencies. Like ordinary persons (*karachaldar kizhiler* in Tuvan), shamans have *tyn* (or any other vital property); yet a part of their person is filled by deceased shamanic ancestors, each of them affecting their successor. The Association's headman himself is a case where ancestors of heterogeneous kinds (arbitrarily called "black" and "white" shamans) compete for prevalence within a successor. One more case revealing this ancestral impulse is a confession by a shaman whose adolescence was permeated by hospitalization in a psychiatric

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[3] Personal communication, 2003. In a paper entitled "Belaia vera ('ak-chayan') v ėtnokul'turnoĭ traditsii Tuvintsev [The 'white faith' in the ethnocultural tradition of Tuvans] in *Kadyn* Journal (Kyzyl, 2003), Abaev provides documentation of a central Asian pattern of spirituality known as Burkhan Chayan (or variations thereof). This overshadows "shamanism" as a variant form of a unitary Mongol religion. In any case, we should remember that Burkhanism or Tenggerism (both linked to Chenggis Khan) constitute popular cultural or academic entities, *not* legal and political ones as holds for Shamanism and Buddhism—both being acknowledged as official religions by the Republic of Tuva.

clinic: "My [dead] grandfather is torturing me," hence expressing what she felt as an impetus for shamanizing.

These struggles with the ancestors, as I described such accounts by shamans in my doctoral thesis (Zorbas 2007), amount to points of crisis and transition within what is an open-ended initiatory process, continuous with the shaman's life-cycle. Carrying Eliade's exaggerated emphasis on mysticism, shamanic initiation is standardized in the literature as an apocalypse of spirits in dreams and visions. This is only one aspect of the picture, as the latter one emerges in the biographies of several shamans I studied. Although these accounts all conformed to classical initiatory ordeals of Yakut and Tungus shamans, they recaptured, on a scheme of shamanic initiation, collective traumas and anxieties relating to the Soviet period and the post-1990s transition (cf. Humphrey 1999).

Relations between ethnic Tuvans and Russians have a long history of tensions and violence (continuing until the early 1990s, when nationalist Tuvans demanded that Russia withdraw all claims to sovereignty over Tuva), and this is perhaps reflected in a somewhat elusive initiatory account by a middle-aged shaman who welcomed me in his village near the border with Mongolia. He recalled a strange experience from his youth, when he was riding his horse in a place close to a Tuvan graveyard; he stopped to have a rest, and the story continued with him in a trance-like state in which he dreamed himself to be waking up and his horse taking him outside the graveyard, where two Russians were standing motionless.

What is important here—and this amounts to a departure from Eliade's typical pattern of shamanic initiation—is that misfortunes experienced also by ordinary Soviet subjects provide the raw material for shamans to reimagine contexts of collective suffering and helplessness within a master narrative of shamanic transformation, which is provided by the culture or even by Soviet ethnography![4] Nevertheless, dead ancestors return periodically, providing a litmus test of endurance in a shaman's career: such was the case with the Association's headman, a virtuoso of ritual, who once plunged into a mental fight with an ancestral spirit, during which he saw hundreds of his clients flying before his eyes. He finally proved to be stronger than his shaman ancestor.

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[4] Old Russian sources on shamanism were not unknown to several of my shaman informants, ranging from Tuvan folklore to accounts of shamans exiled in Kolyma, northeastern Siberia.

Today such narratives constitute the insignia for the organization of shamanic hierarchy in the associations. Claims to a shamanic descent are publicized in posters along with photos that the practitioners themselves have attached to the walls, which contain information regarding their skills and specialty: treating for psychic illnesses, children's illnesses, curses and the evil eye, or divining and performing ceremonies for seeing off a deceased person's soul. The headman and his returning colleague (I opened this article with their encounter) obviously claimed legitimacy for their practicing by reference to their impressive experiences: in the first case, the shaman's grandmother's spirit felt that the time had come (late 1980s) to pass the gift to her successor in a very elegant vision (she touched his hand while he was reading a book); in the second, the elected one, a professional smith, saw his ancestors emerging from the flames his tools produced. He now had upgraded his craftsmanship into a spiritual vocation, a self-identity he described as "*ak-targan*."[5]

Yet, despite these mutual experiences, a gap separated these two shamans: the headman was steadfast in maintaining that Buddhist priests do not see the spirits that make people ill, and declared them unworthy of the prestige they enjoy; by contrast, his colleague advocated the benefits of Buddhist meditation, which complemented his shamanic practice. The shaman-smith insisted that visions occur in the rituals of Buddhist priests also, and left afterward—just as the tension escalated. The headman noted: "He is approaching Lamaism." (I wonder whether by this he meant that his "authentic," as he called it, center of shamanism could be contaminated by alien influences.[6])

In fact, a solution to these shamans' argument was suggested some seventy-five years ago by a man whose name (posthumously) entered

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[5] "White smith," as opposed to "*kara-targan*" ("blacksmith" in Tuvan); those familiar with Altai shamanism will recall a distinction between white and black shamans (*ak-kham* versus *kara-kham*; Vilmos Diószegi, the pioneer Hungarian ethnographer, is the classical source on these regional traditions). Hence, we acknowledge the existence of the famed pan-Siberian analogy between shamans and smiths in this, less-known shamanic tradition of northern Asia (Tuva).

[6] The headman's claims of authenticity were set against rival shamans of other associations in Tuva, whom he called "impostors" or "performers" who were faking contact with spirits. A discussion of authenticity and shamanic revival is beyond the scope of this article (see Balzer 2008 for native Sakha shamanic movements in Yakutsk; also Hoppál's discussion of "post-traditional shamanism" as knowledge that has survived historical change (1996)).

the pantheon of Siberian shamanist scholarship and who is now quoted by almost all general works on shamanism—as Znamenski (2007: 107) writes in his superb study entitled *The Beauty of the Primitive: Shamanism and the Western Imagination*. Known for his pioneering interpretations of the Tungus/Manchu shamanic complex as a "mechanism" integral to these northern communities' psychic equilibrium, the Russian émigré scholar Sergei Shirokogoroff hypothesized that their shamanic rituals had been stimulated by Buddhism, which he considered to be antecedent to the emergence of shamanic specialists in eastern Siberia/Manchuria.

To this end, he referred to extant scripts on pre-Manchu dynasties, as well as to his contemporary ethnographers such as Sanzheev. The latter reported from the Darkhat (Mongolia) in the 1920s that lamas guided mentally troubled individuals to a shamanic career as a cure, and even reserved for themselves the role of contactors for the spirits (Shirokogoroff 1935: 282–283). Shirokogoroff concluded that shamanism had not been the only resource available to these cultures for the relief of anxiety—although it prevailed as a psychological method of harnessing alien spirits, just as mafarism (a similar method, but a more volatile and voyeuristic one which was being practiced by a class of low-status, opportunistic ritual virtuosos) had become popular among the Manchu at the same time (1935: 237).

Yet there is much more to be said about the *Psychomental Complex*, especially about the author's analysis of Tungus shamanism as a mass phenomenon (more on which below). According to this, there is an underlying, "self-regulating" psychological mechanism that is substantiated in massive séances replete with effervescence and shamanic exaltation. Shirokogoroff offers a phenomenal description of the sheer pandemonium that took hold among the participants during a shaman's trance, and only the belief that no one but the shaman may become imbued with the spirit prevented those participating from becoming fully possessed (1935: 272; a hallmark account of Siberian shamanism in anthropological textbooks of religion). From Shirokogoroff's field investigations we also derive a definition of shamans as specialists in controlling the spirits, rather than being led by them (1935: 267 ff.), one more major reference for studies of shamanism and spirit possession.[7]

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[7] See Lewis 1989; Morris 2006.

I shall suggest in this essay that the above theory of shamanism can be relevant to analyzing a series of ritual mediations in an epidemic of curses that took place in Kyzyl. While epidemiologists and the media became "paranoid" with the spreading of SARS (atypical pneumonia) throughout north Asia in the winter of 2003, in Tuva's capital city I sensed that the object of this "social paranoia" was a cultural kind of virus which was ungovernable by any agency except shamans—even less so by the State. Several features for which there are statistical data make Tuva an ideal candidate for analyzing shamanism as a mass phenomenon: poverty, interethnic tensions, and alarming rates of homicide.[8] Shamans proliferate in societies infested with a variety of epidemics, and for this I turn to the *Psychomental Complex* in order to review those parts of it most relevant to the present case.

"Psychological Conditions of the Groups Investigated"

> *"Shamanism" as a European creation has collapsed and we have to revert to the initial point of investigation—to the Tungus shamanism.*
>
> (Shirokogoroff 1935: 269)

Notwithstanding that Eliade's *The Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* made shamanism an international scholarly and spiritual discipline,[9] it was not the first study to examine what shamans were doing for their peoples, instead of how they were harming them![10] By that time, Claude

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[8] See Anaibin (1998–1999) for a full account of social conditions in Tuva in the 1990s. The data on crime and homicide single out Tuva as Russia's most unsafe place, with an alarming rate of 106.2 homicides per one hundred thousand people *per year* (Lester and Kondrichin 2003: 105), establishing thus the region of Tuva as an egregious example of criminality and violence in post-Soviet Russia. The suicide rate for Tuva is also among the highest in Russia.

[9] Vitebsky (2001) and Znamenski (2007) offer detailed introductions to the academic study of shamanism, as well as to the Western popular enchantment with native spirituality.

[10] One need not repeat that early Soviet ethnographers often viewed shamans as a variety of a hypothetical "polar psychosis." Yet similar views were popular in American anthropology at that time; for instance, George Devereux, a star ethnopsychiatrist, averred that the shamans of the Mohave [Mojave] Indians were borderline psychotics (Devereux 1961).

Levi-Strauss had established an analogy between the shamanic cure and psychoanalysis, in the sense that both techniques repair the patient's unconscious (1963). Nonetheless, Shirokogoroff deserves attention, for he revealed the mass operations of shamanism within the indigenous psychology and epidemiology of two cultures in north Asia (1935: 241). The title of this section, taken from his chapters on the regulation of mass psychosis, is instructive in this respect.

Shirokogoroff gives a full account of Tungusic prophylactic measures against infections, which parallel the experiences of epidemics among pre-Soviet Tuvans. As for the Tuva, the headman's story is enlightening: "In the past, a single *aal* (a yurt[11]) was falling ill, and all the other yurts would contract the disease also." The headman recalled the feats of his great-grandfather, whose hysterical trances were said to be effective killers of all pathogens, including noxious spirits: "Evil beings were afraid of him; people said that he was 'horribly screaming' (*strashno krichal*, in Russian), while cleansing the vicinities with his drum."

The Tungus explained disease as an effect not always of spirits, but also of natural causes. Thus, they knew of syphilis and venereal illness, while they referred to a great number of diseases (such as pneumonia, influenza, malaria, typhoid fever) by a native term for spirits, *burkan*, a pan-Siberian term which the Tuvan shamans I worked with included in their *algyshtar* (invocations of healing spirits sung during a ritual for clients). Shirokogoroff's materials aptly show that an epidemiological knowledge (and even concern) already existed among these peoples in the early 1920s, and that spirits coexisted with nosological entities (as far causality in disease is concerned). The image we derive from these native explanations is of a shamanic system that incorporated Russian and Chinese elements, a culture which gave equal weighting to spirits and physical pathogens in coping with disease.

This is evidenced from the interpretations of smallpox given by the Tungus of Manchuria, who ascribed it to affliction by the spirits, but who also were conscious of its contagiousness. We read that the natives identified the Mongols and soldiers wandering in their region as carriers of diseases, and that they welcomed vaccination by Russian doctors and Chinese specialists.[12] A testimony to the danger these people

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[11] Here, it refers to the family unit; the plural is *aalar*.

[12] This refers to the Tungus populations of the Transbaikal region, east of Lake Baikal.

saw in infectious diseases is a custom which the Manchurian Tungus observed against smallpox: a post, with a piece of red cloth tied to it, is erected outside the afflicted household, and the rule of avoidance stands in effect. Similar observances applied to the treatment of the sick: if a shamanic cure was ineffective, this was proof that another *burkan* (etiology), uncontrolled by shamans, was involved, and the sick person was left alone for the disease to complete its natural cycle (1935: 96–97).

It thus appears that, although viruses and vaccination were familiar to these peoples by the 1920s, the technique of using shamanism as a disinfectant for the same afflictions as were treated by doctors was running in parallel! Let us examine a universal technique, burning incense, since it suggests that in these cultures shamanism was seen as equivalent to the medicaments of non-native incomers. In Tuva, this technique is employed for cleansing venues from bad "energies"; when shamans perform it for clients, a cloud of smoke fills the space, as well as the lungs of those present. I call this a ritual filled with pharmacological and mind-altering properties:[13] healing rituals succeed when observers turn into participants, and this is facilitated by this powerful cleansing agent, which, when it is inhaled, may even alter one's consciousness.

If shamanic techniques, or what Shirokogoroff calls placings for the spirits,[14] were an alternative solution to viral infections, in situations of spirit-induced social disorder these techniques were indispensable for salvation. Hence, we enter into a crucial fold of Tungus psychiatry, the behavioral manifestations Shirokogoroff classifies as "psychoses," and the shaman's role in respect of these. From the outset, it should be said that the Tungus do not treat the "psychoses" as pathological, so long as they do not disrupt the social order. Occurrences such as the self-introduction of spirits (spirit possession), hysteria (more often observed in young Tungus women), fatigue, nervous breakdown, "arch" (body locked into the posture of a gate), and imitative mania (olonism) are seen as part of daily living with its hardships and deprivations.[15]

While individual cases of psychological disorganization are viewed as manageable (i.e. a spirit needs to be appeased with offerings), the situ-

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[13] I owe this conclusion to Dr Francoise Barbira-Freedman, a medical anthropologist based at Cambridge University, who brought to my attention the palliative effects of ritual incense.

[14] These were hand-made figurines, which served as traps for evil spirits.

[15] These reactions scarcely ever manifest today, if they do at all.

ation changes when social units become infested by these syndromes. Tungus nomadic life is fraught with dangers and pressures relating to adaptation: wilderness and animal predators are an ever-present threat, while migration entails a heavy toll of work and nervous fatigue. As long as there is a shaman in the unit, an alleviation of pressures in massive rituals is available. Social units that for some reason are deprived of this protection (for example, due to the death of the shaman) are vulnerable to "psychoses": to relay a few examples, a hunter is obstructed by a malicious spirit, and the unit is infected by this failure; individuals susceptible to imitation of other peoples' behavior (*olon*) fall into self-destructive fits; or the unit falls apart from nervous tension at moments of great responsibility (Shirokogoroff 1935: 264).

To most westerners, accustomed to the ideas of government and the legislature as institutions for the preservation of social order, the Tungus reliance on shamans might look bizarre or, even worse, a symptom of a sick and ignorant society. As we saw, these communities applied western treatments for infections, while they also used shamanism as a sort of immunization (a perfectly rational view). This is why the *Psychomental Complex* is so important a source, for it demonstrates that shamanic mediation in social crisis was not simply an impressionistic performance, but a mass operation of social control which was equivalent to the institutions for enforcing public order and safety in modern bureaucracies. In fact, the scholar himself equates shamanism to "good government"! (1935: 275)

How can the above sketch of old Tungus shamanism as an antidote to—or, in Shirokogoroff's terms, a regulation of—the mass "psychoses" provide a context for analyzing a repertoire of evolving phenomena in the post-socialist Siberian city, such as social anxiety, misery, and the revival of shamanism? The Tuvan data will demonstrate that the proliferation of shamanic activities in Kyzyl is linked to the intensification of socioeconomic anxiety among the urban population of contemporary Tuva. While shamans operate on the fringes of State medicine and the law, their rituals for handling clients' anxieties are central to an epidemic that is beyond the reach of the State. Thus, shamans constitute something more crucial than the ethno-cultural revival with which they are often associated in scholarship.

Much of contemporary literature on post-Soviet shamanic practices has laid stress on the (public) surface of spiritual revival—that is, rituals and festive occasions and collective healings catering to the interests of

attendants as diverse as neo-shamanic pilgrims and scholars (Russians and/or foreigners). Of course, this publicized sphere of performance is no less important than what lies underneath; shamans are recruited or even sponsored by the local government for political appropriation of spiritual traditions, just as they are paid by clients to remove curses and countercurse their enemies. Here, I will focus on the latter, less conspicuous strands of Tuvan shamanism for, in my view, they reveal the ascendancy of a new class of shamanic specialists in the making of a new political state of affairs in this part of post-Soviet Asia. Thus, we plunge into the real thing: a social universe infested by a cultural kind of *anomie* and disorder—a universe which is governed by shamans as arbiters of justice, and even as catalysts of injustice.

Shamanic (In)-Justice at the Frontier of Medicine and Law

In many respects the city of Kyzyl, Tuva's capital, resonates with Caroline Humphrey's subtle description of the provincial Siberian city as specially planned to materialize in space the Soviet modernist aims and values of expansion, light, grandness, and high standards of living (1999: 5). Writing of Ulan-Ude, the capital of the Buryatia Republic and a major provincial city in south Siberia, Humphrey notes that its public spaces are designed to fill administrative, educational, and commercial functions: there is, as she describes, a center of government and policy, of parades and high culture; then a commercial area, and beyond that, great expanses of gray communal apartments and cottage houses and factories which operate as a kind of bulwark against wild nature, the city's frontiers with unfenced pastures and the countryside. Shamans in Ulan-Ude treat for misfortunes caused by ancestral spirits from within rented apartments in the city's gray zone; thus, by linking their clients to forgotten ancestral sites in the hinterland, shamans cut across and destabilize the modern city's paradigmatic institutional order and progress, restructuring it in relation to ancestral time.

While the shamanic construction of causality in Ulan-Ude refers, as Humphrey writes, mostly to ancient injustices and aggrieved ancestral souls, in Kyzyl I found that classical kinds of affliction—by ancestors or other spirits—were losing ground to curses and evil thoughts emanating from living enemies. The data on consultations presented below will demonstrate that the agency of inflicting misfortune is shifting from

nonhumans to real friends, relatives, or (ex-)partners who are allegedly determined to destroy or kill with secret spells (*zaklinaniia*, in Russian) and shamanic curses.

This regional difference, it seems to me, illuminates a dark aspect of social experience in Kyzyl, which is reflected in a pervasive anxiety at the possibility of being afflicted with curses. While the shamans Humphrey discusses effect a repartitioning of the city outward by extending genealogical links to the countryside, the headman enlists his shamanic ancestral spirits for an aggressive (though imperceptible) movement from the periphery to the heart of the city, as he intercepts his clients' affairs in bureaucratic or legal contexts. This is not to say that shamans like the headman are enemies of the State (although they consciously challenge its proclaimed authority, especially in health[16]); but rather that their retaliatory rituals of unmaking strained or problematic interpersonal affairs between ex-husbands, business partners, or white-collar workers create an order of legality parallel to the official justice. Thus, this reorganization of local spirituality (or its aggressive aspects) around post-socialist concerns of injustice and lawlessness adds a Siberian case to the classical record of "legal pluralism" in African ethnography and beyond (Fuller 1994).

My argument is that shamans with their retaliatory rituals can be seen as a supernatural judiciary which operates at the margins of bureaucracy and official law in Kyzyl. This immediately emerges once we construct a topography of shamanic practice in the city, and consider what types of conflict these shamans are consulted for. The data will show that many of the shamans' clients labor under a sense of injustice which is based on incidents of real violence and unlawful conduct, cases that can have serious legal and medical ramifications.

Thus, totally misleading conclusions regarding these shamans' role might be reached if the researcher has no appreciation of this (religious) institution's operational strands in its society, emphasizing instead its spatial marginality or formal identification as a "religious organization." The headman and his colleagues live inconspicuous lives, and their

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[16] Such an occasion was a cure the headman performed for a baby boy whose genitalia had disappeared within the body. After three sessions of massage, the boy's missing parts were restored; the headman bragged about his curing abilities, as he would do after almost every cure, saying that most operations in hospitals would have been unnecessary had these patients consulted him instead—a very bold argument!

Association is found in a shadowy and dangerous district, where the only protection that the clients visiting it can get from is anonymity—at the risk of being robbed and beaten by aggressive youngsters. This sense of marginalization is reaffirmed in the Association's interior spaces: a small reception room, where the clients' hardly won anonymity is put on trial as they sit in a row, silent, waiting for their turn to enter the consultation room. The Republic's decrees on shamanism, on the other hand, acknowledge the ancient origins of Tuvan religious and healing practices—excluding thus the new roles that shamans may develop at the frontiers of medicine or law.

Nevertheless, this invisibility and marginality of shamans, exiled in the city's lawless periphery, against the (perceived) monopoly of State law as the "ultimate basis of order" in modern society (Roberts 1979: 16) is reversed once we look at how shamanic rituals cut across and upset the naturalistic order of bureaucracy in Kyzyl. In his masterful account of the features of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, Simon Roberts writes of the "pre-eminent authority of the law in its assigned area of operation," a nomosphere of legal rules, specialists, and courts implementing them, whose supremacy over other normative systems is jealously defended by parliamentarians and jurists alike (1979: 22). His argument that law, in terms of a centrally organized legal system, is not universal and that unwritten rules and informal "justice" substitute for institutions in non-Western societies (traditionally) is particularly relevant for the present analysis of shamanic practice as a kind of legal illegitimacy, which, as I will show below, is currently in high demand. Shamanic murderers or witches are an all-too-real part of this new normative order in Tuva, as the following case, confided to me by an ethnic Tuvan doctor, shows:

Sometimes Tuvans have a shaman purify their sick relatives at hospitals. Once, I received such a request from a family whose relative was gravely sick, and I gave permission [for the procedure to go ahead]. The shaman purified the patient with juniper, and then, muttering some inaudible words, he did something weird: he approached another patient nearby [whose condition was stable] and passed his hand over this patient's head, as if he was removing something from him. Next, he "transplanted" this "something" into the gravely sick person, who (unexpectedly) recovered next morning, while the other one died. The dead person's relatives were *furious* at me [stress in his voice] for having permitted this ritual.

This case of a shamanically committed crime (certainly not the only one in Tuva and, more generally, in Russia), involving a family's secret plan to reanimate their dying patient with a shamanic accomplice and his obscure (for the doctor) ritual, dramatically shows that: (*a*) in Tuva, just as in many parts of the world where sorcery is still viewed as a drastic means of altering the course of one's life, shamanic—and, more widely, supernatural—aggression is seen as equivalent to acts of homicide and premeditated murder;[17] (*b*) the decriminalization of this cultural offence by the modern (Soviet) penal code, where offences are judged on concrete evidence, has resulted in a situation of accusations of curse affliction becoming rampant in the city, thus generating a need for an alternative justice.[18] In its absurd fetishistic approach to law, sanitation, and population control, the Soviet State, by outlawing ritual curing, eliminated shamans as healers and recreated them as witches and killers! Gradually, we are bridging the gap between our headman shaman and Shirokogoroff's masters of mass psychoses.

The above case of a medical crime (moreover, owing to its "shamanic" nature, an unfathomable one) is an example of what I have described earlier as "legal illegitimacy"; here, I must explain what I mean by this. Despite the fact that Russian federal law places severe limitations on religious and folk healing, shamanic "doctoring" cannot be criminally framed, as for the most part it rests on highly abstract and symbolic operations on the human body.[19] Given its obscure (to us outsiders) content, healing or "doctoring" a hospitalized patient with fumigations and incantations may well conceal deleterious motives, and what Rob-

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[17] Cf. Obeyesekere 1975, for Sri Lanka; Schapera 1969, for Africa; Batianova 2000, for Siberia.

[18] Cf. Geschiere 1997 on sorcery trials in Cameroon.

[19] The shamans I worked with occasionally administered herbal remedies (which can be found in pharmacies) as a supplement to their cures using "energy transmission." The headman used the Russian term "*bio-energiia*" (bio-energetic healing) as a convenient metaphor for explaining to many of his city-born clients the mysterious workings of healing nature-spirits (known as *ēren*, in Tuvan; see Vajnštejn 1978; 1984, on ideas and symbols of spirits in Tuva). Massage of the client's face and head was an additional shamanic healing technique I observed (which, as the headman explained, worked well against alcoholism, if combined with drumming and purification), as was scratching the client's chest with bear claws to remove evil spirits—a technique the headman reserved for female clients. Whether these methods are efficacious or not can be debated; at any rate, they are not detrimental to the client's health.

erts defines as the law's "*narrow concept of relevance*" (1979: 21) serves as a safe channel for the expression of such motives through shamanic ritual: that is, issues which are irrelevant to disputes handled by courts of law (i.e. sorcery) are ignored, irrespective of any subjective grievances the disputants may bear.[20] This psychological need is provided by shamanic rituals of identifying culturally patterned forensic evidence of curse affliction.

On Tactics of Defence and Assault: Shamanism and Retaliatory Justice

The medical incident described above leads us to a very interesting psychological aspect of the individuals who consult shamans, which is further revealed once we estimate the yearly figure of all consultations in one of the four associations of shamans in Kyzyl. Generally, people resort to shamans for serious matters pertaining to health and disputes after having unsuccessfully sought a solution through appropriate and prescribed courses of action (e.g. hospital treatment or complaining to the authorities about some offence).[21] Where faith in a shaman's power is reaffirmed by a favorable outcome (e.g. a cure), clients, as I observed, establish a longstanding relationship with *their* shaman, who becomes the family's counsellor; these *returning* clients were either chronically ill, and therefore dependent on renewable healing "energy," or had been restored to health, which they insured by rituals of supplication to spirits in nature.[22]

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[20] From the dominant legal (rationalist) viewpoint, the shaman who was invited by the dying patient's family was just blessing the sick. Rationality instructs that the other patient died due to some identifiable medical problem.

[21] This attests to the rational, pragmatic, and instrumental nature of the recourse to shamans: it is viewed by the individuals who use this technique as one among a number of stations in a chain of therapeutic options available in this culture. Moreover, the cultural view of shamans is that their mediation should be sought for very important issues and questions, even those concerning major life decisions, such as whether your child has found the perfect partner before their imminent wedding. Hence, even such an experienced shaman as the headman could not do much about my Siberian sore throats.

[22] These ceremonies, which often developed into family feasts in the countryside, are performed from spring until autumn; in Tuvan they are called *tagylga*.

Table 1 gives estimated figures for four basic types of ritual services by the headman and the shamans of his Association, plus a yearly total for the period of my fieldwork. In consultations, clients as a rule represent their families; thus, taking the universal nuclear family as a baseline, it appears that at least 5,400 people were touched by the consultations of only one of the four associations in Kyzyl (this of course excludes the numbers of independent shamans and various psychics). If we apply this figure to the other three associations (which are more widely known in Tuva than the headman's), it appears that in a city of 90,000 people the lives of 21,600 people were affected by the outcomes of these rituals! The latter figure necessarily expands, since curse removals involve the shaman's retaliation in kind, with countercursing of the client's enemies. Evidence for the latter will dramatically emerge in a case study (no. 6 below).

TABLE 1. Estimated yearly total of consultations in one shamanic association in Kyzyl

Divinations	900
Curse removals	60
Spirit removals	30
Various purifications (cars, houses)	60
Sending off the souls of the dead	300
Total	1,350

Ceremonies of seeing off the souls of dead relatives after a burial form a substantial part of this sample; this is to be expected, since these rituals are fixed in a family's life-cycle.[23] Divinations are most frequent, largely because they are affordable, less complicated than other rituals, and, unlike curse removals, they do not require considerable planning in

[23] Nevertheless, poverty prevents many from observing this custom, which requires an outlay equivalent to a month's wage in Tuva (around US$100). Shamans warn against neglecting to give the dead a farewell ceremony on the grounds that the offended soul will retaliate.

terms of criteria of shamanic efficiency[24] in cases when they are not part of consultations for diagnosing and curing afflictions involving curses or spirits. Yet, even in these numerous cases, divination also has very important implications for our hypothesis of shamans as an equivalent of State institutions, as the two following cases show: (1) to my surprise, a young Tuvan woman cried out over a divination, where no signs of her missing mother were visible; I was struck by this incident, which revealed that this client had resorted to shamanic divination with the explicit intention of tracing her mother's steps [additionally, this case, although one which did not reduce the client's tension, reinforces a quantitative fact that emerged above, that is, a strong ideological commitment to divination as a way to resolve practical problems]. (2) a Russian woman, nearly sick with anxiety over her son's wasting away due to vodka, was looking for the cause; in her visit to the Association, she was escorted by a Tuvan woman who translated the headman's sayings into Russian. A few weeks later, I saw this woman on the local news, the subtitles introducing her as a top administrative officer in a governmental organization.[25]

It emerges that people in Kyzyl resort to shamans for problems for the resolution of which one would normally apply to the organs of the State (and many indeed do also try these official channels); the clients who patronize the associations expect concrete results—rather than simply psychological support—from the shamans' intervention. We should not be puzzled by this aspect of the clients' behavior: when misfortune defies any sense of rationality or compromise, human beings regard it as justifiable to seek solutions from the extremes of their societies, or even to abjure morals in the face of medical emergencies or when seeking to achieve any other crucial goal (cf. Obeyesekere 1975: 10; 1977).

This conclusion is also borne out by the sample of curse afflictions. The relatively small numbers of cursed clients in Table 1 should not be taken as an index of an infrequency of curse accusations in Tuva; these

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[24] *Gadanie* (divination, in Russian; *tolge*, in Tuvan) gives an accurate prognosis or explanation of past misfortunes and events if its technique is rightly applied, no matter who is applying it. Of course, experience counts a lot here as well; and even more so in successful curse removals.

[25] I disclose no further information in the interests of confidentiality. It is worth mentioning that this very distressed Russian woman was kind enough to answer some of my questions.

are the extreme cases, where the clients' relationship with the (cursing) counterparty has reached a limit. The assumption holds valid that many people are not psychologically prepared to break this limit, even if they bear a grudge against somebody. Lay discourse on curses was widespread in Kyzyl, and this is suggestive of a particular social strain. I will present here six cases on which I collected sufficient data through interviews with clients:

(1) A couple of Tuvan shop owners who ascribed their financial loss to a relative's curses; (2) a Russian woman whose husband nearly died in a car accident caused by an "evil woman"; (3) a restaurateur (a national of a Central Asian state) who accused one of his employees of sorcery; (4) a Russian investor who wanted the headman to punish his (cursing) partners for his financial loss;[26] (5) a divorced Russian woman whose son died of shamanic curses which his own father had commissioned in order to elicit his boy's sexual vitality to use in his extramarital affair! This client had also appealed to the court over property issues; (6) a Tuvan woman who attracted curses and maltreatment by her senior in the office (also a Tuvan female); she had written a petition, but to no avail. The curses penetrated her uterus, causing serious problems. This case had yet another aspect: some time after she was treated by the headman, her ex-partner (who had left her for another woman) visited her to ask whether she had cursed him—testament to a successful shamanic retaliation!

The connection between post-socialist socioeconomic frustrations and a rise in curse afflictions is explicitly demonstrated in these data. Furthermore, we can hypothesize that a new political environment is under construction in Tuva, with shamans as ministers of "justice" in a vast space between the individual's soul and the Republic. I feel that many bureaucrats and medical staff in Kyzyl know this; nonetheless, adherence to rationalism does not allow space (and maybe respect) for alternative forms of power and mediation. Shamanism is one of these, as a powerful intercessionary agency with strands that reach across the terrain of disputes and tensions in contemporary Tuva.

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[26] To this end, he had brought a picture showing the target; this client was steadfast in his intention to retaliate with deadly countercursing.

Concluding Remarks: Shamans and Implications for Further Cursing

> *If the belief in spirits is destroyed, as well as shamanism as a safety valve, will the psychoses disappear or will they take new forms, perhaps now unforeseen ones, and even forms which will not be recognised at once?*
>
> (Shirokogoroff 1935: 267)

By the time Shirokogoroff was asking whether the predicted end of shamanism under Soviet rule would result in the disappearance of the Tungus "psychoses," Tuvans and other native Siberians had seen their spiritual experts being persecuted for illegal healing practices—legally speaking, for fraud against "the people" (*narod*, in Russian)—as well as being incarcerated on the basis of "paranoid" official fabrications of complicity in anti-Soviet conspiracies.[27] Critical as he was of the Soviet purges, the Russian scholar left Stalinist Russia for Harbin in Manchuria, where he worked on his field investigations.

Tuvan literature abounds with stories of Soviet officials challenging shamanic power—only, ultimately, to die for doing so. One of these stories describes the terrible fate of a Sovietized, conceited Tuvan official who defended the superiority of modern medicine before a dignified shamaness and made false allegations against her son as a Japanese spy; he reported (*donos*, in Russian) the old shamaness to the authorities, who jailed her for having performed a ritual for a sick child. One day, her persecutor in the village was walking past her homestead when he vomited blood and died due to the shamaness's curses (Kenin-Lopsan 2002: 130–131). In addition to reaffirming how powerful shamans were—and continue to be—in the social consciousness, these fables relay an historical truth which we have documented above: in criminalizing shamans as healers, the State recreated and "authorized" them as killers and purveyors of dark and ambiguous essences lurking beneath benevolent rituals—although I agree with Balzer in her comment that ambivalent attitudes regarding shamanic spiritual power existed among Siberian natives even prior to Sovietization (2008: 96).

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[27] See Humphrey 2003, for the Buryats.

Now, with the evidence from Tuva, Shirokogoroff's question regarding the fate of the "psychoses" in the aftermath of Soviet repressions can be answered: the "psychoses" are currently prevalent in a Siberian city, where they take the form of an epidemic of curses, which the headman and his fellow shamans govern through their supernatural retaliations. I see this not as a case in post-socialist misery (an outdated concept), but rather as a cosmogony where shamans reanimate the Republic with its lost soul at the frontiers of medicine and law.

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The History of Research on Shamanism in China from 1930 to 2010

GUO SHUYUN DALIAN, CHINA

Studies on shamanism first began in China in the 1930s, along with Chinese ethnology as its concomitant phenomenon. After eighty years of twists and turns, research on shamanism became a significant, special field of interdisciplinary sciences with its own diverse theoretical and methodological approach. Over time, various academic works have been published, with a high value placed on innovation. These steps account for the sudden appearance of modern research on shamism and the remarkable achievements that have taken place.

This development emerged in three phases, each having its own characteristics. The focus of research and the elements of the stages are closely related to each other, not only in the prevailing society and scientific milieu, but also with regard to the evolution of disciplines that are involved.

Stage One: From the 1930s to 1949

The first, or initial stage of Chinese research on shamanism covers the period between the 1930s and the founding of the New China in 1949.

It began with the book, *Songhuajiang xiayou de hezhezu* 松花江下游的赫哲族 [The Goldi Tribe on the Lower Sungari River], by Ling Chunsheng [凌纯声] (1934). In the first part of the twentieth century, when Western studies started to spread eastward, Western ethnology was introduced to China. Some pioneers tried to apply Western ethnological theory and methodology to the research of Chinese minority nationalities in order to establish a basis for Chinese ethnology. Ling's

ethnologic masterpiece, *The Goldi Tribe on the Lower Sungari River,* was born of this type of scientific background.

Ling Chunsheng studied anthropology and ethnology at the University of Paris, where he graduated and received his doctorate degree under the tutelage of the anthropologist, Marcel Mauss. After returning to China, he conducted research at the Academia Sinica and encouraged fieldwork among Chinese minority nationalities. In 1930, he and Shang Zhangsun [商章孙] undertook three months of fieldwork in the areas of Yilan County and Fuyuan County in Heilongjiang Province. Two years later, Ling began writing *The Goldi Tribe on the Lower Sungari River.* The first academic record on the nationalities of China, this book gives a detailed review of the social life, culture, religious beliefs, folklore and other aspects of the Hezhe nationality.[1] It has been called "the first academic fieldwork of Chinese ethnography and an important milestone of the phylogeny of Chinese ethnology" (Li Yiyuan 1996: 413).

The Goldi Tribe on the Lower Sungari River also possesses an important value in regard to Chinese research on shamanism. The area surrounding the lower reaches of Songhua River from Yilan County to Fuyuan County, where Ling conducted his research, covers the sacrificial area of Hezhe shamans in the first part of the twentieth century. Nearly half a century later, due to changes in the ecological environment and methods of production, the remains of shamanism have gradually declined. For this reason, the passages of this book regarding Hezhe shamanism have inestimable value. The book gives a systematic account of the concept of shamanism; the branches, types, inheritance and functions of Hezhe shamans; and their shamanic rituals (i.e. calling the deer spirit in trance, child-blessing, healing, sacrificial offerings to stars and sky, and the family ceremony held in memory of the dead), along with divination and other basic elements of Hezhe shamanism. Ling placed particular emphasis on the shaman's ritual clothes and objects as well as the shape and symbolic meaning of the ritual idol.

In his book, Ling describes more than one hundred valuable shamanic artifacts. As they are mostly material images, the collection reflects the author's line of thought about research on shamanism: "Working from the concrete to the abstract, it is necessary first to study the shaman's

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[1] The Hezhe nation is a minority tribe, living in Northeast China, of the same origin and genetic family as the Nanay in Siberia.

ritual dress and head-gear, ritual drums, knives, and other instruments, and the idols of the leading spirits. Then study the shaman's mystic art" (Ling Chunsheng 1934: 105). This research method—from the concrete to the abstract, from the outside to the inside—is exemplary and serves as a refererence for research on shamanism to the present day. It is especially worthy of note that nineteen Hezhe stories have been preserved in the appendix. These stories and legends reflect the subtlety of Hezhe shamanism and have unique scientific value.

Although Ling's book is not a monograph on shamanism, it is regarded as highly significant in the history of Chinese shamanistic research for the following reasons:

(1) The work established the ethnologic tradition of Chinese research on shamanism. From the very beginning, its ethnologic perspective, theories and metholodology have served as a basis for an approach toward Chinese research on shamanism.

(2) The book has become the most typical paradigm of ethnologic works on shamanism. With its detailed descriptions, rich content, ample collected data, illustrations, and complex system, it has become not only a classic of shamanistic research on Hezhe nationality, but a model for fieldwork and reports in other related areas as well.

(3) The book has become an important source for comparative studies on shamanism. Besides acquainting the reader with Hezhe shamanism, it includes historical insights and cross-cultural perspectives that reconcile Hezhe shamanism with ancient historical data and ethnographic records on surrounding national minorities. It includes, for example, a comparative investigation on shaman drums of the Koriak and Sakha (Yakut) nationalities. These studies represent not only a keen methodological awareness, but also Ling's efforts to enhance Chinese ethnology in accord with Western methods and perspectives. They provide evidence that Chinese research on shamanism had a broad scientific vision even in its earliest stage.

The Goldi Tribe on the Lower Sungari River thus became the cornerstone of Chinese ethnology and has also played a prominent role in research on shamanism. By reflecting the influence of his mentor, Marcel Mauss, and Mauss's school, Ling's detailed descriptions, the scientific orientation of his research on Hezhe shamanism, and his comparative investigations embody the scientific ideology and specific characteristics of Mauss's work.

In the first phase of Chinese research on shamanism, however it is not Ling's Western perspective, but a traditional Chinese historical perspective that characterizes the studies. Certain historians, for example Yao Congwu [姚从吾], Meng Sen [孟森], and Zheng Tianting [郑天挺], devoted special attention to shamanism in their research on dynastic history. In his 1937 study, *Chengjisihan shidai de shamanjiao* 成吉思汗时代的沙漫教 [Shamanism during the Reign of Genghis Khan], Yao Congwu, one of the founders of Chinese modern historical research on the Liao, Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties, reviewed relevant data on shamanism during the rule of Genghis Khan in the Yuan Dynasty. He includes discussions on the entwined power of political and religious authorities, and he describes the nature of shamanism as a form of religion *wujiao* 巫教. For this reason, his work can be regarded as a masterpiece of historical integration.

The sacrifices offered by the imperial family of the Qing Dynasty were shown to originate from Manchu shamanism. After the establishment of that dynasty, family sacrifices of clans and tribes became the sacrifices offered to ancestors of the nation. Related issues were discussed by many literary and other scholars, though their opinions differ widely. In his work of 1935, *Qingdai tangzi suo si Deng jiangjun kao* 清代堂子所祀邓将军考 [Studies on the Sacrifices Offered to General Deng in the Palace Temple During the Qing Dynasty], Meng Sen (1935/1959), an expert on the history of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, discussed related questions. He refutes the allegations of Zhao Lian [昭槤], Zhen Jun [震钧] and other scholars of the Qing dynasty and explains his own insightful views.

Generally speaking, the first attempts at Chinese research on shamanism were based on fragmentary elements of studies on minority nationalities that were linked with other disciplines. *The Goldi Tribe on the Lower Sungari River* by Ling Chunsheng was an exception. It stands apart not only as a landmark of this stage, but is also a prime example of ethnological research on shamanism. The book can be considered an innovative work on Chinese shamanism.

Stage Two: From 1949 Till the 1980s

The second stage in the study of Chinese shamanism covers a period between 1949, when The People's Republic of China was founded, and the era of Reform and Opening in the 1980s. This was the foundation stage of Chinese research on shamanism.

After the New China was established, shamanistic research, following structural changes of Chinese society and sciences, began to manifest its own distinctive character. During this phase, an historical perspective was the approach generally taken by those who conducted research in social science. This point of view undoubtedly influenced and strengthened the tradition of historical research on shamanism. The article, *Qingchu manzu de samanjiao* 清初满族的萨满教 [Manchu Shamanism in the Early Qing Dynasty], by Mo Dongyin (Mo 1958: 175–205), is one of the most important works of this period. Although the book focuses on the form of Manchu shamanism prevalent in the early Qing Dynasty, it also presents early belief systems and the evolution of Manchu shamanism. Its broad viewpoint sheds light not only on Manchu shamanism, but also the development and the evolution of shamanism in general. Mo divides the Manchu shamanic rituals of the Qing Dynasty into two parts: the court ceremony of the Qing Dynasty, and the shamanic ritual of the Manchu Eight Banners. It is worth mentioning that the author uses the comparative method in his research. That is, he compares Hezhe shamanism with Manchu shamanism in setting up his schema of the different developmental stages of shamanism. He demonstrates that the Hezhe nationality lived in a clan society and practiced an earlier form of shamanism, whereas Manchu shamanism showed changes under the influence of other religions.

In the 1950s and 1960s, nationwide surveys of the history and societal makeup of national minorities were initiated. The purpose was to gain a better understanding of economic conditions, social structures, historical changes and unique customs in order to lay foundations for practical work in each region. These surveys had a profound impact on both ethnologic research in general and research on shamanism in particular.

The surveys lasted for eight years. Eight survey groups were established, one after another, in the northeast of Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet, Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangdong, and Guangxi, and later eight other areas in Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, Hunan, Hubei, Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang. The range of the surveys in the North of China more or less covered the regions where shamanism of northern nationalities had spread. The survey group for the northeast of Inner Mongolia was established first. It included investigations on Mongolian, Daur, Ewenki, Oroqen, Hezhen, and other nationalities. The investigations revealed that shamanism as practised among these nationalities had a typical and complete form. The survey groups for Jilin, Liaon-

ing, Heilongjiang and Xinjiang also uncovered special relationships between shamanism and these local ethnic minorities. The data collected in these surveys, along with the vast experience gained through the research and the concommitant training of well-versed researchers, all contributed to laying the foundation for further Chinese research on shamanism, as follows:

(1) *Abundant Fieldwork Data Collected on Shamanism*. From the late 1950s to the early 1960s, the investigatory reports on the northeast national minorities of Inner Mongolia made by the survey group of that area disclosed extremely relevant records on shamanism. These pieces of first-hand information gave specific, detailed reflections on various elements of shamanism. The reports include six publications on the Daur, six on the Ewenki, and thirteen on the Oroqen, all reflecting the situations covered by the surveys. In addition, the Heilongjiang survey group published the following valuable records on the spread of shamanism among local ethnic groups: *Fujinxian jiejinkoucun hezhezu diaocha baogao* 富锦县街津口村赫哲族调查报告 [Report on the Hezhe of Jiejinkou Township, Fujin County] (1958); *Fuyuanxian bachaxiang hezhezu diaocha baogao* 抚远县八岔乡赫哲族调查报告 [Report on the Hezhe Ethnic Minority of Bacha Township, Fuyuan County] (1957); *Heilongjiang aihuixian dawujiazixiang dawujiazicun manzu diaocha baogao* 黑龙江爱辉县大五家子乡大五家子村满族调查报告 [Report on the Manchu Ethnic Minority of Dawujiazi Village, Dawujiazi Township, Heilongjiang Province] (1958).

Basic characteristics of shamanism are identified for each area, for example the shamanic gods, the types of shamanic rituals, the shamanic legends and idols, the ritual instruments, the types and functions of shamans, and the biographies of local shamans. The survey groups took numerous photographs and collected various kinds of shamanic artifacts and manuscripts. The Manchu-language manuscript *Nishan saman* 尼山萨满 [Nishan Shamaness], a unique collection up to now preserved in the Library of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,[2] was collected during this period. All these

[2] It is known as a five part manuscript on the six Nishan saman 尼山萨满 [Nishan Shamaness] in Manchu language preserved in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Another one called Minzu suoben 民族所本 is preserved in the library mentioned above.

precious pieces of data laid an essential foundation for the development of Chinese shamanistic research.

(2) *The Training of Well-Versed Researchers*. One of the most important results of the historical and social analysis of national minorities was the training of researchers who became expert in ethnology and related disciplines. These reinvestigations were conducted mainly by Qiu Pu [秋浦], Mandurtu [满都尔图], Lü Guangtian [吕光天], Cai Jiaqi [蔡家麒] and other skilled researchers. In their long-term studies, they discovered how important the position of shamanism is to the social life of northern nationalities. Early on, they started researching shamanism. They published the famous Wu ren 伍韧 (the homonym of *wu ren* 五人 [five people]) shamanistic papers (Wu ren 1981, thus creating the first scientific research group on Chinese shamanism and greatly contributing to the rise of Chinese shamanistic research.

(3) *Experience Gained from Fieldwork*. During their research, members of the various survey groups gradually developed their methods and techniques, gained vast experience in fieldwork and report writing, and furthered their own investigative empirical style of study. Relying on personal experience and giving specific, concrete evidence to support their ideas, Qiu Pu, Lü Guangtian, Cai Jiaqi, Mandurtu, and others, published numerous reports and scientific papers on shamanism.

Despite their detailed accounts and the wide-ranging experience represented, the above mentioned investigations are far from complete and leave us with the task of making further inquiry. Nonetheless, it is recognized that the data from their social and historical research on national minorities, the improvements in their methods, and the body of well-trained researchers that was produced, all contributed greatly to the promotion of Chinese shamanistic research and prepared the way for further studies.

Stage Three: From the 1980s Till 2010

The past thirty years of China's policy of Reform and Opening-up is the third stage of Chinese research on shamanism, a period of prosperity in scientific research and the virtual springtime of shamanistic studies. The year 1981 is especially significant to the development of Chinese shamanistic research. At this time, scholars including Mandurtu, Qiu Pu, Lü Guangtian, Cai Jiaqi, Xia Zhiqian [夏之乾], Liu Jianguo [刘

建国] (1981) and Meng Zhidong [孟志东] (Meng Zhidong et al. 1981) were the first to publish papers on shamanistic research in journals of Beijing, Inner Mongolia, Jilin and other places. In 1985, they published important articles in the first work of Chinese research specifically dedicated to contemporary shamanism, *Samanjiao yanjiu* 萨满教研究 [Research on Shamanism] (1985), edited by Qiu Pu after three years of work. Just as Ling Chunsheng's book written in 1934 on the Hezhe became the cornerstone for Chinese ethnological research in general, this work became the touchstone of Chinese research in the specific field of shamanism. It marks the advent of shamanistic studies as a new field of research in the Chinese social sciences.

During the thirty years since 1981, there have been considerable developments in Chinese shamanistic research. They can be summarized as follows.

THE DEPLOYMENT OF SHAMANISTIC FIELDWORKERS AND THE EMERGENCE OF RESEARCH RESULTS

The methods of ethnologic fieldwork have improved among national minorites through interviews, on-the-spot observations and informal discussions, and the systematic collection of comprehensive data. All of this has gradually helped researchers develop a more conscious and mindful attitude about their work. The deepening immersion in fieldwork, the gradual development of investigations and the progressive optimization of survey methods have greatly improved the quality and productivity of fieldwork, resulting in other achievements as well.

First of all, regarding the scholarly findings of fieldwork and the publication of results, it is important to emphasize the fieldwork experience gained by Mandurtu and other pioneers and the data they collected during the earlier period of social and historical research on minority nationalities. That research, conducted in the Northeast, Northwest, Inner Mongolia, and other areas inhabited by minority peoples, was the basis for exemplary publications (Mandurtu and Xia Zhiqian 1984; Mandurtu 1993) and had a great impact on the scholarly community.

As for research on Manchu shamanism, the results achieved by Fu Yuguang [富育光], Wang Honggang [王宏刚], and Guo Shuyun [郭淑云] advanced the work of the Jilin Shamanistic Survey Group. From 1983 forward, this group conducted long-term research on shamanic

sacrificial rituals among the Shi [石], Guan [关], Luoguan [罗关], Zhao [赵], Yang [杨], and other Manchu clans on the upper and the middle reaches of the Songhua River. The group produced video films on shamanism in those areas, and they published their research results in scientific papers and reports (Fu Yuguang and Meng Huiying 1991; Wang Honggang 2002; Guo Shuyun and Wang Honggang 2001; Guo Shuyun 2007a; Fu Yuguang and Zhao Zhizhong 2010). In addition, Song Heping [宋和平] quite early conducted research on Manchu shamanism in Heilongjiang Province (Song Heping and Wei Beiwang 1987), while Ren Guangwei [任光伟] and Sun Ying [孙英] (1998) conducted systematic studies on the shamanic rituals of the Hanjun.

Mongolian shamanistic studies had started quite early. By the 1980s, they entered a developmental stage. Bai Cuiying [白翠英] and others conducted systematic research on Horqin Mongol shamanism. They excavated and preserved valuable data that contributed to deepening an understanding of Horqin Mongol shamanism (Bai Cuiying et al. 1986). For his part, Bo Shaobu [波少布] did research and collected data from the Dorbod Mongol Autonomous County, Heilingjiang Province, opening up a new field of research in Mongol shamanistic studies.

The shamanic traditions of the Oroqen, Ewenki, and Daur nationalities represent very old forms of shamanism of inestimable academic value, each with their own special characteristics. Qiu Pu, Mandurtu, and other researchers of the previous generation established Chinese shamanistic research on the basis of their studies of these nationalities. After the 1980s, some literary and history scholars of these nationalities themselves began to focus on the shamanism of their nationalities or of regional ethnic groups. Their research benefited from personal experience and first-hand evidence. Examples of this are Guan Xiaoyun and Wang Honggang (1998), Ta Nuo and Ding Shiqing (2011) and others.

In addition to this, researchers from Beijing, Jilin, and other regions have conducted long-term systematic research on the shamanic traditions of the Oroqen, Ewenki, and Daur nationalities. Fu Yuguang, Wang Honggang and Guo Shuyun, all members of the Jilin Survey Group, repeatedly traveled to Hailar, Qiqihar, and other areas to do fieldwork among the Ewenki and Daur. The studies of these and other Chinese scholars have been collected in the book, *Huozhe de saman: Zhongguo samanjiao* 活着的萨满: 中国萨满教 [*Living Shamans: Shamanism in China*] (2001), edited by Guo Shuyun and Wang Honggang.

Meng Huiying [孟慧英] (2004) and Wang Lizhen [汪立珍] (2002) have also conducted research among these nationalities.

In recent years, the results of shamanistic research on the ethnic minorities of Xinjiang have also become significant, and a series of research reports under the leadership of Dilmurat Omar [迪木拉提 奥迈尔] is currently in the process of publication. Representative of these are *Xibozu min xinyang yu shehui* 锡伯族民信仰与社会 [Society and Belief System of Sibe Ethnic Minority] (Zhong Gao et al. 2008) and *Weiwu'erzu saman wenhua yicun diaocha* 维吾尔族萨满文化遗存调查 [Investigation on Uyghur Shamanism's Cultural Remains] (Adili Apa'er [ed.] 2010).

Although Chinese fieldwork research on shamanism has made considerable progress, different researchers tended to use their own fieldwork methods, did not pay great attention to writing up their reports, and relied only on their own research data in their scholarly works. For this reason, the results of the reports by different reserachers did not always correspond with one another.

A complete survey of shamanistic research must give proper attention to the collection and translation of shaman songs. Shaman songs (also known as ritual songs, the words of the spirits, ritual words, or prayers) are recited or chanted by a shaman and his assistant in sacrificial rituals. As the most direct, first-hand data of the rituals, they have unique scientific value, comprising both oral tradition and textual form.

Mongolian scholars started early to collect shaman songs preserved by way of oral tradition. Since the late 1970s, Bao Yulin [包玉林], Tai Manchang [泰 满昌], Ba Te'er [巴特尔], Wu Lanjie [乌兰杰] (1985), Bai Cuiying et al. (1986) and others, in the course of fieldwork on the Horqin Grassland, collected and recorded shaman songs, some of which have already been published.

Manchu shaman texts, *Saman shenge* 萨满神歌, were discovered by Sibe scholars in Xinjiang and have already been translated and systematized. The discovery of these texts is unique and is of outstanding value to the history of shamanistic research all over the world. In the past 20 years, Chinese scholars have achieved excellent results in their systematic study of the documents. This has had a great impact on the academic community both in China and abroad. As published, they currently include five parts written in the Manchu language in poetic form. Among these, *Qigao, zhuzan, daogao zhi shenge* 祈告、祝赞、祷告之神歌 and *Zhibing shi song wu'erhu zhi shenge* 治病时送巫尔虎之神歌 were preserved by the Nan Jinbao [南金保] family and were discovered

quite early. They have been published in two forms: *Xibozu "Saman ge" yizhu* 锡伯族〈萨满歌〉译注 [Annotation on the Sibe "Shaman Songs"] by Qi Cheshan [奇车山] et al. (1987) and *Saman shenge* 萨满神歌 [Shaman songs] by Yong Zhejian [永志坚] (ed. and transl. 1992).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ON SHAMANISM

Since the Reform and Opening-up in the 1980s, Chinese shamanistic research has been developing on a large scale and has produced excellent results, though the roles of various disciplines in this research are not yet settled. According to available statistics, thousands of research reports and articles have been published in collected works and foreign publications over the past thirty years by scholars from the mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan, along with more than one hundred books and six series of books: *Samanjiao wenhua yanjiu congshu* 萨满教文化研究丛书 [Shaman Culture Research Book Series] (1995–2001), published by Liaoning renmin chubanshe; *Saman wenhua congshu* 萨满文化丛书 [Shamanic Culture Book Series] (1998) published by Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe; *Zhongguo shaoshu minzu zongjiao yu wenhua congshu* 中国少数民族宗教与文化丛书 [The Religions and Culture of Chinese National Minorities Book Series] (2002), published by Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe; *Zhongguo saman wenhua congshu* 中国萨满文化丛书 [Chinese Shamanic Culture Book Series] (2009–2011) *and Xinjiang shaoshu minzu minjian xinyang yu minzu shehui yanjiu congshu* 新疆少数民族民间信仰与民族社会研究丛书 [The Folk Beliefs and the Society of Xinjiang National Minorities Book Series] (2008–2011), published by Minzu chubanshe; and *Saman wenhua yanjiu congshu* 萨满文化研究丛书 [Samanic Culture Research Book Series] (2010–2012), published by Xueyuan chubanshe. Articles and books are mostly in Chinese; but some works have been published in Mongolian, Uighur, and other minority languages, as well as in foreign languages, such as English, German, Korean, Japanese, and Italian. These publications examine various aspects of shamanism from the following scientific points of view:

(1) Ethnological and religious perspectives have been the most important. Various ethnological and religious research methods have been employed, with fruitful results too numerous to be listed in detail. Topics include: the concept of shamanism, its characterics, shamanic rituals, the shaman's heritage, and the origin and development of shaman-

ism. *Zhongguo samanjiao rugan wenti yanjiu shuping* 中国萨满教若干问题研究述评 [A Comment on the Issues of Chinese Shamanism Research] (2011) takes ethnological and religious perspectives as the guiding principle in presenting a systematic order in shamanistic research. It should be noted that in the field of shamanistic research, ethnology and theology differ as widely as the waters of the Jing and Wei Rivers. A large number of scholarly works apply the perspectives and ideological tendencies of both disciplines at the same time. Examples of this are *Samanjiao yanjiu* 萨满教研究 [Research on Shamanism] edited by Qiu Pu (1985); *Shenmi de saman shijie* 神秘的萨满世界 [The Mystical Shaman World] by Wu Bing'an [乌丙安] (1989); and *Saman lun* 萨满论 [Discussion on Shamanism] by Fu Yuguang (2000). At the same time, however, there are works with stronger disciplinary exactitude, such as *A'ertai yuxi zhu minzu samanjiao yanjiu* 阿尔泰语系诸民族萨满教研究 [Research on the Shamanism of Various Nationalities Belonging to the Altaic Language Family] by Dilmurat Omar (1995), who emphasizes the ethnologic perspective, and *Zhongguo beifang minzu samanjiao* 中国北方民族萨满教 [Shamanism among Chinese Northern Nationalities] by Meng Huiying (2000), with its strong theoretical tendency.

(2) As we have seen, the historical perspective has traditionally been used in shamanistic research in China. Ancient ethnic groups, for example the Sushen [肃慎], Donghu [东胡], Dingling [丁零], and Huimo [濊貊] all believed in shamanism. The role of the shamanic belief systems in their history and that of China in general is the reason that they early drew scholars' attention and thus became a focus of Chinese shamanistic research. Since the Reform and Opening-up, this tradition has been carried on and developed, with abundant results in shamanistic research on the Khitan [契丹], Nüzhen [女真], and Huihu [回鹘] nationalities, which belong to the Donghu, Sushen and Dingling ethnic groups respectively. Moreover, the shamanism of the Manchu Qing Dynasty has always been at the centre of scholarly attention, including the changes and nature of Manchu shamanism before and after the era of *ruguan* [入关][3] (Zhou Changyuan 1988; Jiang Xiaoli 2007; Guo Shuyun 2007a). One central question has been the role of the shaman rituals of the Palace of the Qing Dynasty. During the past 30

[3] Ruguan 入关: the troops of Qing Dynasty invaded the main land of China, especially in Central China in 1944.

years, research on the palace rituals has gradually deepened and become more detailed, a representative work being *Shenmi de Qinggong saman jisi* 神秘的清宫萨满祭祀 [Mystical Shamanic Sacrifices in the Qing Palace Temple] by Jiang Xiangshun [姜相顺] (1995).

(3) The historical aspects of shamanism have consistently provided a basis for the relationship between shamanism and archeology. Monographic shamanistic studies on archeology of the northern areas can be divided into two aspects: those on historical vestiges and cultural relics, and those providing interpretations of archeological remains in terms of shamanic belief (Zhang Zhiyao 1990; Feng Enxue 1998; 2006; Sun Qigang 1988). The ethnic identity and culture system represented by the remains of the ritual objects of the Dongshanzui[4] [东山嘴] Hongshan culture[5] [红山文化] has triggered much controversy in the academic community. Some scholars have established theoretically remarkable links between these remains and the shamanic beliefs of northern nationalities (Rong Guanxiong 1993; Guo Dashun 2008; Zhou Xiaojing 2007). Zhang Guangzhi [张光直], from Harvard University, quite early incorporated shamanic perspectives into Chinese prehistoric archeological studies, showing that "shaman-style cultures are the most important characteristics of Chinese ancient cultures." His viewpoint has had a profound impact on the academic community both in China and abroad. Many archeologists turned their attention to the ideology of shamanism with a sophisticated look at an expanded range of Chinese archeological relics over the geographical and national boundaries of the north. *Zhongguo shiqian kaogu faxian de saman yiji* 中国史前考古发现的萨满遗迹 [The Shamanic Remains Discovered by Chinese Prehistoric Archeologists] by Song Zhaolin [宋兆麟] (2001) presents Chinese shamanic prehistoric relics from a macroscopic perspective. *Shang Zhou qingtongqi wenshi de shenjing xinlixue shidu* 商周青铜器纹饰的神经心理学释读 [The Neuropsychological Interpretation of the Bronze Ware Decorations of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties] by Qu Feng

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[4] The Dongshanzui site is situated in Dongshanzui village, Kazuo County, Chaoyang City, Liaoning Province, a site of the New Stone Age, around 5,000 years ago, the first site discovered relating to female worship in China.

[5] Hongshan wenhua, the agriculture of the tribes living between the North of Yanshan and the upper river of Dalinghe and Liaohe dating back to 5,000 to 6,000 years ago, got its name because it was first discovered in the back of Hongshan of Chifeng City, Inner Mongolia.

[曲枫] (2007) reviews research on bronze ornaments of the Shang and the Zhou Dynasties in light of neuropsychological theory. The author maintains that they are the expressions of the shaman's vision quest for entering into contact with spirits.

(4) The relationship between shamanism and philosophy is one of the major challenges for international shamanistic research. Chinese research in this area is closely related to the history of thought of northern ethnic minorities. Tong Defu [佟德富] (1997) has conducted useful explorations in the context of the definition, form and characteristics of shamanic thought in *Zhongguo shaoshu minzu zhexue gailun* 中国少数民族哲学概论 [An Introduction to the Philosophy of Chinese National Minorities] and other works. The philosophy of shamanic cultures is preserved in the particular characteristics of their myths and songs. Se Yin [色音] (1999) and Guo Shuyun (2001; 2002) have brought to light the philosophical ideology of shamanism. Tang Huisheng [汤惠生] believes it is important to keep in mind the original thought of shamanism, which for him means dualistic thought. He has discussed the content and form of such thought as revealed in the genesis and cosmology of shamanism and in its arts and rituals (Tang Huisheng 1996).

(5) Shamanic literature includes sacred myths, songs, legends and so on. Research on shamanic literature in China includes comprehensive studies on shaman myths, the myths of ethnic minorities and other special studies, and has yielded remarkable results. Scholars researching the myths tend to focus on one theme as seen from different perspectives, with research becoming increasingly refined. Examples include the studies on the myth of the vault of heaven by Wu Bing'an [乌丙安] (1985), Fu Yuguang [富育光] (1997), Zhao Yongxian [赵永铣], and other scholars. In *Samanjiao yu shenhua* 萨满教与神话 [Shamanism and Mythology] (1990), Fu Yuguang published for the first time a large number of Manchu myths, the most valuable of which is *Tiangong dazhan* 天官大战 [The War of the Heavenly Palace], which was preserved by the ancient Heishui Nüzhen [黑水女真] (Fu Yuguang [ed.] 1990). Fu's book is a milestone, "representing a specific, categorical stage of Chinese research on shamanism" (Meng Huiying 2003: 433). *Samanjiao nüshen* 萨满教女神 [The Goddesses of Shamanism], by Fu Yuguang and Wang Honggang (1995), discusses the special theme of shaman myths concerning women spirits. The research done on shaman songs is inseparable from collection and systematization work. Such work is not only the basis for studies on shaman songs; it also gives an idea about

the intentions and academic mindset of scholars. The above mentioned works by Shi Guangwei [石光伟], Liu Housheng [刘厚生], and Song Heping combine research and systematization. The most important perspectives of research on shaman songs are theological, anthropological, and ethnological (Liu Jianguo 1989; Meng Huiying 1995; Wang Lizhen 1997; Guo Shuyun 2005). Such research includes studies on the belief systems and shamanic rituals of an ethnic group. The legend *Nishan saman* 尼山萨满 [Nishan Shamaness] is wide-spread among some minorities in China, for example the Manchu, Oroqen, Ewenki, and Daur nationalities. This legend incorporates numerous aspects of the life of these nationalities, such as literature, religion, customs, language, and society, which makes it of great value for interdisciplinary research. Study of it yields many insights about the religion, history, folklore, art, and other related subjects of the Manchu and other northern ethnic groups. It is worth noting the relationship between *Nishan saman* and shamanism on the one hand (Song Heping and Wei Beiwang 1988; Zhao Zhizhong and Jiang Liping 1993; Qiao Tianbi 1998) and the arts on the other (Song Heping 1998; Chen Liping 2005). *"Nishan saman" yanjiu* 〈尼山萨满〉研究 [*Research on "Nishan Shamaness"*] by Song Heping (1998) and *Saman de shijie – Nishan saman lun* 萨满的世界 – 尼山萨满论 [*The Shaman World – Discussion on Nishan Shamaness*] by Zhao Zhizhong 赵志忠 (2001) present systematic, comprehensive research on these themes, with unparallaled results.

(6) Research on shamanic arts includes studies on music, dance, and the plastic arts. The research done on shaman music primarily includes studies on the music of shamanic rituals, instruments and so on. In his research on Manchu shaman music, Shi Guangwei (1987) established a new area for shamanistic research from the perspective of musicology. For their part, Liu Guiteng [刘桂腾] (1999; 2007) and Wu Lanjie [乌兰杰] (2011) have made special studies respectively on the musical instruments of Manchu shamanism and on Mongolian shaman music. The most important aspects of research on shaman dances are their religious origin, form, symbolism, and artistic features. *Ke'erqin menggu bo yishu chutan* 科尔沁蒙古博艺术初探 [Studies on Horqin Mongolian Art] by Bai Cuiying [白翠英], Xing Yuan [邢源], Fu Baolin [福宝林], and Wang Xiao [王笑] (1986) discusses the types of Horqin Mongolian shaman dances and describes their characteristic artistic style. *Samanjiao wudao ji qi xiangzheng* 萨满教舞蹈及其象征 [Shamanic Dance and its Symbolism] by Wang Honggang, Jing Wenli 荆文礼 and Yu Guohua 于

国华 (2002) constitutes a comprehensive study on the shaman dances of northern national minorities. It covers the historical and cultural contents and symbolic meaning of these dances and shows their rich and vivid forms. Ethnological, cultural, and anthropological perspectives come to the fore in research on shamanic plastic arts. *Yuanshengtai minsu xinyang wenhua* 原生态民俗信仰文化 [The Primordial Forms of Folk Customs and Beliefs] by E Xiaonan [鄂晓楠] and E Suritai [鄂·苏日台] (2006) exemplifies these perspectives. It examines data of the shamanic arts and customs of northern nationalities as manifestations of primordial shamanic culture. *Saman yishu lun* 萨满艺术论 [Discussion on Shamanic Art] by Fu Yuguang (2010) is a comprehensive study on shaman music, dance, plastic arts, shaman songs, and other aspects of shamanic arts.

(7) In recent years, theories and methodologies of religious-, cultural-, artistic- and medical-anthropology have gained great attention, with a large number of fertile results. Se Yin [色音] (2007) in his book *Ke'erqin saman wenhua* 科尔沁萨满文化 [Horqin Shaman Culture] uses methods of religious anthropology to carry out systematic research on Horqin shaman culture. Based on a large quantity of information, the book stands out among research papers on shamanic studies. In *Yuanshi huotai wenhua – samanjiao toushi* 原始活态文化 –萨满教透视 [The Primitive Form of Culture: A Shamanic Perspective], Guo Shuyun (2001a) examines shamanism from anthropological perspectives, revealing aspects of its philosophical, astronomical, geographical, medical, legal, semiological, literary and artistic thrusts. *Mengguzu saman yiliao de yixue renleixue chanshi* 蒙古族萨满医疗的医学人类学阐释 [Mongolian Shamanic Healing from the Perspective of Medical Anthropology] by Wuren Qiqige [乌仁其其格] (2009) offers an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the healing rituals of Horqin Mongols in terms of their types, form, symbolism and character, in light of the ideologies and methodologies of anthropology, medical anthropology, and medical sociology.

(8) The physiological and psychological examination of shamanism is still quite rare in China. Strictly speaking, there has not yet appeared any work based on these sciences. There are some scholars, however, who are trying to incorporate the ideas and methods of physiology and psychology into their research (Se Yin 2000; Zhou Puyuan and Li Xiaolin 2006). Based on extensive fieldwork, *Zhongguo beifang minzu saman chushen xianxiang yanjiu* 中国北方民族萨满出神现象研究

[Research on Shamanic Trance Phenomena among Northern Minorities] by Guo Shuyun (2007) examines the shaman trance phenomenon of northern national minorities from interdisciplinary perspectives, in particular those of psychology, religion, sociology, and other disciplines. The work examines both traditional shamanic society and the individual physiological and psychological qualities of shamans.

RESULTS IN ESTABLISHING THE DISCIPLINE OF SHAMANISTIC STUDIES

In the last thirty years, the academic study of Chinese shamanism has advanced greatly in establishing the discipline, fostering scholarly interchange, and training well-versed researchers. Among achievements, the setting up of special academic groups and research organizations is most notable. The Jilin Shamanic Culture Association was set up in the Yitong Manchu Autonomous County on 10 July 2009, and held two fora on shaman culture in September 2010 and September 2011. The Institute for Shamanic Culture of Changchun Normal University and the Shamanic Culture Research Centre of Changchun University were set up in April 2004 as special research organizations for the study of shaman culture. In December 2006, the Jilin Educational Department ratified the Shamanic Culture Institute of Changchun Normal College as the basis for the study of humanities and social sciences, integrated with the Center for the Study of Shamanic Culture and the Northeast National Minorities.

For more than thirty years, the Chinese scientific community has established beneficial scholarly exchanges. The Nationalities Institute of Jilin Province, the Institute of Ethnic Literature of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the Chinese Folk Literature and Art Society and the Central University of Nationalities held eight scholarly symposiums in Changchun, Beijing and Hailar. In addition, the 7th International Conference of the International Society for Shamanistic Research was held 22–25 August 2004, sponsored jointly by the Chinese Folk Literature and Art Society, the Changchun People's Government and the International Society for Shamanistic Research. Nearly 200 scholars from more than twenty countries and regions attended this conference, which has had a favorable impact on academic communities in China and abroad. Such meetings for the exchange of scholarly information, discussion of scholarly problems, promotion of cooperation, and devel-

opment of scholarly viewpoints have advanced the development of the discipline and provided strong impetus for progress in Chinese shamanistic research.

The past thirty years constitute an important stage in the development of Chinese research on shamanism. The establishment of a scholarly base, the development of diverse theories and methods, the expansion of research fields, and the upgrading of standards all contribute to the development of the discipline at this most recent stage.

(1) *Broadened horizons and more systematic scholarly research.* Shamanic research conducted in the period of Ling Chunsheng (1930–1949) consisted only of the limited, fragmentary researches of one individual with a dependency on other disciplines. This approach was typical until the 1980s. During the thirty years of scholarly hard work from 1980 until 2010, however, shamanic research became a scholarly field in its own right, with a wider reach and improved scholarly and systematic methods that developed year-by-year.

(2) The strengthening of scholarly consciousness and increased role of talented scholars. Since the 1990s, scholarly awareness of the importance of shamanic research has been strengthened and the scholarly consciousness of scholars themselves enhanced. Fieldwork is now accepted as a conscious choice of shaman scholars, and the training of researchers well-versed in standard academic training has received greater attention in schools of higher education and scholarly research institutes.

(3) *The development of research in line with international trends.* In the international arena, shamanic research has a history of more than 200 years, moving through important developmental stages. It has already formed a relatively complete system for the study of the disciplines concerned. Although there are differences between shamanic research in China and abroad, and although the degrees of internationalization are still rather low, Chinese shamanic research among northern nationalities over the past thirty years has begun to incorporate practies of foreign shamanic research and follow the international mainstream.

(4) *Trends toward theoretical diversity.* Chinese shamanic research was influenced by Western theories early on. When Western ethnological theories began to spread eastward into Asia, a Marxist-materialist-historical perspective became the accepted theory in China. More recently, however, Western scholarly theoretical diversity has introduced changes in the perspectives of Chinese scholars. Over the past thirty years, the tendency for theoretical diversity in Chinese shamanistic research

under the influence of Western sciences has gradually become evident. Theories and methodolgies of religious anthropology, religious sociology, medicine, psychology, and other disciplines have been incorporated into research on shamanism, widening its theoretical base. Shamanistic research has an inate, interdisciplinary character, that arises from the nature of shamanism itself. Diverse scientific approaches have developed step-by-step in China. Nowadays, research approaches and subjects cover the fields of history, ethnology, anthropology, archeology, sociology, linguistics, religion, mythology, folklore, musicology, dance, arts, philosophy, psychology, physiology, medicine and so on.

There is also diversity in research personnel. There are both full-time and part-time researchers; and among researchers of ethnology, religion, history, folklore, there are some native ethnic workers. Out of a kind of double identity, some shamans and their descendants, clan leaders, and other members of northern ethnic groups feel responsible for their own shaman culture and have spontaneously begun to conduct research on shamanism. Such persons have special advantages in collecting data, gaining personal experience, etc.

We see that, in evolving through the three developmental stages of Chinese shamanistic research during the past eighty years, research styles have established their own unique character and have improved significantly. From a perspective of global scholarly research, shamanistic studies have matured dramatically, hold a secure place in the international mainstream of the discipline, and demonstrate remarkable accomplishments.

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The Rejuvenation of Manchu Shamanism

MIHÁLY HOPPÁL BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

The plan to visit China first began to take shape in my mind in 1991, after I was assured at various conferences by Chinese colleagues that active shamans could still be found in certain areas of the country. Most important of these occasions was in Zagreb, where we had decided to establish the International Society for Shamanistic Research. My intention was reinforced by the fact that the Northwest Chinese, i.e. Manchurian, territory is the cultural continuation of the Far Eastern shamanism of Southern Siberia. S. M. Shirokogoroff's impressive monograph *The Psychomental Complex of the Tungus* (1935) gave solid foundations to my fascination with the area, which I decided to pursue. My motivation was further enhanced by knowing that the Hungarian traveler and researcher Benedek Baráthosi-Balogh had also done research in the Amur area, although somewhat further north, in the early decades of the twentieth century (Baráthosi-Balogh 1927; Hoppál 1999).

And finally, an important point of interest was a true delicacy for a researcher—the fascinating texts of "The Nishan Shaman," which have also been published in Hungarian (Melles 1987). I found out that as early as 1875 still another Hungarian scholar, Gábor Bálint, delivered a presentation on "The Manchu Book of Ceremonies" at a reading given at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The book had been a present from a friend, and the manuscript inspired him to give a talk on the characteristics of the "*számán* religion." As far as we know, no references are made to this interesting paper, even though it was the first description offered in European literature (Bálint 1876; 1973) about the Manchu book of rituals, which had been compiled in the eighteenth century by commission of the Chinese Emperor. It was mostly based on oral tradition and the accounts of the heads of the Manchu clans recollecting their ritual practice. Chapters of the manuscript book enumerate the rituals, prayers, and songs, tied in with the seasons of the year, then goes on to describe

the dishes used for the rituals, complete with sketches and sizes. This book of rituals exists in several variants which were published at later dates in various languages, in Russian, English, German, and others, so that by now there is a separate branch of scholarship in Oriental philology just for the study and comparison of these different manuscripts and data—a branch that is referred to as "nishanology" (Stary 2002). At any rate, the consecutive publication of different variants provided comparative shamanistic research with a whole stream of new information. The illustrations of these manuscript variants are extremely valuable precisely because they are realistic and thus reveal a great quantity of detail about the rituals of the Manchu shamans.

Fieldwork in Northeast and Northwest China

Starting in 1991 I did fieldwork in China on six occasions, my visits motivated by the express intention to visit Manchuria where there are a number of ethnic minorities, or "nationalities" as they are termed in China, living alongside the Manchu. Besides the Tungus, there are different Evenki and Mongolic groups. The Agreement on Academic Exchange has enabled me to make six study trips to China over the past two decades, and since the rules demand that each visit is at least four weeks long I had the privilege of doing recurrent fieldwork, particularly among the Manchu. Among the 55 different nationalities living in China, the Manchu numbered more than four million in the early 1990s, and they must be an even larger population today because a special law on nationalities obliged women to have one or two children more than the single child compulsory in China. The Manchu live, mixed of course with the Chinese, in a large unified territory over several provinces such as Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang, and Hebei. They are characterized by clan (*mokun*) shamanism, which is actually a characteristic trait of the Manchu way of thinking and preserves the structure of the extended family. It was common practice for the entire network of relatives to come together at certain times of the year to commemorate their ancestors and thus confirm the sense of belonging together. I shall say more about this later.

I will now summarize each field trip because it is not irrelevant for research history how during such a visit one can both earn the trust of

local colleagues and also gain access to the data which are indispensable for understanding the culture under examination.

1991: CHANGCHUN, JILIN PROVINCE, MANCHURIA

In 1991 I arrived in China, in rather a naïve way, equipped with accurate maps of the different dialects.[1] Naturally, I was questioned at great length as to why I wanted to go to Manchuria, until I finally managed to get my Chinese colleagues to understand that I was there to do fieldwork, not as a tourist, and was interested in more than the Great Wall. Eventually I was taken to Changchun, where local colleagues met me with eager interest. We established that for them as Manchu nationals research on shamanism was very important as it formed an important and historically significant element of their culture. Some of them spoke Russian so we could hold conversations directly, which deepened our personal connection. Speaking of translation, I must mention here that I was assigned a young researcher from Inner Mongolia who had an excellent ear for languages and helped me a great deal in making contact, as he was a colleague with a truly open attitude. By now he is a professor lecturing in anthropology at a prestigious private university in the US.

Perhaps the most important field experience I gained during cooperation with Chinese colleagues is that one needs to be infinitely patient about the sensitivities of remote cultures. What this meant in this case in particular was that I simply waited and waited and did not press anything, while, quite often, I had to wait for two days to receive an answer to questions I asked. First I needed to earn the trust of the local people. My first trip took place during the early 1990s when the political climate was quite different and Chinese colleagues were extremely cautious not to cross certain boundaries and to keep the necessary distance. Despite this overall sense, I managed to get them to show me some of their collection of shamanic objects, and they even gave

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[1] Stephen Wurm had made me the gift of a photocopy of the as yet unpublished map of Chinese dialects, so I had quite a clear idea of my destination. At the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, which has an exchange program with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, I was received with noticeable suspicion and questioned on how I knew the precise geographical locations of small ethnic groups speaking local dialects.

me some photographs they had taken years before of shamans of the minority Manchurian peoples. They also showed me some interesting documentaries, but getting a video copy of these films was out of the question. Finally, right after my trip to Changchun they told me that they would take me for an outing in the country. The next day I found out that they had arranged a meeting for me with an old shaman. It is worth quoting some of the diary entries I wrote at the time.

The day has come. They promised that they would take me to see an old shaman. We left on the dot of 8 o'clock in a microbus, slaloming lethally amidst a flood of cyclists because, although it was Sunday, crowds of people were biking to work. From time to time we drove through markets where poverty was the most remarkable trait, with people sitting in the dust along the roadside selling melons and vegetables. After about an hour the good road ended, but we chugged along for another two and a half hours, sometimes at a walking pace, along roads that got worse and worse, water ditches, dirt roads, through villages bathed in dust. To make the story complete, it is important to know that yesterday they had sent ahead a young woman working for the institute to go and get hold of the old man and bring him into the centre of the village, Monhka, where, naturally, I was met by the village elders.

At 11:30 I was ushered into the "reception room" in the building of the local "council." A small room, 4x4 meters in size, had a typical Manchu stove built in on both sides. These are called *kang* and you can either sit or sleep on them. The old man was already waiting there when we arrived. The village of Takon where he lives is a few kilometers from here (he is from the Zhao clan). "There are about 600 people living in the village," said a granddaughter who was also present, and around 100 of those are direct relatives. The shaman's name is Zhao Yuge (aged 83), this Manchu man was the first living shaman I met in my life. Only yesterday he was still out fishing and during the great flood was out in the forest collecting firewood. He is in excellent health and good spirits, aside from being slightly hard of hearing.

I did not waste time but started questioning him straight away and my intuition turned out to have been correct—after lunch there was no chance to do this any more. He had brought along his hand-written book of ceremonies, an old Manchu text in Chinese script. Even after several questions I was unable to find out whether he regularly read the text printed in the book or knew the whole thing off by heart. The manuscript itself looked quite worn. He said that according to family tradition the booklet was around 200 years old. The old man has five sons, two daughters, eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren,

and shamanhood will be carried on by his oldest son who is now forty. He himself was thirteen when suddenly he was taken ill and the shaman who was curing him gave the family the advice, or rather expressed his wish, that he, too, should become a shaman. He began to receive the teaching from his great grandmother, and in response to my question he said instruction lasted fifteen days. He had been chosen because he was the eldest son. In the Manchu tradition a shaman, just like the Hungarian *táltos*, had to have an extra bone or finger. To be sure, it is possible the shaman did not get my question right as my translator was an urban person who spoke standard Chinese and his accent had to be translated for the old man by the local people, who then yelled the translation right into his ear. So conversation was somewhat difficult. He had begun to teach his own eldest son when he was seventeen. Shamans always have to choose their successor from their own family—he has had eight students thus far but all of these boys were too young.

When I asked when he had last used his shamanic skills, he said it was in 1988, during the Year of the Tiger. Once in every twelve years he has to perform the great family rite and on the same occasion the names of the newborn and the dead are entered into the family chronicle—a drawing of a family tree the size of half a wall, where babies are marked in red and the dead are entered in black ink. (I believe this is allusive to the symbolic opposition between blood and soil.)

The reason why the family rite has to be performed in the year of the tiger is that this clan has a tradition of respecting the tiger. His students all have the same family name as himself. His second son is a drummer at the ceremonies. He had his drum made in Jilin and it is covered in sheep skin. It was in quite a sorry state, with the leather gone loose. I asked why the cloth in which the drumstick was wrapped was yellow. What is the meaning of yellow? The old man refused to divulge the information, or at least the translation I was given was that it was a secret, he did not want to talk about it.

I think this was an important moment because it meant that his knowledge has a secret part which must not be transmitted, at least not to strangers. I happened to be the first white person he had seen in his life or talked to about shamanism, so in a sense we were both a first for each other.

This meeting with the old shaman was important to me because I had never met a real shaman before. It was also the first time I had a chance to use a modern camera to take photographs of the shaman's perpetual movement—the front cover of my book (Hoppál 1994) shows this old Manchu shaman drumming. The ultimate lesson was that one must never give up

hope that in the field one will find the data and the informants that the literature (and politicians) mostly speak of in the past tense.

This outing marked the beginning of long-term cooperation with Manchurian colleagues. They gave me some very interesting photographs, but during our conversations they also decided to compile a monograph presenting all the photographs and objects they had shown me.[2]

1995: XINJIANG UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION

My next trip to China took place in 1995. I first marked Xinjiang, next to Manchuria, as my location for fieldwork, partly because I was aware that certain Manchu groups had been relocated in the mid-19th century to the western extremes of the Empire to act as border guards. Living among the Uyghurs, the Sibe (Chinese Xibo) ethnic group retained many archaic traits of old Manchu culture. During my fieldwork, Uyghur colleagues were most helpful to me in collecting literature on the subject, but, as could be expected, there were only Chinese publications in those years. No matter how hard I pleaded, they refused to take me to see the Sibe or the Uyghur shamans, nor was I allowed to visit the Kazakh or Kirghiz groups living here as minorities. I could still draw encouragement, however, from the open-mindedness of my colleagues and the promise of future cooperation and joint research. Naturally, there was a lot to learn from the outings which took us to observe local cultural values—after all, treading in the wake of the Hungarian–British archeologist and explorer Sir Marc Aurel Stein and observing the phenomena of local life, one had the chance to observe conditions characteristic of a good century back and scrutinize the facts of peasant life as if it were an open ethnographic textbook. Having no permission, my colleagues simply denied the existence of shamanhood.[3]

I also returned to Manchuria where colleagues now met me as an old acquaintance and took me to see another shaman who was a characteristic representative of what is called family shamanism; more precisely, he

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[2] This volume was later published in both Chinese and English, see Guo and Wang (eds) 2001.

[3] Therefore it was no small surprise to me when a good decade later, in 2004, I managed to collect an incredibly rich array of material precisely in Xinjiang—and with the help of the same colleague.

was the head of ceremonies of extended family communities headed by shamans. Guang Borong is a member of a famous shaman family with several family members acting around him as drummers and helpers. When we visited him he was very open and ready to talk to us. Naturally, the interview was conducted with the help of Chinese colleagues. Although a very famous shaman, he lived in a very simple house, located in a small village, which was not even plastered on the outside.

He received me in a very open and friendly manner, as he had been informed beforehand about my arrival. After a brief interview he put on his usual shaman skirt with the characteristic stitched-on decoration and the belt consisting of cone-shaped bells which make a mighty clamor as the shaman moves around twisting his waist. In the room, there was a shelf over the mirror and on it a small box containing the sacred documents of the extended family, including the family tree. He was facing this box when he began his show—I can find no other word to describe the performance of the song inviting the spirits. I managed to record his gestures, his song, and the movements of the drumming on video, as well as take a few interesting photographs (Hoppál 2002: 115; Hoppál et al. eds 2005). Naturally, as an ethnographer who had come all that way, I would have liked to hear and see even more of the shaman's prayer inviting the spirits. The word *enduri* (spirit) could be discerned from time to time, spoken after the names of the specific spirits that this shaman likes to invite to this ceremony. Then, after a few minutes and after bending his knees a few times, he suddenly stopped drumming. When I asked him why he did that, he replied: "It would have been dangerous to invite the spirits because this was actually only an introduction to show you how a real ceremony begins." The lesson to be learnt from this brief episode was that the ceremonies we hold sacred cannot and must not be presented without the entire ritual context because they lose their strength. This was actually the most perfect answer he could have given, as it explained the whole situation and proved the authenticity of the setting and the shaman himself. Nevertheless, even these small fragments made it clearly discernible how shamans move in the real situation of the ritual.

Guang Borong then took me to the oldest member of the clan who lived in the same street—this was the man who guarded the genealogical chart, some two meters square, which preserves the branches of kinship in their clan for later offspring in the shape of a family tree. Later, during my 2004 field trip, I managed to photograph some family trees of

this kind.[4] During my visit to the friendly clan leader I certainly found out that he, too, took family traditions seriously because he declined my request to spread out the sheet and show it to me. It must not be taken out except during the big communal festivity that is held every three years. This is when young and old of the clan gather together and enter new information on the family tree, registering the new babies and the death of the old. Later, in Beijing, my colleagues showed me an extremely interesting documentary about this clan ritual.[5]

2000: CHANGCHUN IN THE YEAR OF THE CHANGE

My next study trip to China took place in 2000—at a time when ethnographers could witness the beginning of great changes. One difference was that Chinese colleagues in the headquarters of the Academy of Social Sciences received the Hungarian researcher with far more openness, and no obstacles were raised to my planned itinerary to Manchuria. As regards the official talks which are compulsory at the beginning of all such trips, my Chinese colleagues appeared open to the idea that in the coming years China should host one of the conferences of the International Society for Shamanistic Research (ISSR) in 2003. Most aptly, they instantly decided that within the Institute of Literary Studies of the Academy of Social Sciences they should form a research group which could provide the institutional background for such an international conference. Since I as the head of the ISSR saw no reason why such cooperation should not take place, we proceeded to lay down certain basic principles. However, the speed and agility which my Chinese colleagues demonstrated on this occasion exceeded all expectations. When I returned after a month's fieldwork, before I left for home, we were able to sign an agreement of several points stating that they would form the research group studying shamanism and begin preparations for the international conference.

It seems a good idea to cover a theoretical point here. Whenever we spoke about shamanism and its research or I gave my lecture, the Chinese translation consistently featured the term *samanjiao*. Now, however,

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[4] Cf. Guo and Wang 2001: 114.

[5] For a description of the film see Shi 1991.

an agreement was reached after some talks that in future instead of the word *yiao* (religion), they would use the far more neutral term *wenhua* (culture), because this can help avoid the sharp anti-religious critique of the previous years. Research into *samanwenhua* seemed acceptable to the leadership of the institution because, although it covered phenomena of popular religion, it also referred to other aspects of shamanism, including its artistic manifestations which could now be included within the frames of research. Thus the party leadership could no longer interfere with the exploration of a group of previously denigrated phenomena.[6]

To return to my field trip of 2000, with the help of my Changchun colleagues I now got to visit a different shaman—the same one as had been recorded in a film of which I eventually managed to get a copy. Zhang Yuhai was an old shaman who lived in the village of Wulajie and was in his 80th year when we met (fig. 1). He was the shaman who fell into a trance at one point of the ceremony, clearly recorded in the film, when, piercing his facial skin, he acted out the appearance of one of the guarding spirits of the clan, that of the wild boar. In this village, besides Han nationals (they are Chinese), there also lived a special ethnic group—members of the so-called Hanjun clan. They saw their ancestor in a blacksmith who had lived long ago and this is how they explained why their drums have a wrought iron frame and are very finely decorated by local blacksmiths. With the help of these drums, under the spell of their tremendously powerful rhythmic effect, the audience comes into a unique altered state of mind.

This was claimed not merely by our Manchu colleagues but may be confirmed by the ethnologist who did the recording in the field. Under the influence of the drumming one is overcome by the feeling that time has stopped. It has been scientifically proven that the rhythm of the drumming enhances the brainwaves conducive to attaining an altered state of mind (Harner and Tryon 1992). True to the tradition, the old man donned his head-dress, which had obviously been made not very

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[6] The colleague who came to head this research group, it later turned out, was none other than the party secretary of the Folklore Institute. He himself belonged to a minority ethnic group, being of Naxi origin, so he had personal experience of what it meant to belong to a minority. Nevertheless he was the most determined hardliner representing official party ideology. It is purely a matter of luck, from the perspective of shamanistic research, that he himself had been a researcher of Naxi shamanism ever since his youth and had edited an excellent monograph on the subject (Bai and Yang [eds] 1998).

Fig. 1. Shaman Zhang Juhai. Photo: Mihály Hoppál, 2000.

long ago and which had three round glass mirrors built in at about the height of the forehead. On top it was decorated with peacock feathers, which were not very long, while at the bottom the shaman's eyes were covered by a curtain of plastic beads. Blocking vision also helps to attain the altered state of mind. I was accompanied on my visit to the old man by a colleague who is the foremost shaman researcher here, and we were given a warm welcome. So much so that the shaman wanted to show us how he pierces his face, just to prove his authentic shamanic skill. During our meeting it became clear that he really could access what some researchers have recently come to call the "shamanic state of mind."

The Zhang clan has been the organizer of this family feast for generations, and as such they also consciously guard the transmission of traditions. Thus the old man has several students who will inherit the office of organizing and holding shamanic séances. I met one of the young men who works at present as a local schoolteacher. He told me that he is already working on recording the entire stock of the shaman's knowledge. At any rate, it was clear that my Chinese colleagues and the local Manchurian researchers were well acquainted with the old man, and this aging preserver of traditions was even visited from time to time by foreigners (Brunton 1995; Shi 1993).

When I questioned him about the circumstances under which he had become a shaman, I found out that (1) he had been selected by the spirits of the ancestors; (2) he fell ill, indicating that he had to become a shaman; and (3) he had to learn from an older shaman. He also told me that usually old shamans chose their own successors. Our companion Fu Yuguang told us that he was the shaman who had featured in a film in the mid-1980s—the same documentary that my Chinese colleagues showed me but refused to give a copy of (Guo and Wang eds 2001: 86–89). Still in his prime at that time, the shaman was the chief organizer of the ceremonies devoted to the veneration of the ancestors. The local people took out the sheet of paper half a wall in size which contains the family tree and, dancing and drumming in front of it, invoked the spirits of the ancestors. They also sacrificed a pig. This happened in the early spring—in other words what emerged was a family get-together complete with pig-killing, lasting several days, to which they invited the spirits of the eagle, of the tiger, and of fire. This present shaman played the part of the tiger. In the film it was clearly evident that he was in a complete trance and also that during the ceremony his facial skin was pierced with two silver sticks that looked something like

knitting needles. Now he looked even more like a tiger. This is the scene of which the old man wanted to give us a taster after a few minutes of drumming. Then, after he became tired, he sat down and thanked Fu Yuguang, his good old friend, and the stranger who had come all this way for visiting him. When we said good-bye, there was a smile on his face radiating a deep sense of inner calm. His son told us that his father is happiest when from time to time he takes out his drum and that he is quite sad that he cannot know who his worthy successor will be.[7]

2001: JILIN, AND SOME RECENT MANCHU STUDIES

In 2001 an international conference was organized in the city of Jilin for scholars of Manchu studies. I happily took advantage of this to do some fieldwork once again and perhaps meet further shamans. Even if I was somewhat disappointed in these hopes, my trip was not without benefits, since I could observe new phenomena that I had had no chance to experience directly before. It is exactly these phenomena, which go hand in hand with modernization and political changes, that indicate the state of shamanism in the early twenty-first century.

One of the trips organized for participants of the conference took us to the same small village where I had visited the old shaman, but this time we had the chance to observe a characteristically new cultural phenomenon—that of folklorism. The local council and the organizers of the conference had jointly decided that they would give a show of what they judged to be characteristic aspects of Manchu folklore, also involving groups of schoolchildren. This meant that, besides old Manchu female costumes and head-dresses, they would also borrow and rework for presentation some elements of shamanism. More precisely, these elements meant the rattling belt described in the context of the Nishan shaman woman and, of course, the drum.

Every child was given a rattling belt and a make-believe drum and, dressed in body-tight gymnastic suits, performed the choreography of a "shamanic dance." The entire performance was reminiscent of the mass-scale gymnastic shows of the socialist countries of the 1950s, which are of course still prevalent in contemporary China. Looking out from the

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[7] I heard in 2004 that since that time he has joined the ranks of the heavenly shamans.

window of my urban hotel I could see every morning that even before lessons started, all children had to attend gymnastic exercises to the perky rhythms of cheery marches. Imbuing folklore into the minds of young people with this kind of political-didactic intent is based on a misunderstanding of folklore. On the other hand, it does indicate that politicians have at least got to the stage where they have accepted that there are local traditions, costumes, and customs other than Chinese. Thus it was no surprise that the little group of child actors performed a historical story, quoting from the histories of heroes from Manchu folklore. This political manipulation was aimed not only at us—a large local audience also attended the performances, which lasted a good two and a half hours apiece. Naturally, the children marched in and out in a regimental order.

Now I had no reason to be surprised when the next day we were taken to a village museum where members of another significant shaman clan, the Guan clan, gave a show of song and dance. They had built up small buildings in a completely authentic village style which seemed like normal places of residence from the outside and reproduced the same structure. These buildings contained exhibitions of old relics of Manchu culture, while in the courtyard male members of the clan demonstrated how to drum, how to dance with the flat drums and spin them about in a dazzling way in the air. The beat was dictated from the background by one of the oldest shamans, but three young shamans also took part in the ceremony. Their folk costume seemed overdesigned and newly made, except for the characteristic blue shaman skirt and the head-dress ornamented with three mirrors and peacock feathers.

In 2001 I got a chance to repeat my study trips to China, because the great conference of scholars of Manchu culture—which had always been planned to take place in the city of Jilin but was always postponed at the last minute—now actually took place after several years' delay. Beside Changchun, this city is actually the center of the Manchu ethnic area, although the research institute which functions alongside the Academy is in fact in Harbin. The conference attracted more than a hundred researchers from the entire territory of China, including visitors who had set up Manchu clubs and circles in southern and western China and were engaged in organizing local cultural life. At times one had the impression that participants ranged from volunteer collectors, through heads of cultural groups dedicated to maintaining national consciousness and specialists who worked to sustain national pride, to

professional experts of Manchu and Chinese origin. Naturally, on such occasions conferences are opened by local leaders, and to the European eye they are extremely formal and solemn. At the conference over fifty papers were delivered, and simultaneous translation was the privilege of a few foreign researchers whose talks were given during the morning of the first day.

This conference enabled me to meet a whole line of scholars, including some members of the new generation who spoke good English. It was at this conference that the authors presented the excellent monograph *Living Shamans: Shamanism in China*, the first of its kind to be published by Chinese authors (Guo and Wang eds 2001). This monograph was actually the first book produced with the intent of offering a comprehensive picture of the shamanism of the minorities living in the area of China. And by picture I do mean picture, in fact a whole lot of pictures—the book contains over two hundred illustrations. These photographs have a special significance in academic history in that they capture original, unarranged scenes from the 1960s and '70s onwards at shamanic séances of which there had been no visual documentation of any kind before. This was the period when Chinese colleagues were finally allowed to start systematic research into the manifestations of shamanism, even though this could not be presented as an official agenda at the time. The majority of the pictures come from the 1990s, but this had the advantage that most of them are color photographs. If we add the photos of objects, we get an idea of the shamans of the ethnic groups related to the Siberian peoples, the Evenki of China (called Orochon there), the different Mongolic groups (Daur, Khorchin) and, naturally, the Manchu and the various Tungus groups. This way we gain access to the kind of detail which only the local researcher can usually see, not to mention the commitment and devotion characteristic of my Changchun colleagues Fu Yuguang and Guo Shuyun, who are themselves of Manchu origin. It might be worth mentioning that during one of my earlier visits we thoroughly discussed the first rough outline of this book, which follows a structure built along shamans, souls, and symbols. I left them a German copy of my book in gratitude for the rare pictures which they had given me and I had included in my book. They acknowledged the cooperation by inviting me to write the introduction (Guo and Wang eds 2001: 1–4) to their volume.

As a ritual ending to the conference, in the usual fashion they invited participants for an outing, which meant that we were bussed to a nearby

village on the edge of which they had built an old Manchu farmhouse somewhat along the lines of an open air museum. One wing included a small collection of Manchu folk culture, while the other rooms served to receive visitors. Chinese colleagues told me that although this boarding house was now privately owned, the project had been heavily subsidized by the local authorities because it served as a kind of official excursion spot for high-ranking or foreign visitors arriving in the province. Here they can present the reconstructed versions of old Manchu customs with the customary requisites, which in practice means a line of finely dressed young women and meals of 10–12 courses.

What we were shown on this occasion is actually the midsummer community rite in keeping with the season—the harvest ritual to which they invited the local shamans who usually carry out this ritual at this time of the year. I quote from my field diary entry about this.

August 26, 2001. A lovely day, not a cloud in the sky. A good hour from the city of Jilin, or maybe a bit less, they had just completed a village museum ensemble consisting of a few buildings. More precisely, they had constructed the buildings the way they used to stand, in the farmhouse style, where the main building—the owner's house—was opposite the entrance, while there were smaller buildings standing on both sides, with the same internal structure. To the left and right there was a room each and on two sides of these there was a dais for sleeping which could be heated (you had to take your shoes off to step on to this). Finally, there were windows opening to west and east. In the middle room there were two stoves, with holes in the middle for large cauldrons—in winter time this was the way they heated the *kang* which served as beds.

When we arrived, preparations were already underway in the kitchen—water was boiling in the cauldrons in the middle room and I saw them prepare the cornmeal (or millet?) for the sacrificial dishes. On the veranda, with its line of pillars, the drums of the shamans stood in a row leaning against the wall. The characteristic round Manchu drums (around 60 cm in diameter) are held by a brass ring the size of the palm of one's hand which is fastened to the rim of the drum by leather strings in a cross shape. The pattern and knotting of the strings is the unique characteristic or identifying mark of each group (clan or extended family).

They say this unit of houses, a village museum and tourist motel, was only completed recently and it is quite typical that it was built by an entrepreneur (his young wife became the manager). It says something about nascent Manchu ethnic pride that they are building village museums like this alongside the tourist sights. One has to admit that the building is totally authentic and follows the

traditions, because each of the three times I visited a Manchu shaman the house was structured in exactly this way.

A few things were already waiting prepared at the end of the room on the left-hand side where the family tree of the ancestors was guarded in a small wooden case; on the bottom, still on the raised section, there was something like an altar, a few dishes and some joss-sticks. According to the previously set program, in Jongji village the Guan clan would present a sacrifice to the spirits of the ancestors and the God of Harvest. The sacrificial rite of the afternoon is commended to the Heavens, while the evening's shaman dance is commended to "the God of Meat." The offering is a pig—a black pig will be killed and everyone partakes of its meat along with the village people. This all sounded very interesting, as the harvest was not yet over, with the sweet corn still standing in the fields. The organizers made sure the shamans would give a show of old customs appropriate to the time of year to the local researchers. Apart from the three foreigners, all the people present (over a hundred) were researchers and representatives of organizations working on the preservation of Manchu culture.

Before anything began I got a chance to meet the shamans and asked, with the kind help of my lady colleague Meng Huiying from Beijing, what would be the purpose of the ritual. The answer was "to commemorate the ancestors." Well, in the middle of summer, at the time of the harvest, the ancestors certainly deserved all respect—after all they had helped the community by securing a good harvest. The names of the shamans were Guan Yunde (aged 53), Guan Yunduo (aged 66), Guan Canghong (aged 70), Guan Yunbi (aged 74), and Guan Yunjiu (aged 78). These were actually only drummers—I doubt that they were all shamans—while the two youngest clan members who only joined in with the ceremony later on were genuine shamans and seemed initiated. Their names were Guan Changji (aged 33) and Guan Jingfu (aged 39). One of the shaman drummers added that for members of the extended family remembering the ancestors actually meant a form of confirmation, happiness and good health. This is why they would gladly participate at the ceremony. The name of the God of Harvest was Ūsi Enduri. In response to the question whether the rite was performed every year, they replied no, only in the years of the dragon and the tiger (according to the oriental calendar). This was not one of those occasions, the customs were only being shown to us, except that the sacrifice was meant to inaugurate the village museum.

To start with, there was some drumming—no more than four or five minutes. The rhythm consisted of two long and three short beats. This introductory drumming took place still in the courtyard in front of the door. The base was provided by a large drum on a stand with a powerful, deep sound. They stopped

the drumming very suddenly and everyone crowded into the room on the left where the table stood that had been prepared for the altar.

[. . .] The two young shamans were dressed in blue skirts with stylized ornamentation at the bottom. (The pattern was not as archaic as that worn by Guan Borong whom I had visited in 1995 and who was the Grand Shaman of this same clan.) The drumming resumed, to the previously heard rhythm. Fu Yuguang also took up a drum and did drumming. In the meantime, the young shamans placed small dishes, brass plates and tiny metal teapots on the altar. Next they knelt down beside the altar and touched the ground with their forehead three times over. The two young shamans were wearing shirts of a traditional (Chinese?) cut and it seems that the red belt was a characteristic part of their costume, because all the shamans I had ever met also wore red belts.

The drumming resumed once more, with the two young high shamans drumming along with the older men. In the meantime they brought in a boat-shaped wooden tub containing the yellow cornmeal for the sacrifice. The high shaman walked round the low table with the tub, drumming, first clockwise, then counterclockwise. It turned out that the tub was not made true to tradition, because the original form was quite simply an oblong-shaped wooden box. (It is amusing to think what interesting theoretical speculations might have been fueled in the minds of ethnographers, say, about the symbolism of boats carrying the souls of the dead forebears.) The drumming lasted exactly five minutes [. . .]

In the meantime, in the kitchen, a chicken was cleaned and placed beside the tub of the ancestors. The young women kept making innumerable little sticks out of the polenta (later the cookies never emerged . . .) And they knelt, instead of sitting, even though their work lasted almost an hour. When they were finished, the two young shamans brought in the clean chicken and laid it down in front of the hamper next to the altar. The chickens were offered up to the Golden Eagle God (Aishin Daimin). While all this happened, the drummers just kept on drumming the beat. I observed that not all the drummers kept spinning their drum during the beats. This stretch of drumming was longer than average, a good 20 minutes, while two young shamans busied themselves around the altar, arranging the objects around it. Luckily, there were several people who could not stand all this drumming and went out, so it became easier to make a video recording. The high shaman and his helper put on their rattling shaman belts and the drumming resumed—indeed, the whole ritual was arranged into intervals. It seemed as if the whole event was divided into acts like a stage play with intervals and different types of action. The two young men dressed in shamanic clothes stood in front of the altar and kept on drumming with very earnest faces, bending their knees from time to time without stopping the drumming. Less

than two minutes later they started walking out of the room in order to stop by the kitchen window and start summoning the spirits of their forebears. They were hoping that the spirits of the ancestors would help the community.

We were well into the afternoon when from the outside we heard the screeching of a pig. They were leading, in fact pushing, a large black pig toward the house so that it was walking only on its front legs. They drove it to the altar, laid it on its side and kept drumming into its ear. So far the pig bore this with acquiescence. Next the high shaman poured some brandy into its ears and as the pig shuddered, this meant that the gods, i.e. the spirits of their forebears, accepted the sacrifice. Next they took it to the kitchen and stuck it, catching the blood in a dish. This was followed by cleaning the black hair off the animal with the help of hot water from the huge cauldron and some sharp knives. (They made blood sausages for the night's dinner out of real blood, unmixed with anything else—this is a typical Manchu dish which they also served at other places as a typical local delicacy.)

An important element was cutting up the pig after it had been cut in half. One of the older helpers showed them how to cut the body into eight parts, and then the pieces were taken to the spot in front of the altar. In the boat-shaped tub they reassembled the entire body. The head was left in one piece, but the mouth was covered with some sort of thin lining (perhaps it was the stomach). The head was placed near the altar, while the hot pieces of meat were carried into the dish by the oldest assistant drummer, with the young high shaman and his helper just looking on. Fu Yuguang did some more drumming—he was not wearing any shamanic costume at all, similarly to the other two drummers. The two young shamans stood in front of the altar drumming and now they put on their rattling belts. The one on the left enumerated in a chanting song the gods invoked, as is usual on these occasions. The drummers stood around the offering of the pig and just kept on beating their drums indefatigably. The drummers, tired out by cutting up the pig, were wearing yellow towels around their neck, having shed the earlier plastic cloaks.

Now the two high shamans back off as far as the pig, shaking their belts and their waists, and then move back to the altar once more. The high shaman shakes his hands, imitating a dance, then picks up some ball-shaped bells from the altar and walks round the pig, once clockwise and once the other way round, while the helper (*zhaili*) holds on to his belt from behind and follows him. After the third round he suddenly lashes out his hand to the pig and rips the jaws open, tearing apart the pellicle which covers it. As the locals told me, this act symbolically opened the way for the gods to eat from the sacrificial animal.

At this point the high shaman fell to the ground and stayed there, while his helper knelt by his side enumerating at length the gods which had been summoned for the ceremony. This imitation of trance and the accompanying song did not last longer than two minutes. The shaman is said to be possessed at these times by the Wild Boar God (perhaps the black pig is referential to this), while the main god, the God of Heaven, was Abha-enduri, whom they mentioned. His bird is the raven, the bird which brings good fortune, one of the helpers of the Manchu shamans. The raven brings the message of the gods—in Hungarian mythology, as in many others, birds are messengers. The Manchu have particular respect for bats because one of their ancestors, the legendary hero (*baturu*) Nurhachi, was saved by one landing on his head, which rendered the hero invisible. Bats also appear in a stylized form in Manchu ornamentation. Fu Yuguang told me that the owl was also a helper bird of the shamans.

[. . .] Outside, in the courtyard they built a fire which was soon lit and made a mighty spectacle. In the meantime, on a table they carried out a whole lot of hand-sized pieces of bacon from the pig and long iron skewers. These served for everyone to roast a piece for themselves over the fire.

Anyone who wanted could help themselves to these fistfuls of pork and roast them over the fire. This was probably the ceremony dedicated to the God of Fire—at least this is what it said in the program—and the meaning was that anyone who ate from the meat would live a long life, as the locals revealed to me. In other words, when the participants ate, in this way the God of bacon also partook of the sacrifice, but the God of Fire was also satisfied, as lots of pieces of meat fell into the fire. The fire was the mediator—as in so many other rituals.

The overall atmosphere grew hotter and hotter—the fire was so powerful that even with the long skewers we had difficulty roasting our meat. Then the sound of the drums began again, but now the rhythm was beaten not by the previous drummers but by the local people—anyone could join in, including the conference participants, and indeed many people did join the general whirl around the fire. They were inviting everyone, and lots of people accepted the invitation. The drummers began to jump about wildly—I had seen this before in a Manchu documentary, except that there the spirit dance was carried out with masks, while here there were none.

This liberated ring dance was what eventually gave an authentic air to the artificially organized ritual play of this day—being there, being involved in the ritual, gave participants real pleasure. What rendered it perfectly genuine was that the sacrificial animal was indeed killed, the meat was offered unto the ancestors, and the participants then ate it together (*com-*

munion). Eventually, they danced a self-forgetting ring dance under the stars, around the fire, to entertain themselves and their ancestors.[8]

Since I, too, was called upon to join in with the dancing, I asked for a drum and, picking up the rhythm, had a great time drumming, dancing, and jumping about like all the others. At the end a young Manchu woman came up to me to compliment me, and on the bus driving home several people said I made a good drummer. This dance had been meant for them—the locals. What began in the morning as a restrained and shy social event developed in the liberating atmosphere of darkness and fire into a self-forgetting whirl of a ritual. The harvest, meat, and dancing all joined forces to express the tremendous social and biological potential of fertility and a healthy life instinct. This is how the fragment of tradition presented here as a showpiece finally transformed itself into a living and meaningful community rite the impact of which was too powerful for anyone to escape.

Conclusions

These cultural phenomena, which actually mean reviving and replaying old customs, have some distinctive post-modernist traits characteristic only of the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century. Namely, the traditional elements merge seamlessly with the most daring and unexpected innovations. We could see how Manchu hospitality has merged with the official hospitality that has been developed artificially in contemporary China and which entails tremendous waste and ceremonial pomp.

In today's world all of this is complemented by the media and, in contemporary China, the local media as well. Felicia Hughes-Freeland (1998) compiled an excellent collection of papers on the interaction of ritual as performance and the media in the contemporary world. It is quite clear that most of the customs and rituals of the past live on today as media events, and the latter aspect is more important than the original cultural content. Even though the authentic form has been retained,

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[8] This function of the ritual was observed in Korea, too, during the shamanic rituals there, as that was an occasion when the spirits expressly had to be entertained and everyone had to join in with the common dancing, including the foreign visitors and the anthropologist shooting the documentary footage.

what really distinguishes the event from other cultural phenomena is its media appearance. Film, television, or a simple video recording legitimizes as it were the cultural form itself. For instance, this is almost the only feature that renders a dramatic play culturally interesting—in other words anything that is not recorded ceases to exist. This is how in the trinity of ritual, performance, and the media the last becomes the most important. During the research of shamanism it is important to see that a local phenomenon is becoming expanded almost without bounds—this is what we are witnesses, indeed, active participants of.

In some cases we can even actively influence these tendencies as we can (as I have done) make specific suggestions about how to strengthen the position of local scholars. Our encounter was not a one-sided affair where they gave us or showed us something of their own culture—it was also about us "Westerners" showing them and teaching them how they can, indeed must, use the emblematic phenomena of their own culture—in this case the culture of shamans—in the social and political setting which the post-communist world offers them. In brief: we used them, and they used us in reaching their goals. This exchange is no longer the usual one-directional communication between center and periphery but the characteristic equalizing mechanism of an increasingly global world in which descendents of a Nganasan shaman can perform at a folklore festival in the South of France or the President of the ISSR inaugurate a statue of the Manchu shaman-goddess-mother at the celebration of a local community in China.

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VOL. 21. NOS. 1-2. SHAMAN SPRING/AUTUMN 2013

Visiting a Sakha (Yakut) Folk Healer

DÁVID SOMFAI KARA and LÁSZLÓ KUNKOVÁCS BUDAPEST, HUNGARY
With a Musicological Note by JÁNOS SIPOS

In the summer of 1997 two Hungarian researchers visited the Sakha Republic (Yakutia), the largest region of the Russian Federation which occupies around 3.1 million square kilometers of northeast Siberia. It is inhabited mostly by Sakha (Yakut) people, a Turkic-speaking ethnic group who migrated to the north from Lake Baikal due to the Mongolian invasion in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Traditionally they are sedentary and their economy is based on horse and cattle breeding near round meadows (*alaas*) in the woods along the River Lena (Ölüöne or Ulaxan Örüs) and other major east Siberian rivers.[1] The Sakha population of the republic is around 470,000 (50% of the total population). Besides the Sakha, there are Russians (38%), Tungusic groups (Evenki and Even; 36,000), Tatars (8,000), and Yukagirs (1,300).

Shamanic Traditions of the Sakha

Sakha shamanic traditions were thoroughly described by several scholars through the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries (Seroshevskiĭ 1896; Ksenofontov 1928/1922). During Soviet times the Sakha were heavily oppressed, which resulted in the loss of many aspects of their ethnic culture, including epic and shamanic traditions. When the Sakha Republic became more independent in 1992, the local intelligentsia wanted to revive their shamanic traditions. They expressed they will to support traditional belief and healers. But when in 1997 we

[1] Major rivers of Yakutia (names in Sakha/Russian): Bülüü/Viliuĭ, Allaan/Aldan, Ǯaaŋï/Yana, Amma/Amga, Xalïma/Kolyma, Indigir/Indigirka, etc.

visited the republic we could find no living or revived shamanic tradition in the rural areas. Post-Soviet neo-shamans were all members of the urban society who had revived or created some new traditions to strengthen their ethnic identity (Balzer 2008: 9–13). All that we found was the tradition of folk medicine and healing, and this was practiced not by shamans (*oyuun* and *udaγan*) but by folk healers (*emčit*). The word *emčit* derives from *emp* 'medicine' (Turkic and Mongolic *em*) carrying the well-known Turkic *nomen agentis* suffix *-hit/čit*.

The Sakha Folk Healer

We traveled by bus to Berǰigesteex (*berǰiges* means 'small, short pine tree') in Gornay *uluus* (Russian Gornyĭ district), 184 km from the capital J̌okuuskay (Yakutsk). In those days the village had some 5,000 inhabitants. Although the name of the district means 'mountainous' (Russian *gornyĭ*), it is in fact a very flat area surrounded by taiga forest. But the Sakha call the taiga *tïa*, which originally meant 'mountain' (cf. Turkic *taγ*), thus explaining the name (figs. 1, 2).

During our stay we met an old woman by the name of Ilekhen (fig. 3), who was born in Bülüü District (1901). I did an interview with her about her life and healing activities.[2] She started to heal people at the age of sixteen (1917), but during Soviet times she had to continue her activities secretly due to the Stalinist repression. Her husband died during World War II and she became a so-called "military widow," receiving benefits from the Soviet state. She has six children and 27 grandchildren. She had moved to Berǰigesteex four years before because her younger brother lived there and the government granted her a house in the district center. She used to travel to other villages visiting her children and relatives (Ölüöxme, Čurapčï, Bülüü, and Yakutsk), and she healed there too. But since growing old she was only accepting local people and some visitors. There was a lack of qualified doctors in Yakutia, so people visited her from distant parts of the republic to ask for healing. A couple of years previous to my interview Vladimir Alekseevich Kondakov, a writer and leader of the Sakha revival

[2] The interview was transcribed and translated by Dávid Somfai Kara with the assistance of Anna Argylova, of the Sakha Republic, and Csaba Mészáros (Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences), to whom he expresses his gratitude.

Fig. 1. View of a Sakha homestead in the village of Berǰigesteex.
Photo: László Kunkovács, 1997.

Fig. 2. A Sakha cowshed (*xoton*) in Berǰigesteex. Photo: László Kunkovács, 1997.

of shamanic traditions (Kondakov 1992; 1999), visited her and granted her some sort of certificate as a folk healer (*emčit*). Subsequently, French and Canadian anthropologists and film-makers visited her and recorded her activity. She treated one of the Canadians for infertility.

Ilekhen treated pregnant women, especially those who had suffered miscarriage, and healed conditions related to cold as well as liver sickness (e.g. jaundice) and stomach problems. She used herbs and massage (*imeriy-* 'to apply herbs' or *massaastaa-* 'to apply massage') and performed healing by charms, all part of Sakha folk healing. She gave blessings (*algïs*) for weddings and opening ceremonies (e.g. for clubs or clinics). The blessings were performed in the Sakha singing style (*kïlïba*). She also used a little bucket made of birch bark (*ïaγas*) to perform fortune-telling.

A Healing Ritual

When we asked if we could see Ilekhen's healing ritual she immediately agreed, but we had to find a patient for her. Our companion from Yakutsk, a Sakha lady, agreed to be her patient. She had to lie down on a bed in the healer's house. The healer told her that she had probably suffered from cold many times during her childhood. During the healing Ilekhen used a Sakha fan (*deybiir*) made of horse tail. She felt her pulse while putting the fan on her shoulder. Then she symbolically drove away the evil energy from her body with the fan. Then Ilekhen placed the fan by the top of the patient's head, reached out her right hand over the patient's body (figs. 4, 5, 6, 7), and started to sing her blessing song (*algïs*).

A Blessing (*Algïs*) by Ilekhen *Emčit*

1st part

Ǯie-buo, ǯie-buo!	*Ǯie-buo, ǯie-buo*[3]
Bultaydammït ïarïï	The illness that attacked you, let it fly
bulguччu köttün dien	away quickly

[3] Magical words with no meaning.

Sapsaybït ïarïï	The illness that seized you,
saas-saahïnan arayïstïn dien	let it go away forever
Algïs kurduk arayaччïlaatïn dien	Let these words protect you like a blessing
Kebis, kebis . . . arayïax[4]	Throw it away . . .
Kepselge kiirbit	People started to talk about me
Emčit dien min buollum dii	I have become a healer
Orosxuota suox	The poor (with no means)
. . .	. . . [Elekhen stops singing here.]
Emčit oloxxo kiirbit	Healer earned a living
Bïlïr-bïlïrgïttan	Long time ago
Üs saxa üösküöyütten	When the three Sakha clans appeared
Tüört saxa törüöyütten	When the four Sakha clans were born
Uraaŋxay-saxa onon buluoyuttan	Since the Uraangkhai-Sakha[5] have lived
Emteetim dien emtiibin eyigin	I am healing you as much as I can
Ǯol doyordoho turuoxtun	Luck should be your friend
Ieyiexsit kördöhö turuoxtun	The *ieyiexsit* spirit should show the way
Ayïïhït argïstaha turuoxtun	The *ayïïhït* spirit should be your friend
Damidi, damidi, damidi	*Damidi, damidi, damidi*[6]
Ňirin buollun, ňirgil buollun	Let her be vivid, let her be strong!
. . .	[She is using the horse-tail fan]
Ǯe, bütte	Well, that is it!

2nd part

Ürdee, ürdee, sargïtaa, sargïtaa	Arise, arise, be happy, be happy
Ǯolo üöhee üllüktener	Let her luck walk high
Maayïn eppitim kurduk	As I have already said

[4] For technical reasons, the recording was interrupted here for a while.

[5] Sakha people also use their Mongolic name *uraaŋxay* (Mongol *uriangqai*) as an endonym, usually saying it together as Sakha-Uraankhai. Mongols used to call all Siberian Turks *uriaŋqai*—including the Tuva.

[6] These words have no meaning either.

Uu Ǯulaygïttan	From her head
Uluŋax xaraγar dieri	Down to the paleness of her feet
Min emteebitim kennitten	After I have healed you
Kihi berde buolan	You will become strong
Oxtooxton oxtubakka	You will not fall down
Xahan daγanï sanaaγïn tüherbekke	You will never lose your good mood
Onnuk kihi buoluoxtaaxxïn.	That kind of person you will be.

Fig. 3. Ilekhen (center), the Sakha native healer (*emčit emeexsin*), in front of her house with her sister-in-law (right) and our guide (left). Photo: László Kunkovács, 1997.

Fig. 4. Ilekhen checks the veins of the patient to make her diagnosis while holding a Sakha horsetail fan (*deybiir*) in her other hand. Photo: László Kunkovács, 1997.

Fig. 5. Ilekhen holds the fan over the head of the patient as she sings her healing song (*algïs*). Photo: László Kunkovács, 1997.

The first part of the blessing was a song in traditional Sakha singing style (*kïlïha*), although Ilekhen stopped singing after one minute and continued in a normal speaking voice. She was not singing during the second part of the blessing and, having finished it, the whole ritual came to an end.

Some Notes on the Text

In the first part she is chasing away the illness as well as introducing herself to the spiritual world. She then refers to mythical times when the Sakha clans were formed, saying that her healing ability (*uǰuor*) comes from the ancestors (*öbüge*). She also mentions two important helping spirits from Sakha mythology, namely the *ieyiexsit* and the *ayïïhït*. The Sakha *ayïï* means 'goodwill' but also means 'fate'. The word *ieyiex* derives from the verb *iey-* 'to love or soothe' (cf. Turkic *seb-*). Both names are constructed by the Turkic *nomen agentis* suffix *-čit/sit/hit*, which means that these spirits bring goodwill, luck, loving, and health. Good helping spirits used to be called *taŋaralar* 'deities'[7] in Sakha folk belief, but nowadays this word is used only for God. She only mentions those spirits but does not invoke them since she is not a shaman who is entitled to do so. Then Ilekhen repeated the magic words *damidi* a couple of times while using her fan to chase away the illness. In the second part of the blessing she literally blessed the ill person with good health and fortune. She emphasized that after she had healed someone that person would have a happy and healthy life.

A Musicological Note on the Blessing of the Sakha Healer

There are several publications on Sakha folk music, and we will mention some of them here. In his book, V. L. Seroshevskiĭ (1896/1993) devoted an entire chapter to folk songs, especially to the *degereŋ ïrïa*.

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[7] The word *taŋara* originally meant 'heaven', but nowadays it has lost that meaning as people use *xallaan* for 'sky and heaven'. It is related to Old Turkic *teŋri/taŋrï* 'sky'.

Fig. 6. After placing the fan by the patient's head, Ilekhen raises her left hand as she finishes her blessing. Photo: László Kunkovács, 1997.

Fig. 7. The patient sits up and expresses her gratitude to Ilekhen for the healing and blessing. Photo: László Kunkovács, 1997.

The famous Russian ethnomusicologist V. M. Beliaev (1937) was the first to study the metric and rhythmic features of the same song style. In 1947–1949 M. N. Zhirkov (1981), the first Sakha composer and researcher on local folklore, wrote the first comprehensive study on Sakha musical folklore, published in 1981. Here he discussed the song styles *ǰieretii degereŋ* in detail, introducing the characteristics of the rhythm, harmony, microtone system, form, and manner of performance. In the 1960s to 1970s fundamental works on Sakha folklore were written by S. A. Kondratev, G. I. Litinskiĭ, Z. Z. Vinokurova, G. M. Krivoshapko, and others, among whom we will mention here only G. M. Krivoshapko's monograph (1982). Finally, mention should be made of the works of the renowned researcher Ė. E. Alekseev (1965; 1967; 1976; 1986a; 1986b; 1988; 1990; Alekseev and Nikolaeva 1982).

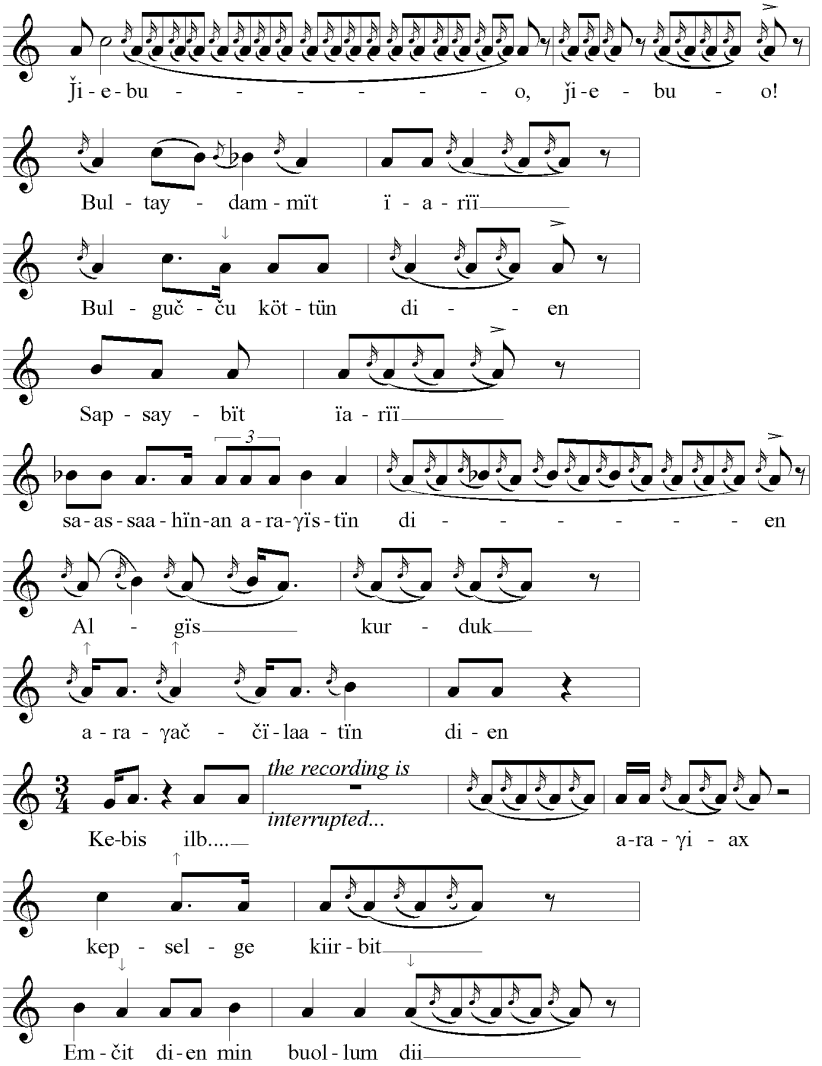
MAIN SAKHA MUSICAL STYLES

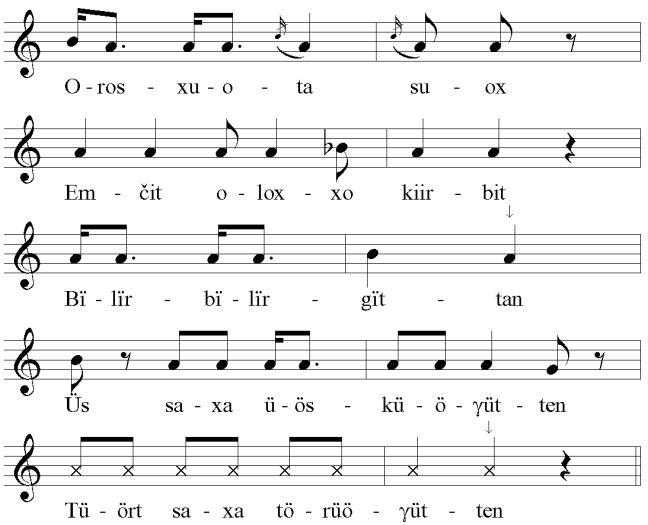
There are two main old Sakha musical styles, the *degereŋ ïrïa* and the *ǰieretii ïrïa*. The *degereŋ ïrïa* (rhythmic, measured song) style is usually linked to songs of fishing, weddings, maternity, and different rites and dances. *Degereŋ* melodies are melodically more developed, and are based on a wide range. The structures of *degereŋ ïrïa* tunes are stricter than those of *ǰieretii ïrïa* (see above), and the pitches of their scales are more stable. G. I. Litinskiĭ (1958: 93–94) states that *degereŋ ïrïa* are more suitable to reflect the variety of emotional states. The texts of the *degereŋ ïrïa* are improvisatory but—in contrast to the *ǰieretii ïrïa*—the rhythmic structure of this style follows more rigid formulas.

ON THE SONG OF THE SAKHA HEALER

The song of the Sakha healer belongs to the *ǰieretii ïrïa* type (lingering, smooth, flowery song) characterized by spontaneous improvisation, heterorhythmic melody sections, microtones, and sustained tones ornamented with overtones. Among Sakha people *ǰieretii ïrïa* is considered the "high" style of singing. These kinds of songs are typical in the Sakha heroic epic (*oloŋxo*) and also among melodies sung on ceremonial occasions for good wishes, calling the spirits, etc.

These melodies are characterized by a colorfully ornamented entry, usually with the solemn cry *jie-buo* "well here!" The entry is followed by sections of different lengths, rhythm, and numbers of syllables. The last tone of the sections is usually decorated with the same pulsation in eights as the long notes of the entry. This pulsation is stressed by accented overtone *appoggiatura*.





Sakha scholars developed a system of symbols that reflect the non-tempered nature of the Sakha melodies, dividing the whole step into six parts. Instead of that, I now use arrows to indicate pitches that are unusual to a European ear. The melody basically moves on A and (b)B—though rarely, at the beginning of the sections, it may jump up to C. In contrast to the simple range, and simple melodic progression, there is no characteristic rhythmic formula and the rhythmic patterns are unique even at the ends of sections.

To sum up, here we meet with a unique and beautifully simple musical phenomenon, and we may once again admire the richness of the folk music of the Turkic-speaking people, where the relations between languages are basically different from the relations between folk songs. It is not rare that the music of a given Turkic people is in closer contact with a neighboring non-Turkic people than with other groups that are related by language. The Sakha people were gradually formed from out of a mixture of different ethnic groups, and the Sakha language includes a number of words and concepts of Mongolic origin, while some words related to fishing are of Tungusic origin. The musical dialects too are in closer contact with that of the Tungus than with the folk songs of any other Turkic people.

Conclusions

Unlike in Southern Siberia and Northern Mongolia where shamanic traditions survived the Soviet Era and one could find traditional religious specialists (Turkic *kam* or Mongolic *böö/udgan* and *zaarin*), the Sakha people lost their shamanic traditions in the first half of the twentieth century. The last shamans and their song were recorded by Pëtr Terentievich Stepanov in the 1940s. In a booklet entitled *Oyuun* (fig. 8), texts collected by N. T. Stepanov between 1944 and 1946 (Emelianov and Mukhopleva 1993) were published in the Sakha language with no translations. The two shamans who provided invocation songs (*kïïrïï*) were S. V. Andreev Xaxxaa and P. A. Abramov Alaajï. A. A. Savvin also recorded invocations by S. A. Fomin Chïamahïn in 1938, and those are also included to the booklet.

During our stay the villagers categorically stated that no shamans (*oyuun* or *udaγan*) practiced among them in the districts of Gornay, Xangalas, Menge-Xangalas, Nam, or Tatta, Tompo, Čurapchï and Amma. The so-called "white shamans" were also unknown among them. The *emčit* 'healer' on the other hand is very different from a shaman, because as the name suggests that person only heals and has no relation to the spirits of ancestors (*emeget*) and other owner spirits of nature (*iččï*). Yakut healers are similar to the healers (*imsĕ*) among the Bashkir whom we discussed in an earlier field report (Somfai Kara and Kunkovács 2010), where shamans also disappeared in the nineteenth century. Sakha healers do pray (*algïs*) to certain helping spirits such as *ieyexsit* and *ayïïhït*, but they never fall into trance. Healers never go through the so-called shamanic disease (*saxa ïarïï-ta* 'Sakha disease'), where the body of a future shaman is symbolically chopped up (*etten-*) into pieces by the spirits to make it reborn. These healers have no drums (*düŋür*) or shamanic dress (*son*, *kumu*). Some of the literature notes that Konstantin Chirkov from Abyï district was an *oyuun* ('shaman', see Balzer 2008: 9), but he did have a drum too (Iliakhov 1993: 76). Apparently it was confiscated in 1932 when Chirkov was arrested. He continued to heal after he was released from prison but he stopped his shamanic activities. Chirkov was considered as an *ürüŋ oyuun* ('white shaman', Balzer 2008: 9), a term that was created probably at the beginning of the twentieth century. As Christianity influenced shamanic traditions, falling into trance (*kïïr-*) and having contact with the evil spirits (*abaahï* and *üör*) became more and more unacceptable to the Sakha society.

Post-Soviet Sakha neo-shamanism chose a different way from other revitalized shamanic traditions in Southern Siberia (Tuva, Buryatia), where proper shamanic initiations (e.g. Buryat *šanar*) and shamanic trance (Tuva *xamnaaškïn*) were revitalized. Sakha intellectuals created

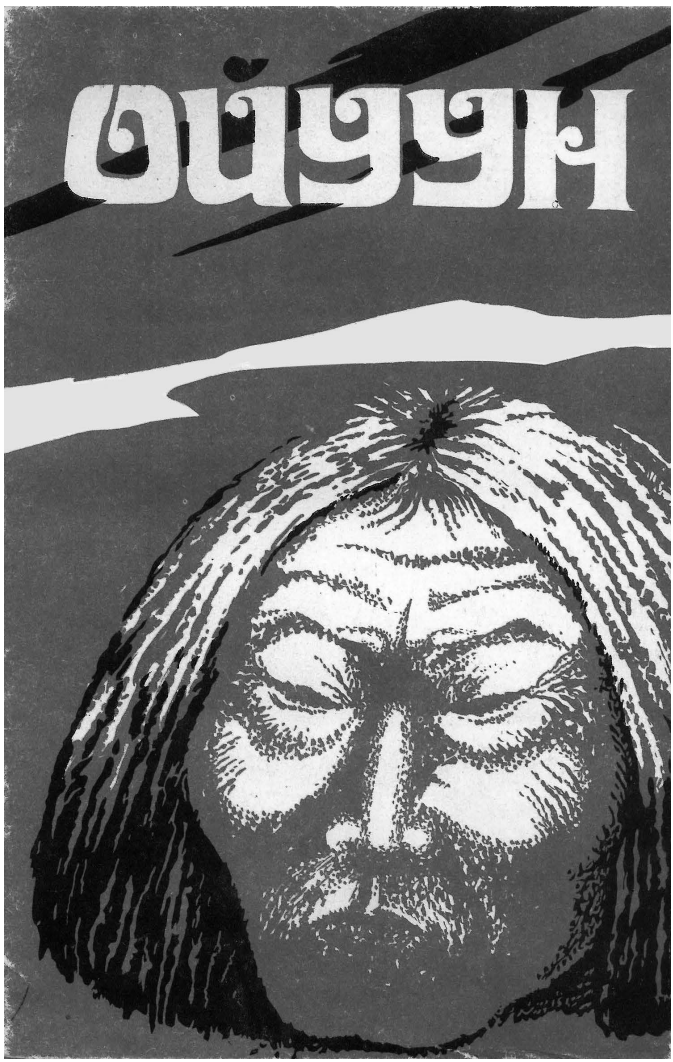


Fig. 8. The front cover of Emilianov and Mukhopleva's book *Oyuun* (Shaman) containing shamanic invocations (*kïïrïï*). Photo: László Kunkovács, 1997.

the term *ürüŋ oyuun* 'white shaman', whose role is very similar to that of an *emčit* 'healer,' and they even made attempts to merge the two types of specialists into one.

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Book Review

THOMAS A. DUBOIS. *An Introduction to Shamanism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2009. ISBN 9780521695367 (paperback). Price: £18.99 (US$30.99). Published together with the hardback edition: ISBN 9780521873536. Price: £50.00 (US$87.00). 317 + xi pages and 13 illustrations.

A good book needs more a few words of scholarly advertisement than a detailed retelling of the contents of the publication. Professor DuBois is a relatively young Scandinavist and folklorist, actually working in Madison (Wisconsin University). As a newcomer in the shamanistic world he belongs to a "new" generation of shamanologists who are coming from university libraries and archives, and not from fieldwork in the *taiga*. Because of internet sources they read more publications than the previous generations and, thanks to exchange programs, they can spend some time abroad—in DuBois' case in Finland, where he met all the folklorists. In the United States it has always been necessary to develop a specific approach to any area of research, demonstrating one's difference from colleagues. The result sometimes is gymnastics of words and acrobatics of thought. Luckily DuBois, a student of Kenneth Goldstein, is also a very well trained folklorist and knew intimately the "ethnography of speaking" trend, and later the Missouri school of "oral-formulaic poetry" as well. And he is a serious expert on early Scandinavian culture, poetry, and religion, which branch of philology gradually became just recently a visible ingredient in studies of shamanism because it can be considered a pre-Christian religion in Northern Europe and is closely connected with ancient peoples of the Arctic (see for example the works of Juha Pentikäinen, Anna-Leena Siikala, Clive Tolley, etc.).

Professor DuBois' book aims to give a concise general introduction to shamanism "as such," i.e. not preferring a particular region or form of it. In fourteen chapters grouped into the five parts of the book, the author characterizes several main "foci" (as he likes to call them) of shamanistic research. The book successfully achieves a polyphonic equilibrium. We find there references to a Thai student in the author's university

classroom reporting the activity of *tsiv neeb* (a traveler between the visible and invisible worlds), and the story of the demonic US Navy Commander Henry Glass,[1] who forced Tlingit shamans to hold with their bare hands wires from a charged electric battery, throwing their bodies into contortions and frightening their people, then having their heads shaved and covered with oil paint and forcing them to promise not to practice shamanism any more (221).

It is typical that the author presents not just one but three introductions: on shamanism as an issue of religion; a history of research of shamanism-like phenomena in European cultural history; and on the earliest textual and archeological data connected with world shamanism. DuBois mentions the up-to-date approaches, including for example mycology and European witch trials, which were so eloquently baptized by Carlo Ginzburg as remnants of old European shamanism.

Another three components—cosmology, the calling of the shamans, and mediation—are brought together in the second part of the book, which the author has titled "Shamanic soteriology and ritual." (In fact I cannot figure out why the word "soteriology" should have been used here. Perhaps the author wished to indicate by this term that shamanism is inevitably a chapter within comparative religion. However, he does not actually define the term, which is also missing from the otherwise extensive "Index" at the end of the book.) DuBois refers to old and recent phenomena as well, from Protopope Avvakum to the Dalai Lama, from petroglyphs to opium. Besides Scandinavian researchers, he quotes Soviet studies (as if they were published in English) as well. The *séance* takes the central place in DuBois' book, and of course the psychotic references are underlined. The other important factor is the healing. The book offers various insights both into its workings and its failings.

In Part IV DuBois uses the word "arsenal" to cover the music, the tools of the shaman, and his verbal art, which ranges from (broken) words to (quite lengthy) poems. The chapter ends with narratives about the shaman's journey, told by others. The author calls them "legendary accounts." These were always a dominant genre among descriptions of the shaman's activity, but scholars usually have not stated that those

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[1] See Sergei Kan 2001. "Shamanism and Christianity: Modern Tlingit Elders Look at the Past." In Frederick E. Hoxie, Peter C. Mancall, and James H. Merrell (eds). *American Nations: Encounters in Indian Country, 1850 to the Present.* New York and London: Routledge, 2001, 242–262. Passage paraphrased is on pages 248–249.

narratives are not always reliable source material and can be separated from the "primary" reports. (Perhaps it is not frivolous if I mention here the *Wunderrabbi* narratives as parallels.)

The final part of the book is devoted to the shift of political or ideological attitude toward the shamans from Chinggis (Genghis) Khan's time to the Soviet regime and the recent *revitalization* of shamanism and *neoshamanism* in many countries. He calls it "eclectic," which is at least a mild term for that subculture, infiltrated as it is with much hoaxing. DuBois tries in every chapter of his book to keep account of the particular topic as a global phenomenon, and in the last chapters the tendency is quite clear. He mentions not only American Indian ghost dance movements and recent Western fans of shamanism like Michael Harner, but he pays attention to post-communist events as well.

A short "Epilogue" summarizes the major statements in the book, as well as the history of its writing. Here DuBois says that since Eliade's *Shamanism* (the English version, 1964) much has changed on the scene. We know of more details and have more local studies and careful descriptions. In the past "shamanism" was a stamp applied to very many different phenomena, it was characterized as a strange form of "primitive religion," and scholars looked down on the shamans and their clients. Today our view is broader and more permissive. And even if shamanism is not religion in the strict sense of the word, its study is unavoidable in modern studies of comparative religion.

A rich bibliography and an index of facts and terms, and of the names of shamans and their scholars, close the book. Showing meticulous care, the index is detailed and cleverly grouped into main entries. For example, American Indian tribes are listed under the entry "Native American cultures." Only thirteen figures (carefully selected for didactic purpose) are included. There are very few typing errors and omissions from the bibliography.

To write a book on shamanism—even in three hundred pages—is a difficult task. DuBois is always clear and concise, and his quotations and references are well selected. I imagine that the book has not been edited from a first draft, but is the result of several years of teaching and rewriting. DuBois knows the topic very well, and in all details he is reliable. He has checked his source material and chosen the most striking samples from the author's archive. He does not criticize other shamanologists, nor does he hunt for sensational facts. In style the book is "cool," fitting well into Cambridge University Press standards.

Of course I could complain that some of my favorite scholars of shamanism—for example Willard Z. Park for comparison, [on comparative studies?] Elena Novik on the topic of the Siberian artistic "arsenal," and Håkan Rydving on the Saami—and some important topics have not been mentioned. But all books have their space limits. It is alarming for us that Hungarian research on shamanism has not influenced the author (nor for that matter other scholars). I can understand why. But it is quite unique that a "modern" nation like Hungary should consider its past to lie in shamanism. DuBois, when speaking of "nationalism," refers to the recent revitalization in Korea of the activity of *kut*. He could at least once turn the pages of the Hungarian studies of shamanism, now stretching back 200 years and serving the national identity. To put it succinctly: it is shamanism without shamanism.

If we decipher truly the title of the book ("An Introduction"), and we know that twelve different topics have been covered here in a book of handsome size, we can understand why DuBois presents only selected plates of world-wide shamanism. Since his samples are valid, his characterization is precise, and his style is elegant, the purpose of the book has been fulfilled. The book is not a *manifesto* of any (old or new) trend in shamanistic studies; it is a fine companion, and I definitely recommend it. If one has to understand or teach shamanism from one book—this is the one!

VILMOS VOIGT BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

THE 11TH CONFERENCE OF THE ISSR, GUIYANG, GUIZHOU PROVINCE, CHINA, SEPTEMBER 6–9, 2013

We are pleased to announce that the 11th Conference of the ISSR will be held in Guiyang, China, on 6–9 September, 2013, pending final approval by the authorities. Commissioned by the ISSR, the conference will be organized by the Guizhou Institute for Advanced Study in Anthropology and Ethnology (GIASAE) at Guizhou Normal College. We hereby warmly invite you to attend this great scholarly event.

Conference Main Theme:
Traditional Rituals and Spiritual Harmony in the Changing Globalized World

Hosted by
Guizhou Institute for Advanced Study in Anthropology and Ethnology (GIASAE)at Guizhou Normal College
Commissioned by the International Society for Shamanistic Research (ISSR)
6–9 September 2013, Guiyang, Guizhou Province, China

It is well known that the shaman is the mediator between the human world and the world of spirits, between the living and the dead, and between animals and human society. Shamanic culture is interwoven with details of our everyday life, either openly or in a hidden way. To some degree, everybody is a shaman. The revival of shamanism is perhaps one of the most "unexpected" phenomena in post-Mao China as well as in many other parts of the world, and one of the examples most worthy of citing would be that the shamanic healing tradition of Hmong immigrants, which originated in ancient China, has been adopted since 2009 as part of the Integrative Patient Care at the Merced Medical Center, a Western hospital in California, USA. In China itself shamanic performance increases in number and scale, sometimes as a cultural display and touristic attraction expanding under governmental or non-governmental sponsorship. This echoes appeals to the larger population for the (re-)creation of community and identity. Widespread

beliefs legitimized by the cultural renaissance are embraced by an astonishingly large population and are commercialized with the state-agents' incentive of generating revenue through the transference of invented tradition into the tourist industry. Ancestor veneration and rituals of almanacs, geomancy, horoscopy, and spirit mediumship are intermingled with new waves of salvationist movements and body/spiritual/healing techniques. The increasing social/political/economic disparity creates a greater anxiety to seek for old ways of oracle-reading, mask-dancing, sutra-chanting, karma-fair hosting, and so on. The national and global flow of capital, symbols, ideas, and practices also poses an unprecedented problem of religious pluralism as mobility increases.

Situated in such worldly moment of predicament and alterity, the conference will take a critical approach to the concepts of shamanism, arguing that shamanic practices in this changing globalized world are processually contested and crucial to the understanding of local peoples in particular and of the global community as a whole. We suggest that shamanic culture should be studied not just by onsite ethnographic description, but in addition by articulating its concrete relations with the totality of the social context, while we also especially urge scholars to undertake various comparative analyses.

The conference will include an academic symposium consisting of plenary sessions and panels, a special forum on world anthropologies of ritual, a showcase performance of Chinese shamanic rituals, an exhibition of local shamanic arts, an auction of shamanic craftwork and publications, a field excursion to a Hmong/Miao or Buyei indigenous village, and other open options. In addition, the ISSR President will hold the General Assembly to discuss ISSR internal affairs with members, tentatively scheduled for the evening of 8th September and running for about two and one-half hours, dependent on the number and complexity of problems to be addressed.

The main theme of the conference is "Traditional Rituals and Spiritual Harmony in the Changing Globalized World," and sub-themes and topics of interest shall include but not be limited to the following:

* Theoretical and methodological reflections on shamanistic research
* Harmonious ideology and cosmological ecology in world shamanisms
* Shamanism in regional, continental, and global indigenous knowledge systems

* Case studies featuring Chinese shamanism as life arts and cultural heritage
* Endangerment of shamans and shamanism in the global risk society
* Comparisons between shamanism and other forms of healing culture
* Tradition and modernity in changing shamanic practices
* World anthropologies of ritual in retrospect and prospect

For your reference, the conference hosting city, Guiyang, is the capitol of Guizhou Province in Southwest China, and it has a longstanding fame and alias as the "Forest City" of the country. Guizhou is globally renowned as China's "most colorful" province, with highly diversified ethnic cultures and well-conserved biodiversity. Tour services for enjoying the biocultural diversity can be arranged to suit your requirements right after the conference.

The 11th ISSR Conference Organizing Committee, co-chaired by Prof. Dr. Naran Bilik (Dean of GIASAE) and Prof. Dr. Bai Gengsheng (Vice President of ISSR), and locally coordinated by Profs. Jason Y. Long and Guo Shuyun, has been formed to prepare the conference program, agenda, and logistics under the consulting directions of Prof. D. Sc. Mihály Hoppál, President of the ISSR, and the ISSR Board.

The conference registration fee is 260 Euros or 350 US Dollars, which includes admission to a reception, a banquet, and a field excursion. On the top of many other expenditures for organizing the conference, the registration fee will also cover in part expenses for the publication of presented papers in edited volumes with a fine English publisher, and will make available to every participant of the conference a copy of the most current issue of *Shaman*, the official journal of the ISSR. Shamanistic researchers with an indigenous background or from underrepresented indigenous communities in all parts of the world other than China, and young scholars (aged 35 or below) from Russia, Mongolia, North Korea, Africa, and Southeast Asia, once they have been accepted to present a paper at the conference will be eligible to apply for the 11th ISSR conference grant, which is a waiver of the conference registration fee. Grant application forms will be available online along with the conference website in the middle of March, 2013.

The main conference venue is the newly built Guizhou Normal College Auditorium, which provides a simultaneous interpretation facility. The

conference organizing committee has secured the reservation of the Boyuan Siyuan Hotel right on campus at the rate of 120 CNY (approximately 14.5 Euros or 20 US Dollars, taxes included) per night for the conference period. This is a charter hotel that primarily serves the National Teachers Professional Development Program operated on campus and it has only 60 double-bed rooms and five single-bed rooms available to our conference participants on a first-come first-served basis; food is not covered by the rate, but you can enjoy authentic Chinese foods in the college staff canteens for only about 8 CNY (approximately 1 Euro or 1.5 USD) per person per meal. For those who can afford it, the Springs Paradise Spa Holiday Inn, a four-star villa-style hot springs resort hotel about 1 km from the conference venue, will be reserved with special discounted rates varying between 80 and 100 Euros (approximately between 110 and 137 US Dollars) per room/night based on floor and size, with breakfast, lunch, and dinner (either buffet or menu order) as well as all taxes included.

We cordially invite you to present your paper at the conference. Please send your paper proposal or panel proposal in English to Prof. Naran Bilik by 10 March 2013. A paper proposal should include a title and an abstract of around 300 words, and a panel proposal normally should include 5 to 10 paper abstracts. We shall send out the formal invitation as soon as we receive your paper proposal or panel proposal. We sincerely look forward to meeting you in Guiyang, China!

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at the following address:

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