STUDIES ON SHAMANISM

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CONTENTS

Preface
Anna-Leena Siikala
Part 1

Siberian and Inner Asian Shamanism
1–14

The Interpretation of Siberian and Central Asian Shamanism
15–25

The Siberian Shaman's Technique of Ecstasy
26–40

Two Types of Shamanizing and Categories of Shamanic Songs
41–55

Finnish Rock Art, Animal Ceremonialism and Shamanic Worldview
56–67

Singing of Incantation in Nordic Tradition
68–78

Shamanic Themes in Finnish Epic Poetry
79–86

Shamanic Knowledge and Mythical Images
87–106

References
107–114

Name Index
221–224

Acknowledgments
Mihály Hoppál
Part 2

Shamanism: An Archaic and/or Recent System of Beliefs
117–131

On the Origin of Shamanism and the Siberian Rock Art
132–149

Pain in Shamanic Initiation
150–155

Traces of Shamanism in Hungarian Folk Beliefs
156–168

The Role of Shamanism in Hungarian Ethnic Identity
169–175

Changing Image of the Eurasian Shamanism
176–181

Ethnographic Films on Shamanism
182–196

Urban Shamans: A Cultural Revival
197–209

References
211–220

Subject Index
225–230

This book is dedicated
to the memory of
Vilmos DIÓSZEGI
(1923–1972)

PREFACE

The authors dedicate this book to the memory of the excellent scholar of Siberian shamanism Vilmos Diószegi (1923–1972). This book is not only to commemorate the Hungarian scholar who died so unexpectedly and so young exactly two decades ago, but also his work, his Siberian research completed in 1957, which opened up a whole new field of possibilities of research in shamanism for his Russian colleagues as well. One could say his work gave a new international impetus to research on Siberian shamanism.

Since then the world has changed so much, the changes have been especially great in Siberia, which is usually called the classical region of shamanism, its *'locus classicus'*. The great empire which was formerly known as the Soviet Union in the years between 1930–1950, that is in the middle of its history, treated shamans as ideological enemies. The current successors of the old shamans, the bearers of the ancient spiritual traditions and the researchers, after the years of suppression, all became the forerunners of a new historical period in which Siberian shamanism can develop further on its native ground.

Thus we may be allowed, in all modesty, to dedicate this volume to those North Siberian and Eurasian small ethnic groups who lived within and even today live with shamanist traditions. It is about them, about a part of their genuine culture that our collection of studies refers to and if our studies and the analyses published here help to promote a better understanding of the complex and enigmatic world of Eurasian shamanism then our work has not been in vain and our volume has succeeded.

May 1992, Helsinki and Budapest

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This volume is a selection of studies and articles made by the two authors the general theme of which is shamanism, but more specifically Siberian or in a wider sense Eurasian shamanism. These studies which have already been published elsewhere can now be seen all together creating a panorama of current research and the problems it entails.

We would like to acknowledge a more specific debt of gratitude to our colleague and friend, Jukka Siikala, the acting president of the Finnish Anthropological Society for his help and encouragement without which this book would not have come into being. We would also like to thank all our colleagues for their active interest in our work, for their help and personal support. In particular we have discussed many of the ideas at length with Robert Austerlitz, Valeri Basilov, Luise Bäckman, Gyula Décsy, Marlene Dobkin de Rios, Ismail Gemuev, Galina N. Gracheva, Felicitas Goodman, Jonathan Horwitz, Åke Hultkrantz, Michael Harner, Roberte Hamayon, Lauri Honko, Marcell Jankovics, Kim Taegon, Heimo Lappalainen, Ian Lewis, Luis Luna, Roberto Mastromattei, Lennart Meri, Taras Mikhailov, Richard Noll, Elena Novik, Elena Okladnikova, Juha Pentikäinen, Elena Revunenkova, Lola Romanucci-Ross, Otto von Sadovszky, Bo Sommarström, Boris Simchenko, Chuner Taksami, Sevyan Vajnshtein, Andrej Wierciński, Elemire Zolla, to mention only a few of them. We are sincerely indebted for their highly valuable suggestions.

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3. "The Siberian Shaman's of Ecstasy". In *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* 11:103–121. Stockholm, 1982.

4. "Two Types of Shamanizing and Categories of Shamanistic Songs. A Chukchi Case". In L. Honko and V. Voigt (eds.), *Genre, Structure and Reproduction in Oral Literature,* Budapest, 1980. 73–93.
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Mihály Hoppál

1. "Shamanism: An Archaic and/or Recent System of Beliefs." In *Ural-Altaic Yearbook* 57:121–140. Bloomington, 1985.
2. "On the Origin of Shamanism and the Siberian Rock Art." In *Studia Hungarica* 207–222. Budapest, 1985.
3. "Pain in Shamanic Initiation." Paper presented at the conference on Circumpolar Religions. Helsinki, 1990.
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5. "The Role of Shamanism in Hungarian Ethnic Identity." In *Danubian Historical Studies* 1(3):34–43. Budapest, 1987.
6. "Changing Image of the Eurasian Shaman." In M. Hoppál and O. von Sadovszky (eds.), *Shamanism: Past and Present.* Budapest – Los Angeles/Fullerton, 1989. 75–90.
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PART 1

SIBERIAN AND INNER ASIAN SHAMANISM

Shamanism is a fundamental and striking feature of Siberian and Inner Asian cultures. The religions of these regions have therefore been described as shamanistic. Shamanism itself is not, however, a religion, but rather a complex of different rites and beliefs surrounding the activities of the shaman connected with very different religious systems. Shamanism is founded on a special technique for achieving ecstasy by means of which the shaman enters an altered state of consciousness, and on the idea that the shaman is accompanied by helping spirits who assist him in this state. While in a state of trance, the shaman is regarded as capable of direct communication with representatives of the otherworld, either by journeying to the supranormal world or by calling the spirits to the séance. He is thus able to help his fellow men in crises believed to be caused by the spirits and to act as a concrete mediator between this world and the otherworld in accompanying a soul to the otherworld, or fetching it from the domain of the spirits. The shaman acts as a healer and as a patron of hunting and fertility, but also a diviner, the guardian of livelihoods, and so on.

The Origin of Shamanism

The ecological and cultural differences among the peoples of Siberia and Inner Asia are considerable. The way of life of the Arctic sea-mammal hunters and reindeer breeders differs greatly from that of the steppe or the hunters and fishermen of the taiga. It follows that, despite certain basic similarities, the shamanic complexes are not uniform either. There are variations in the shaman's status in the community, as there are differences, for example, in his ritual accessories or the tradition of beliefs he represents. Tracing the history of shamanism is thus a complicated matter. Shamanism is generally thought to be founded on the animistic concepts of the northern hunting peoples. On the other hand, soul flight, the ability of the shaman to journey to the otherworld, a striking feature of northern and western shamanistic complexes, has led scholars to regard a dualistic concept of the soul as the ideological basis of shamanism. According to this belief, man has one soul confined to the body and a second soul, or part soul, capable of leaving the body freely during sleep, trance or sickness.

The word *shaman* comes through Russian sources from the Tungus word *šaman (xaman)*. There are such varied names for the shaman in Siberia and Inner Asia that these names cannot be used to throw light on the origin of shamanism. A theory was

put forward in the nineteenth century that the word derived from the Pali *samana* (Sanskrit, *śramana*) and Chinese *sha-men*. Although this theory has been disproved (Németh 1913- 1914; Laufer 1917), the cultural-historical foundations of shamanism have been sought in Buddhism or others of the great scriptural traditions of the East. It is indeed a fact that Buddhism and Lamaism had a significant effect on the development of shamanism among the Evenki (a Tungus people), the Mongols, and the Buryats. The wide distribution of the phenomenon of shamanism and the endemicity of certain of its basic ideas – soul flight, soul dualism, the link with animal ceremonialism – in Arctic and sub-Arctic cultures do, however, support the view that the roots of shamanism lie in the Paleolithic hunting cultures. In his fundamental work *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (1964), Mircea Eliade regards the ideas of ecstatic experience and soul flight as the basis of shamanism, and asserts that shamanism grew out of the ancient Paleolithic inheritance, fertilized by Buddhism, Lamaism, and even more ancient East and South Asian influences.

The Shaman in the Community

The small hunting and fishing communities of northern Siberia have provided a setting for shamanism completely different from that of the agrarian cultures of Inner Asia rooted to one locale. Both the status of the shaman in the community and his tasks depend on the supporting culture, its economy, the nature of its social structure, and its practice of religion as a whole. Variations in the status of the shaman and the importance of shamanism as an institution spring from the relationship between the shaman and the group supporting him as well as from the nature of the particular group.

The Clan Shaman

The Yukagir and the Evenki retained their clan system until relatively recent times, and their shamanism is clearly connected with the organization of the clan. Even at the end of the nineteenth century the Yukagir, a Siberian tribal people, lived off deer hunting and reindeer breeding, the latter having been assimilated from the Evenki. The population, consisting of the remains of formerly larger clans, lived in camps or villages of related families. The shaman, who had to be related to the clan by ties of blood, was one of the leaders of the clan and acted as its general patron. It was also his job to maintain contact between the living and the dead members of the clan and to arrange the shamanizing connected with the calendarical hunting rites. It was during these rites that the shaman would retrieve the souls of the animals to be hunted from the keeper of the species in the otherworld store. The shaman helped individual members of the clan by curing diseases and infertility, by prophesying, and by preventing misfortune threatened by the spirits.

A highly advanced clan system existed among the Evenki, who were spread over a wide area and were divided into different occupational categories: hunters and

fishermen, reindeer breeders, and hunters breeding horses and cattle. Their chief social unit was the clan, which had its own area or "river"; the clans were in turn grouped into larger tribes. One of the leaders of the clan was a shaman. Such special status among the Evenki living along the Podkamennaia Tunguska is illustrated by the belief that the shaman's hair may not be cut because it is the dwelling place of the souls of the members of the clan. As the protector and leader of his clan, their shaman set up a *marylya* (a fence made of spirits) around the clan's lands; he also possessed knowledge of the mythical clan river leading to the otherworld. The clan shaman held séances on behalf of his supporters, shamanizing in the course of hunting rites and helping individual members of the clan. At the end of the nineteenth century there also were professional Evenk shamans who would shamanize on behalf of members of a different clan for a fee. These "false" shamans were not accorded the honoured and important position of the clan shaman.

The Small-group Shaman

The shamans in circles of neighbours and relatives among the hunters of north-western and northern Siberia had a relationship with their supporters comparable to that of the clan shaman. For example, the Nganasans (a Samoyed people) were spread over such a wide area that the clan was of no significance mainly in religious connections, such as in annual rituals. On an occasion such as the clean-tent festival of the Nganasans, held in February when the sun began to rise again, the shaman might act as representative of the clan. He did not, however, achieve a status symbolizing clan unity and the welfare of the clan. He was equipped by his own small community, the tent community or village whose members he assisted as a healer, a bringer of success in hunting, a guardian at difficult births, and so on.

The Professional Shaman of the North

The relationship between the shaman of the north and his supporters was not as close as that described above in north-eastern Siberia. The Chukchi and the Koryak – small tribal peoples indigenous to Siberia – fell into two occupational categories interacting closely with one another: reindeer breeders and sea-mammal hunters. They showed no signs of a clear clan system, their basic social unit being the hunting communities and nomad camps made up of relatives and neighbours. The annual occupational rites were handled by the family or occupational unit, one typical feature being family shamanism. In this type of shamanism, which cannot be considered shamanism proper, anyone attending a festival could drum and dance in the manner of a shaman. Since the occupational and other important rites were performed among the family or kin, the shaman was not tied to any clearly defined band of supporters. He was a healer and a resolver of various incidental crises. The status of the shaman who was able to

choose his clients freely depended on his personal skills. Thus the performance of various tricks played a considerable part in the competition between shamans.

Shamanism in the South

The hierarchical community of the nomads and farmers of southern Siberia and Inner Asia (e.g., the Yakuts, the Buryats, the Tuvin, the southern Altais, the Khakas, and the horse-breeding Evenki of Transbaikalia) and the rise in status of the area to an administrative unit (called "patriarchal feudalism" by Soviet scholars) above the clan provided a background to shamanism that differed from that of the northern hunting communities. Under the influence of the Lamaism and Buddhism of the south, the ritual aspects of shamanism and the beliefs concerning the supranormal world here developed in a richer and more complex form than shamanism in the north.

While contact with the clan may be significant, regional factors often determine the shaman's sphere of activities. Since becoming a shaman and the passing down of the shamanic tradition is under the strict control of older shamans, shamanism in the south clearly has more institutionalized forms than in the north. Among the Buriats, for example, a large number of initiated shamans join the new candidate in taking part in the shamanic initiation ceremony, thus demonstrating the importance of control from within to the institution of shamanism. In addition to acting as a healer and a diviner and carrying out other conventional tasks, the shaman may also assume the role of sacrificial priest. Practices such as the sacrifice made by the Altaic Tatars of a horse to the god in the sky rely on the ability of the shaman to accompany to the otherworld the soul of the animal sacrificed.

Categories of Shamans

In addition to the fundamental differences in the status of shamanism as a whole, shamans differ in their nature and prestige from one ethnic group to another. The Hungarian expert on shamanism Vilmos Diószegi observed on interviewing former Tofa shamans in the late 1950s that they fell into different categories according to clan, the colour symbolism of their accoutrements, their power, their skill, and ultimately also their own personal characteristics.

The categories of shaman used by different ethnic groups themselves are evident in the names for types of shamans. For example, the most highly respected shaman among the Entsy (a Samoyed people) was the *budtode*, who is in contact with the spirits who live in heaven. The less highly regarded *d'ano* was able to protect humans from evil spirits, and the least respected *sawode* shaman could contact the dead. In the same way the lowest category of shaman among the Nanai (Goldi) was the *siurinka*, shamans who cure the sick. *Nemati* shamans were able both to cure the sick and to perform the shamanizing at the first festival in memory of the dead. Among the shamans with the greatest prestige were the *kasati* shamans, who had command of all shamanic knowl-

edge and who are capable of the most important task of the Nanai shaman, that of accompanying the souls of the dead to the otherworld.

The Yakuts believed that the shaman's prestige was determined by the status of the god who granted him his chief spirit helper, and by the height of the branch on the mythical shaman's tree on which the shaman was instructed by the spirits during his initiation. The division of shamans into black and white, encountered among the Yakuts and elsewhere (e.g., among the Altaic peoples) points to the nature of the spirits with whom the shaman came into contact. White was the colour of the sky, black that of the earth. According to the shamanic tradition, the shaman's nature and rank are determined by the spirits initiating him. In practice the distinguishing features were probably the skills and ability to achieve ecstasy of the initiate and the nature of the tradition that he assimilated. A shaman could also rise to a higher category as his knowledge increased. A great shaman often bore the epithet `old'.

Initiation

Gaining command of the shamanic tradition and the ecstatic rite technique called for special training on the part of the beginner. The nature and length of the initiation period depended on the position of the shaman in his community and the importance of shamanism in the culture in question. The length of the apprenticeship, the amount and nature of the tradition to be internalized, the initiate's instruction, the number of initiation rites, and the control of the initiate's abilities varied from one region to another. Two features common to all areas were the shaman's meeting of spirits and winning of spirit helpers while in a state of ecstasy and the recognition of a new shaman by his supporters.

The Shaman's Disease

A potential shaman could be recognized by an abnormal, often highly nervous, disposition. All over Siberia and Inner Asia, selection was often preceded by the shaman's sickness. The first symptoms might be states of mental unbalance, fits of hysteria, periods of seclusion, unusual visions and the hearing of voices, or states of physical torment. Usually the sickness struck at adolescence, but people stricken as adults might also become shaman initiates. It is impossible to give any specific account of the illness from reports of the symptoms. The point is that shamanizing was the only recognized cure. Often a shaman called in to cure the sufferer would teach him how to shamanize.

Scholars such as Waldemar Jochelson, an expert on the tribal peoples indigenous to Siberian and Inner Asia, have compared the shaman's initiatory sickness to hysteria. The healing effect of shamanizing would then mean that the novice, under the instruction of an older shaman, learned to control his ego functions and the regression of hysteria became an ego-controlled regression during the initiation stage. It is signifi-

cant that shamans suffering from a preliminary sickness have found that repeated shamanizing is a condition for remaining healthy.

The shaman's sickness was interpreted as the call of the spirits to become a shaman; since the task was so dangerous, shamans say they often resisted the call to the very end. Internal compulsion was not the only reason for selection; there could also be external reasons. A young Chukchi, for example, might choose to become a shaman in the hope of gaining wealth and prestige. Among the Evenki the clan elders or clan shaman might select a child of suitable temperament for training as a shaman.

The position of shaman was handed down within the family, especially in the areas of clan shamanism and the professional shamanism of the south. A.F. Anisimov, an expert on the shamanism of the Podkamennaia Tunguska Evenki, observed that shamans deliberately tried to keep this important position within the family. The inheritance of shamanism is founded on shamanistic ideology. In the northern regions, where selection as shaman was often a matter of incidental vocation, the spirits encountered by the novice were chiefly spirits of nature. The principle of inheritance within the family is a reflection of the notion that the spirits preparing the initiate to become a shaman were ancestor shamans or spirits of nature undertaking the task at the request of the ancestor spirits.

The Initiation Period

At the start of the initiation period the initiate retired in solitude, learned how to use the drum in seeking ecstatic experiences, and steeped himself in the shamanic tradition. One of his main tasks was to compose his own shaman songs. The songs for calling the spirits sung at séances of Chukchi shamans, for example, were products of the initiation period. In the shamanic view the novice is taught by the spirits; there are, however, reports of situations in which older shamans guide the novice in the art of shamanizing.

The next phase of the initiatory period is one of visions and the hearing of voices, during which the novice undergoes his initiation by the spirits. During these experiences the novice feels that the spirits are actually destroying his old ego, dissecting or boiling it, after which he is to be reassembled as a new shaman, capable of seeing that which is hidden to ordinary men. Thus is repeated the theme of death and rebirth. Despite individual differences the visions follow traditional patterns. For example, among the Samoyeds, the novice is given his spirit helpers by the initiating spirits, and he promises to follow his calling. The handling of his bones, the dismembering and reassembling of his skeleton by the spirits, plays a significant part in the visions describing the shaman's rebirth. In the background here is the idea also found in animal ceremonialism that the bones are the point of attachment for the soul.

Following his initiation by the spirits the shaman still had to prove his powers to his community. He did so at various test shamanizings and through public rites. The small-group shaman of northwestern Siberia acquired his attributes gradually in the course of annual rites. His dress and ritual objects were made by neighbour and

relatives who were among his supporters and who also took part in the shamanizings at which the objects were first used. Similarly, great test shamanizings were held in the clan shamanism region and were attended by the entire clan. Through prayers and sacrifices, an ancestor shaman might be asked to indicate a suitable animal for making the shaman's requisites. As we have seen, the rituals surrounding the initiation of the shaman were most richly developed in the shamanism of the southern regions. The Buriat shaman, for example, promised during a great initiation festival to fulfil the obligations of his profession.

The shaman's initiation was less formal among the tribal peoples of Siberian and Inner Asia than elsewhere. The mysteries surrounding the call of the spirits and the experience of meeting them were paramount; as there were few requisites, the ritual announcement of the new status was not of itself significant. The shaman's later actions proved whether or not he was capable and whether he had gained by supporters.

The Shamanistic Belief Tradition

Some indication of the nature of the shamanistic belief tradition is provided by the visions of the initiation period and the shaman songs describing, for example, the shaman's journey to the otherworld. Although the cosmographic concepts vary greatly over Siberia and Inner Asia, and although the influence of Lamaism and Buddhism is very much in evidence among the southern peoples, there are certain structural features shared by all and of wide distribution. Among these are concepts of a multilevel cosmos, the world above, the middle world inhabited by man, and the world below, which is divided into three, seven, or nine levels. The layers are connected either by the world stream (among the Ket, it is by holy water), which begins in heaven and flows through the earth to the underworld, or by a hole at the North Star in the center of the globe through which the Chukchi, among others, believe it is possible to pass from one layer to another. Besides believing in a multilayered cosmos, the northern peoples in particular believe in the concept of a tentlike upper world, the firmaments spanning a round or square world. Supporting it in the center is the cosmic pillar. Phenomena parallel to the cosmic pillar are the cosmic mountain and the cosmic tree. The latter's counterpart in the shamanistic belief tradition is the shaman's tree, by means of which the shaman might travel from one world level to another.

During his initiation period the novice had to study the structure of the cosmos and above all learn the topography of the otherworld: the paths and rivers leading to the otherworld and the dwellings of the various gods, the guardian spirits, the demons of disease, and the dead. The way to the otherworld was usually described as being fraught with difficulties and dangers. The Nanai shaman, for example, was able to list the landmarks along the road to the kingdom of the dead and the dangers in store along the way.

At the séance the shaman turned to various gods and spirits as it became necessary. Linked directly with the shamanistic complex were the spirits of his initiation and his

ecstatic experiences. In some cases the shaman enters the service of these spirits; at other times, they are at the shaman's command.

The spirits influencing a shaman's initiation in north-eastern Siberia were mainly spirits of nature. One Koryak shaman described how spirits of the wolf, the raven, the bear, the sea gull, and the plover appeared before him in the forest, sometimes in human form, sometimes in the form of an animal, demanding that he enter their service. The Chukchi believed that 'everything lives', that even inanimate objects have some sort of soul principle. Thus the shaman's band of spirits might also include various objects, stones, or household utensils. It is significant that there is no difference between the guiding spirits of the initiation period and the spirit helpers proper: the spirits appearing before the novice become his spirit helpers when he is a shaman.

In the small-group shamanism of northwestern Siberia, too, the spirits influencing a shaman's initiation are mainly spirits of nature. The initiation visions of the Nganasans demonstrate that the novice meets a number of spirits who help him in different ways. The selection of a shaman might be made by spirits of nature, such as the spirit of water, who give the novice zoomorphic guides on his journey to the otherworld. The shaman's initiation is performed by special smith spirits, who forge a new shaman on their anvil. The guiding spirits leave the shaman after his ecstatic initiation, by which time he has gotten to know his spirit helpers proper.

The spirits of ancestor shamans play an important part in a shaman's initiation in clan shamanism and the professional shamanism of the south. For example, the Transbaikalia Evenki say that a dead shaman appears before a prospective candidate and orders him to follow. The spirits of ancestor shamans may appear as candidate selectors, as the novice's supranormal teachers, or as initiators carrying out the dissection process, as in the Lower Tunguska region. The spirit of an ancestor shaman usually remains as the shaman's spirit helper proper. Although most of the spirit helpers of, for example, the Evenk shaman are in the form of an animal or bird, he is usually also supported by shaman's spirits in human form.

Another inherited spirit is the Nanai *ajami*, the tutelary spirit of the novice period, who instructs the novice in matters of the otherworld and provides him with the spirits necessary for shamanizing. The relationship between the *ajami* and the shaman is erotic, the spirit in question being a spirit wife or husband handed down from one shaman to another within the family. Similar marriagelike relationship between spirit and man also reported elsewhere. The transvestite shaman among the tribal peoples indigenous to Siberia and Inner Asia, for example, might have a spirit lover.

An important part is played in the initiation tales of Yakut shamans by the Animal Mother and the spirits ancestor shamans, the evil *abaasy* spirits that may perform the novice's initiation mysteries. The Animal Mother, who is the incarnation of the shaman's *kut* soul, his invisible double, was thought to show itself on the birth or death of a shaman and during his supranormal initiation. The Animal Mother, in the form of a bird with iron feathers, was thought to sit on a branch of the shaman's tree, incubating an egg containing the soul of a novice until the soul hatches from the egg.

The nature and number of spirit helpers proper varies from one ethnic group to another. Among the Ob-Ugrians (i.e., the Khanty and Mansi), the shaman might have seven spirit helpers, most of them in the form of an animal, such as a bear, a deer, a wolf, a horse, a snake, a fish, or a bird. Birds common to the northern regions were the eagle and the owl, as well as various waterfowl, in whose form the shaman was said to travel the underwater routes to the otherworld. The belief concerning the relationship between the shaman and his spirits are complex. The shaman might travel in the form of the animal accompanying him; the Yakut shaman, for example, fights other shamans in the form of his Animal Mother, as an elk or a deer. On the other hand, the spirit helpers may accompany him as outside assistants. For example, the Evenk shaman of the Podkamennaia Tunguska region had command over a large band of spirits on his journeys to the underworld.

The Shaman's Activities

The shaman's public activities took place at the séance, a ritual performances. While there were many reasons for calling a séance there was a need to make direct contact with representatives of the spirit world in all cases. All the vital elements of shamanism were present at the séance: the shaman and his assistant, those in need of assistance, an interested audience, and representatives of the spirit world called on by the shaman

The Shaman's Attributes

The ritual objects and the shaman's attributes symbolize the shamanistic worldview. The most important item is the drum. Names for the drum are usually connected with the idea of the shaman's journey. For example, the Transbaikalia Evenki call the drum a boat, while the Yakuts, Buriats and Soyot call it a horse. In this case the drumstick is a `whip'. By means of his drum the shaman `rides' or `flies'; in other words, he achieves an altered state of consciousness. The frame of the drum is made from a special tree – a representative of the cosmic tree – indicated by the spirits, and the membrane from the skin of an animal also chosen by the spirits. The drum-reviving ceremonies in the Altaic regions indicate that the drum animal represents one of the shamanistic spirits: during these ceremonies the animal from whose skin the membrane was made `comes to life again', telling of its life and promising to help the shaman The motifs carved on the drum frame or drawn on the skin likewise symbolize shamanistic spirits and express cosmological concepts.

Although the shaman's dress, along with the drum, is one of the most striking features of shamanism in northern and Inner Asia, the number and type of attributes varies from one area to another. There is no shaman's dress proper among the Chukchi. While preparing for a séance the shaman was, like the Inuit (Eskimo) shaman, stripped to the waist. Similarly, the only item that identified the shaman among the Nentsy (a Samoyed people) in the northwest of Siberia was the headdress that he wore. The

dresses with the greatest number of symbolic ornaments are to be found in central and southern Siberia and in Inner Asia.

The shaman's dress is made of leather or cloth, and onto it are sewn pendants of metal, bone, and cloth depicting spirits in animal or human shape or phenomena associated with the supranormal world. On the back of the Yakut shaman's dress are metal disks, the shaman's sun and moon, providing light on the dark route to the otherworld. Despite the variety of symbolic emblems, the basic idea behind the shaman's dress is clear. The feathers attached to the headdress, the winglike or furry appendages on the sleeves, the antlers or bear's snout on the headdress show that the dress basically represents some kind of animal. The most common type is a bird, found not only in the Altai-Sayan region but also in northern Mongolia and different parts of Siberia. In the Altaic region the dress most often imitates on owl or an eagle, in northern Siberia a deer. The Samoyeds and the Ket also wear a dress reminiscent of a bear.

In addition to the pictures associated with the spirits or the otherworld, the shaman's dress also has iron or bone appendages resembling a human or animal skeleton. These symbolize the death and rebirth experienced by the shaman during the ecstatic visions of his initiation period. The dress represents the mysteries experienced by the shaman and is the dwelling place of the spirits. Thus the dress itself is thought to posses supernormal power. In the areas of clan shamanism the dress could not be sold outside the clan, because the shaman's spirits belonging to the clan were attached to it. A worn-out shaman's dress might be hung on a tree in the forest, so that the spirits could leave it gradually and enter a new dress.

The Shamanic Séance

The shamanizing séance requires that both the shaman himself and the setting for the rite be meticulously prepared. The séance is often preceded by a period of time during which the shaman goes into seclusion, fasts, meditates, and recalls the details of the rituals he must perform during the séance. He transfers to the role of shaman by putting on the ritual dress and by tuning the drum.

The actual séance is usually held inside after dark, in a dwelling with a fire burning in the center. Because the spirits are thought to be afraid of light, darkness is a prerequisite for shamanizing. The settings for séances varied greatly, depending on the status of the shaman and the importance of his task. in the Podkamennaia Tunguska region the shaman and protector of the clan held his séance in the *sevencedek*, a tent specially erected for the purpose. Here he acted out the fundamental features of the shamanistic world concept: the middle world inhabited by humans, the upper and lower worlds with their spirits, and the cosmic stream and cosmic tree as landmarks along the shaman's route in the otherworld. The séance was attended by the entire clan, members helping with the preparations. Similar large séance settings are found among the Nanay, whose shaman, being the representative of his clan, transported the souls of the dead to the otherworld. It seems that the higher the status of the shaman and the

bigger the group he represented, the richer were the symbolic requisites of the dress and the setting for the séance and the more theatrical the course of shamanizing. The imposing settings of the séance in the southern areas are probably a later development influenced by the great scriptural traditions of the East.

Before the séance, the shaman's assistant, those in need of the shaman's help, and the audience would assemble. At the start of the séance the shaman concentrates on calling his spirit helper by singing and drumming. The themes of the shaman's songs are the calling of the spirit helpers, a description of the spirits' journey, an account of the shaman's own journey to the otherworld, and a description of the topography of the supranormal world. In the songs calling the spirits, during which the shaman might imitate the sounds of his zoomorphic spirit helpers through whistles, shouts, and growls, the shaman invites the spirits to the séance and may also give a step-by-step description of their journey to the séance from their dwelling in the otherworld.

The calling of the spirit helpers is the trance-induction stage. The rhythmic drumming, dancing, and singing gradually become louder and more frenzied as the shaman, while concentrating on the world of the spirits, achieves an altered state of consciousness. This phenomenon, similar to Western hypnosis, is brought about by rhythmical stimulation of the nervous system, growing concentration, motivation on the part of the shaman, and the emotional charge produced by the expectations of the audience. The effect of rhythmical stimulation was further enhanced among the Ob-Ugrians and the tribal peoples indigenous to Siberian Asia by, for example, eating amanita mushrooms. Other common means were the burning of various herbs producing intoxicating smoke, and, more recently, smoking tobacco and consuming alcohol. The use of hallucinogens and other intoxications is not, however, essential to or even a vital factor in the shaman's trance technique.

The ecstatic climaxes of the séance come at the point where the shaman meets his spirit helpers, journeys with them to the otherworld, or banishes, for example, a disease demon that has taken up residence in a patient. The biggest cultural differences in the shamanistic rite technique are manifest at precisely this stage. The forms of meeting the spirits are based on different belief traditions.

Common to the central and eastern parts of Siberia, for example, among the Yukagir, the Evenki, the Yakuts, the Manchus, the Nanais, and the Orochi is the possession séance, during which the shaman's chief spirit helper enters his body and speaks through him. The shaman fully identifies with the spirit; he in fact turns into the spirit and manifests this change in his gestures, movements, and speech. Another person present at the séance, usually the shaman's assistant, then becomes the shaman, talking to the spirit. In regions where this type of possession-trance is common, the usual explanation for disease is that a demon has entered a person. It is then the shaman's task to banish the demon, and to do this the shaman takes the disease demon upon himself after his spirit helper; in other words, he turns into the demon. There are also complex possession-trance séances at which the shaman, having manifested various spirits, travels with his spirit helpers to the otherworld – when banishing a demon, for example.

The shaman may also create an illusion that the spirit helpers are present at the séance without identifying with them. The Chukchi display great skill in the manifestation of the spirits by the technique of ventriloquism. The shaman brings one spirit after another to the séance, and the audience can hear the spirits speak outside the shaman's body. Meetings of shaman and spirits at séances without possession are also known in western Siberia and Inner Asia. Among the Minusinsk Tatars, for example, the shaman's assistant spring water around for the spirits to drink, so that they will not come too close to the shaman

If the main idea of the séance is soul flight, or shaman's journey to the otherworld, the manifestation of the spirits is not as dramatic as at séances of the possession type. Typical séances in the western and northern parts of Siberia – among the Samoyeds and the Ob-Ugrians, for example – are those at which the shaman imagined as travelling to the otherworld with his spirit helpers. The emphasis is not on role-changing and talking to the spirits but on the description of the shaman's journey. At this type of séance the shaman's trance usually deepens steadily and ends with loss of consciousness. At possession-type and ventriloquist séances the shaman often calls his spirits again after his return in singing and drumming. In other words, the depth of the trance moves in waves. Since concentration on the spirit world leads to a change in consciousness and focusing his attention on the audience brings the shaman back to his waking state, the depth of shamanic ecstasy depends upon the extent to which he must allow for the audience's wishes during the séance, and thus ultimately on the relationship between the shaman and his supporters.

The séance usually ends with an episode during which the shaman sends his spirit helpers away, answers questions from the audience, and issues instructions on the sacrifices or required propitiations to be made. The basic structure of the séance is thus relatively uniform, regardless of the object of shamanizing showing variation according to the way in which the spirits are encountered. The various rites, manifestations of the presence of or banishing of spirits, and tricks on demonstrations of skill proving the supranormal abilities of the shaman do, however, vary from one area to another. Despite cultural differences, the basic features of the shaman's technique of ecstasy, his main requisites, the concept of the spirits helping the shaman, and the part played by the audience as a chorus assisting at séances are elements of shamanism common throughout northern and Inner Asia.

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THE INTERPRETATION OF SIBERIAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN SHAMANISM

In 1253-1255 the Franciscan monk Wilhelm av Ruysbroek was sent by King IX of France to the court of Mongolia. He describes what he saw as follow:

> "Some of them appeal to devils and gather together by night those seeking an oracular answer from an evil spirit at their homes, where they place boiled meat in the middle of the house. The oracle (cham) intending to invoke the spirits begins his sorcery and frenziedly beats the ground with a drum. At last he begins to get wild and lets himself be bound. When the evil spirit comes in the dark, he gives it meat to eat, and it utters the oracular answer" (Charpentier 1919:258-259).

The account includes one of the first descriptions of a shamanic séance, and it is of great significance in that it proves that the séance has in the main remained almost unchanged from one century to the next.

Hundreds of similar eye-witness reports of Siberian and Central Asian shamanism have subsequently accumulated. The peculiar practices of shamans have caught the attention of European travellers, missionaries and ethnographers in centuries past.

As an archaic phenomenon of remote and little known cultures Siberian shamanism did, however, remain a subject for research by specialists until the publication of *Le chamanisme et les techniques archaiques de l'extase* by Mircea Eliade in 1951. The revised and enlarged translation into English, *Shamanism: Archaic Technique of Ecstasy,* in 1964 was a special source of inspiration for a vast number of publications concerning not only Siberian and Central Asian shamanism but also similar practices all over the world. Thanks to the great work done by Mircea Eliade the description and explanation of the phenomenal complex going under the name of shamanism has been one of the central themes of recent research in ethnology, anthropology and comparative religion.

Problems of Interpretation and Comparison

Few branches of the humanities and social sciences have remained so alien to one another as anthropology and the history of religion, despite their common origin and theoretical backgrounds. Mac Lindscott Ricketts points out that

> "despite the fact that the anthropological study of the religious life of 'primitive peoples' overlaps with the research of certain historians of religion (or 'comparative religionists'), one finds in the writings of English-speaking anthropologists an almost total absence of references to the theories of historians of religions" (Ricketts 1973:13).

The historians of religion have been accused of ignoring 'ethnographic reality' or suspected of a hidden religious bias.

A good example of misunderstanding and academic narrowness is John A. Saliba's work *'Homo religious' in Mircea Eliade* (Saliba 1976), in which he contrasts the anthropological approach to religion with that of the approach of the history of religion. Saliba defines anthropology in terms of the general method of post-Malinowskian time, holistic field work in small-scale society using participant-observation (Saliba 1976:13-15). Thus defined, anthropology is an empiric social science interested in synchronic functioning of society and void of all comparative and diachronic interests. The skeptical attitude to generalising comparisons in anthropology dates back to the critique of evolution theories. The particularistic concept of cultures emphasises differences in the ideological basis and central values of cultures. This in turn leads to difficulties in finding suitable standards for the comparison of different societies and cultures.

The real gap between these two disciplines has been the nature of the method and the basic theoretical assumptions. The hermeneutical phenomenology favoured by the students of religion has remained unknown among the anthropologists. Furthermore, its basic concept of knowledge differs fundamentally from that of the positivistic empiric studies. There has in recent years been growing interest among anthropologists in historical perspectives. At the same time a crisis in behavioral anthropology has raised discussion of the basic premises of anthropological studies. The focus of interest has shifted from behaviour and social structure to meaning, symbols and language (Marcus – Fischer 1986:26). Interest in systems of cultural meaning has directed scholars' attention to interpretative methods. Phenomenology and hermeneutics have become labels for a new line of study observing, for example, the ways in which natives see or experience the world around them. In stressing that "interpretative processes are necessary both for communication internally within a cultural system and externally between cultural systems" (Ibid., 30), the new interpretative anthropology opens the door to comparative analyses of a new kind.

It seems that interpretative methods could form a new bridge between anthropology and the history of religion. Shamanism is an area of research in which a bridge of this kind, of benefit to discussion and mutual understanding, could be very useful. For it is an area in which the interests of both disciplines overlap, and in which the problems of interpretation and comparison have been faced earlier by the history of religion and especially Mircea Eliade. This is the point I have in mind in examining studies in Siberian and Central Asian shamanism and trying to show the paths opened up by Eliade for further exploration.

The Nature of Knowledge on Siberian and Central Asian Shamanism

Siberian shamanism is a phenomenon that already belongs to history. The nature of previous knowledge greatly limits the potential for further studies. It could be claimed that the picture we now have of shamanism depends greatly on the interests and aims of observers. For they were the first interpreters of shamanism and a knowledge of their enterprises is vital to an understanding of the shamanistic complex.

The Europeans showed relatively little interest in Siberia in the Middle Ages, and not until the 17th and 18th centuries, with the spread of settlement across the Ural Mountains, did a knowledge of shamanism quickly begin to grow up. Apart from mission workers and explorers who went to Siberia expressly, the new Russian settlers were important sources of information. The travellers recorded their tales, and by thus passing on second-hand observations not only brought out relevant information but also paved the way for many false concepts.

By the 1880s interest in shamanism had become lively, and the last two decades of the century bequeathed us with plenty of reliable source material. One could say that in the 1988s researchers at last got down to systematic field work, lent impetus by the first published programmes for the collection of information on shamanism. The emphasis in these programmes was still a description of the outer manifestations of shamanism and a cry for information on the séance procedure or the shamans' paraphernalia. No questions on the ideological content or verbal tradition of shamanism foreign to concrete ethnographical research were asked – a fact that was for a long time to hamper the handling of shamanism as a religious phenomenon.

Since the turn of the century the collection of material on shamanism has to an increasing extent been in the hands of trained ethnographers. The tremendous cultural change that has taken place this century and which gained impetus under the influence of the post-revolutionary political societal reforms, crushed shamanism. A tradition no longer with any social significance has almost vanished, and the field work that could in the first three decades of the century be done in living and, from the point of view of the community, functional contexts has become the recording of the last fragments of information on a dying cultural tradition.

As a result of this long process of observation and collection, the material on Siberian shamanism is extremely heterogeneous, comprising the observations of chance travellers, missionaries, political prisoners, new settlers and finally research-oriented reporters. In addition, the recording of shamanism for research purposes has been primarily in the interests of ethnologists, even students of religion and folklore have also helped to collect material. It is typical of the source material on Siberian shamanism that the sources analysing the practices in a specific area fall in different decades or even different centuries. In discovering the typical forms of shamanism of some ethnic group it must be remembered that the period when information on shamanism was collected coincides with accelerating socio-cultural changes, and that these changes very obviously affected the development of shamanism among the given

groups. Comparisons are further made difficult by the indefinite references to regional and ethnic units appearing in the older sources in particular. The biggest problem of non-systematic collection work concerns the gaps in the information.

These are the difficulties which the student of Siberian and Central Asian shamanism has to face besides the linguistic and cultural diversity of the vast area. Many questions concerning the spiritual life of these cultures can never be answered, because the factual material is fragmentary and deficient. On the other hand, there are three classes of material besides shamanistic paraphemalia which form a suitable basis for comparative research as regards their collecting activity and the intensity of their note entries. There are accounts of shamanistic séances, personal accounts by shamans of visions during their initiation period and the songs sung during a shamanistic séance.

The Main Problems of Study

Most of the vast literature on Siberian shamanism is marked by a predominance of material and restraint in the description of concrete phenomena observed in the field. On the other hand from the last few decades of the 19th century onwards the publications were marked by a striving towards broader general presentations or theoretical views explaining the history of the development of the phenomenon and the conditions of its existence. Many Russian scholars from the turn of the century onwards had a sound insight into their material provided by field work, so that articles of a theoretical nature appeared side by side with publications of materials or texts aiming at pure description. General works, chiefly phenomenological analyses, increased in number, especially from the 1930s onwards, as more and more publications of material appeared to provide a sounder basis for comparison (e.g. Mikhajlovskii 1892, in English 1895; Stadling 1912; Czaplicka 1914; Tschubinov 1914; Nioradze 1925; Schmidt 1912-1955; Harva 1933, in German 1938; Ohlmarks 1939; Bouteiller 1950; Eliade 1951, in English 1964; Findeisen 1957; Lommel 1965; Hermanns 1970; Basilov 1984). These general studies on Siberian and Central Asian shamanism form a research tradition in which the basic problems of the phenomenon have been dealt with repeatedly and from different standpoints.

One of the chief trends in the problems of research did in fact become crystallised at the very beginning of the century when research really got down to outlining the history of the development of shamanism and the stages by which it came into being on a more extensive scale. Although the psychological, sociological and religio-phenomenological aspects gradually superseded evolutionistic thinking, the historical perspective has retained its vitality among Soviet scholars in the form of Marxist historical materialism, and inspired in the West by, among other things, archaeological research.

The object of research into the history of shamanism has to a considerable degree been the origin of its ideology, aiming at the discovering the basic features of the ideological ground that promoted the birth and evolution of shamanistic practices. The problem is firmly associated with debate on the relationship between shamanism and

religion. The question of how and in what respect shamanism can be regarded as a religious phenomenon has presented a constant problem to researchers. For example, a Russian evolutionist at the beginning of this century, W.B. Bogoras, repeatedly urged scholars to study shamanism as a religion and believed that it represents a certain degree of development of a religion (Bogoras 1910, Vdovin 1973). Bogoras nevertheless placed shamanism in a very special cultural-geographical framework; whereas e.g. Mikhajlovskij saw in shamanism a universal form of religion (Mikhajlovskij 1892), Bogoras like Waldemar Jochelson (1905-1908:47) and Uno Harva (1933:299), regards it chiefly as the expression of a North Asian religious cult. Even such modern researchers as Hans Findeisen and Vilmos Diószegi have seen in shamanism a form of religion (Findeisen 1957:192-96; Diószegi 1960:8). On the other hand researchers primarily interested in the ecstatic nature of the shaman's rite technique or the most important of his activities, healing, have completely overlooked the religious aspects of shamanism and speak of the shaman as a psychopath, a healer or a fraud. B.K.M. Rychkov (1922:113), among others, stresses that shamanism is specifically a psychopathological phenomenon related to hysteria and epilepsy. Most researchers do, however, agree that although the practice of shamanism obviously demands special mental and nervous properties, it is nevertheless first and foremost a phenomenon in the realm of religion and magic.

It must be remembered that beside the fixed religious systems of the written cultures the religious systems of the ethnic religions are heterogeneous; in place of one system we find multi-level, parallel and overlapping traditions, parallel conceptual systems covering different spheres of religion (Goody 1986). On this basis we find an explanation for the attaching of shamanism to religious systems differing in content, and it is on this basis that Åke Hultkrantz describes the position of shamanic practices as component elements of various ethnic religions:

> "Shamanism, of course, is the complex of beliefs, rites and traditions clustered around the shaman and his activities. All these traits constitute a well-organised net of relationship, a religious configuration within the religion" (Hultkrantz 1973:36).

Hultkrantz's view of the autonomous position of the shamanic complex as a segment of various religions does, however, seem exaggerated. Although only certain elements of a religious tradition are fundamental as regards the shamanic ideology, the best shamans attempt to rule the whole belief tradition of their tribes and to regard it as a frame of reference for their own activities.

The evolutionists placed special emphasis on the part played by animism as the ideological basis of shamanism. For example, one of the first compilers of comparative general works, the Swede J. Stadling, who also had first-hand experience of shamanic phenomena, thought that shamanism represented the most primitive religious thinking of mankind, an animistic conception of the world (Stadling 1901). The concept of the association of shamanism with an animistic way of thinking is not unfounded, and references to the animistic associations of shamanism are also made in recent research (cf. Paulson 1964:131; 1961:92). Animistic concepts are, however, also abundant in areas of the world where shamanism is unknown. It is thus clear that this alone is not

sufficient as the basis for the growth of the shamanic complex. The argument does in fact become more tenable when seeking the ideological basis for shamanism in the nature of the soul concepts of the area in question. Åke Hultkrantz (1953:110-12; 1957:254) and Ivar Paulson have shown that a dualistic soul concept is typical in the nucleus areas of shamanism. As is seen from Paulson's sizable study *Die primitiven Seelenvorstellungen der nordeurasischen Völker* (1958), the soul concepts of various peoples differ considerably as regards the number and function of souls; in many cases one could speak of the multiplicity of souls rather than the dualism of souls, as e.g. Jochelson does (1926:237). Nevertheless, as Eliade has stressed, the underlying thought that in addition to a fixed soul element maintaining his vitality man also has a soul capable of leaving the body during sleep or trance is by nature dualistic and a vital condition for visions of the journey of the shaman to the Beyond, and likewise for explanations of sickness based on loss of the soul.

Beside historical aspects the phenomenological approach has been the most widely represented in the shamanic research tradition. Features typical of such research are the division of the shamanic complex into its components, the examination of the ecstatic behaviour of the shaman, the spirit-helper system, initiatory visions, the journey of the shaman to the Beyond or the characteristics of the shamanic cosmology, followed by an attempt to indicate the cultural-historical or geographical ties between these components. The chief problems have often concerned the question as to which of the features of shamanism is most fundamental or vital to the entire phenomenon. Thus the phenomenologist resemble the historically-oriented researchers in their search for the heart of shamanism, and thus often its most original features. One of the biggest arguments in phenomenological research concerns the role of ecstasy as the most characteristic feature of shamanism. Mircea Eliade in fact calls shamanism simply a technique of ecstasy. He states: "A first definition of this complex phenomenon, and perhaps the least hazardous, will be: shamanism = technique of ecstasy" (Eliade 1964:4). The fundamental nature of ecstasy as the supporter of the shamanic rite technique cannot be denied, and its central position among the functions of the shamans has been examined by e.g. M. Hermanns (1970), R. Th. Christiansen (1953), A. Closs (1960), A-L. Siikala (1978) and M. Harner (1980). On the other hand ecstasy is extensive as a religious phenomenon and is not sufficient as a factor explaining Siberian shamanism in its entirety. According to Eliade it receives ideological content from the concept of the shaman's ascent to the sky: "Hence any ecstatic cannot be considered a shaman; the shaman specializes in a trance during which his soul is believed to leave his body and ascend to the sky or descend to the underworld" (Eliade 1964:5). In some cultures the idea of the shaman's journey is accompanied by traditional forms according to which the shaman is able to contact the spirits without leaving the body. In stressing the ascent-to-the-sky element Eliade concludes that possession, the entering of the spirit into the shaman's body, is a non-shamanistic feature. A view opposing that of Eliade on the question of possession is held by Hans Findeisen, in whose extensive output the supporting theory is the indication of the shaman's spiritual-mediumistic connections. In treating the shaman as a religious specialist, a priest,

operating only through possession, Findeisen is guilty of one-sidedness (Findeisen 1954, 1956, 1957a, 1958, 1960). László Vajda and Dominic Schröder likewise hold reservations over the stressing of the ascent to the sky as the idea supporting the entire shamanic complex. Vajda crystallises his opinion in the following thoughts: the shaman also has functions in which the ecstatic ascent to the sky plays no part; although the ascent to the sky does not constitute one typical component of shamanism, it cannot explain all the other components (Vajda 1959:470). I have tried to show that the journey of the shaman and possession, the entering of the spirit into the shaman's body, are simply functional alternatives describing the communication between the shaman and the other world (Siikala 1978). The shaman's journey is, however, still a special feature of shamanism and is not connected with other kinds of mediumistic traditions.

The cultural-historical background and native areas of shamanism have been the subject of extensive debate. The cradle of shamanism has been sought equally often in the northern arctic regions as among the high religions of the south. Peter Wilhelm Schmidt, who in his broad and many-volumed book *Ursprung der Gottesidee* (1912-1955) examines, among other things, the phenomenology and history of shamanism throughout Siberia and Central Asia, concludes in his treatises on the religion of the nomadic peoples of inner Asia that shamanism was originally the product of southern matriarchal agrarian communities (Schmidt 1912-1955, III:333-39). A student of the shamanic complex of the Eastern Evenks, S. M. Shirokogoroff, noted in it numerous features descended from Buddhism and Lamaism. In his great work *Psychomental complex of the Tungus* he reaches the form "shamanism stimulated by buddhism" (1935:282) and Mircea Eliade, among others, emphasises that the concept is right – southern influences really did modify and enrich the shamanic system of the Evenks – when we remember that the latter is not the creation of Buddhism (Eliade 1964:498).

Eliade's own view of the background to the birth of shamanism is crystallised as follows:

> "Shamanism in its structure and as a whole cannot be considered a creation of these southern contributions. The documents that we have collected and interpreted [...] show that the ideology and the characteristic techniques of shamanism are attested in archaic cultures, where it would be difficult to admit the presence of Paleo-Oriental influences. It is enough to remember, on the one hand, that Central Asian shamanism is part and parcel of the prehistoric culture of the Siberian hunters, and on the other, that shamanic ideologies and techniques are documented among primitive peoples of Australia, the Malay Archipelago, North America, and other regions" (Eliade 1964:502-503).

The involuntary sickness of the initiation stage, visions, hallucinations and fits of torment, all of which can be cured by shamanising, and full control of the techniques of ecstasy at the shaman stage, the mastery of the neurophysiological process of one's own body, have in their apparent contradiction given rise to the most highly disputed question in shamanic research. The mental divergence noted by eye-witnesses has been explained as hysteria, or epilepsy, psychosis or schizophrenia (Czaplicka 1914; Ohlmarks 1939; Loeb 1929:60-84; Nioradze 1925:50; Ackernecht 1943:43). The debate on the nature and degree of the deviation of the shaman has remained lively until recent times (see e.g. Silverman 1967 and Devereux 1961). I have tried to show that by means

of traditional ecstatic technique a person of normal nerves may achieve a state of trance, even though people with an extra-sensitive make-up do have greater potential that others (Siikala 1978).

Mircea Eliade as an Interpreter of Shamanism

Research in recent years has, in addition to debating the classical issues outlined above, focused increasingly on details of the shamanistic tradition of Siberia and Central Asia (Diószegi and Hoppál 1978). Research in the Soviet Union in particular from the 1970s onwards has produced new ethnographic material (Mikhajlov 1980, Vdovin 1981, Alekseev 1984, Novik 1986). More reliable and more exhaustive information has been unearthed on such items as the societal and economic background to shamanic complexes, belief traditions, the development of and links between shamanic complexes of different cultures. Shamanic research has enjoyed a major boom, and new questions concerning shamanic ecstasy or practices have been presented.

As we have seen, Mircea Eliade handled many of the classic issues of shamanic research. In this respect he represents the main stream of studies in shamanism. The secret of his success lies not in the questions he posed, but in the way he dealt with them. His views have in many cases become widely assimilated, to such an extent that they have become general knowledge, the origin of which is not necessarily always remembered. Eliade's importance in shamanic research is not, however, confined to the explanation of individual phenomena or the solving of even major controversies. Shamanism is the field in which he really comes into his own as a historian of religions. As a student of shamanism he is not, like the pure phenomenologist, content merely to dissect complex phenomena or to construct phenomenal typologies and morphologies. By means of comparison he sets them in a broader historical context. This historical context is not, however, historicist, stopping at the observation of mere concrete facts, nor does Eliade limit himself to the observation of religious developments within the Siberian and Central Asian region. Placing culturally defined documentary materials in their historical perspective provides him with a basis for revealing transhistorical phenomena. It is Eliade's goal "to cover the entire phenomenon of shamanism and at the same time to situate it in the general history of religions" (Eliade 1964:XI). In other words he sets out to reveal the essence of shamanism as a religious phenomenon and to place it in the perspective of the history of religions.

Eliade's interpretation is comprehensive and comparative. In examining the shamanistic complex he tries to reveal its structure and essence hidden in its symbolism, its myths and its ritual behaviour. His interpretation is founded on a penetrating familiarity with the general nature of religions. Even so the comparativist is always faced with the problem of interpreting cultural-specific facts and crystallising transcultural elements. This is especially the case in the area of Siberian shamanism. The first and most striking feature that arises on examining the shamanic phenomena occurring among the various ethnic groups of Siberia and Central Asia is the diversity appearing at every level of tradition. This is a matter to be aware of, especially since

in stressing uniform practices most general accounts of shamanism create an illusion of a homogeneous complex of phenomena. In analysing Tofa (Karagasy) shamanism Vilmos Diószegi in a notable manner pointed out the variation in tradition to be found among just one ethnic group. Interviews with twenty-one former Tofa-shamans showed that besides individual differences they differed in clan, in nature (white and black shamans), and in degree of power and proficiency (small or minor, middle or intermediate, and big and powerful shamans) (Diószegi 1968:242).

So the shamans of the Tofa – among whom the shaman held a professional status along with highly developed traditional features – were of varying degree as regards their prestige and influence. If we extend the examination to cover the whole of the Siberian region, the dispersion is naturally even greater, and the differences do not concern merely the concrete manifestations of the tradition but the whole significance and position of shamanism in the life of the community.

I have also already mentioned the highly problematic nature of the materials on shamanism. Eliade has managed to avoid these problems to a great extent by choosing as the basis for his study the very best materials, accounts of visions, myths and accounts of rituals as regards their quality and the intensity with which they were collected. Furthermore, he has founded his interpretations on complete descriptions, texts leaving room for interpretation – something in the nature of shamanic case studies.

Before presenting generalising conclusions Eliade analysed shamanistic phenomena first within a culture – and even at individual level – but always in the light of comparative religion. It can also be said that he was the first to fully understand the value of shamanic folklore and vision tradition as a means of understanding the essence of the whole complex.

The legends of journey to the other world and meetings with various spirit beings were moulded in content and shape according to the shamanic tradition peculiar to each ethnic group. Themes common in these legends throughout Siberia are the outlining of the structure of the cosmos, recognition of its most important aspects (the cosmic tree, mountain stream, etc.), and knowledge of the roads leading to the supranormal, the abodes of spirits, and above all the spirits, the guardians of game, and so on. This mapping out of the supranormal was at times so precise that it was possible to deduce the whole future range of the shaman's tasks on the basis of his initiatory visions, even which illness he would be capable of healing. The culmination of the transition stage is the ecstatic initiation, the experience during which the candidate feels that the spirits turn him into a shaman. The visions of ecstatic initiation repeat the themes of death and rebirth, the spirits tearing at and dissecting the candidate's former ego and then reconstructing him and investing him with supernatural powers, a shaman able to 'see' and 'hear'. At the same time the candidate might be urged by the spirits to act as a shaman and receive a promise that the spirits will help him in his future task (Siikala 1978:311-319).

For Eliade the mystery of shamanism lies in the initiation. The novice does not get his spirit-helpers until he has experienced his ecstatic initiation conducted by the spirits

– the `origin of the shamans' as the Nganasans say. The experiences of the Nganasan shamans interviewed by Popov, for example, display an infinite richness in detain in the visions connected with becoming a shaman (Popov 1968). These visions speak to reader as such. Interpreting them Eliade opens up a perspective on the mental world of the shaman and thus constitutes a line that could be followed further by students of cognitive anthropology (cf. Noll 1985).

Most studies of shamanism have been specialists of Siberian and Central Asian cultures or regions. As a historian of religion Eliade could show better than anyone else the basic structures and forms of shamanic tradition that can be also found in other religious systems. For example, the death and resurrection experienced in the initiate's vision is a traditional pattern approved by Eliade as being repeated in different parts of the world as part of many different systems of belief. The analysis of cosmic symbols in turn discloses the connections between shamanism and other religious systems. One of the chief merits of Eliade's work is in fact the way in which he has pointed out shamanistic elements in traditions outside Asia. For example, the Finno-Ugrian and Indo-European belief traditions clearly have a basic shamanistic stratum, study of which would throw light on the fundamental thought patterns of these cultures (Hoppál 1975; Siikala 1984, 1986).

Eliade admits the justification of sociological, ethnological and psychological research and leaves them to study, for example, the tasks of the shaman in the community, the cultural adaptation of shamanistic complexes, ethnographic details of the shamans paraphernalia, and so on. These disciplines provide suitable material from which to draw conclusions on the history of religion – material with which the history of religion can, by synthesising, make progress in the interpretation of religious phenomena. The new, interpretive anthropologists are, like Eliade, interested in the meanings of cultural phenomena. The interpretations of anthropology and the history of religion do, however, differ in their basic premises. The anthropologist seeking, as it were, to examine culture from within tries to understand the meaning of practices in the light of the beliefs of the culture in question or the knowledge, emotions and images of the people maintaining that culture. The historian of religion has the same starting point, but he also places religious systems in relation to one another, i.e. uses comparative research as a means of seeking constant, transcultural meanings. These research procedures are not conflicting, the ultimate aim of both is through comparative perspectives to seek for cultural and cognitive universals. It is thus a question of the relationship between general cultural phenomena and their specific manifestations. The ethnographic descriptions produce relevant information which the comparative interpretation in turn places in a broader context.

Mircea Eliade, in studying shamanism, did in a way combine these two levels of interpretation. Shamanism appears in the light of comparative research to be a phenomenon revealing the basic religious experiences of mankind, and it is therefore significant to the understanding of all human culture. Herein lies the fundamental contribution made by Mircea Eliade through his research into shamanism: through shamanism he has opened up new vistas on the understanding of basic religious

experiences common to all mankind. At the same time shamanism itself has changed from being only an exotic ethnographic phenomenon into a major object for religious research posing questions that still require an answer in the light of the new knowledge accumulated. It is to be hoped that research will benefit from interaction with ethnographical research and studies in the history of religion, so that cross-cultural models can be sifted, by means of comparative research, form the information produced by intracultural interpretations. This would in turn lead to a better understanding of the development and background of the specific, culturally-structured manifestations of shamanism.

THE SIBERIAN SHAMAN'S TECHNIQUE OF ECSTASY

The Siberian shaman's function as mediator between the normal and the supranormal world is based on systems of beliefs according to which difficulties threatening the even peace of life are caused by representatives of the spirit world, and can be forestalled and eliminated with the help of benevolent spirits. There are several methods used in the areas in which shamanism appears that are thought to influence the working of supranormal beings. The essential feature in the functioning of the shaman is the creation of direct and reciprocal states of communication directed at the spirit world. The shaman is thus first and foremost a supplier of information and a 'negotiator', whose task is to find out the measures required to resolve a crisis that has already arisen or to prevent crises in the future. Although the tasks of the shaman vary somewhat in different communities, they do have one thing in common in that direct communication with the spirit world is always considered necessary in carrying out the shaman's duties. A shamanic rite is not made shamanistic merely by the nature of the task to be carried out, i.e. the aim of the rite, but by the way in which the goal is sought. The shamanic rite is an attempt to solve the problems of the normal world through ecstatic contact with the supranormal.

Shamanism and the Altered States of Consciousness

The Siberian shaman's technique of ecstasy, regarded sometimes as symptomatic of a pathological state and sometimes as 'cold-blooded' playacting, is one link in a series of extensive phenomena highly varied in form. The anthropological literature uses the words *trance, ecstasy and possession* as general terms for given states. The last of these, sometimes wrongly used as a synonym for the first two, arises from culturally-bound concepts. It is based on native theory according to which a supranormal being may enter a person's body and take command. As terms, 'trance' and 'ecstasy' do not differ greatly from each other except that the former is favoured primarily by anthropologists, the latter by students of comparative religion. They both refer to forms of behaviour deviating from what is normal in the wakeful state and possessing a specific cultural significance, typical features being an altered grasp of reality and the self-concept, with the intensity of change ranging from slight modifications to a complete loss

of consciousness. Recent research has adopted the general term, altered states of consciousness, ASC's, to express this sphere.

In order to be able to understand or interpret correctly the incomplete reports of ecstasy and possession based on the momentary impressions of eyewitnesses appearing in ethnographic literature, the reader must be familiar with the features characteristic of altered states of consciousness. The matter cannot be approached completely objectively. The scale describing the outward behaviour of the ecstatic, and similarly his feeling or observations, is very broad. The same external stimulation may also, in the case of various individuals, lead to ASC's differing from one another. As I shall attempt to show later, the factors leading to personal ASC experiences lie at many levels and are always weighted according to the demands of the situation and the motivations and hopes of each individual (van der Walde 1968:56). The subjective content of experience is influenced by what is culture dependent, e.g. belief, frames of reference the ecstatic has learnt to associate with ASC's, i.e. during his trance the shaman meets his spirit-helper, a Christian possibly Christ or the Virgin Mary. Differences in the nervous systems of individuals also affect their responses to various stimuli and thus shape the nature and degree of the alteration of consciousness. The phenomena classified as altered states of consciousness do, however, have certain common features with the help of which their close relationship can be shown. Arnold Ludwig has tried to define these natural properties, whilst emphasizing that some are more, some less typical of different individual cases. He mentions alteration in thinking, disturbed time sense, loss of conscious control, change in emotional expression, body image changes, perceptual distortions, hallucinations and pseudo-hallucinations, change in meaning or significance, sense of the ineffable, hypersuggestibility (Ludwig 1968:77-83).

Examining shamanic phenomena in the light of Ludwig's list of features, we see that most of the properties he mentions well describe the state reached by the shaman during his ritual activity. Changes in the field of observation and body image, attenuated grasp of reality and self-control, which may lead to identification with authority in the case of the shaman with supranormal powers, are all identifying features of shamanic ecstasy. It also appears that some of the basic elements of the shamanic tradition can be explained on the basis of typical marks of identification of altered states of consciousness. A sense of depersonalization and transcendence may in itself act as an impetus to cosmic journey fantasies. Without doubt, such feelings are at the very heart of the tradition containing the schism between mind and body. Thus, by placing the shamanic technique of ecstasy beside parallel modes of behaviour, possibly of different cultural background, we discover the guide lines for analysing its basic psychophysical properties.

The ways in which people have pursued trance or an altered state of consciousness, or found themselves in such a state, are generally speaking highly varied, ranging from mechanical stimuli of the nervous system to chains of effect caused by such mental factors as states of mind and motivations. We may, however, mention four regions of the human organism the disturbance of whose balance, in one way or another, leads

to altered consciousness. These are a) the normal inflow of sensory stimuli, b) the normal outflow of motor impulses, c) the normal 'emotional tone', or d) the normal flow and organization of processes of recognition (Ludwig 1968:30; see also Fischer 1969 and 1970.) The part played by emotion as a factor leading to ecstatic behaviour has attracted the attention, above all, of students of mysticism and deep religious experiences. Orlo Strunk links the arousal of emotion with the process of perception and finds himself on the track of one fundamental fact in saying that the closer perceived aspects (concerning religion) come to self-concept, the greater is the attendant emotional experience (Strunk 1962:67. See also Sundén 1959:49 ff.).

Arnold Ludwig has presented an extensive list of the methods used in the pursuit of an altered state of consciousness. He divides these methods into five groups, according to the nature of the technique, and points out that different methods may overlap (Ludwig 1968:71-75. Quoted here is Sheila S. Walker's summary, which concentrates in particular on a broad presentation of the parts that concern institutionalized and religious connections Walker 1972:12).

1. Reduction of exteroceptive stimulation and/or motor activity:
   – result of absolute reduction of sensory input, changes in pattern of sensory data, or constant exposure to repetitive, monotonous stimuli.
   – includes hypnotic trance; ASC's from prolonged social isolation, e.g. mystics, ascetics.
   – (lethargy of initiation period).
2. Increase of exteroceptive stimulation and/or motor activity and/or emotion:
   – excitatory mental states resulting mainly from sensory overloading or bombardment, which may or may not be accompanied by strenuous physical activity or exertion. Profound emotional arousal and mental fatigue may be major contributing factors.
   – dance and musical trance in response to rhythmic drumming; hyperkinetic trance states associated with emotional mental contagion, often in a group or mob setting; religious conversion and healing trance experiences during meetings of a revivalist type; mental aberrations associated with certain rites of passage; spirit possession states; shamanistic, divinatory, prophetic and ecstatic trances.
3. Increased alertness or mental involvement:
   – results from focused or selective hyperalertness and from peripheral hyperalertness for prolonged periods.
   – fervent praying; total involvement in listening to dynamic speaker; trance resulting from watching a revolving object.
4. Decreased alertness or relaxation of critical faculties:
   – passive state of mind with minimum of active, goal-directed thinking.
5. Presence of somatopsychological factors:
   – result from alterations in body chemistry, or neurophysiology, which are deliberate or due to a situation over which the individual has no control.
   – drowsiness; dehydration; hypoglycemia from fasting; (hyperventilation); hormone disturbance; sleep deprivation.

It is interesting to note that the ASC technique appearing in religious connections cover all five of Ludwig's classes. For example, the pursuit of trance through meditation comes under classes 1 and 4, the mass frenzies brought on by charismatic preachers under class 3. Ludwig places shamanism in the group `Increase of exteroceptive stimulation and/or motor activity and/or emotion', but it is clear that the use of hallucinogens he places in class 5 also serves to characterise the shamanic technique of ecstasy (Cf. Harner 1973). It appears from some of the reports of shamanizing that the séance is preceded by a period of concentration, a type of meditation (Jochelson 1926:205), which is in marked opposition to the strongly motoric behaviour of the séance itself. A study should be made of the types of combinations appearing among forms of shamanism representing different cultures. The most common Siberian hallucinogen, for example – amanita – is not used everywhere (Saar 1989). In some areas it is among the normal, revered tools of the shaman, in others it marks out the user as belonging to a class of poorer or less skilled shamans. From the reports of séances we can also observe clear regional differences in the motor behaviour of the shaman. Thus Ludwig is right to suggest that the means of ecstasy he classifies may possibly overlap. The technique of ecstasy, especially in its ritual connections, seems to constitute a cumulative process in which factors aiming at the same result but operating at various levels of man's psychophysical mechanism act as mutual reinforcements. These component processes may also come in succession. Sheila S. Walker notes that the initial stages of possession trance may be due to one factor, later stages to a different one (Walker 1972:12-13). Thus the shamanic séance, like many other enactions of cult, begins as a current given momentum by rhythmic music, dance and song. We may then think of a gradual alteration of consciousness induced by sensory stimulation as opening the way to mechanisms at a psychological level.

Changes in states of consciousness are moulded by many factors: external stimuli, personal expectations and motives, social, cultural and situational demands, even properties connected with the inherited psychophysical make-up of the aspirant. In the most highly patterned connections, even the combination of so many variables leads to individual differences. On the other hand, when studying a phenomenon such as shamanism, where the method of inducing trance is marked by the occurrence of certain common features and whose culturally-bound meaning and social function are, broadly speaking, uniform, we may assume that despite individual variation the basic mechanism of the technique of ecstasy may be delineated. What, then, is the ideal process of the shamanic trance technique? What factors exert particular pressure on the behaviour of the shaman? On the basis of Ludwig's classification we may already conclude that some of these factors have a `mechanical' influence at the neurophysiological level, whilst others are among more complicated brain functions, i.e. are formed from processes of a psychic nature.

In setting out to discover a basic psychic mechanism for the shaman's technique drawing on a knowledge of Western hypnosis, I wish to emphasize immediately that it is impossible to make an exact equation between these phenomena. Differences in cultural environment, cognitive system and functional context, alone, push them in

different directions. Also of great importance is the fact that the Western hypnotic trance does not involve any of the neurophysiological changes discernible by EEG that are most clearly characteristic of shamanic ecstasy. (See Raymond Prince's list of features indicating neurophysiological changes, Prince 1968:121.) Thus although the shaman's technique of ecstasy does display many factors influencing at a neurophysiological level which do not appear in Western hypnosis – the use of hallucinogens will suffice as one such factor – I consider that the basic psychic process by which the shamanic trance is channelled into a specific form and content is the same as the process of influence in hypnosis. (New studies concerning the active-alert induction of a hypnotic-like ASC support this assumption, see Bányai 1980, Bányai – Hilgard 1976, Bányai – Mészáros – Greguss 1980).

The induction phase of hypnotic trance has been analysed best by those researchers who have stressed the nature of the phenomenon as goal-oriented striving or social interaction. Mention should be made in this sense, above all, of two theorists with complementary views each illuminating our understanding of the shaman's technique of ecstasy: Ronald E. Shor and Theodore Sarbin. Both set out to develop the theories of Robert M. White which stress the importance of motivation as a basic element of hypnotic behaviour and which are crystallized in the following definition:

> "hypnotic behaviour is meaningful, goal-oriented striving, its most general goal being to behave like a hypnotized person as this is continuously defined by the operator and understood by the subject" (White 1941:483).

Ronald E. Shor's article "Hypnosis and the concept of the generalized reality-orientation" is significant in the sense that it tries to show how an alteration in consciousness occurs as a result of this goal-oriented striving. He starts from the theory that a normal state of consciousness is characterized by the mobilization of a structured frame of reference behind the attention which supports, interprets and gives meaning to all experience. This frame of reference he calls the usual generalized reality-orientation (Shor 1959:585). Generalized reality-orientation develops slowly during life and remains a superstructure of consciousness only by means of active mental striving, which in fact is not usually conscious. According to Shor hypnosis is a complex of two fundamental processes. The first is the construction of a special, temporary orientation to a small range of preoccupations and the second is the relative fading of the generalized reality-orientation into non-functional unawareness (Shor 1959). This basic process of the altering of awareness, or actually the two fundamental processes, illustrates the psychic mechanism by which the shaman attains a state of trance. To the shaman preparing for a séance his generalized reality-orientation remains without significance. He directs all his energy towards active performance, by means of which he recalls the other reality to which only he has access, the shamanic world. His special temporary orientation is directed at shamanic knowledge.

Shor himself points out that this basic mechanism of hypnotic trance was in fact described earlier, only with the emphasis on slightly different aspects:

> "While the concept of new, special orientation is defined from the standpoint of cognition, it is identical with what White has called goal-oriented striving from the standpoint

> of motivation or what Sarbin has called role-taking from the standpoint of social psychology" (Shor 1959:598).

The supranormal shamanic world is personified in separate supernatural beings which, being capable of communication, are social beings. Correspondingly the shamanic séance as a forum for communication between this world and the next is a social occasion at which the shaman, as medium, holds reciprocal relationships with both sides. If we assume that the basic psychic mechanism of the shaman's technique of ecstasy is the same as that in Western hypnotic practices or, on an even wider scale, in all trance behaviour. (Cf. the view put forward by van der Walde, based on cross-cultural comparisons, according to which the basic mechanism of hypnotic trance is the same as that in all goal-oriented trance behaviour. Van der Walde 1968.) Theodore Sarbin's socialpsychological formulation "hypnosis is one form of a more general kind of social psychological behaviour known as role-taking" (Sarbin 1950:255) then provides the analytically most fertile point of departure for studying this mechanism. This view does not contradict the explanation starting from a personality psychology basis, according to which controlled trance phenomena can be explained as regression in the service of the ego. (On the theory of hypnosis as controlled regression, see Gill and Brenman 1959.) The reason why, in examining shamanism, the socialpsychological aspect takes precedence over the personality-psychological is simply that the former provides a better terminological and conceptual frame of reference for the sounding of the social dimensions of an institutionalized phenomenon. (Hjalmar Sundén and Lauri Honko have mapped out the potential of role theory specifically as an explanation of the psychological prerequisites for the encounter between man and the supranormal (Sundén 1959 and Honko 1972). In his article "Role-taking of the Shaman" (1969) Honko has also discussed the shaman's art of social role- changing. In my earlier publication *The Rite Technique of the Siberian Shaman* (1978) I have deliberated these principal ideas and paid special attention to the concept of role-taking. See also Peters – Price – Williams 1980).

The Conditions for Controlled Ecstatic Behaviour

Although social reasons, such as the striving for prestige or material advantage in the case of poor young men, may lead a man to become a shaman (cf. Bogoras 1904-1909:424), the bulk of the shamans' own personal reports give `the shaman's disease' as the basic stimulus. The story of the wife of shaman Kyzlasov is typical:

> "That was how he became a shaman, after the sickness, after the torture. He had been ill for seven years. While he was ailing, he had dreams: he was beaten up several times, sometimes he was taken to strange places" (Diószegi 1960:58).

The symptoms are both mental and physical; there are frequent mentions of pains in the head and the limbs, states of torment, with visions and voices, fits reminiscent of manifestations of hysteria, and so on. The patient turns to shamanizing in order to be healed, and this means is often mentioned as being the last and the only way of

attaining equilibrium. Whatever the nature of the psychophysical disturbances that the symptoms of shaman's so-called sickness refer to, it is clear from the reports that equilibrium can be attained and maintained precisely by shamanizing. Often the shaman's account mentions that neglect of shamanizing causes a return of the sickness. If the shaman's initiatory sickness is equated with hysteria, as is done by many scholars, the novice stage must be regarded as a therapeutic period during which the initiate, generally under the guidance of an older shaman, learns to order and control his ego-functions by means of ready models within the belief tradition so that a real fit of hysteria during the initiatory stage *becomes* a fit in the control of the ego. No universally accepted conclusions as to the nature of the shaman's initiatory `sickness' have been made, however, and it is difficult or even impossible to draw any from the wide range of symptoms mentioned in the reports. It is more or less agreed that one feature of the shaman novice is some sort of nervous sensitivity or reactional susceptibility. When we remember, for example, that the future shaman of a clan may be selected for training even as a child, that seeking to become a shaman may be influenced by social reasons and, above all, that even a person with a normal nervous constitution may by means of a suitable technique reach an altered state of consciousness (see Neher 1962 and Walter – Walter 1949), it is obvious that it is impossible to name any specific nervous disorder qualifying a person as a shaman. The basic qualification for becoming a shaman is control of the technique of ecstasy and the formal study of this technique. People with a certain nervous susceptibility are, however, best suited for this, and people easily roused to hysteria have the best potential. Thus it is often exceptional individuals who seek to become or are sought out as shamans. The long initiatory stage is then preparation for the control of ecstatic behaviour. The shaman must execute faultlessly traditionally-patterned ritual functions before the critical eyes of an audience.

Study centres round ways of using mechanical means of stimulating the nervous system – rhythmical music, singing, dancing and drugs – as best suits each individual, and practice in the psychic mechanism of the technique of ecstasy. The psychic side of the shaman's technique of ecstasy may be regarded as a phenomenon related to Western hypnotic behaviour, in which an altered state of consciousness is attained as a suggestive consequence of dynamic experience. As a result of the shaman's position as a vehicle of communication between this and the other world, this experience takes place by means of role-taking directed at representatives of the spirit world. The assumption of the role of the other is a covert cognitive process which denotes the ability to place oneself symbolically in the place of another. (On role-taking and the role-concepts of symbolic interactionism, see Mead 1934, Sarbin 1950 and 1954, Turner 1956, Allen – Sarbin 1972.) Living the spirit roles, manifesting them to the point of identification does, however, mean that these roles have been learnt. Sarbin and Allen, for example, who observed that role-taking and role-performance concern man's entire psychophysical being, stressed the need for previous experience in a role-taking situation (Sarbin – Allen 1969:522-523). During his initiation period the novice constructs his supranormal counter-roles in accordance with the models pro-

vided by tradition, i.e. he acquires his spirit-helpers. The way in which the young shaman selects elements of the belief tradition in shaping his supranormal helpers is illustrated in the shaman's songs and the visions requiring a deeper assimilation of the tradition. For example, the songs of the Chukchi shaman, based on tradition but moulded into individual shapes, came into being precisely during the novice stage. The content of the songs is to a great extent the shaping of supranormal roles: they describe the regions inhabited by the spirits, the essence of the spirits and their characteristic features, the tasks they are able to carry out, and so on (Siikala 1980:88-92). The ways of manifesting the spirit roles are also traditional. Shirokogoroff, for example, describes typical modes of behaviour of the Manchu shaman from which the shaman's assistant and those present can recognise the spirit in question (Shirokogoroff 1935:337). The ecstatic experiences of the initiation period, which shamans have, when interviewed, been able to describe feature by feature, are repeated in the songs during séances. There are frequent references for example to the motif of `the dissecting of the shaman by spirits', i.e. the culmination of the process of becoming a shaman, the `birth' of the shaman. It is interesting, as appears from the initiatory visions of the Samoyed shaman, that these experiences are completely traditional not only in content but also in form (Siikala 1978:193-197). In other words the structure of the visions is in the main similar, and the motifs are repeated in the songs sung while shamanizing.

The Induction of Trance

In public ritual proceedings the technique of ecstasy transferring the shaman to an altered state of consciousness appears as a cumulative process in which elements acting at the physical and mental levels reinforce one another. In addition to a mechanical stimulus (rhythmic music in the case of Siberian shamans), the following suggestive factors affect the change in consciousness: a) the motivation of the shaman, which may be social (there is an acute need for the séance) and recognised or may lie in the realm of unrecognised personal hopes and wishes, b) study by the shaman of matters representing the supranormal, c) the actively expressed concentration of the attention, hopes and wishes of the audience on the shaman and d) a strong emotional pressure that is the sum of all these elements. It is characteristic of the course of the séance that these factors influence the séance in different ways at different stage, and the degree of change in the shaman's consciousness likewise varies. I shall here attempt to outline the basic features of the shamanic technique of trance and to distinguish the factors shaping the shaman's ecstatic behaviour.

The preparation for the séance is the stage at which ties with the ordinary waking state, the normal world, are broken. The séance may be preceded by a period of fasting or contemplation. Whether the period of concentration is long or short, it includes the assembly of requisites and the donning of the shaman's dress, these representing the concrete transition to the faculty of shaman. The dress, on which are depicted the shaman's supranormal assistants or other objects necessary for moving about in the spirit world, in itself helps to focus the shaman's thoughts. All measures taken during

the preparatory stage – the tuning of the drum, the removal of any icons, which were already relatively common by the end of the 19th century, the extinguishing of the fire, the making of idols, the excitement and hushed expectation of those present – generate favourable emotional charges in those present and above all help the shaman to concentrate on his coming task as shaman and on the supranormal helpers required in the task.

The induction proper of trance, the stage at which the shaman attains an altered state of consciousness, is, according to shamanic theory, the period of assembling the spirit-helpers. The chief principle may be described as follows: *connected with the rhythmical, sensory stimulus slowly gaining momentum and directly influencing the central nervous system is the gradual actualisation of the supranormal counter-roles and a slowly intensified assumption of supranormal roles in conjunction with the sensory stimulus.* It has been experimentally proved that rhythmical stimulus alone is sufficient to bring about changes in the electrical activity of the brains of people with normal nerves and, according to the reports of the test subjects, it also produces unusual observations (Neher 1962). The shaman's drumming technique is by and large uniform over the whole area: a slow, soft initial phase is followed by an increase in tempo and volume. The effect of the rhythmical stimulus is in some areas fortified by various intoxicants, such as amanita, and in latter times in particular strong tobacco and alcohol. The use of hallucinogens and other such intoxicants is not, however, a vital element of trance technique in any part of Siberia. The mechanical stimuli mentioned thus form a necessary basis for the shaman's trance behaviour. Shamanic practice does, however, differ from other means of attaining ecstasy with its emphasis on the ritual role-taking technique aimed at the supranormal counter-roles, the 'spirit-helpers'. The shaman's generalized reality orientation is cut off by means of suitable ritual requisites, the extinguishing of the lights and the noise of intensified drumming. Its place is taken by special orientation, a world created by the shamanic tradition, fantasies of supranormal beings and their dwelling places. The shaman actualises one spirit role after another according to a set pattern. Very often (e.g. in the shaman's songs of the Khanty [Karjalainen 1918:558-591], the Nentsy [Lehtisalo 1947:493-496], and the Chukchi [Findeisen 1956:141-156]) the shaman, in calling on his spirits, almost as it were brings them concretely near him. The objects described in the songs are firstly the figure of the spirit and its dwelling in the other world, then the spirit's journey to the shaman stage by stage, reaching its climax with the arrival at the séance. The course of the account of the journey described in an invocatory song such as this coincides with the curve representing the rise in ecstatic frenzy on the part of the shaman, i.e. during the songs the shaman reaches an altered state of consciousness. The invocation of the spirit- helpers during the induction of the trance may be manifested more simply. The imitation of the sounds of the spirit-helpers, constituting the first act of the most common séance, is one of the most established elements of the séance. More precisely, this is the imitation of the sound of spirits imagined to be in animal form, and this acts almost without exception in the function of a call. Corresponding growling, whistling and other sounds are also encountered later in the séance, but then it is a question of

manifesting the spirit roles present. Simple shouts of invocation or request to the spirits for help fall in between the songs, dividing them up into shorter entities. Note that the nature and scope of the invocatory songs seems to correlate with the modes of manifesting the spirit roles. Instead of a long description of the spirit world there may simply be a statement of the reason for the séance and request for help (cf. Orochi séances, Lopatin 1946-1949:365-368). In such cases improvisation plays a relatively large part in contrast, for example, to the long poetic song episodes of the Nenets (Lehtisalo 1947).

The audience plays a relatively small part at the trance induction stage. It chiefly concentrates on supporting the shaman through invocations or urgings addressed to the spirits. Many observers mention a growing expectation, which is a feature characteristic of the opening stages of the séance. The part played by the audience is probably greater at this stage as an emotional factor. The shaman feels the weight of expectation as he concentrates on his performance.

Variations in the Presentation of Spirits

Meetings with the spirit-helpers, either in this world or the other, constitute the ecstatic climaxes of the séance. As the shaman manifests his supranormal helpers his consciousness has already clearly altered. This degree of alteration is not, however, the same in different séances, nor does it remain constant within the course of one séance. The depth of the shaman's trance varies in the different stages of the séance, and he may from time to time rest in order to seek ecstasy again. In addition to individual differences arising from ecstatic ability the depth of the trance also seems to be regulated by traditionally bound factors. Comparison of the descriptions of séances shows that the supranormal counter-roles are manifested by means of a few alternative techniques. These are: a) the shaman identifies completely with the spirit role, he is regarded as having changed quite concretely into a spirit (role-identification); b) manifesting both his own role as a shaman and that of the spirit, the shaman creates a dialogue situation in which the spirit is regarded as acting and speaking from outside the physical being of the shaman (dual role); c) the shaman creates an image of the role performances of his spirit-helpers purely verbally, in which case only the shaman is regarded as 'seeing' or 'hearing' the spirits during the séance (description of counter-role).

Complete role-identification, which is common in Central and Eastern Siberia (among e.g. the Yukagir (Jochelson 1926:196-199), Evenki (Anisimov 1963:100-105), Yakuts (Hudyakov 1969:311-355), Manchu (Shirokogoroff 1935:308-309, 313-314), Nanai (Lopatin 1960:169-172) and Orochi (Lopatin 1946-1949:365-368) signifies possession. One or more spirit-helpers is thought to enter the body of the shaman and to speak and act through him. Jochelson's description of the changing of a Yukagir shaman into a spirit is highly characteristic:

> "The shaman half-opens the door and inhales his spirits in deep and noisy breaths. Then he turns to the interior of the house, holds his hands like claws, rolls his eyes upwards, so that only the whites are seen, sticks out his tongue, curling it under the chin and, without uttering a word, walks to the centre of the house and sits down on the ground. Having sat down, he straightens his hands and pulls his tongue in with his eyes still turned upwards and a blown up belly he sits there and already one of the spirits speaks through him" (Jochelson 1926:201).

Features that recur are a) the arrival of the spirit at the door, b) the inhaling of the spirits and c) the expression of the spirit's nature in words, mimicry and movement: a Manchu shaman, transformed into a wolf, claws the ground like a wolf (Shirokogoroff 1935:337) and an Orochi shaman transformed into a bird leaps across the tent shouting, `I fly, I fly' (Lopatin 1946-1949). As regards the role relations of the séance, the shaman's complete identification with one of his supranormal counter-roles means that the position of the shaman as a *mediator* between the two worlds remains, as it were, unfilled. Role-identification is regularly followed by the someone present at the séance, usually the assistant, taking over as mediator. A dialogue then ensues between the mediator, which may sometimes be the entire audience present at the séance, and the spirit, in which the reasons for the crisis leading to the séance and the chances of eliminating them are discussed. The shaman's identification with a spirit role is often momentary, it comes at different stages in the séance and is susceptible to disturbances. In the course of one séance the shaman may identify with several spirits.

It is worth noting that the area in which role-identification occurs largely coincides with the areas in which the spirit of the ancestral shaman plays a major role as the initiator of the novice shaman. In these areas, the spirit of the ancestral shaman may also remain as the shaman' chief spirit. In this case the spirit of the ancestral shaman enters the shaman at the séance and speaks through him. This points to the possibility that identification with the spirit role, i.e. the possession-type séance, is linked precisely with the development of family-bound and ultimately clan shamanism. In parts of Central and East Siberia the typical explanation for illness is that a disease spirit has entered the patient's body. During a séance the Yukagir shaman identifies with the roles of both his chief spirit and the disease spirit alternately (Jochelson 1926:201-205). Both forms of possession are basically similar – the spirit is inhaled with noisy gasps, it speaks through the mouth of the shaman, who manifests it with his whole being. The spirit is deactualized by being blown out. Only the characteristic features of the spirits are manifested in different ways. Since shamanic séances are for the most part precisely healing events, it is scarcely a coincidence that basically parallel spirit and demon possessions appear in the same regions. Thus the explanation for illness `the demon has penetrated the patient' would in turn add to the popularity of the possession-type technique of shamanizing. On the other hand, the possession-type of séance is not the only form of séance found in these areas and the shaman's journey-type also appears. Among the Evenki, for example, there were further séances in which the shaman met the spirits in this world, i.e. in the tent, and also travelled to the upper and lower worlds in their company (Anisimov 1968:207 ff). As a result the shaman might well manifest the roles of the spirit-helpers in different ways during the course of one séance:

identifying with the spirit role or in some other way manifesting its presence, and describing its behaviour in words only.

The shaman might also manifest spirit roles without identifying with them completely, and create an illusion of communication between several spirit figures appearing simultaneously. In the background is the idea of the meeting of shaman and spirit in such a way that the spirit or spirits remain all the time outside the shaman's body. This dual role of the shaman does not require any active contribution from an assistant or from the audience to carry the séance through; the shaman creates the whole performance before them. As regards the manifestation of spirit roles, the ventriloquism produced, for example, by the Chukchi shaman is brilliantly skilful and the séance takes on the form of a great show in which the shaman brings in one spirit after another (Findeisen 1956:159-167). 'Dual role' is in this case an inadequate expression, for the shaman sometimes tries to create the illusion of the simultaneous presence of several spirits. As well as in Northeast Asia, the shaman's dual role is a typical means of manifesting supranormal counter-roles in the western parts of Siberia, although the technique of manifestation is more reminiscent of the possession-type than the ventriloquism-type: by his sounds and movements the shaman indicates that a spirit is present. The shaman's songs also contain imitations of the sounds of animals, i.e. zoomorphic spirits. Displays of this type are sometimes difficult to distinguish from those of the possession type. According to Munkácsi, for example, the possession tradition might be found among the Khanty, whereas Karjalainen, on the basis of his own subsequent experiences, puts this claim open to doubt (Karjalainen 1918:593). The typical dual role situation of the west is found in the shamanizing séance of the Minusinsk Tatars (Lankenau 1872:281-283). It is the specific duty of the assistant to sprinkle water for the spirits to drink so that they do not come too close to the shaman. Even so the shaman, by imitating the sounds, for example, of a zoomorphic spirit, indicates that it is present, and creates the direct illusion of a conversation between the shaman and the spirit.

Describing the supranormal counter-roles in songs is a common element of the invocation of the spirits. In many cases the course of the entire séance is expressed through song. The shaman meets the spirits in either this or the other world, describing his meeting and his conversations in the songs. It is sometimes difficult to draw a line with the former mode of behaviour, and the presentation of the spirit roles purely by description is also more common in the northern and western parts of Siberia than in the central and eastern regions. Particularly the rich song tradition of the Samoyeds, with its visionary themes, is suitable for carrying out séances of this type (Lehtisalo 1924:152-155). It is natural that at séances in which the shaman's soul is thought to depart for the supranormal world these experiences are described in the songsections. In this case the outward journey, for example, may be described in song, the arrival there is marked by loss of consciousness, and the return journey again in song. The séance basis typical of the northern regions, performed by means of visionary songs, is always the journey of the shaman's soul. The special nature of this type of séance is revealed when contrasted with the ways of manifesting the shaman's journey employed by e.g. the Evenki and the Nanais. If it was an important and difficult

undertaking they might become great shows the setting for which – the objects laid out, the shamanizing site, etc. – was prepared beforehand. The shaman manifested the stages of his journey and the counter-roles he met on the way both through frenzied movement and singing, and also through mimicry. The number of people attending big séances such as this, typical of clan shamanism, was sometimes so great that similar events would have been impossible among the small hunting communities of the north.

Role-taking and Control of the Degree of Altered Consciousness

The ways of manifesting supranormal counter-roles in the shamanic séance thus vary from total involvement by the shaman in living out the role to a mere outlining of the counter-role. We noticed that role-identification, the playing of a dual role or verbal description of a counter-role are, on the one hand, typical behaviour models bound to tradition, but that on the other hand the intensity with which the shaman lives a counter-role varies even in the course of a single séance. The latter point means that the depth of the trance varies according to the course of the séance. The variations in intensity are understandable when we remember that (1) the role relationship of the séance is in fact made up of a triad, for in addition to the shaman and the supranormal role figures he creates there must always be a third party at the séance: the audience, and that (2) the séance always has a goal, something the shaman bears in mind during his actions. As a result, the shaman always has two sorts of other-roles, radically differing in nature, in operation at the séance. For the séance to be duly conducted he must direct his role- taking at the representative or representatives of either group according to need, i.e. during the séance the target groups for the shaman's role-taking change. Then it must be noted that in directing his role-taking at one other-group, the illusory spirit roles, the shaman to a greater or lesser extent keeps an eye on the reactions of the second other-group, the representatives of the community present. Since the supranormal counter-roles act primarily as the objects of reincarnation and identification for the shaman, this other group might be called the *identification* group. Correspondingly the 'clients' taking part in the séance, neighbours or relations who guide the shaman's behaviour by their wishes and reactions, are called the *audience* group. The role adopted by the shaman with regard to the supranormal is therefore dictated by the extent to which he follows the reactions of the audience group of factors connected with the traditional execution of the séance. Alternative forms of role-taking may thus be examined from the standpoint of role-taking or its reflexiveness (see Turner 1956). The latter refers to the shaman's self-consciousness – his awareness of how he appears in the eyes of others – and is characteristic precisely of role-taking directed at the audience. Role-taking directed at the audience does not include identification, either; its starting point is selective consideration of the hopes of the audience and the correct execution of the rite. In the light of the above criteria the chief types of 'shaman-supranormal' relations would appear to be as follows:

'Shaman–supranormal' Relation

	A. Dual role	B. Role-identification	C. Verbal construction of role
Reflexiveness of role-taking:	Reflexive	Reflexive and non-reflexive	Non-reflexive
Role-taking standpoint:	The audience	The spirit role (and the audience)	The shaman (his previous vision experiences)
Depth of trance:	Light trance	Depth of trance varies-comes in waves	Trance deep, most often ends in loss of consciousness

The shaman's role-taking with regard to the supranormal, not merely a cognitive process at the séance, but finding an outlet through this process in active operation, the manifestation of roles, thus varies in intensity, influencing the degree of change in the shaman's consciousness. In this respect type A is in different position to types B and C. Keeping an eye on the reactions of the audience requires a stronger link with waking reality (A) than complete identification with the spirit role (B). In the latter case, the responsibility for directing the rite is in fact transferred to the assistant, whose job is also to help the shaman, where necessary, return from too deep a trance. Séances in which the construction of supranormal roles takes place at a verbal level (C), i.e. in the shaman's songs, permit in turn the greatest concentration on supranormal reality. To use Shor's concepts, the direction of the shaman's generalized reality orientation is replaced by complete special temporary orientation. Séances of this type very often end in complete loss of consciousness; all in all, the curve showing the shaman's ecstatic frenzy is simpler – often consisting of a rise, climax and fall – than in séances in which the shaman must be constantly aware of the audience's reactions, or where identification and audience groups change repeatedly as the objects of the shaman's role-taking. In this case, the curve showing the shaman's ecstasy is wave-like, with several climaxes. Although the part played by the audience as a suggestive factor can under no circumstances be denied – on the contrary, it does exert some sort of basic pressure on the shaman's quest for ecstasy and also provides active support for the shaman during the séance – it is nevertheless clear from the accounts of séances that when the roletaking is directed at the audience the degree of the shaman's altered consciousness falls just as it rises when role-taking is directed at the supranormal world.

The relationship between the shaman and the audience attending the séance, which influences ecstatic activity, is determined according to the position of the shaman and shamanism in the community. It is interesting to note that among the Chukchi Type A (dual role) manifestation of the supranormal based on ventriloquist skill was held in greater esteem than type C (verbal construction of role), typical of small group shamanism in northern Siberia and connected with the shaman's journey. The former

type of séance, in which the shaman was able to observe the audience's reactions throughout the performance, is in fact more suited to the independent professional shaman seeking the favour of the audience than is the latter form. The Chukchi's manner of bringing in the spirit roles, which demanded great skill, and the great show-like shaman events of the southern regions have been mistakenly regarded as indications of the degeneration of shamanism merely because there was seldom a loss-of-consciousness stage. In the case of rite performances involving a wealth of requisites and many episodes, it is rather a question of more developed forms of tradition, reflecting the importance and scope of the shaman in the community rather than a degeneration in the shaman's ecstatic ability.

TWO TYPES OF SHAMANIZING AND CATEGORIES OF SHAMANIC SONGS: A CHUKCHI CASE

The Point of Departure

The improvised nature of shamanic songs has often been emphasized (cf. e.g. Diószegi 1960:169). The issue can by no means be explained in plain undisputed terms, for the models of singing may well vary within one and the same culture. And when dealing with such a wide-spread phenomenon as shamanic practice, variation in the feeling for improvisation is almost to be expected. It is difficult from the material available to determine the degree of improvisation of the songs. In fact, it is easier and more to the point to frame the question slightly, and to ask, for example, to what extent and in what way the songs of an individual shaman are bound to the shamanistic and/or some other belief tradition of the given ethnic group. Similarly the significance of the songs can be examined from the point of view of the shaman's training for his profession, his duties or the mode of shamanizing in question. One analytically fruitful point of departure is the study of repeating structures. It is possible to isolate elements of shamanic songs that reoccur in different tradition areas.

These elements, such as 'description of the spirit-helper', 'call addressed to the spirit-helper', 'description of the shaman's journey', 'description of a point in the topography of the underworld', could be called *motifemes*. The manifestations of the motifeme, the *motifs*, are determined from the traditional background of the shamanism in question. Corresponding to one motifeme is a group of motifs varying in content. For example, 'description of the spirit-helper' takes on various forms depending on the nature of the spirit-helper system of the given ethnic group, the spirit-helper concerned, and so on. The structural units, the motifemes, are then like compartments that can be filled by alternative motifs, i.e. *allomotifs*. The concepts are in agreement with the structural analysis terminology outlined on the basis of the ideas put forward by Alan Dundes (1962, 1964, 1965), Kenneth L. Pike (1954-1960) and Vladimir Propp (1958). The simple nucleus idea (structural unit 'motifeme' – alternative content unit 'allomotif', cf. morpheme – allomorph of linguistics) is transferable, though the structural models developed by Dundes or Propp for the analysis of the narrative tradition are not in themselves relevant to shamanic songs.

Study of the recurring elements in shamanic songs, the sequence of motifemes, may reveal the rules observed by the individual shaman in constructing his songs. On the other hand, recognition and naming of the motifemes are an aid to the analysis of the basic features of the shamanic belief complex revealed in the songs and thus facilitate, e.g. comparison of the forms of tradition of different types of shamanism at motif level. I shall now examine the part played by songs in the light of two Chukchi cases as the bearing structure of the shamanic rite process a) by picking out the motifemes and motifeme sequences typical of the shamanic songs and b) by analysing the traditional background of the allomotifs. Both shamanizing events are included in Bogoras' extensive and detailed account. (Hans Findeisen published a German translation of the account in 1956, cf. Findeisen 1956:141-156.) The shamans, Ukwun and Nuwat, try in turn to quell a snowstorm disturbing the life of a small coastal Chukchi community. The account is unusually representative, thanks to Bogoras' exact recording of the words of the songs and the fact that the shamans stood for two competing shamanizing traditions known among the Chukchis. Shaman Nuwat relies on soul flight: in order to obtain contact with the supranormal he must journey to the other world. This type of séance was loosing ground to the displays of ventriloquism such as those used by shaman Ukwun. Instead of journeying to the other world Ukwun called the spirits to the tent and manifest their presence by means of tricks and ventriloquism.

The Motifemes Typical of Shamanic Songs

The themes of shamanic songs cover the meeting of the shaman and the supranormal, the various stages and matters connected with them. They do not merely reflect the progress of the séance process, for it is precisely through the songs that the shaman operates within the rite situation. Since the songs are thus direct manifestations of the basic ideas of the rite, it is not surprising that the same content elements, the themes supporting the 'plot' of the séance, reoccur in different tradition areas. Whether their specific content variation depends on the tradition in question is a different matter. These content elements, called motifemes, supporting the plot of the séance and also appearing in the songs of Ukwun and Nuwat, are as follows:

motifeme signum	*motifeme*
a	description of spirit-helper
b	call or plea for answer addressed spirit-helper
c	shaman's journey in form of spirit-helper
d	journey of the spirit-helper
e	description of shaman's journey
f	activities of the shaman in the underworld
g	description of supranormal place
h	description of supranormal being (other than spirit-helper)
i	plea addressed to supranormal being (other than spirit-helper)
j	purpose of shaman's journey
k	shaman's return
l	address to supranormal being (other than spirit-helper)

Shaman Ukwun's Songs, Their Motifemes and the Tradition Background of the Allomotifs

I – Kleines Fischchen Wăkan! – begann er in einem lauten und gedehnten Rezitativ zu singen. – He, he! Es wuchs heran, es wurde größer als ein Walfisch. He! Es liegt inmitten des offenen Meeres. Sein Hals wurde gleichsam zu einer Insel, sein Rücken dehnte sich wie das Festland aus. He, he, he! Wenn du beim Vorbeifliegen mit deiner Flügelspitze an das Land Ljuren stößt, gib Antwort!

Motifemes: h (d) b

Tradition background: The background to Ukwun's first song is the concept of a giant fish residing in the middle of the sea, a concept belonging to the Chukchis' religious view of the world. This giant fish is called Kaña'yolhIn. "The name is used to designate sculpin; but the giant Kaña'yolhIn has existed as a separate fish from `the first limit of creation'. It lies motionless in the middle of the sea. Its body has become an island, and moss grows on its back." (Bogoras 1904-1909:329.) Following his `He, he, he' cries, Ukwun described the journey of his spirit-helper and adds a plea for an answer addressed to this spirit.

II – Über der Quelle des laufenden Wassers, auf der Spitze des weißen Gebirgskammes, beim krachenden Gletscher lebt der Blitz, die Mutter des Bergechos. Sie fliegt am Himmel entlang und donnert mit ihren eisernen Flügeln. Unter ihren Füßen sprüht hellrotes Feuer hervor... Solltest du aus diesen engen Klüften gekommen sein, so gibt Antwort!

Motifemes: h (d) b

Tradition background: Among the traditional elements of the second song is the concept of a giant bird that "flies across the sky and thunders with its iron wings". Bogoras mentions: "Thunder is said to be produced by the passing of the thunderbird", (Ibid., 322.) and elsewbere: "A `giant thunder-bird' is sometimes regarded as the same as the supernatural Raven; but more frequently it is a kind of `giant eagle' of supernatural strength". (Ibid., 328.) This thundering, bird-like creature is, according to Ukwun, lightning, the Mother of the Mountain Echo. The mountain echo belongs also to the mythological figures of the Chukchi, to a group named by Bogoras as `monsters'. "The `mountain echo' (E'nmI-ta'añ) lives in the open, among the mountains. Its body is of stone, and its mouth and eyes are located on its breast. The `mountain echo' is also described as a young, pretty woman wandering about among the rocks." (Ibid., 329.) The snatch of incantation ends, like the former one, with a plea to a spirit-helper.

III – Hinter den Grenzen der durch die Sonne beschienenen Erde, hinter dem Gestade des traurigen Landes des Abends liegt das Gebiet der ewigen Finsternis. Das Gespenst des Mondes ersetzt dort die Sonne. Dieses Gebiet ist zugedeckt wie ein riesiges Zelt. Drinnen

The songs of shaman Ukwun fall into ten sections divided off by dashes in the account of the séance (cf. Findeisen 1956:141-144) here denoted by Roman numerals.

vollziehen die Geister ihre Zeremonien... Wenn du aus dem schwarzen Zelte der Geister dich losgerissen, alle Hindernisse gesprengt hast um in rasendem Laufe über die Mündung des großen Flusses zu setzen, so gib Antwort!

Motifemes: g (d) b

Tradition background:: According to the cosmological concepts of the Chukchi, there exist several worlds one on top of the other. These worlds are located symmetrically above and below the world inhabited by Man, and they are said to number five, seven or nine. (Ibid., 330.) In addition to these, there are also other worlds: "one in each direction of the compass, which represent receiving-places for sacrifices...; a separate world under water; and a small dark world, belonging to a female ke'lE-bird, situated somewhere above, and apart from all others." (Ibid., 331-332.) Ukwun's song is based on the traditional cosmological concepts: According to Chukchi mythology, the sky in our world touches the earth at all points of the horizon. (Ibid., 332.) The Chukchi distinguish 22 directions, which are bound to the variation in the light of the sun and the daily round. "The `directions' of the evening are classed together as `Darkness'..." (Ibid., 303.) The moon is sometimes called the sun of the ke'lE. Bogoras also mentions: "The suns of lower worlds are often quite similar to our moon." (Ibid., 305.) In the cosmogonic drawings the different worlds are depicted as broad mountains. (Ibid., 311-312.) The world mountain drawing could also be compared to a tent, since the roofs of the `worlds' are curved like the top of a tent. The end of the song is again addressed to the spirit who is thought to break away from this black tent of the spirits and hurry over the wide tundra and a large river, overcoming all difficulties.

IV – An dem vorgeschobenen Kap, wo die Erdteile sich treffen, wendet sich die Strömung des Meeres wieder zurück. Und hier, auf den Gewässern zwischen den beiden Kontinenten, kreuzen sich die Wege der umwohnenden Völker... Zwischen den zusammenschlagenden Felsen liegt der Berg der Vögel... Wenn es dir auf deinem Fluge durch die Kiefer der steinernen Falle, welche soviel fliegende Scharen totschlägt, gelungen sein sollte, die grauen Federn auseinander zu wehen, so gib Antwort!

Motifemes: g (d) b

Tradition background: By the place where two continents meet and where the flow of the sea turns backwards the Chukchi mean the Bering Strait. Their mythological view of the world includes the concept of moving rocks at the point where the sky and the earth meet: "Each border of the horizon is called `Attainable Border of the Sky' (Yê-pkêt-ta'gIn). On the four corners of it, the rocks of the sky come down to the rocks of the earth, like moving gates, shutting and opening alternately. According to the Chukchee belief, the birds, when flying to their own world every fall, have to pass between these rocks: therefore the gates are called `Attainable Border of the Birds' (Ga'lha- pkêt-ta'gIn). The rocks shut so quickly that birds lagging behind are caught, and crushed between them. Their incessant movement, similar to the movement of bellows, produces winds, which blow from all sides of the horizon. The ground around the rocks is covered a fathom deep with bloody mud of pounded bird-flesh; and the feathers fly about like snow." (Ibid., 332.) The spirit-helper is thus thought to fly in

the form of a bird over these dangerous mythological places, and the incantation again ends with a request to the spirit: "so gib Antwort".

> V – Sprich, rede, rede! Wer scharrt mit der riesigen Schaufel den Schnee am Rande der Eiswüste auseinander, um die Augen jedes lebenden Geschöpfes zu blenden?... Gib Antwort!

Motifemes: b (h) b

Tradition background: The brief mention "who is shovelling snow with a huge spade..." contains an allusion to the concept explaining the birth of the wind: "The cold wind are said to be produced by giants who live on the border of our earth, and spend their time shovelling snow with huge shovels made of the shoulder blades of whales. Sometimes the winds are said to have an old mistress, who causes snow-storms by shaking the snow from her dwelling". (Ibid., 322.) The song is ended by the order: "gib Antwort".

> VI – Sonne, erhebe deine Arme, – begann Ukwun von neuem, – zeige dem Monde deine Fausthandschuhe...! An deinem Arme krieche ich nach oben, erreiche den schwankenden Schoß der Wolken. Von den Wolken steige ich zum durschichtigen Himmel empor. Am Firmament entlang gehend, gelange ich bis zur Öffnung des Himmels... Durch die Spalte erreiche ich den Stern des hineingesteckten Baumes, den Polarstern... Bewohner der Dämmerung, helft mir! Bewohner der Morgenröte, helft mir! Bewohner des Ostens, helft mir! Bewohner des Morgens, helft mir!... Zur Morgenröte kommt die Abendröte auf Besuch: sie schwimmt auf dem sandigen Flusse der Milchstraße nach unten... Der Morgenstern wandert dahin in Gestalt eines Nomadenzuges... Bei den Elentierjägern, dem Doppelsternbild des Luchses, nehme ich eine dreifach geflochtene Fangschlinge, bei dem glänzendem Stern der Venus ergreife ich eiserne Fesseln... Scheitel des Himmels, gib deine Scheren her, um seine Schwungfedern zu beschneiden und auszuzupfen... Ich werfe auf ihn das dreifach geflochtene Lasso, umwinde ihn mit den eisernen Fesseln und binde ihm die eiserne Kette um den Leib.

Motifemes: i (e) i (repeat) (h) f

Tradition background: Ukwun now goes on to describe the shaman's journey, his own journey in the worlds above, among the heavenly bodies. Many of the heavenly bodies, likewise the directions, are counted among the benevolent `Beings', the `va'Irgit'. The noun va'Irgin signifies `existence', `being', `way of living', `acting force', `substance'. (Ibid., 303.) Ukwun begins by appealing to the sun for assistance. In Chukchi mythology the sun is described as a separate `being', a man who travels across the sky dressed in bright clothes and pulled by a dog or a reindeer. (Ibid., 305.) "The parhelia sometimes appearing in the arctic are referred to as the sun's gauntlets, while the corona is regarded as its headdress." (Findeisen 1956:156.) The Chukchi shaman may fly to heaven riding on an eagle or the thunder-bird; one way of reaching heaven is to climb the rainbow or a ray of sunshine. (Bogoras 1904-1909:331.) The last possibility is referred to by Ukwun "An deinem Arme krieche ich nach oben, erreiche...". The Chukchi considered that the clouds are a kind of aerial ground upon which one may repose while ascending to the sky. (Ibid., 331.) All the worlds were, among other things, regarded as being linked with one another through a hole under

the Polar Star (Bogoras 1904-1909:331). Ukwun appeals to the benevolent 'Beings' in various directions. Dawn and Midday are among the most important 'Directions', 'Beings' to whom sacrifices were made. The Milky Way was supposed to be a river, called Pebbly River, which was believed to flow toward the west and to contain islands (Ibid., 309). Ukwun speaks to the Morning Star travelling "in Gestalt eines Nomadezuges", the image has counterparts in the belief tradition of the region: "Shooting-stars are said to be stars that go coasting down hill on sleds. The Koryak suppose that they take alms to the needy in heaven. Those that shoot away from land toward the sea carry reindeermeat, while those that move in an opposite direction carry whalebubbler." (Ibid., 314.) Castor and Pollux are two elks running away from two hunters who are driving two reindeer-teems represented by the stars γ, χ and ξ, μ of the constellation Lynx (Ibid., 308-309). The moon was often described as a man with a lasso. (Ibid., 311.) Venus was called 'the bright star', and it was also said to have many clothes, as it shines in different colours (Ibid., 314). Of the iron bonds there is no mention in the mythological material recorded by Bogoras. Neither does he mention the mythological scissors. Whose wing feathers does the shaman wish to clip, whom does he wish to catch with his lasso and place in iron bonds? It is a bird-like being, perhaps the same spirit-helper whose flight he described in the preceding songs. On the other hand, it might be "der Geist des frischen Windes" appearing later and described as a bird, summoned by Ukwun to put an end to the snow-storm.

> VII – Von der Windseite her erschien bei meinem Zelt ein Rentierbulle mit einem siebenendigen Geweih, – fuhr Ukwun fort. – Er wittert den bitteren Duft meines Rauches, er atmet den Geruch meines Lagers ein... Laß mich auf dir Platz nehmen für eine lange Reise: Alle Länder werde ich durcheilen, die Tundren und die Gebirge werde ich durchforschen, um das von seiner Frau errichtete Zelt zu entdecken...

Motifemes: a (c) j

Tradition background: The bull reindeer appearing on the windward side of the tent is Ukwun's spirit-helper. The shaman appeals to him to change places so that he can undertake the long journey in the form of a reindeer. The purpose of the journey, "um das von seiner Frau errichtete Zelt zu entdecken..." is mysterious. The expression may be a cliché; a similar statement is found in the two following songs describing the animal- helpers. On the other hand, remembering that the aim of the whole shamanizing was to make the storm die down, and that Ukwun tries with the aid of his spirit-helpers to make contact with the spirit of the wind, he may be referred precisely to the dwelling of this spirit.

> VIII – Ein altes Walroß schlief allein auf einer Eisscholle ein, wobei es sich mit seinen Stoßzahnen am Rande der Scholle festhielt... Trage mich über das weite Meer! Ich werde in allen Buchten und Flußmündungen Umschau halten um den von seiner Frau verfertigen Polog zu finden.

Motifemes: a (c) j

Tradition background: The walrus, along with the deer, is one of the most common of the shaman's spirit-helpers in animal form among the Chukchi.

IX – Eine graue Eule mit breiten Flügeln sucht in den Eisspalten nach Nahrung! Auf ihren Flügeln fliege ich auf die Suche; ich werde neun Himmel und neun verschiedene Welten durchforschen, um das von seiner Frau angezündete Herdfeuer zu finden.

Motifemes: a (c) j

Tradition background: The owl was the most common of the shaman's spirits in bird form throughout Siberia.

X – Wo bist du? Wo bist du? – heulte Ukwun mit wütender Stimme. Erscheine, erscheine, erscheine!...

Motifemes: b

Tradition background: The final plea is addressed to the spirit Ukwun wishes to meet. In the following episode "der Geist des frischen Windes" appears who later, through the interpreter spirit, states that he is the spirit of Mercy.

Shaman Nuwat's Songs, Their Motifemes and the Tradition Background of the Allomotifs *

I – Mein Nachen, – begann er, – ist leicht und schnell! Im Flug überholt er die Vögel. Ein kleiner Vogel ist der KajañalgIn, auch ihn überholt er. Zwei meiner Seelen sagen: Halten wir uns an den beiden Seiten des Nachens und fliegen, auf einem ausgebreiteten Fell zu sitzen, inmitten der hölzernen Umfassung, und mit Rudern aus Fischbein zu rudern.. Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho!

Motifemes: a/c

Tradition background: Nuwat describes the shaman's flight. The vehicle is a boat, which he steers with a fish-bone rudder. The drum is also called a boat (Bogoras 1904-1909:438); the fish-bone rudder most usually refers to a drumstick made of fish-bone. The boat carries two birds that can be interpreted as the shaman's spirit-helpers. According to the Chukchi, man has several souls, Bogoras noted down 5-6. Ivar Paulson speaks in his analysis of the Chukchi's concepts of the soul of the bodily soul, the free soul and the limb soul (Gliederseelen). All in all the concept complex remains somewhat unclear. The soul capable of the shaman's movement is regarded by Paulson as chiefly the free soul. "The soul of the shaman that leaves him during trance and represents his whole being, the shaman in his whole, united, personal totality, may well be precisely the free soul. However, since this form of genuine shamanic soul flight with trance seems to have deteriorated among the Chukchis, it is also possible that the clearness of their conception of the free soul has become weakened in the process." (Paulson 1958:187-188, Hultkrantz 1953.) In Nuwat's case

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* The songs of shaman Nuwat fall into sixteen sections marked off by dashes in the account of the séance (cf. Findeisen 1956:149-153.) They are here denoted by Roman numerals.

there are two flying souls. As is evident from the following song, they travel in the guise of the spirit-helpers.

> II – Das Haupt des Fliegenden in der Finsternis ist mein Haupt... Seine Hände sind meine Hände... Seine Füße sind meine Füße... Seinen Körper eignete ich mir an; mein eigener Körper jedoch verwandelte sich in einen alten Baumstumpf und fiel auf das Kap mitten in das Treibholz... Mein Lied ist schön. Meine Seelen fliegen in verschiedenen Richtungen dahin. Selbst unsichtbar, überblicken sie alles Seiende und tragen das Wissen in meine Brust, so wie die Vögel die Nahrung in das Nest tragen.

Motifemes: c/j

Tradition background: The shaman likens himself to a creature flying in the dark and describes his own body as a dead trunk lying immobile among driftwood. Although in the song the travellers are described as being in human form and the shaman's spirit-helpers are still, according to the song, birds, it is obvious that the objects of identification are still the spirit-helpers, i.e. the shaman's two souls journey in the bodies of two spirit-helpers. Correspondingly, Ukwun tells of his owl-like spirit: "Auf ihren Flügeln bin ich auf die Suche" (Ukwun IX). The idea that the shaman cannot merely send his spirits to the place he desires but himself turns into a spirit is familiar from Chukchi mythology. "... in the tale of the Shaman with warts (Kuku'lpin), this shaman during a shamanistic contest, asks his adversary, `which ke'lE are yoy going to employ?' The other answers, `The small hawk.' – `And you?' – `The great diver.' Then they turn into these birds, and the contest begins." (Bogoras 1904-1909:437.) The purpose of the shaman's journey is traditional: the acquisition of knowledge.

> III – Schon seit langem sehne ich mich danach, auf meinem runden Segel nach oben zu fliegen, imer weiter hinauf!

Motifemes: c

Tradition background: The shaman speaks of his round sail, again a reference to a boat as a means of conveyance.

> IV – Ich bin wieder da, wieder da, wieder da! – sagte er gedehnt, – Ich bin auf dem Schlitten einer Sternschnuppe vom Himmel heruntergefahren. Ich bin auf dem Meere geschwommen wie ein schwimmender Pelz. Ich bin aus dem Inneren der Erde hervorgedrungen wie das Horn eines Teufelhirsches (Mammut), wenn er sich in den Steilwanden an Flußufer einen Gang gräbt... Da bin ich wieder...

Motifemes: k (repeated)

Tradition background: The shaman announces his return and says that he has travelled in the sky, the sea, and inside the earth. The function of the song and the following ones is different from that of the songs described above. The shaman no longer calls his spirit-helpers. Instead he informs the onlookers of the stages in his journey to the other world.

> V – Ich erhob mich über die Grenzen der Welt, – sprach Nuwat – Meine Füße wandelten auf der Rückseite das Himmels. Meine Augen sahen die Zelte der überirdischen Länder. Mich an meinem Kahn schmiegend schwebte ich über unbekannten Ländern. Selbst unsichtbar, schaute ich umher...

Motifemes: e

Tradition background: According to Chukchi mythology, the inhabitants of the upper world, called the 'Upper People' or the 'Dawn-People', pitch their tent on land made up of clouds and live the same sort of life as humans (Ibid., 331). The medium of Nuwat's flight is again a sail, in other words the drum.

VI – Ich sah, wie der abnehmende Mond mit dem zunehmenden zusammestieb, und einer von ihnen tot herunterfiel...

Motifemes: h

Tradition background: No mention of the collision between the lower and upper moon in Bogoras.

VII – Ich sah, wie der Osten und der Westen miteinander wetteiferten, wer über eine mit scharfen Knochensplittern gefüllte Spalte springen könne...

Motifemes: h

Tradition background: The points of the compass, or the deities living in them, are in Chukchi mythology counted among the most important benevolent spirits. "While there are numerous varieties of 'benevolent spirits', the most prominent are the 'benevolent spirits sacrified to' (taaro'nyo va'Irgit), those two whom people bring sacrifices. The live in all 'directions' of the compass, or are even themselves the 'directions' of the compass in their connection with a special stage of sunlight and of day-time which corresponds to each separate 'direction'" (Ibid., 303). Thus East and West could be included among these benevolent beings. Although there is no direct point of comparison for the concepts contained in the verse, it can with reasonable certainly by assumed as having its origin in some myth. According to one myth, Dawn and Moonlight had a common wife that a certain shaman tried through devious dealings to take as his own. A shamanic contest was held to see, among other things, who could leap across a stream of boiling water or a ravine full of sharp blades (Ibid., 303-305).

VIII – Ich sah, wie die Geister des Nordlichts Ball spielten... Ihre Beine kennen kein Ruhe... Der Schnee unter ihren Füssen erstrahlt in feurigem Glanze.

Motifemes: h

Tradition background: The 'spirits of the Northern Lights' are the spirits of those who have met with a sudden or violent death. Bogoras also says that the moving rays of the Northern Lights are the dead, running and playing ball on a living walrus (Ibid., 334-335).

IX – Ich sah die Töchter der Dämmerung, die ein buntes Gewand trugen. Ihr Kragen ist mit Sonnenstrahlen umsäumt. Die Öffnungen ihrer Ärmel sind mit feurigem Glanz erfüllt.

Motifemes: h

Tradition background: Cf. the shining robes of the 'Sun' (Ibid., 305).

X – Ich sah die Herrscherin der Welt, die reiche Frau, die auf einem Haufen von Bibern sitzt... Bei jedem Seufzer kommen zehn Biber aus ihren Nasenlöchern hervor... Sie tut sie in Beutel, verteilt sie ringsumher wie ein buntes Zelt um sich herum.

Motifemes: h

Tradition background: Parallel to the *Sedna* concept of the Eskimos, (Findeisen 1956, 158.) Bogoras also mentions Chukchi tales of a goddess ruling the fish game of the sea, but he is not sure whether the phenomenon is genetically related to the Sedna tradition (Bogoras 1904-1909:315-316).

XI – Ich sah die Schönheit der überirdischen Welt, aber Narginen sprach zu mir: Verweile nicht hier! Schau, daß du wieder hinabkommst!

Motifemes: h

Tradition background: *Narginen* = "The cosmos, or the universe in the concepts as the highest deity of the Chukchis." (Findeisen 1956:158.)

XII – Ich stieg bis zu den Tiefen des dritten Abgrunds hinab, wo die Schatten alles Seienden leben.

Motifemes e

Tradition background: The worlds beneath the earth are also situated one on top of the other, and life is much the same as on earth. The first world beneath the earth is inhabited by *ke'lE*, the next by the souls of the dead (Bogoras 1904-1909:330).

XIII – Ich sah den Schatten unserer Erde, das Gespenst des Meeres, das Spiegelbild der Uferfelsen... Die Seelen unserer Zelte waren dorthin vor mir hinuntergestiegen und lehnten sich an die Felswand zwischen umhergestreuten Steinen.

Motifemes: g/h

Tradition background: The description of the underworld continues. A cliff, for example, is seen as a mirror image. The description may also take in references to the animation of Nature (Ibid., 280-283).

XIV – Die Leute eines toten Stammes brachten hinter den Zelten Opfer dar, – fuhr Nuwat fort. – Das Feuer von ihrer Herdstelle stieg als dünne, rauchlose Saule empor. Ich trat hinzu und begann mit ihnen zu essen.

Motifemes: gh

Tradition background: Nuwat describes the life of the dead, cf. Bogoras' statement: "The houses of the deceased are said to be large round tents without any seams, and shining like bubbles of saliva. Their reindeer-herds are numerous, and consist of animals brought for sacrifice or slaughtered for meat, and of wild reindeer killed in the hunt." (Bogoras 1904-1909:336.)

XV – Da kamen zwei von Mitternacht hergejagt. Sie kamen auf schekkigen Rentieren herbeigefahren. Die Kufen ihrer Schlitten waren von der langen Fahrt zerfetzt. Die Hufe der Rentiere waren vom Galoppieren abgewetzt. Ich blickte auf sie, mein Verstand trübte sich, und mein Körper verlor seine Kraft und wurde wie Wasser.

XVI – Weshalb sind ihre Augen nach rückwarts gewendet? – fragte ich. – Weshalb ist der Bauch der Rentiere aufgeschlitzt, und weshalb schleifen sie ihre Eingeweide hinter sich her? – Als sie bei der Feuerstelle ankamen, sah ich ihre Gesichter. Der eine hatte einen Strick um den Hals. Seine Augen waren die Augen Katyks. Sein Hals war der Hals eines Erdrosselten. Wen suchten sie unter den Bewohnern der Unterwelt? Der Schnee begann zu schmelzen und floß wie Blut. Ein ganzer See bildete sich zwischen den Zelten. – Blut, Blut! – schrie Nuwat plötzlich,...

Motifemes: h/l/gh

Tradition background: Nuwat sees a reindeer Chukchi who killed himself because of his great age arriving in the camp of the deceased. The singing is interrupted by a vision seen by the shaman: blood on the tent poles.

Construction of the Songs on the Basis of Tradition

Examination of Ukwun's and Nuwat's songs in the light of the Chukchi belief tradition showed that they are completely bound to tradition. Motif by motif the songs repeat the themes of the belief tradition or myths. Allusion-like references to some myth appear to be very common, such as the mention at the beginning of Ukwun's songs of a huge fish in the middle of the sea, this being a mythic allusion. Allusions such as this, often only hint-like references, show that the shaman operates with ease amid his mythological material. It is clear from e.g. Nuwat's extensive descriptions of the cosmos that the information has been well digested; the shaman commands the phenomena of the supranormal reality just as well as those of this world – it is part of his organized view of the world.

The songs of the Chukchi shaman are partly a tradition handed down from one generation to another, and during his initiatory period the young novice must carefully assimilate them. In part they arise during the initiatory period. For example, Bogoras explained that the songs of shaman Tyljuwija represented three groups: 1) some were a crystallised tradition passed down from one shaman to another, 2) some were composed by Tyljuwija during his initiation period, and 3) some "were the outcome of improvisation and were created every time the spirits were called upon" (Findeisen 1956:160). The Chukchi called the initiatory period by a special term meaning `he gathers shamanic strength' (Bogoras 1904-1909:421). It was a difficult period, especially for men, and it lasted for months, even years. Some novices wandered restlessly over the tundra, some remained in the tent shamanizing and sleeping. Characteristic of the preparatory stage are the long periods of sleep during which the shamans saw visions and communicated with the spirits. Shaman Ainanwa't, for example, said that he slept during the smallpox epidemic of 1884, during which he lost his family, for two weeks, keeping company with the spirits. The spirits manifest themselves and offer their services in many different ways. Shaman Scratching-Woman had obtained her two spirits int he following way:

"The Scratching-Woman brought some of the entering `spirits' to my special notice. One was a fawn of wild reindeer, found by him in the wilderness beside the carcass of

> its mother, which had been killed by a wolf. The fawn, when he found it, was trying to suck the carcass. The strange sight had evidently struck Scratching-Woman, and he took the fawn for one of his assistant ke'let. The `spirit' manifested his presence by characteristic short snorts, peculiar to the fawn when calling for its mother. Another `spirit' entered with a dismal howl. This was the wolf who killed the reindeer-dam" (Ibid., 436.)

In order to make her spirits appear at the shamanizing place during later séances Scratching-Woman doubtlessly sang a calling song addressed specifically to them. Presenting themselves as the central elements of the songs composed during the initiatory period were precisely the ecstatic experiences of the initiation period, meetings with the spirits, etc. Thus every shaman had some songs of his own that were generally known. If a shaman borrowed the song of another the listeners noticed that immediately. The examination of the songs of Ukwun and Nuwat showed the shamans selected slightly different features from the common store of tradition. The songs become individual according to the features of tradition the singer includes in them and how he brings out this knowledge. Thus the individuality of the songs, their recognition as the `property' of some particular shaman, lies at allomotif level. As can be seen from the case of Tyljuwija quoted above, a shaman might well create new songs during a séance in order to give added effect to his invocation of the spirits. This `improvisation' of new songs – as Bogoras puts it – was not, however, the presentation of random associations of ideas. In creating new songs the shaman drew on songs already assimilated and inherited as analogy models. The repeating structures made up of motifeme sequences provided the framework for the `improvisation'. New songs could be constructed only by increasing the allomotifs corresponding to each motifeme. Since the motifs of the songs of the Chukchi shaman faithfully repeat the themes of the belief tradition, the choices available to each shaman were nevertheless restricted: the number and nature of the allomotifs were directly dependent on the knowledge of the shaman in question of the affairs of the supranormal.

Two types of Shamanizing and the Structure of Shamanic Songs

Songs were the medium through which the shaman gained contact with the other world. Thus the motifemes of the shaman's songs comprised sequences logical to the performance of the rite.

Examination of the motifeme sequences employed by Ukwun and Nuwat throws light on the position and significance of the songs as parts of the overall structure of the rite process.

The motifemes of shaman Ukwun fall into the following sequences:

I: h/d/b
II: h/d/b
III. g/d/b
IV: g/d/b
V: b/h/b

VI: i/e/i (repeat) /h/f
VII: a/c/j
VIII: a/c/j
IX: a/c/j
X: b

The motifemes of shaman Nuwat fall into the following sequences:

I: a/c
II: c/j
III: c

IV: k/k/k/k
V-XI: e/h/h/h/h/h/h
XII-XVI: e/gh/gh/h/l/gh

Reduced to motifeme level the songs give rise to two notable observations: (1) the same motifemes are repeated in Ukwun's VII-IX and Nuwat's I-III songs, whereas Nuwat's IV-XVI songs prove to be radically different, and (2) Ukwun's songs fall into clear structural units, Nuwat's songs remaining more indefinite in their motifeme combinations. The motifeme distributions reflect the functional differences of the songs. All of Ukwun's songs and I-III of Nuwat's songs belong to a category that could be called `a call addressed to the spirits'. The purpose of the songs is to place the shaman in contact with his spirit-helpers. Nuwat's songs IV-XVI, on the other hand, have a different function: through them the shaman informs those present at the séance of the events and results of his journey to the supranormal. The songs could be called `information of the shaman's journey'.

Of central importance in the `call addressed to the spirits' songs are the motifs associated with the spirit-helper beliefs. The structural consistency of Ukwun's songs is not accidental, for similar elements can be isolated from shaman's songs with similar functions among the Samoyeds and the Ostyaks, for example (Cf. e.g. Lehtisalo 1947:81, 82, 86, 89, 90 and Karjalainen 1918:588-591). He begins by describing the distant borders of the supranormal world and the mythological beings residing there, at the same time mentioning that each spirit- helper moves through these distant places, and adding an invocation to the spirit at the end of each episode. He then proceeds to a song technique in which he describes the forms of his different spirit-helpers in turn. Associated with each description of a spirit is a motifeme the basic idea of which is a vision of the shaman's journey in the underworld in the form of or with the aid of the spirit-helper, and a justification for the journey. In his songs the shaman thus literally brings the spirit-helpers nearer. He localizes them in the supranormal world, calls them to him, describes their form, and finally identifies with this form. This is the cognitive process of role-taking in which localizes the supranormal roles in the reality of the other world, constructs the fundamental features of the role in his mind and momentarily identifies with the role in order to create a reciprocal role relationship. Since the shamans role-taking serves precisely as a tool in the shaman's technique of ecstasy (Cf. Honko 1969), i.e. it transfers the shaman to an altered state of consciousness (Cf. Sarbin 1950 and Siikala 1978), the `call addressed to the spirits' songs belong to the

trance induction stage if we consider the séance as a whole. Nuwat's songs I-III, which can be classed as a call to the spirits, contain almost exclusively identification themes the content of which is proof of the young shaman's rare capacity for entering into events. Nuwat begins to shamanize by continuing Ukwun's performance. As Bogoras notes, the situation was exceptional; listening to the old shaman's singing had opened up the way to the other world for Nuwat. It must be noted that although in both his I-III and his IV-XVI songs Nuwat describes his journey to the underworld, in the former it is a question of journeying in the form of the spirit-helper, whereas in the latter the doer and the observer is the shaman himself. Nuwat begins the latter songs, providing information and addressed at the audience, with the cliché 'I saw...', describing to his listeners what he experienced in his recent journey to the underworld. The spirit-helpers have acted as the shaman's links with the spirit world and they are no longer of any significance as he informs his listeners of the stages in his successful journey. The repeat of the 'shaman's return' motifeme beginning the song episode (IV) already points to the functional nature of the songs. The structural looseness of the songs, the repetition of the same motifemes in long series is explained by the visionary nature of the song.

The fact that song categories of different natures hold the central position in the performances of Ukwun and Nuwat is no coincidence. At the time when material on Chukchi shamanism was being recorded, at the end of the 19th century and around the turn of the century, two parallel types of shamanizing were found in the area: alongside the typical northern shaman journeying to the other world there were shamans whose actions were based on skill at creating 'separate voices', i.e. who were ventriloquists. Bogoras points out that the latter performance type was extremely popular (Bogoras 1904-1909:435) and he regards its appearance as a sign of the degeneration of shamanism (Ibid., 441). The altered state of consciousness of the ventriloquist shaman is namely so light that he does not lose consciousness during the séance. The term 'degeneration' of shamanism does not, however, seem right when speaking of a performance technique difficult to command, nor does it explain the popularity of this type of séance. It is in fact a question of two alternative ways of communicating with representatives of the spirit world, found in other parts of Siberia, too: the shaman either brings his spirit-helper to this world, the tent, within reach of those attending the séance, or he journeys to the spirits, in the other world. Let us here ignore the fact that the shamanic séance is very often, e.g. in Central Siberia, a combination of these two forms of communications. From the point of view of Chukchi shamanism it is significant that these two basic ideas of the séance in principle demand different modes of manifesting supranormal counter-roles and thus – if we think of the séance as a state of interaction involving three parties, the shaman, his spirit-helpers, and the audience – also different shaman-audience relationships. Unlike the shaman journeying to the supranormal and entering into the supranormal 'reality' even to the extent of losing consciousness, the ventriloquist maintained contact with his audience throughout the séance. His repeated call songs brought in a crowd of spirits who, by means of tricks and ventriloquism, were made to 'talk' to the audience. The shaman's chances of

observing the audience's reactions and allowing for its wishes and demands were thus far greater than in the case of the shaman journeying to the other world, when the controlling role of the audience did not come out until the final stage in the séance, when the shaman had already informed the audience of his journey. Séances were the concrete and chief manifestations of shamanism; thus the building up of the shaman-audience relationship cannot be regarded as an insignificant phenomenon, since it was more a direct derivative of the status and position of shamanism in the community. Ventriloquism was a typical special feature of Paleoasian shamanism. The rise in popularity of ventriloquist séances at the expense of the archaic soul-flight type can easily be explained as a consequence of the rapid socio-economic changes that had placed the ancient communities in the area in a state of ferment (Cf. Antropova – Kuznetsova 1964:803-804, 819-821). The Chukchi shaman lacked an established and clear band of supporters such as those vital to the clan shamanism of e.g. the neighbouring Yukagirs (Cf. Jochelson 1926:163). The status of each individual Chukchi shaman was directly dependent on the favour of the audience, and the ventriloquist séance technique provided an easier route to favour than the classical journey type.

Finding the fundamental determinants of the structural variations in shamanic songs at the level of position and status of the shaman and shamanism in the community shows that `improvisation' is not the right term in speaking of the shamanic performance. The building up of the songs is in harmony with basic logic of the séance, and if this changes it is also reflected in the songs. The appearance of an illogicality such as the `shaman's journey' motifeme (e) in song VI of ventriloquist Ukwun is in itself an interesting phenomenon and points to the former dominance of journey-type séances in the Chukchi tradition.

FINNISH ROCK ART, ANIMAL CEREMONIALISM AND SHAMANIC WORLDVIEW

The Finnish rock paintings have been identified as manifestations of a painting tradition peculiar to the hunting cultures in different parts of the world. In the northern Eurasian region, rock drawings and paintings extend from Scandinavia to the Chukchi peninsula (Lommel 1967:42). Most of the information on Finland's rock paintings was collected in the 1960s and 1970s. By 1978 a total of 33 prehistoric paintings had been found; most of them are along the Kymijoki and Saimaa waterways, but the Helsinki-region, Päijänne and Kainuu are also represented (Taavitsainen 1978:180; Sarvas – Taavitsainen 1976:49-51). As J.P. Taavitsainen has pointed out, the range of finds does not necessarily reflect the area in which the painting tradition originally lived; discovering pictures today depends on the potential for preserving and tracing them (Taavitsainen 1978:180). Finland's rock paintings were produced over long periods of time. Christian Carpelan reckons that the oldest were painted around 3000 B.C. and the most recent perhaps 100 B.C. (Carpelan 1975a:140). The people of the combed-ware period, who lived in Finland some 3000-2000 B.C., lived by hunting and fishing. The term 'combed ware' refers to the manner of decorating clay pots typical of this culture, similar forms of which have been found over large parts of northern Europe extending from Fennoscandia right across to the Urals (Kivikoski 1961:30). In addition to forms of closely related comb ceramics, stone and wooden objects decorated with elk and bear heads also speak of early cultural links between Fennoscandian and Ural regions (Carpelan 1975b). The most recent paintings represent the culture of the earlier Metal Age. According to Taavitsainen and Kinnunen the Syrjäsalmi painting at Puumala may be as late as 500 A.D. (Taavitsainen – Kinnunen 1979:40). Placing the most recent paintings in the same era as the Bronze and Iron-Age settlements in Western Finland and along the coast of Southern Finland does not mean that their point of cultural attachment had changed. For in Eastern and Northern Finland primitive hunting culture remained unchanged for a long time even after the coastal regions had under the influence of the invasion of corded-ware culture (2200-1900 B.C.) and the lively Baltic and German contacts that followed it, begun to keep cattle and started a primitive form of farming (Huurre 1979: 76-77).

A consideration of information on rock paintings was published in the 1970s. Pekka Sarvas and J.P. Taavitsainen, among others, have analysed the motifs of Finland's rock painting tradition (Sarvas – Taavitsainen 1976; Taavitsainen 1978). Painted onto

vertical rock faces, almost always near water, are various figures, the most common of which are pictures of elks. The distribution of figure motifs is, according to Taavitsainen, as follows: elk 35 per cent, human or anthropomorphous beings 30 per cent, horned human figures 4 per cent, so-called boat pictures 9 per cent. The remaining 22 per cent consists of pictures of hands and paws, various animal figures, some of them unrecognisable, and various geometric figures, such as short, overlapping horizontal lines, zig-zag designs, rake-like figures and circulars with cross.

Interpretation of Figures and Cultural Entity

Although the figures in rock paintings appear to be realistic, as is the art of hunting cultures in general, interpreting them is by no means straight-forward or easy. In addition to fragmentation, copying problems and so on there is also the difficulty of comprehending the meanings of the message. We cannot say for sure which figures should be taken concretely and which are symbols for different idea categories. Individual symbols and sings often occur in the same form over vast areas but may have had different meanings in different cultures. If we set out to seek the meanings of objects or pictures thought to be religious by tracing the correspondence of individual figures and signs in other cultures the danger of error is great.

We can begin to interpret rock paintings by examining them as a relic of a form of communication once understood in their culture. It can be assumed that the meanings of individual pictures, their nature and number were relevant to the composition as a whole and the other figures in it. Semiotic interpretation of the compositions in Finland's rock paintings, which display a large number of different motifs, is made difficult by the fact that the pictures in many of the finds were painted over long periods of time, often one on the other. That the need repeatedly occurred to express this conceptual complex, manifest in figures – signs –, is in fact another feature of this conceptual complex. The limited number of motifs and the continuity of the central themes prove that the painting tradition remained more or less unchanged for a long time.

An attempt can be made to construct categories for the meanings included in Finland's rock paintings by means of the oppositions expressed by the motifs (see *Fig. 1*). Examination of the motifs shows that they are divided into two large main classes: *animate* vs. *inanimate*. In the animate category are *animal forms* vs. *human forms*; the animal forms are further divided into *elks*, the frequency of which is high, and other *animals*, the frequency of which is low. Other animal forms further subdivide into *realistic* vs. *stylised* depictions. The motifs representing human forms are in two groups: ordinary or normal human forms, the frequency of which is high, and human forms with characteristic features, the frequency of which is low. The latter can be further subdivided into those with sings connected with dress and those with signs indicating sex. Parts of humans or animals are also depicted, e.g. hands and paws. The inanimate figures comprise concrete (boats) and abstract symbols, and there are several types of the latter.

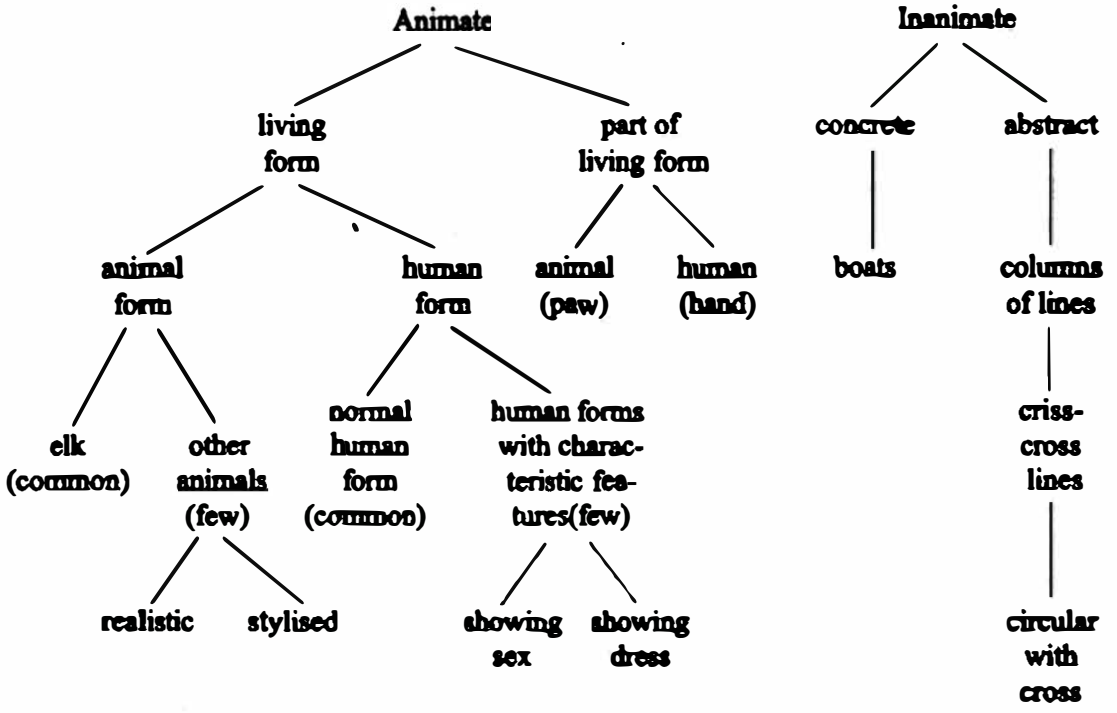

Figure 1: **Motifs of Finland's rock paintings**

How, then, can we explain the semantic relations of these motifs? The high frequency of elk figures and normal human figures illustrates the fundamental relationships between man and the part of nature he exploits, his quarry. The human figures equipped with special signs, stylised or unusual in contact between elk and man, namely snakes, fish, birds etc. and abstract figures must then be explained as describing the organization of the fundamental elk/man relationship. Stylization and features reoccurring in stereotype manner, such as human beings with horns, indicate the symbolism of figures.

Using semiotic analysis we can, in fact, discover only the basic structures of the cognitive field (e.g. structure expressing a given way of viewing the world) within which figures take meaning. The method is not alone sufficient to reveal the culturally-specificant, e.g. religious, meanings of symbolic figures. Our interpretation should, to my mind, start with the overall types of the culture in question and study the archaeological remains for examination as manifestation of this cultural entity (cf. Moberg 1977:99). For a form of culture may in itself already indicate a way of thinking and religious practices peculiar to it. In saying this I start with the view that religion is not an element separate from culture as a whole; it is an integral part of the other systems within that culture and thus observes the line of cultural development in question (cf. Bellah 1965; Honko 1976). Thus, the world views of primitive gathering and hunting cultures in northern areas have certain structural and outlook uniformities that are not found in other cultures, e.g. cultures based on farming (see Hultkrantz 1965 and 1975). By this I do not mean that the belief systems of hunting peoples have no cultural variation, but that the concept of the supranormal and its influence on man's

life takes its form on the basis of the interaction between man and nature that provides a means of subsistence. This view could be called religious ecology. Religious ecology can, according to Åke Hultkrantz, be defined as an approach in which the chief element is the integration of religion and the environment with all its consequences (Hultkrantz 1965:267-274; 1979:226-229). In emphasizing the importance of the ecological environment as a regulator of the conditions for the existence of a culture – production, technology and the behavioural models and social systems associated with them – and in proving the connections between belief systems and ecologically determined culture complexes, Hultkrantz in fact touches on the neo-evolutionary theory formation of cultural anthropology (cf. Steward 1955; Steward – Murphy 1977). Hultkrantz presents an ecological research model for studying cultures directly dependent on a natural environment, and in doing so wisely defines the limits of its application. For the suitability of religious-ecological examination for studying the forms or religion of high cultures is limited by certain special problems. Cultural variation is one very great problem; the handing down of individual features from earlier periods or borrowing from neighbouring cultures complicate the overall situation.

Examination of the spreading of phenomena has been one very important method in the study of comparative religion. True, the high frequency of some features in ecologically uniform types of cultures may be an indication that the factor in question is structurally of fundamental importance in the type of culture in question. On the other hand it must, however, be noted that even if an individual cultural feature is widely spread, it may not necessarily be very primitive or of any importance in the overall system of some culture. Analysing the nature of prehistoric cultures on the basis of reference material made up of historical materials is indeed a problem and even at its best can only hope to yield probabilities. It is a known fact that, for example, criticism of classical evolutionism denied such projection completely. The criticism, however, was aimed more at the speculative chronology structures of cultural forms than at explaining realistic relics in the light of the functional operation of cultures containing phenomena similar to these relics. Approaches similar to the latter have been in constant use in the study of material culture, and concluding that, for example, a net stuck in the mud at the bottom of an ancient lake is a fishing requisite or that a hollow tree trunk is a mode of transport in the light of knowledge of later similar objects and their use, has not been thought much of a problem. Although the connections between object remains manifesting an intellectual culture and the cultural meanings associated with them are more complicated and more difficult to determine than is the case with tools or technical devices, the method of deduction based on comparison itself may observe the conventional line of material culture research. In reconstructing prehistoric forms of religion we should, however, instead of pointing to similarities (which in the case of individual features may in fact be the registration of coincidences just as much as of genuine uniformities), start from the basis of structural and functional systems of the belief tradition of cultures that prove to be comparable in their technical adaptation to their environment. In reconstructing prehistoric belief systems by methods of comparison starting from the perspective of religious ecology,

we can reveal the position and functional connections of individual beliefs and cult practices within their cultural entity and in this way distinguish any potentially similar phenomena in the culture we are studying.

Animal-ceremonialism and Shamanistic Belief Tradition

The religions of the north Eurasian hunting cultures provide a natural basis for comparison in reconstructing the form of religion of Finland's Stone-Age population. The word 'religion' is in this connection somewhat misleading; it would be more accurate to speak of different belief complexes. For an ideological system passed on by word of mouth is nonhomogeneous and is normally made up of a number of parallel conceptual entities, often conflicting with one another and often overlapping. Primitive religiosity is by nature practical, permeable, and the prevailing concept of the supranormal provides an explanation for the problems of everyday life. Because of its permeability and concentricity, archaic religion represents the philosophy, arts and sciences of its culture just as much as its religious thinking. In hunting cultures this connection between religion and practice is most evident in man's relation to the source of his livelihood: nature. Regulating the utilisation of nature are the representatives of the supranormal: various spirits, guardian spirits of the various animals hunted, the owners of places and areas and also the deceased (cf. Paulson 1962:64-100).

The Finnish rock paintings can be interpreted precisely on the basis of the animal-ceremonialism typical of hunting cultures and the shamanistic belief tradition associated with it. It is worth noting that the Paleolithic hunting art of Central Europe has also been associated with shamanistic thinking, as have the rock paintings of Siberia (Lommel 1965; Campbell 1959:301; Kircher 1952). The methodological grounds for linking Paleolithic art to hunting themes with shamanic phenomena have, however, been very slight. The views presented by Andreas Lommel in the work *Die Welt der frühen Jäger – Medizinmänner, Schamanen, Künstler* have, for example, met with severe criticism (cf. *Current Anthropology* 1970, Vol. 11, No. 1). Arden R. King, among others, criticises Lommel for his use of unproven equivalents from widely separated cultures as the basis for his deductions. The cultures paralleled by Lommel are separated by a vast gap in space and not only in time. Although the cultures compared by Lommel are hunting cultures, they are nevertheless adapted to different ecological conditions and had different cultural contacts – and they do not necessarily represent the same cultural type. Thus equating, for example, the culture of the Australian aborigines with the Paleolithic culture in Europe 40,000 years ago may lead to false interpretations.

The interpretation of rock paintings found in Siberia and northern Europe can be based on very different premises. Archaeological finds have proved that the material remains, technology and objects typical for the cultures that produced rock paintings and drawings on hunting themes in the northern regions closely resemble the northern hunting cultures whose overall structure and ideology are well documented in recorded time. In Siberia the last rock paintings fall in the historical era; in Southern Finland

there is a gap of 500 years between the estimated creation of the last rock paintings and the earliest historical sources. Although the end of rock painting did mean the disappearance of a very special cultural element and was a symptom of greater cultural change, this change was not, according to archaeological finds, quick or violent. In Finland it seems that rock paintings ceased to be produced at about the time that commercial furtrapping and taxation measures reached the previously isolated population concentrating on elk hunting.

In the northern hunting cultures a festival lasting many days and culminating in a shamanic séance was held at the beginning and end of the hunting season and also at other times when hunger threatened. The soul of the shaman, who fell into a trance, was thought to be travelling in the company of the guardian spirits, the helping spirits, to see the keeper of the game animals. From the store of the keeper of elk or deer the shaman received or stole the animal souls necessary for the hunting season. The Yukagir shaman Nelbosh, who had himself often done the shamanising connected with the hunting ceremony, described the situation to the Russian ethnographer Waldemar Jochelson in the mid-1890s as follows:

> "The soul of the shaman, having approached the house of the Owner of the Earth, half-opens the door, but does not enter, fearing to insult the Owner of the Earth by its persistence. The shaman is herein supported by his guardian spirits. The shaman, that is, his soul, says through the open door: 'Earth-Owner! your children me to you sent for some food for the future'. If the Owner of the Earth loves the shaman, he gives the soul of a reindeer doe, if he does not love (*e'rietem*) he gives him the shadow of a bull. 'Shaman will take that (reindeer); having taken will bring (home).' That is, the shaman then comes to, rises to his feet, beats his drum and dances with joy. Then he sings to his spirit-protectors (*e'iji*), who helped him in his journey to the Owner of the Earth. 'Me well lead, from evil protect, (else) me will kill (evil spirits).' Then the shaman approaches the head hunter and hands him the soul of the reindeer. The hunter does not, of course, see the soul, for only shamans can see it. The shaman places it on the head of the hunter, and tying it with an invisible bandage, says: 'River will stand, river when will stand (there) on the right bank of it go, there you will find (that is, the reindeer).' Next day, in the morning, the head hunter will go to the river and there, on the right shore, a reindeer will come to meet him. He will shoot and kill it. If the Owner of the Earth gave shadow of a doe the hunter will give a doe, for this will be the same reindeer whose soul was brought by the shaman. Then throughout the entire hunting season the hunters will have luck in following the reindeer. If, on the other hand, the Owner of the Earth gave a bull, the hunter will only kill that bull, and there will be no more game. This happens when the Owner of the Earth does not like the shaman .." (Jochelson 1926:210-211)

Nelbosh also pointed out that if a shaman, assisted by his spirits, takes a reindeer's soul from the Owner of the Earth by stealing it – as bad shamans are forced to do – the result will be misfortune, such as infertility among his tribesmen.

The mention at the end of Nelbosh's account of going to the bank of the river refers to normal cult practices; the shamanizing itself took place in the camp area, in a tent or some other place inside. The programme for the day after the shamanizing often included a visit to a sacred place where game might be encountered, e.g. a place on the annual migration route. Trying to catch animals from a boat at a point where the animals crossed a river or a narrow lake was, in the months when there was no snow,

a mode of hunting used extensively in the north. For example, the Caribou Eskimos called the places where deer crossed a river sacred crossing points, in which areas the behaviour of hunters was subjected to the strictest taboos (Rasmussen 1930:40). The fact that the Finnish rock paintings are found along waterways may be explained either directly on indirectly in such a context.

Hunting elks on skis on the spring snows, such as is referred to, for example, in the folk poem *Hiidenhirven hiihdäntä* in Kalevala metre based on a version of the Orion myth widely known in northern Eurasia (see Hautala 1947), is the earliest method of hunting known in Finland and may even have been known in prehistoric times, as J.P. Taavitsainen assumes (see Taavitsainen 1978:187). However, the oldest skis found date from 1900-1600 B.C. (see Valonen 1980:31), so they came a thousand years after the first rock paintings. Hunting on skis or from boats, such as the boat pictures in the rock paintings, possibly indicated in the original tradition context, are furthermore not mutually exclusive; they are alternative forms of hunting depending on weather conditions.

The rock paintings thus possibly showed the sacred places where it was possible to approach the keeper of a species of animal and plea for sacrificial places with *seite* idols of the Lapps (see Paulaharju 1932; Mebius 1968:77-79). The signs of hands appearing in rock paintings, images providing magic protection, indicated the criticalness of a place. Hands are known in high religions as symbols giving protection. Their early manifestations have, however, become associated with shamanistic cult practices in particular (Ivanov 1977-1978; cf. Hummel 1954). Some of the peoples of Siberia, such as the Evenks and the Nganasans, may have decorated the shaman's dress with pictures of hands or metal trinkets in the shape of a hand. The hand symbols sewn onto the shoulder were called `shoulder guardians', those sewn onto the arms, `masters of the bones'. These names, such as the `spirits of the hands' (*Ntsuj tes*) of the Hmong shaman, reflect a very special feature of the shamanic belief system: the concept according to which the different parts of the human body, particularly the hands and feet, have their own guardian spirits or `masters' (Ivanov 1977-1978:104-105). The hand symbols of the ritual shamanic outfit are thus symbols manifesting the existence and help of the `spirit of the hands' or guardian spirit. The symbolic function of the hands in the Finnish rock paintings can be explained naturally on the basis of the shamanic thought in question.

According to the way of thinking of primitive hunting cultures, the continuing supply of a species of animal could be safeguarded by returning a hunting animal to the keeper of that species. Returning specific parts of that animal's body meant returning the soul of the animal present in these parts to its original home, thus making rebirth of the animal possible (Paproth 1976). A similar practice was preserved until very late times in the eastern and northern parts of Finland with the ceremonies following the killing of a bear (Haavio 1967:15-41; Edsman 1975). The returning of the bones or other parts of an animal to promote the rebirth of that animal differs in its underlying principle from sacrifical cults, even though the outward forms of the hunting rite and the sacrificial rite do greatly resemble one another (see Mebius

1975:230). Uno Harva, among others, explains that the procedures of the hunting rites have been preserved in the sacrificial cults of cattle breeders – which is what the northern reindeer nomads were (Harva 1938:447 ff). It is known that in North Siberia the primitive hunting rites were replaced by later sacrificial rites (Hultkranzt 1975:374). The animal ceremony practices were actualized regularly in connection with the catching of large and unusual animals, such as a bear. In the case of herd animals, such as deer, only one of the animals would be given ritual treatment, such as the first animal or the one that marked the start of the hunting season (Ibid., 373).

Thorough investigations have been made into the guardian spirit concepts connected with animal ceremonials. At the base of the belief complex are probably observations on the leader of a herd of animals, or of animals differing on account of their size or colour, which have been interpreted on the basis of experiences provided by man's economic and social systems and ideas on the collective soul of a species of animal (Hultkrantz 1975:373). The most mighty guardian spirit, or the guardian spirit of the most important game animals, may have developed into figures protecting all species of animals (Ibid.). Since the appearance of the guardian spirit was conceived of as both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic, it is possible that the pictures of elks in some of the Finnish rock paintings represent the keeper of the elk. The number and repetition of elk pictures, however, is more naturally explained by the elks' position as game. The depicting of an animal or human has, according to widely-held concepts typical of primitive cultures in particular, meant the depicting of the soul of that animal or person. In this sense the elk pictures in the rock paintings can be conceived of as capturing the fundamental essence of the animal in a specific way. They would in this case then be `success pictures' produced before the hunting act (a sort of game reservation), or `return pictures' in accordance with animal-ceremony thinking (to assure successful hunting in future).

F.K. Karjalainen, among others, says that the Ob Ugrians made images of game animals, such as birds and fish, out of wood and placed them in sacred places to assure success in hunting and fishing (Karjalainen 1918:385). Also of interest is Karjalainen's account of the pictures made after hunting, which can in the light of animal-ceremony be interpreted as the returning of the form of the animal, e.g. its soul, to the keeper of the forest or that species. Karjalainen says that in addition to the unconnected animal pictures mentioned above there were also ones drawn onto living timber, such as are found in certain areas. Thus the Konda Ostyak, on making a considerable catch, a bear, an elk or another animal, draws the picture of the animal in question on a pine tree in the village or along the path. These pictures do not, however, have any belief importance; they are made so that people can see that an animal such as this has been killed. The truth of this explanation is supported by a corresponding Vasyugan picture. Reindeer or elk antlers were carved on a tree at the crossing of hunting paths to show the nature of an animal killed, and in addition there were marks to show the number of animals killed. When a bear was killed there was as many paws carved as there were animals killed, and the number of hunters participating in the hunt was shown by marks (Karjalainen 1918:385-386).

Possible Interpretations of the Finnish Rock Pictures

The greatest problem in interpreting the rock pictures found in the Finnish areas has been not just the normal human figure, i.e. the ordinary person in the hunting culture, and the elk, the object of hunting, but the other different pictures representing animate beings or abstract symbols. The meanings of the pictures manifesting the relationships between man and elk are revealed through the animal ceremonies and also the closely associated shamanic tradition. Since, in accordance with the ideology of primitive hunting cultures, the relationship between man and his game was regulated by representatives of the supranormal, the picture motifs apart from just the elk or the ordinary person can be regarded as depicting either keepers or spirit beings or a person capable of communicating with them, a shaman.

Human figures whose dress bears certain symbols can be interpreted as shamans. For the shaman was a mediator between man and the spirit world, whose special status was evident from outward signs. In the Siberian region, the most common types of shaman's dress were imitations of either a deer or bird, most often an owl or an eagle (see Harva 1938:499-526; Lönnqvist 1976). The human figures bearing horns or what looks like owl masks in the Finnish rock paintings can in fact be interpreted as people shamanizing (cf. Sarvas – Taavitsainen 1976:43). Since women did not conventionally take part in the hunting of elk or deer, the human figures with feminine signs can be regarded as beings from the supranormal sphere. The two female figures in the *Astuvansalmi* painting, one of which has a bow in her hand, probably represent either the keeper of the elk or the keeper of the forest. The concept of the mistress of the forest, usually called *Mielu* or *Mielikki*, can be found in late Finnish folk traditions (Sarvas 1969:25; Haavio 1967:72-74). It is of note that in most northern hunting cultures there were special taboos concerning the relationship between women and game; the very presence of a woman in hunter's quarters might defile the hunting

Figure 2. Astuvansalmi rock pictures (ex: Sarvas 1969:15)

tackle, making it unfit for use (Harva 1938:412-418). The unusual relation between women and game animals is also evident in the custom by which a man shaman wears a woman's clothes as his ritual dress. Harva says that, for example, when a Yakut shaman approaches the keeper of the forest, he puts on a woman's garments when shamanizing is a typical feature also in Paleo-Asian shamanism.

When in a trance the shaman was thought to travel to the spirit world in the form of the soul of an animal or assisted by it. The Finnish rock paintings have interesting pairs of pictures showing a human and beside him an animal not connected with elk hunting, e.g. a fish and a man in the Juusjarvi painting (Luho 1962:67), and a man and a snake stylized into zig-zag shape in the Märkjärvi (Ojonen 1973:39) and Käkövesi (Sarvas – Taavitsainen 1975) paintings. There are also individual bird figures (Sarvas – Taavitsainen 1976:45) and lizards (cf. Taavitsainen 1979, figures, group e) in the paintings, and the Hossankallio picture has a bear (cf. Taavitsainen 1979, figures, group c). These pictures without doubt represent the shaman's zoomophic helping spirits, for the species in question are the most common manifestations of the shaman's spirit helpers in northern areas (see Siikala 1978). It is also interesting to note that among the mythical animal helpers of the Finnish *tietäjä* or witch, are not only snakes and lizards but also a huge eagle, a bear and a special kind of fish *(made)* (see e.g. SKVR 14:486; SKVR 14:495; SKVR 14:497; SKVR VII 3:44). The connection between the stylized animal pictures, such as the zig-zag snake and the lizard viewed from above, and the Lappish drum drawings and the spirit symbols of the shaman dress attributes is likewise obvious.

Abstract or geometric figures possibly show what sort of equipment was used and how contact was obtained with the beings described, or what sort of information was put across in this contact. The fence-like and crisscross lines can be interpreted as enclosures for elk souls in the spirit world, as becomes evident from the drawings of the Evenk shaman and their explanations (Anisimov 1958, *Fig. 3*). Net figures may mean either traps with which the shaman can in the other world catch the elk souls he needs (cf. Lommel 1967:28, Fig. 5) or dangerous traps on the shaman's road to the supranormal. For example, Väinämöinen, the hero of Finnish epical songs, returning from the Underworld, has to swim through nets in the form of a snake (Kuusi 1963:40); there are similar concepts among the Evenkis (cf. Anisimov 1963:105 and 113).

The drum or staff was used as the shamanizing device itself. The elkheaded staffs, also found as objects, e.g. in the grave of Olen Island (Erä-Esko 1958:17), can be interpreted as shamanizing devices. 'Shamanizing with a staff' was particularly a feature of young shamans in western and southern Siberia. A staff in the shape of an animal was used to travel or 'ride' on, and it might play a particular role in for example the initiation rites (Harva 1938:490, Fig. 65).

The most problematic group of motifs is that consisting of pictures probably referring to some concrete object, the so-called boat motifs: curving horizontal lines with marks going upwards as if they were the crew. The idea of the boat motifs was originally undoubtedly connected with catching animals from boats. The vertical lines would then depict the hunters taking part. The boat motifs of later times, which the

Finnish finds (in view of the history of rock art as a whole) represent, may, however, be symbolic depictions of representatives of the supranormal just as much as depictions of humans. In the northern areas the shaman's dress had namely metal boat trinkets with sitting forms explained as being spirit beings (Frolov 1978-1979:64, Fig. 57).

A boat might, furthermore, also represent the vehicle used for the journey to the supranormal world. According to J. Fellman the Lappish shaman drum could be called

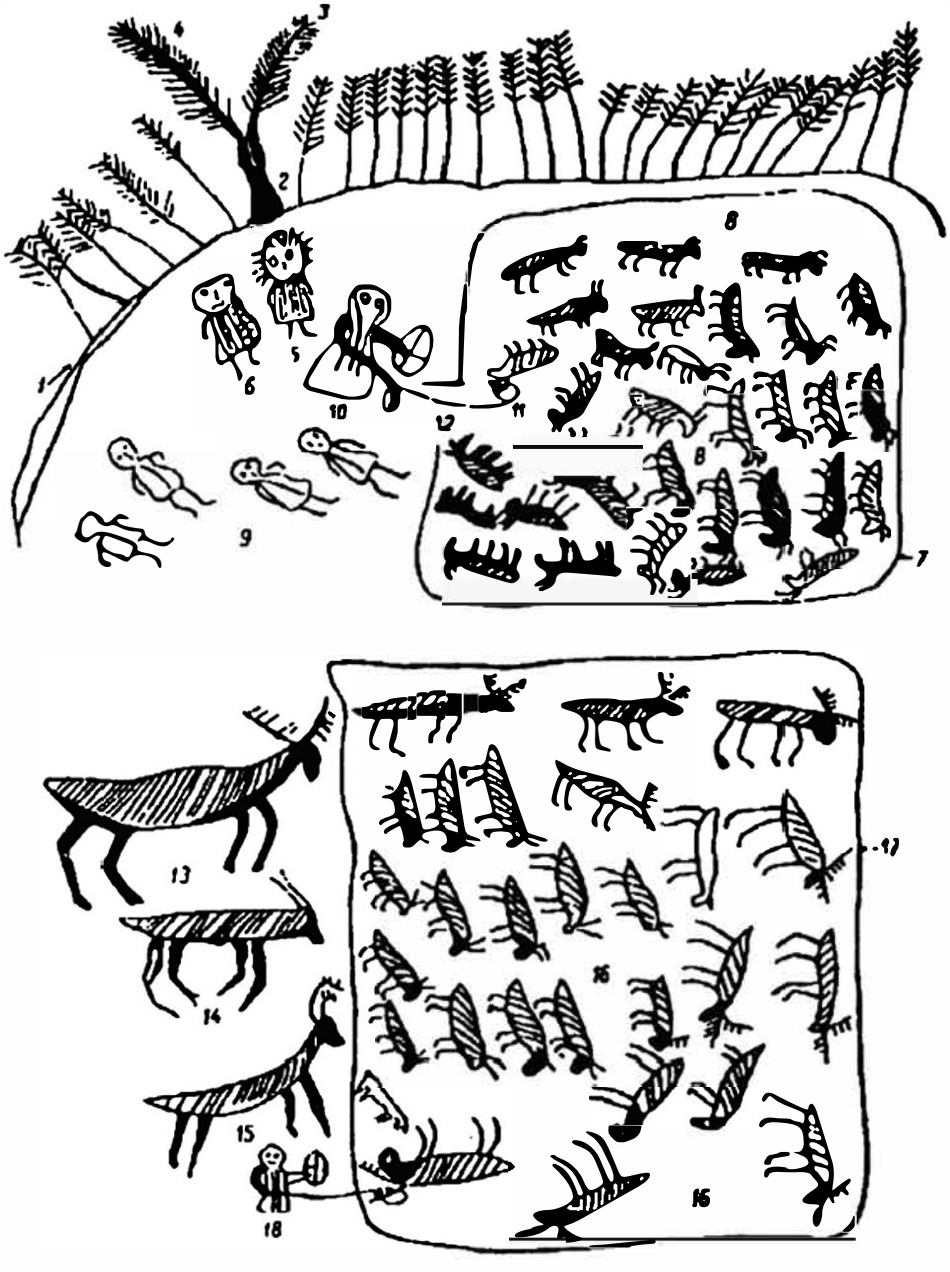

Figure 3. **Shaman's hunting the souls of deer in the supranormal world. Drawing of an Evenki shaman** (ex: Anisimov 1958, fig. 2)

a boat (Itkonen 1946:121); the idea of boat as a means of transport to the supranormal world is also behind the small boat formed Lappish offering plates (Mebius 1968:70). The offering tree near a *seite* stone could also be modelled after the keel of a boat; the Finnish name for such a tree was *hiidenvene*, the boat of the Forest spirit (Itkonen 1946:15). So, if we regard the elk figures as 'return pictures' in accordance with animal-ceremony thinking, the boat signs could symbolize the vehicles for that returning.

The motifs of the Finnish rock paintings can thus be interpreted on the basis of animal-ceremonial practices and the associated shamanic view of the world. The belief basis of the rock painting tradition began to change as Finland entered the Roman Iron Age and the European fur-trading sphere. An external factor began to intrude on the man/nature axis; self-sufficient hunting centering round the elk had to give way to the demands of taxation, trade etc. We do not know exactly what happened in the South-Eastern lake district of Finland around 100 B.C. to 500 A.D. The self-sufficient hunting community did, however, become dependent on external trends and the hunting began to concentrate on fur-trapping; there are numerous examples of similar developments from later times in both Siberia and North America. The disappearance of elk ceremonialism did not, however, necessarily mean the vanishing of the shamanic belief system, for full-strength shamanism has been encountered among peoples who had transferred to fur-trapping and reindeer nomadism. Replacing hunting for the community's own use by these types of economy did not yet shake the social organization based on kinship. On the other hand, the advance of southern pastoralism and farming did bring with it the conditions for the disappearance of clan systems and the shamanic complex in Asian regions. The life-span of Finnish shamanism is for this reason measured not by the most recent rock paintings, but rather by the population expansion indicated by the spread of Iron-Age burial finds. The material and intellectual cultural capital of these people grew on the basis of Baltic, Germanic and Slavic agrarian influences that thoroughly moulds the ancient tradition.

SINGING OF INCANTATIONS IN NORDIC TRADITION

In 1678 Tuomo Jaakonpoika, a crofter, was questioned at the Liminka Assizes on the subject of witchcraft and the worship of idols, for out in the forest he had constructed and erected a wooden image. At the hearing, Tuomo spoke as follows:

He was so seriously ill that he found relief by bathing seven or eight times a day in steam so hot that the women bathing him were forced to wear mittens. He then requested a certain Simo Pulloinen from Siikajoki to come and bath him – a man often resorted to in cases of serious illness. Before Pulloinen embarked on his task, Tuomo's wife said: `Cross yourself with iron first in order to seek the Lord's protection'. (These words are in Finnish, though the rest of the court records are in Swedish.) The Pulloinen took his sheath, containing two knives, and crossed this thighs and his body three times round in order to prevent himself from catching the disease. Then he cast a lot, placing his cap on the floor and flint therein; thereafter he cast a silver coin on the flint three times. The coin fell thrice with the same side showing, thus indicating the source of the disease. At the same time, sometimes mumbling, sometimes in a loud voice, he recited prayers and incantations, including the Lord's Prayer and the Creed and the following chant:

"Neighty Maria emoinen,	Virgin Mary, Holy Mary,
puhdas muori puhtukainen	purest of maidens
tule mulle turvaksi	watch over me
täsä työsäni,	in this my task,
anna mulle apua	give me help
viskaa metinen löyly	and honey steam
niin kuin löyly saunan löyly."	as the steam in the sauna.

During the bath Pulloinen went outside for a moment, and said on returning that the disease had come from the forest. Then, in the sauna, Tuomo and Pulloinen made a wooden image about 15 centimetres high, clothed it and then gave it to Tuomo's sister-in-law, ordering her to take it into the forest and tie it with red woollen thread to an alder tree. This she did one Thursday, and then departed without looking back.

It further appeared the Pulloinen had, while curing Tuomo, sung (laulanut):

"nosta pilvi pohjaselta	raise a cloud from the north
tuo sulka sulalta maalta,	bring a feather
Marian makia maito,	from ice-free earth

kipiöitä voitelemaan,	Mary's sweet milk,
pahoja parantamaan "	to soothe the pain,
(Juvelius 1930: 58 ff.)	to cure the evil

This report of the court proceedings published by Einar M. Juvelius in the Chronicles of the Finnish People is one of the earliest accounts of the behaviour of a Finnish *tietäjä* or sage. Thanks to the liberalmindedness and close observations of Tuomo Jaakonpoika, detailed information on the events of a healing rite have been preserved for subsequent generations. Of special interest are his observations on the delivery of the incantations. We see that the Finnish *tietäjä* at the end of the 17th century had recourse to several incantations and prayers during a single healing event, and that he delivered them in different ways, sometimes mumbling under his breath, sometimes chanting or singing in a loud voice.

The Spoken Incantation

The above account is significant in the sense that spoken recitation later became established as the mode of delivering the Finnish incantation. The ordinary incantations connected with everyday life in agrarian society were recited with little ceremony, in a mumble, a whisper, as if "rattling it off inside the mouth" (Wartiainen 1926:78). Christian Lencqvist drew a parallel between the mumbling of incantations and Christian influence in a description of Finnish folk belief published in 1782:

> "They are known in Finnish by the name of *lugut*. They were uttered not by singing and not in a loud voice, but in a subdued mutter, with great piety and with heads bared, especially incantations, which bore the influence of Christianity and which mention Christ or the Virgin Mary or other saints" (Porthan 1982:100).

Bengt af Klintberg claims that Swedish incantations developed under the influence of the formulae which spread from the Catholic monasteries in translations from Latin into the vernacular in the 10th and 11th centuries, and the chants for the banishing of demons and the blessings later officially favoured by the Church. The clergy began, for example, to recite them in the vernacular in order to drive out the incantations inherited from the pre-Christian era. Following the Reformation, the exorcisms and blessings favoured by the clergy were prohibited. By that time, however, they had already exerted a profound influence on both the popular contents of incantations and their mode of delivery (Klintberg 1980:13 f.). In more recent centuries Sweden, too, witnessed a tendency towards low-voiced muttering in sharp contrast to the pompous grandiloquence of the Catholic era (Klintberg 1980:11).

Following the example of Lencqvist, Finnish researchers of folk belief have described the incantation as a genre characterised by spoken delivery and a verbatim adherence to a traditional scheme (Hautala 1960:21). The European incantations noted down in the past few centuries are indeed formulae with a seemingly mechanical effect. The performer aims not at personal contact with the other world or an opponent, but believes rather that he will achieve his goal through his command of secret knowledge

and magic techniques. Anyone is capable of reciting an incantation, and the mode of delivery is of no vital significance. This description, however, only partially correspond to the essence of the Finnish incantation tradition. F.A. Hästesko states that the incantations of Eastern Finland differ from those of the western tradition in their breadth and wordiness. They have also been characterised by a wealth of variation (Hästesko 1910:iv). These characteristics are reinforced by the *tietäjä* institution which persisted late in the area. From what we know of the *tietäjä's* behaviour, the incantation uttered in a normal speaking voice is a late phenomenon. It also appears that the Finnish and Karelian *tietäjä* institution in particular retained elements of the pre-Christian, Scandinavian belief tradition longer than any other.

The *tietäjä* Ecstatic

The *tietäjä* tradition that still existed in Eastern and Northern Finland and Karelia even this century was once known in all part of the country. Proof of this, for example, is the following account from South-West Finland published by Lencqvist in 1782:

> "If some complaint is to be induced or banished, the task is embarked on with horrifying and almost preposterous gestures, by means of the voice and movements of the body. A certain nobleman from the parish of Taivassalo suffering from a complaint of the foot was audaciously approached some years ago by a quack doctor who promised to heal him if he had faith in his hands. The sick man consented. the quack heated up the sauna and got together a number of sauna switches made from the branches of many trees. As they entered the sauna, the quack first drove away with hideous gestures and sounds all the demons and evil spirits, brushing the ceiling, the walls and the floor with the switches. Then he heated the switches a little and, in the Finnish fashion, set about flaying the sick man's body, muttering his own incantations. This done, he cut the switches into very small pieces with a knife, gripped by tremendous wrath, dug a hole in the sauna floor and hid them from view. The nobleman often spoke of this later to his friends, with a laugh. For some days after the sauna he did in fact feel better, but the complaint did not disappear" (Porthan 1982:102).

The hideous gestures and `wrath' that astonished the nobleman were no random phenomenon. A *tietäjä* has to be `inspired', `possessed by spirits' or `in ecstasy' in order to wage a successful battle against a disease. Maura Marttini of Vuokkiniemi said that "when curing you have to leap in ecstasy, the greater the ecstasy, the better and more effective the spell" (SKS Marttini 1911). In a lexicon published in 1786 Christfrid Ganander explains the expression "to leap in ecstasy" as meaning being in the grips of a special spirit, a state akin to ecstasy.

In his work *Mythologia Fennica,* Ganander describes the state of the witch (*noita*) in a trance in colourful words: "No one dares to disturb these omniscient gentlemen, for they rage, clench their teeth, their hair stands on end, they leap about in excitement, mutter some words, stamp their feet and behave as if consumed by rage, and they are accordingly called Ecstatics" (Ganander 1789:21). The most detailed account of the behaviour of a *tietäjä* is contained in the doctoral thesis of Elias Lönnrot: a *tietäjä* (1) rages, (2) his speech becomes loud and frenzied, (3) he foams at the mouth, (4) he

clenches his teeth, (5) his hair stands on end, (6) he rolls his eyes, (7) he scowls, (8) he often spits, (9) he twists his body, (10) he stamps his feet, (11) he leaps up and down and (12) he makes many other such gestures (Lõnnrot 1832:11). The attention of observers has also been caught by the convulsions that set his body trembling (Hako 1954:61; Kopponen 1973:34) and the glassy stare that follows the rolling of his eyes (Koivu and Tuovinen 1980:178; Salminen 1931:632).

These descriptions give some idea of the state of ecstasy entered into by the *tietājā* – one astonishingly similar to the states of altered consciousness induced by violent movement and rhythmic music achieved by the shamans of Central and Eastern Siberia. These motoric trances, as they are called, take the form of hyperactiveness, and they do not necessarily infer loss of consciousness. In Siberia and Asia such states, also known as possession trances, are reached at séances at which the shaman's spirit helper enters his master's body. The shaman is then in a position to journey to the other world, though he does not always do so. The prevalent explanation for disease in the possession trance regions is that a disease demon has entered the patient's body, and in order to cure the patient, it is therefore sufficient to banish the demon.

Possession trance differs from altered states of consciousness induced by hysteria or hypnosis alone in that neurophysiological changes take place which can be measured by EEG. These changes are indicated, for example, by muscular jerks and tremors of the head and limbs (Siikala 1978:43 f.; Prince 1968). The *tietājā's* convulsions and the tremors that beset his body can in fact be interpreted as neurophysiological changes accompanying trance. Another characteristic of possession trance is a reduction in sensory perception, which explains the shaman's ability to handle burning and sharp objects. The Finnish *tietājā* was also capable of corresponding feats (Paulaharju 1981:221).

Like the shaman, the *tietājā* preparing for his task would summon his supernatural powers by collecting his requisites and dressing for the rite. The *tietājā's* shirt (SKS Lahtinen 1889), cap and belt have been regarded as vestiges of the ancient witch's costume (Honko 1960:88). Sewn into the lining of the cap there might be a piece of leather from a diver (SKS Pulkkinen 1937), a squirrel (Paulaharju 1929:178) or some other animal. The pouch hanging from his waist contained bones, bear's teeth and other such accessories required for healing, protection, etc.

There is proof that the somewhat rare references to the *tietājā's* dress really do apply to an ancient tradition in the Icelandic saga, Eiriks saga rauda, noted down in the late 13th century, but probably composed in the 12th century (Strömback 1935:50-55). Threatened by starvation, the people of Greenland sought help from a seer by the name of Lill-võlva, who set up a witch's séance. In addition to a cape and a staff he had a head-dress lined with white cat's fur, gloves of cat's fur and a belt from which hung a witch's pouch. Since the symbols attached to the witch's head-dress in the Northern Asian tradition represent helping spirit beings, it may be assumed that the skins sewn into the head-dress in both the Karelian-Finnish and the Icelandic traditions referred to helping spirits in the form of animals. Sometimes a snake might be sewn into the belt of the Archangel Karelian *tietājā* for the same purpose.

The *tietäjä* embarking on his task thus began by calling upon his spirits. This he did by means of various formulae and chants invoking his spirits and requesting help:

"Nouše luontoni lovelta,
Havon alta haltiani,
Havon alta hattupiäššä.
Kiven alta kinnaš kiäššä!"

(SKVR 1:4. 11)

Rise, my guardian, from thy lovi,
Wake, my spirit, once again,
From under your tree,
a hat on your head,
From under your stone,
a mitten on your hand!

We may deduce from the Icelandic description given above what these mysterious words mean. The ancient Scandinavian seid séance held by Lill-völva links the behaviour of the *tietäjä* more closely with that of the shaman in the sense that contact with the spirits was obtained by means of songs, and supporting the witch was a band of assistants. On the seer's request, one of the women present sang a *vardlo(k)kur* song so beautiful that it attracted many spirits (*nattúrur*). Thus we also encounter the concept of 'spirit' in connection with the Scandinavian *seid* séance. Its synonym, *vard*, indicates a guardin spirit of an individual person, household or family, a keeper or invisible companion imagined as having e.g. human form. The *vardlo(k)kur* song invokes the companions guarding the witch, her guardian spirits, and at the same time conducts him to a state of altered consciousness. Like Lill-völva, the *tietäjä* calls forth his spirit companions from their dwelling place somewhere in the other world. Like its master, the guardian spirit is fitted out with potent mittens and a hat.

The behaviour of the *tietäjä* is in many ways reminiscent of shamanic ecstasy. But the shaman appears in public, supported by an assistant and a chorus, and instead of spoken incantations resorts to rhythmical music and singing. Since the recitation of incantations as a means of attaining a state of trance is exceptional rather than general, we should give further thought to what the observations of Tuomo Jaakonpoika on singing at a healing séance really meant.

Were Incantations Sung?

Elias Lönnrot explains in bis lexicon (Lönnrot 1874-1880:1-2) that the word *laulaa* (to sing) was also used in connection with incantations: "uppläsa en trollformel, förtrolla genom trollformels uppläsande, signa; laulettu lakana, genom signeri försäkradt lakan." Y.H. Toivonen has further pointed out that in certain sayings singing has the meaning of 'exerting mysterious, magic-like influence', as in "päivä laulaa voin" (Toivonen 1944:193 f.). The verb *laulaa* is used specifically to describe the delivery of incantations in the report of a court case at Kuolajärvi in 1671. The 80-years old Aikie, son of Aikie from Kuusamo had tried to ensure a man luck in salmon fishing by drumming and singing (förmedelst Trumma och Laula eller Sjunga). Martti Haavio noted that the same verb was used by Gabriel Tuderus in the 1670s in describing the séance of some Lapp witches (att laula och sjunga; laulande; laulandet) (Haavio

1967:323). The link between the words *laulaa* and *loitsia* would indicate that incantations were sometimes sung.

In chapter 13 of *De poesi fennica* H. G. Porthan points out that incantations are not poems in the conventional sense. They are called *lugut* because they are uttered more in a speaking voice than in song. It seems, therefore, that Porthan also knew something about the singing of incantations, although, like the other folklore scholars in the 18th century, he stresses that incantations were specifically recited in a speaking voice. It appears likely that incantation singing was no longer found in the western tradition areas in the 18th century. The concept that incantations are always spoken became established among folklore scholars. There is, however, conflicting evidence from Karelia and especially Archangel Karelia. Reports of collecting in the 19th century very often mention the singing of incantations (e.g. Niemi 1921:1121). In describing a meeting with Huotarini Kostja A.A. Borenius says;

> "In singing to me his incantation poems he did, in the manner of a *tietäjä*, always keep a few 'words' (or lines) at the end of the poem for himself, so that the power of the incantation would not pass from him to me" (Niemi 1921:1091).

The omission of the lines indicates that the *tietäjä* really did conceive of his song as an incantation. That incantations were sung is also indicated by the term *tieto-* or *konstivirsi* (information or means song) (Niemi 1921:1108).

It is possible that incantations were sung in the manner of epic poems, with an accompanist following a leader. Gottlund reports on how he got Samuel Nykytti of Vuokkiniemi to sing for him at Kuhmoinen in 1859:

> "And since there were several rune singers present, after the meal I got one of them with an accompanist, to sing the long poem (incantation) about the origin of the snake, to give the people of the region a chance to hear a song of this type" (Niemi 1921:1178).

Was the singing of an incantation with an assistant merely a unique occurrence set up by Gottlund? It appeared at the assizes in Elimäki and Vehkalahti in 1643 that Erkki Matinpoika, accused of witchcraft – who while he was asleep could learn news of another parish – has sung a 'magic song' with another man while drunk at a St. Stephen's Day feast. It is very unlikely that this was one of the ritual poems recited on the day after Christmas to bring luck to the horses, because the host and the other guests angrily drove the singers out. The lines recalled by the host (Mäntylä 1969:109) indicate that this was a variation of the St. Stephen's Day song devised with a view to mockery. We know from the parish of Heinola, for example, of the St. Stephen's Day song being sung 'backwards' (SKVR 9:1, 284).

There are also reports in incantations of chants being sung by a solo singer and a seconder. The song of Shimanaini Kipri, a *Patvaska (tietäjä* or matchmaker) from Archangel Karelia (SKVR 1:4, 1873), tells how Väinämöinen harnessed a colt and rode to Lapland. There he meets a Lapp, who asks for a ride in the sleigh. The Virgin Mary brings the two of them some beer, after which the Lapp suggests that they 'put their hands together'. Placing a kantele or 'song box' across his knees, he announces the purpose of the incantation: 'Let us sing a bird from Lapland'.

The *Patvaska's* song does in fact give a realistic description of the way runes were sung. On the other hand, it also contains the important external features of a shamanistic séance: anyone wishing to fall into a trance needed an assistant to bring him round again, an instrument as his medium and some stimulating substance to work him up into a state of frenzy. K.F. Karjalainen reports that the Ostyak witch had recourse not only to a drum but also to an instrument reminiscent of a five-stringed kantele (Karjalainen 1918:565 f.). According to the shamanistic way of thinking the instrument bearing the shaman to ecstasy is a vehicle; in the Altaic regions the drum is called a horse, in the Arctic regions a boat. Calling the kantele a `song sleigh' (SKVR 1:4, 481) reflects the same idea.

In what sorts of situations were incantations sung? Leea Virtanen, studying the Kalevala mode of singing, observed that it is difficult from written notes alone to draw any distinction between the spoken and the sung incantation, the epic song in Kalevala metre. She claims that singing in the function of an incantation is part of the preparatory stage of work (Virtanen 1968:27). One factor helping to solve the problem of the sung incantation is its public or community nature. The ritual songs performed at the annual occupational festivals or various events in the course of work were part of the common heritage and their performance was not discouraged. The activities of the *tietäjä*, on the other hand, were founded on the secret knowledge at his command and encroached, what is more, on a region of the Christian faith that still shunned the public eye. On the other hand, seeking protection and appealing the benevolent spirits, which assume the form of a song in various situations, featured among the special skills at the shaman's command. The above examples, like many of Virtanen's findings, further indicate that the poems of origin that were among the *tietäjä's* tools were commonly sung. Turning to a song of origin in an attempt to resolve a crisis is also indicated in an incantation noted down by D.E.D. Europaeus at Uhtua, before a healing rite (SKVR 14:1, 481).

Also giving some idea of the mode of performance are the names for incantation poems. Incantations of origin were very often called *virsi*; they were, therefore, sung. *Luku* suggests the spoken voice. *Sanat* poses something of a problem in that it can apply to both spoken delivery and to `verses' or holy words. Huotarini Kostja, among others, kept a few words or lines of his incantation to himself.

The most direct proof that incantations were originally sung is to be found in folklore itself. The *tietäjä* of narrative poetry and incantations is a `singer' who crushes his opponents by singing incantations (cf. Haavio 1967:324 f.). The most descriptive accounts of sung incantations are given in Lemminkäinen's Adventures and the singing competition between Väinämöinen and Joukahainen. There are counterparts to this competition between masters on mythic knowledge in international folklore, the closest example being the quiz between Odin and Vaftrudner in ancient Scandinavian poetry (Siikala 1986). Like Odin, Väinämöinen proves himself superior in his knowledge of the birth or origin of phenomena, because he himself took part in their creation. The victorious Vainamöinen then sings Joukahainen into the swamp. *Singing* here means specifically the exerting of magic influence. It is not, however, a spoken *luku*;

it is specifically a sung incantation such as that known by the Skolts as a *levt*. In 1926 Uno Harva noted down a story told by the Skolts of Petsamo in which some sons turned their mother into a stone by means of a *levt* song. He notes that although Genetz, in his lexicon of the Lapp dialects of the Kola Peninsula, describes a *levt* as a wordless song, he does recollect hearing words, too, though the melody was more important (Harva 1935:42 f.).

The *laulu* or song of the Finns and the *levt* of the Skolts probably resembled the incantation singing known by the ancient Scandinavians as *galdr*. Odin was *galdrarnas* fader, i.e. the father of incantation singing, just as he was also the finest expert on poetic inspiration, magic arts and mythical knowledge. The *galdr* resembled the shamanistic song in the way it was performed. It was sung in a high register, in a voice reminiscent of the sound of a diver or a bird of prey, as was witnessed by the Roman Emperor Julianus on hearing Teutonic soldiers singing on the Rhine in the year 360 A.D. (Ohlmarks 1963:40). *Gala* specifically meant influencing through singing: the Swedish word *galen*, meaning crazy, originally referred to the state of a person bewitched by singing (Klintberg 1980:11). Since the verb *gala* also means shouting and shrieking and the sound made by a bird, such as the crowing of a cock, it has been assumed that the *galdr* was performed something in the manner of a *joiku* (Klintberg 1980:11). Few *galdrs* have been preserved in proportion to other ancient Scandinavian poetry; people tried to keep them secret in order to preserve their potency. Snorre Sturlason has, at Hattatál, nevertheless described their poetic metre, which was extremely complex and incorporated three types of rhyme. Alliteration, for example, was used to enhance the magic potency.

The context in which *galdrs* were sung is indicated by the poem Grogaldr, in which a boy called Svipdag fetches the words of an incantation from his witch-mother already in her grave. The theme as such is reminiscent of Väinämöinen's visit to the grave of Vipunen. The poem gives several hints that the roots of both the invocation of the spirits by the *tietäjä* and the ecstatic words of the singer lead back to early incantation singing. The witch teaches her son the fateenticing song *(ödets locksång)*, which helps him wherever he goes. This is a summoning of the spirit similar to the *vardlo(k)kur* sung at the *seid* mentioned above (Ohlmarks 1948, 307). The lack of a spirit of happiness is likewise bemoaned by the singer in this Ingrian poem:

"Minun on onneni ojassa
lykkyni lylyssä puussa,
haon alla haltiani..."
(Salminen 1943, 210.)

My hapiness is in the ditch
My fortune far off in a tree,
My guardian spirit hidden beneath
a trunk

Although Väinö Salminen did not believe that the Finns once sang incantations, he nevertheless points out the link between the 'singer's words' and the incantations invoking the spirits (Salminen 1943). He is right in assuming that the common factor is the pursuit of ecstasy: both the reciter of the incantation and the singer of the rune had to be in a state of ecstasy. Thus the singer's words also include lines invoking the spirits (Salminen 1943:210). The singer also boasts of being able to sing incantations, of achieving wonders with his singing (SKVR 1:3, 1315).

The singer's words do not speak of true magic influence: their light, merry style expresses the singer's joy. They do, however, have a surprising number of similarities with the invocations of spirits, boasting and protection charms of the *tietäjä*. One of these is a description of the place of performance; both the chanter and the singer take up their position on a stone, 'a low stone', 'a joyful stone', etc. The dead witch in Grogaldr tells her son the correct performance of the *galdr:* "When singing *galdrs* I stood on a stone in the ground, just inside the door". This was not just any stone; it was a stone beneath which the guardian spirits resided. According to Reichborn-Kjennerud there were similar beliefs attached to the threshold (Reichborn-Kjennerud 1928:1, 4). Later Scandinavian incantations also mention chanting on a stone set in the earth. We also know that in Norway blood was staunched while sitting on a stone such as this (ÅA Knuts 1974:39). Magic stones are also encountered in later Swedish folklore as the place for driving out diseases, 'under sten och stock'. Reichborn-Kjennerud explains that this derives from the guardian spirits attached to the stone. These were believed to take possession of the disease and make it harmless. We now see why the *tietäjä* called forth his spirits from 'under a stone' or 'under a tree', or why a gate or a threshold were typical places for seeking protection in North European folklore. We also see that the ancient Finnish *tietäjä* achieved ecstasy by singing.

The *tietäjä* and the Shaman

In examining the way in which incantations were performed I came to the same conclusion as Kaarle Krohn: incantations delivered in a speaking voice are part of the tradition that became established in the Middle Ages. Short incantations were presumably used even before this, but in the pre-Christian era the singing of incantations demanding an ecstatic delivery was among the *tietäjä's* tools. In function, this resembled the ancient Scandinavian *galdr*. On the other hand, the *tietäjä's* requisites, the chants summoning the spirit and his ecstatic behaviour call to mind the ancient Scandinavian *seid* institution, even though the trance technique of the *tietäjä* differed from the events of the *seid*.

Was the singer-*tietäjä* also a shaman? Was he able to travel to the other world? Like Finnish narrative poetry, ancient Scandinavian poetry and the *fornaldrasaga* tradition prove the existence of shamanistic phenomena differing from the Lapp *noaide* or witch tradition in Northern Europe in the Viking era and the time of the Crusades. Martti Haavio has presented considerable evidence on behalf of Finnish shamanism. I shall not go into this here; I would, however, mention that the concepts *noita* or witch (which has a counterpart among e.g. the Voguls), *langeta loveen*, meaning to go into a trance or to lose consciousness, and *kannus* meaning a witch's drum demonstrate that the Finns do have their own names for the chief shamanistic phenomena. I will turn, instead, to a point only touched on by Haavio. Elias Lönnrot says in the foreword to his collection of the Incantations of the Finnish People:

> "Sitting on a stone, the *tietäjä's* were said to travel across rivers and lakes, and their souls, detached from their bodies, travelled in other remote places, obtaining knowledge

> and then after some time were again united with their bodies. They prepared for such voyages of the spirit by quietly humming some magic poem, thereupon falling into a trance, and while the soul was travelling independently, the body, like a spiritless body at least, lay as if dead, to recover again on the return of the soul from its journeys" (Lönnrot 1880:VII).

Since the origin of this information is not clear, Haavio assumes that Lönnrot was misled into describing the trance of a Lapp *noita* witch. This does not seem very likely, for Lönnrot particularly mentions that the Finns were not known to use a drum. Since the information in the foreword is in other respects well in keeping with reality, why would he have made a mistake over just this? The image of witches travelling on a stone are to be found both in the legend tradition and in narrative poetry. It is founded on the beliefs and practices surrounding reciting on a stone that are described above. The witch chanting on a stone fell into a state of ecstasy; during his ecstasy his soul might leave his body. In cases where the origin of a disease was not obvious or codified by the poetic tradition, the witch would undoubtedly travel in a trance to the other world to discover it. In Lapland, as in Siberia, dream may have taken the place of loss of consciousness as a means of acquiring knowledge.

The means of ecstasy employed by the Finnish *noita* was singing. He probably also used some kind of musical instrument. At the earliest stages this was, in keeping with the hunting cultures of northern Eurasia, undoubtedly a drum. The use of a drum in fact continued to be common among the Finns for a long time. In 1663 the northern witch Antti Tokoi told the court that he possessed a drum that had once belonged to a Lapp (Luho – Luukko 1957:495). A type of drum with a name only in Finnish has also been found in the area of Lapland around Kemi. In the pre-Christian culture described in the Kalevala epic and familiar to us from archaeological research in Karelia and Western Finland, the shaman's medium was a *kantele* (and possibly also a drum). As the poem about Väinämöinen's playing says, the sound of the kantele conjured forth not only people but also the spirits of the forest and the water. Stringed instruments were used as a means of attaining ecstasy not only in Europe but in Western Siberia, too.

More important to the shaman than his instrument, however, was his assistant, who reiterated all he said and took over the singing when he fell unconscious. The original meaning of the word *runo* (which today means a poem) was 'magic song, incantation'. Originally rune singing thus literally meant the singing of incantations. It appears that, like epic poems, incantations, were sung with an assistant. Thus the delivery of both the epic and the incantation would have common roots that ultimately lead back to the shamanic séance.

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SHAMANIC THEMES IN FINNISH EPIC POETRY

In his book on Väinämöinen Martti Haavio says:

> "The cultural tradition in which the earliest poets who composed songs of Väinämöinen lived was a shamanistic culture. It must have been so; no other cultural surroundings are a feasible location for the earliest Väinämöinen poems: The visit to Tuonela, The visit to Vipunen, The singing contest. So those who composed the Väinämöinen poems lived at a time when the shaman, the wise man, a kind of wizard, played an important role in religious and social life. By virtue of his calling and natural disposition this shaman had become an intermediary between human beings and the world of the spirits, and he was understood to possess other supernatural faculties as well." (Haavio 1950:309)

This was not a new idea. As early as the 1890s, the Italian Domenico Comparetti had stated that the hero in Kalevala poetry is a shamanistic wise man rather than a man of the sword. Matti Kuusi, too, holding Lemminkäinen to be the quintessential shamanic male of Finnish epic poetry, takes the Tuonela poems as being representative of the shamanistic outlook – "the primal layer of our spiritual history" – even though they bear the imprint of many different periods (Kuusi 1963:259-260). On the basis of stylistic features Kuusi alleges that these poems originated in the cultural setting of the Viking period and to have undergone much recomposition in the Middle Age.

So can we take shamanism as a relevant topic in a discussion of Finnish epic folklore? And if so, in what sense? Under what strata of tradition do the roots on Finnish shamanism lie? Before attempting to answer these questions, let us first briefly consider the general character of Kalevala-metre epic poetry.

The ages, origins and underlying meanings of the poetry that was the basis for Elias Lönnrot's Kalevala epos have been the subject of much debate ever since Lönnrot's day. With the exception of a few findings from the 16th and 17th centuries, the poems were collected during the last two centuries, mainly from the Karelian Orthodox and Ingrian areas, though the tradition also existed both in Estonia and in northern and central Finland. Some researchers, suggesting that these poems developed over a long period of time, have conjectured that the earliest protoforms can be traced back to prehistoric times (Kuusi 1963). Yet others have suggested that the poems were at their zenith just before they were collected (cf. Kaukonen 1977). When we examine the subject matter of the poems, we must first of all make a distinction between the topic and poetic form, as the topics can be much older than the actual poem, existing earlier

as religious beliefs and so on. The poetic form is also linked to language, whereas the continuity of content presupposes only cultural continuity and cultural contacts without being confined to language or ethnicity. The contents of Finnish folklore have been subject to many different cultural climates and bear their imprints: medieval Catholicism, for example, has left a heavy mark on magical verse. Some mythical poems and the so-called adventure poetry contain so many features referring to pre-medieval cultural milieu that it is impossible to imagine that folk poetry singers in the 18th and 19th centuries Karelian cultures invented them – especially since no corresponding tradition in prose has been found to exist. I can only surmise that the researchers advocating the late nascency of this tradition have failed to see the close tie between the folk poem and culture. A folk poem may survive by adjusting to conditions of many varying cultural milieu, but it can originate only in an environment where it fits the existing system of expression.

In cultures without language, narrative poetry is often a means of transferring to the new generations both secular and religious information that is considered particularly important. The poetic form serves as a mnemonic device, and frequent repetition of some details is much more common than in performance of prose. However, it is obvious that when poetry lives in the oral tradition, it will not remain unchanged regardless of its fixed form but it will be susceptible to influence from various cultural and individual factors. During the lifetime of a poetic tradition, different beliefs and sentiments tied in with different cultural eras and milieu will blend into each other, change and become obscure. A poem can be transferred from one generation to another, but each age interprets and understands it differently, depending on the prevailing world views. General developmental tendencies in a culture will determine whether any particular branches of the tradition passed on by the elders will die or live on, and how they will change and be interpreted. The mythical element and the historical element are interpreted differently in different cultural traditions, and the demarcation line between the two is not as clear as it is in our modern world. With aboriginal people, historical developments are ordinarily understood to be an uninterrupted sequel the mythical events. A large number of the mythical elements that are also known in other parts of the world have indeed been preserved in Finnish epic poetry. Counterparts to these mythical elements can be traced to northern Siberia and subarctic zones. Examples of these are the story of the creation of the bear that is part of the bear rituals, and the astral myth of the elk hunt on skis. Another body of mythical subject matter is known particularly in cultures of the Near East, the Middle East, Central Asia and the Far East.

The Wise Man and Singer

The poem of Väinämöinen and Joukahainen has been interpreted as a match between two wizards possessing shamanistic skills (Haavio 1950:102; Kuusi 1963:254). The main characters spur their horses forward and their sledges collide. In the ensuing dispute over authority, Joukahainen proposes that the man of lesser knowledge should

give way to the other. A contest follows in which Joukahainen expounds on his knowledge of the origin of the world: "I remember the ploughing of the ocean, the staking of the land, the fixing up of the arch of heaven, the heaping together of the hills, the gathering up of the stones" (SKVR II:5). Some of the variants have Joukahainen remembering trivial things – as if to emphasize his triviality – but in this matching of knowledge against knowledge, the essential issue is how much each remembers of the mythical events of the world's beginnings. Väinämöinen defeats Joukahainen by declaring that himself has performed the heroic feats Joukahainen mentions. He then proceeds to sing – and intoning magic incantations plunges Joukahainen into a swamp "up to his belt, into a meadow up to his waist" or to *Tuonela* or *Manala,* the world of the dead.

The initial contrapositional scene can indeed be assumed to refer to the shamanistic competitive situation: the main characters confront each other as they drive their horses. Driving as a metaphor for shamanic activity has been found in many Siberian peoples: the Samoyed shamans for example refer to the singing of a shamanistic songs as `driving', taking a trip. Competitions in skill between shamans have been reported from different parts of the north. However, a direct counterpart to the competition between Väinämöinen and Joukahainen can be found quite near, in the Scandinavian tradition. The supreme God, Odin, goes to meet the ancient giant, Vaftrudner, in Jotunheim to find out if he is omniscient. The questions these two ask each other have to do with the events surrounding creation and finally Odin comes up with a question that reveals that he himself is the God involved. Vaftrudner acknowledges his defeat and admits Odin to be the wisest being in the world (Ohlmarks 1963:77-79). The wisdom in question is not just any wisdom but knowledge of things mythical and magic. In the Finnish poetry Väinämöinen is the eternal sage, the master of all hidden knowledge. Correspondingly, in the Scandinavian gallery of gods, Odin is the most competent master of all magic skills (Ohlmarks 1963:37). Both Odin and Väinämöinen are also the mythic virtuosos of poetry and song.

Väinämöinen conjures Joukahainen into a swamp. This incantation is a special magic spell cast through singing. At the time these were collected, the Finnish magic spells were recited rather then sung, either quietly mumbling or getting faster and faster in a state of ecstasy. However, many ritual poems were sung, for example when leaving on a hunting trip. The epic poems, too, were sung and at times were used as the texts for rituals. Some eye witnesses have reported singers reaching an agitated, ecstatic state (Virtanen 1968:47). In the Finnish area, no verifiable information survives on singing of magic incantations, but information does exist from the Scandinavian area. Odin was the father of incantations, `galdernas fader'. *Galdr*, the incantation, was sung in high descant, with a voice reminiscent of a grebe or raptorial bird – we have verification of this from as far back as the year 360 when Emperor Julianus listened to the singing of the Germanic soldiers (Ohlmarks 1963:40). In Havamal, Odin says he knows 18 magic songs, some of which are connected with battle situations. The performances of *galdr* is similar to shamanistic singing. In function, however, closer to shamanistic singing are the evocations to the spirits of the *seid* sessions. Scandi-

navian women were the principal guardians of their seidr tradition; however, Odin, too, is mentioned as possessing *seid* skills.

In a *seid* session, a witch in a trance sat in the middle of a chorus and after her tutelary spirits arrived, was capable of seeing far-off things and telling fortunes (Strömbäck 1935). The words used in arousing *luonto* 'nature', i.e. the tutelary spirit, by the Finnish wise man are reminiscent in function of the evocative songs to the spirits of the *seid* session. The wizard calls up his tutelary spirits and all the helping spirits. He makes frenzied movements, speeds up his words and falls into a trance.

The concepts *langeta loveen* 'go into a trance, to lose consciousness' and *kannus* 'shamanic drum' prove that the Finns had expressions in their language for the technique involved in shamanistic ecstasy. There are some reports from 17th century witch trials that support the oral tradition according to which the Finnish wise men sometimes travelled to the Lappish shamans to learn their skills. Hence, the Finns were acquainted with the shamanistic ecstasy technique. Existing evidence provides very strong support for the fact that songs of evocation to helping spirits were used as a means of attaining the state of ecstasy. However, the singing by Väinämöinen during the battle against Joukahainen is closer to the magic song of the *galdr* rather than the *seid* sort, in that the wise man himself induces the desired state of affairs by his own singing rather than with the aid of the assisting spirits.

The dispute through incantations in the song of Lemminkäinen is much closer to classical shamanistic traditions than the battle between Väinämöinen and Joukahainen. There, a hero with the skills of a wizard – sometimes Lemminkäinen, sometimes Väinämöinen – is threatened by one of the participants at a big feast. The one who starts the dispute summons up a hare to attack the hero, and the hero evades the hare by singing up a fox to kill it. The opponent then sings up a new animal to threaten the hero: a squirrel, which the hero intercepts by summoning up a martin. The opponent may conjure up a lake, which, however, is drunk by a bull the hero sings up. A shamanistic match where animal figures do the fighting instead of the main characters is known widely in Asia and even in Oceania. The animal here acts as the representative of its sender: it is the soul animal of the shaman. As Czaplicka notes, this kind of competition could involve many scenes: the shamans matching themselves one against the other in the air, on earth, and maybe even under water (Czaplicka 1916:212). The soul animals vary according to the circumstances. The Norwegian Saga of Sturlaugs Starfsama (XII) is a story of a young man fighting a Lapp (a Finn). The sorcerous enemies first transform themselves from their human shape into dogs, but the decisive battle is fought finally high in the sky in the shape of eagles (Ellis 1977:126).

The theme of animal representatives in a fight is based on the belief that it is possible for witches to transform themselves. This belief is very central to shamanism and is known not only in the Lappish tradition but also in the Finnish and Scandinavian epic poetry. On his journey back from Tuonela, Väinämöinen has to transform himself into a snake (cf. SKVR I:357). Odin also is reported by Snorri in Ynlingasaga to be capable of changing himself into a bird, a wild animal, a fish and a dragon. During the

metamorphosis, Odin's corporeal body was stretched out as if he were asleep or dead (Ellis 1977:122). This is a description of a typical shamanistic trance (cf. Siikala 1978:330-341). In northern Europe analogies have only been reported from the Lapps.

Whereas there are no shamanistic helping spirits in Finnish epic poetry, the magic poetry has numerous descriptions of various spirits and beings who assist the wizard. The most interesting of these are the animal figures – a grey horse, an enormous eagle and a formidable dog, all of which in Finnish epic poetry evoke images of *Tuonela* and *Pohjola*. These beliefs are common to both the Finns and the Scandinavians: the wizard's assistant who transports diseases into the underworld corresponds to Odin's eight-footed horse *Sleipnir*, which carried Odin on its back to *Hel*, i.e. to the house of the dead.

Journey to the Otherworld

Coexistent with the figure of the wise man-poet in epic poetry is another shamanistic theme, namely, journeys to the underworld.

Finnish ideas of the underworld and of the composition of the universe in general are similar to those held by Northern and Central Asian peoples (cf. Harva 1938). In addition to the human's living area, the world was divided into six or nine different levels of the upper world and the underworld, and connecting these, extending from heaven above to the netherworld below, was a hollow (cf. *Tulen synty*, the Birth of Fire, SKVR I:250). In the Altaic region, for example, the hollow is the shaman's passage to the underworld (Eliade 1964:202). The outer edge of the earth was described by the Finns as a circle from which arches the gigantic dome of the sky. The upper support for the sky is the North Star, `the spike of the North', `the pivot of the North'. The Lappish had called the North Star by a name that referred to a pillar, and some traces are found with the Finns as well of the vision so common with the arctic peoples of a gigantic pillar supporting the sky. Also known widely in Central and northern Asia is the mountain of the world, `The stonehill of the North', that was envisioned as existing in the northern centre of the world together with the tree of the world, `The Rutimo willow'. In the Finnish view of the world the North played a unique role: it was a cold and hostile place where diseases and jaundices were exorcised and where stood both *Tuonela* and the mythical North, *Pohjola*, `the village of man eaters'. Feature by feature, these *Tuonela* and *Pohjola* visions correspond to the Hall of the Dead, *Hel*, of the Scandinavians, and similarities are also found with other mythical northern lands that share features with *Hel*, for example the ares of *Geirröðr* and *Utgarða-Loki*. Concepts of a dead people's land beyond a stream, reached by ferry or an extremely narrow bridge, covered over maybe with weapons, about a gate to the dead people's land with a monstrous watchdog on guard, etc. are of course familiar from both European and Asian cultures. These ideas are associated with widespread notions of the Medieval Christian visionary literature of the scenes of hell, which international comparative research has demonstrated to be only a later version of the earlier tradition.

Of all portrayals of the journeys to the underworld, the most clearly shamanistic is the poem of Väinämöinen's journey to *Tuonela*. In one version, Väinämöinen in building a boat by singing a magic song and then notices that he lacks some of the necessary words; in another version, the poetry sledge breaks and he leaves to fetch a tool, i.e. the words to the magic poem, from *Tuonela*. On the *Tuonela* river he meets a maiden who speaks out, wondering why he displays no ordinary signs of the dead, why, for example, he is not wearing the headdress of the dead. After Väinämöinen has admitted that he has arrived in order to fetch knowledge, the maiden rows him over the river to *Tuonela*. The food there is unfit for human consumption, and snakes crawl on the beds. A maiden with iron fingers weaves a fishing net to prevent Väinämöinen from escaping. However, he strains himself to stay awake and sneaks through the eyes of the net to freedom in the form of snake. Descriptions of the journey and of the circumstances in *Tuonela* follow closely the journeys of Odin and Hermord to *Hel* – there, too, a stream must be crossed, and the maiden Modgudr in charge of the road wonders why the newcomer does not have "the hue of a dead man" (Ellis 1977:174). The snake theme as well is common in the Scandinavian literature (for example, Völuspa). The fishing nets laid in the Tuonela river have analogies with the Siberian shamanistic tradition: the Ob Ugrian shaman, for example, tries, to rescue the soul of a sick person from the underworld river using a net made of human hair (Haavio 1950: 123).

Different versions describing Väinämöinen's meeting with Antero Vipunen have two different themes referring to shamanistic initiation rites. In the first one, Väinämöinen seeks his way to the grave of a wise man who had lain dead for a long time; Väinämöinen awakens him in order to learn from him the secret magic words. Vipunen has laid either dead or in a trance so long that trees and bushes are growing on top of him. A close analogy with this is found in a Scandinavian poem Baldr's Draumar, where Odin rides to the land of the dead in order to awaken the longdead *völva*, a female soothsayer, to be his informant. Her grave is east of the gate of *Hel*, Odin finds it and wakens the woman by singing a special *valgaldrar* song, described as a corpse spell. Like the Finnish poem, so this poem, too, puts strong emphasis on the length of the time the völva has already been lying dead: "Snowed on with snow, beaten with rain, Drenched with the dew..." (Ellis 1977:152). Both poems in fact reflect actual ritual activity by the wizard. There are statements from 17th century witchcraft trials according to which the wise man acquired his skills from the spirit of a dead witch. Up until the 20th century, magic rituals included habitual visits to graveyards.

In some variants of the Vipunen poem, Väinämöinen ends up in Vipunen's stomach, starts up a blacksmith forge and finally, after Vipunen has awaken, obtains the knowledge he has been seeking. We are involved here with the so-called swallowing motif as represented, for example, by the story of Jonah and the whale. This widespread myth is a part of initiation tradition and takes both verbal and ritualistic forms (Bishop 1975).

Like Väinämöinen, Lemminkäinen, too, journeys to the otherworld. In most versions, he is said to be going to *Päivölä* (place of the Sun) to attend a feast. That this is a locality in the otherworld becomes obvious as Lemminkäinen's mother demon-

strates against the journey. There are dangerous obstacles on the way, unnegotiable by a mere mortal: a fiery trench, fiery rapids, a fiery birch tree with a menacing eagle perched on its branches and an enormous snake or a fence with coiled snakes as withes. In the *Päivölä* feast, referred to as the drinking feast of the gods, Lemminkäinen ends up among men drunk on beer and quick to draw the sword. He has a curse contest with the host and is finally slain by a blind herdsman.

The Lemminkäinen poems involve various strata of tradition, with fragments adhering to them that are suspected to be heroic poetry from the Viking period. Different beliefs on the mythical *Pohjola* have also adhered to the *Päivölä* description. Lemminkäinen is killed by a blind man he has overlooked, who uses a magic tool: a sprig of a water plant with magic ingredients stuck into its hollow stem through its one open end. The theme has been compared with the Scandinavian Baldr, on the one hand, and with the death of Christ on the other (Krohn 1903). It is possible that some references to the ancient sun cult have been preserved in the *Päivölä* description – there is some information on sun worshipping from both the Baltic area and Lapland. However, some of the obstacle on the way to Päivölä bear witness to Scandinavian influence. In front of *Valhöll*, where Odin assembled the stouthearted heroes for never-ending drinking feasts and swordsmanship games, there grows a colossal tree with shining foliage, an eagle at the top and a huge snake at the foot. The scene also includes a foaming waterfall pouring out of the mouth of the wolf Fenris (Ohlmarks 1963:55-60). The tree represents *Yggdrasil*, the tree of the world, with which an enormous eagle and snake are also connected. The emphasis on the large size of the Päivölä house has its parallels in the emphasis on the enormousness of the hall of *Valhöll*. And just as the Finnish otherworld is behind a snake fence, so, too, the Scandinavian *Hel*, the house of the dead, is surrounded by a fence bound together with snakes.

After he has been killed, Lemminkäinen is brought back to life by the efforts of his mother, who descends to the underworld. This section, known as Lemminkäinen's death song, has no analogies in the neighbouring traditions. In parts it is reminiscent of the Egyptian Osiris myth (Haavio 1967:257-264). A similar idea is expounded in the myths of the Accadian, Ishtar, and her Sumerian counterpart, Innin, that involve restoring vegetation to life: in these, the goddess goes down to the underworld to resuscitate her dead husband-son. Another variant of the Orpheus theme is the story told by the Tatars of the Sayan steppes of a Kubaiko heroine who seeks out her brother from the land of the dead ruled by Irlek Khan. After performing the feats of skill impossible for ordinary mortals, ordered by the princes of death, she gains possession of her brother's dead body and resuscitates him with the water of life (Harva 1927:355 ff).

Different Currents of Tradition

Many different facts support the thesis that Finns have practised shamanism, one being the noun *noita* itself, which has an equivalent *náit* in Vogul, and which refers in Finnish magic verse to the wise man's opponent, the witch and seer; others are the existence

of a Finnish-language terminology connected with the technique of ecstasy; and the beliefs concerning helping spirits and the wizard's metamorphic abilities. Both archaeological findings and linguistic research indicate that the Finn's early forefathers belonged to those northern Eurasian cultures where shamanism was a common practice. This common northern Eurasian tradition is undoubtedly the underlying source of all the beliefs and ideas that have been discussed here. However, what is known as Finnish shamanistic epic poetry cannot be regarded as a purely northern tradition as are the mythic songs and rites connected with bear festivals. The origin of Finnish shamanism in indeed traceable to the ancient northern hunting cultures, but the representative epic poems adhere closely to the tradition that spread in northern Europe during the Viking and Crusade period. Many features of these beliefs have parallels in the Near East, the Far East and Central Asia. Similar observations have been made by some researchers into the shamanistic features of Odin. Åke Ohlmarks has pointed out that influences form southern horse-riding peoples can be detected in elements of the horse cult connected with Odin and in Odin's initiation, where he hangs himself from the tree of the world, which is reminiscent of an Altaic horse sacrifice (Ohlmarks 1963:37). There is, therefore, no doubt that the cultural influences pouring into Europe form the Near East and Central Asia, and from which certain mythical themes such as the egg of the world derive also, carry along with them some beliefs that modified the European shamanistic tradition.

SHAMANIC KNOWLEDGE AND MYTHICAL IMAGES

Shamanism has been a favourite object of study in the field of ethnographic and religious studies. Students of shamanism have been interested in the ideological basis of the phenomenon, its cultural-historical background, the phenomenology of shamanic rituals and beliefs, the symbolism of ritual requisites and the ecstatic behaviour and mental states of shamans. The ritual behaviour and objects, which can easily be observed by scholars whose knowledge of the native language is poor, have been especially popular in shamanic studies. There are far fewer studies concerning the belief tradition of shamanic cultures, though Russian ethnographers have described the ideologies of different ethnic groups. Thanks to these detailed works we know that the inner side of the shamanic world is a quite complicated fabric of beliefs, ideas, concepts and images. However, these complex mental facts form the nucleus of shamanism by giving meaning to all outer manifestations of the institution. Without knowledge of shamanic knowledge we cannot understand shamanism.

Shamanic Knowledge as Mental Models and Images

The mental world of shamans is revealed in oral tradition, in songs and tales of shamans and also in narratives of individual experiences, auditions and visions (see e.g. Friedrich-Buddruss 1955, Diószegi 1968). Shamanic folklore has its own genres, in other words its own forms, contents, scopes of application and modes of performance. All these factors depend on the basic functions of the shaman institution. Narratives describe the initiation of shamans, their journeys to the other world, the other world itself and its spiritual beings, miracles caused by shamans, mythical shaman ancestors and their deeds, conflicts between rival shamans, etc. When shaman songs are used as a means of inducing a state of trance, they are most central in shamanic practices. By his invocation songs the shaman makes contact with his spirit helpers and studies matters representing the supranormal.

Shamanic knowledge is knowledge of the unknown, of the other world. In this respect it represents a special form of mythical knowledge. Indeed, shamanic narratives are reminiscent of mythical tales, not only in content but in expression, too. The shamanic mode of thought is similar to what has been described as mythical thinking.

Mythical consciousness is not organised into concepts logically linked to each other. It seems to function to a great extent as sense images concerning mythical objects and beings. The logic of mythical thinking has been the object of intensive study. Sigmund Freud formulated an idea of primary processes, which is typical both of dreamwork and of mythic thought. He saw the primary process as a primitive form of thought differing from the rational and reality oriented-thinking that he called `secondary processes' (Freud 1900). Claude Lévi-Strauss in turn found mythical thinking a sophisticated form of thought directed towards solving the fundamental problems of society (Kracke 1989:36).

According to Claude Lévi-Strauss the elements of mythical thinking fall somewhere in between perceptions, images and concepts. Like images, they are concrete independent entities; they further resemble concepts in their power of reference. The ingredients of mythical thinking are signs that, unlike images, do not merely represent themselves but which refer to specific matters (Lévi-Strauss 1971:18). Mythical phenomena are expressed by illustrations instead of abstract concepts; they are `seen'. However, mythical images are not just any images or observations; they acquire meaning by referring to the phenomena of the mythical world. This reference relationship based on the belief tradition is the key to understanding mythic discourse.

Mental Images and Metaphors

Many arctic cultures share an image of a thunder bird, a giant eagle or raven from whose beating wings come flashes of lightning. The Chukchi shaman Ukwun describes the thunder bird in a song as follows:

> "... Above a spring of running waters,
> on the peak of the white crest of a mountain,
> near the rumbling glaciers lives the lightning,
> mother of the mountain echo.
> It flies across the sky
> and thunders with its iron wings.
> From its feet flash bright red flames.."
> (Findeisen 1956:141-144)

Images of the thunder bird may be expressed either verbally or in drawings and objects. Even those pictures that are highly individual are still for the most part similar. For the thunder bird is a common, recurring image in the arctic hunting cultures. Georg Lakoff has pointed out the conventional images, which differ from the contextual and the consciously created (Lakoff 1986:446; see also Kosslyn 1980, and Shephard and Cooper 1982). Membership of a culture brings with it a large number of unconscious images which automatically spring to mind and are part of a common fund. Although mythic images do in fact often belong to the domain of hidden knowledge and are used only by experts, they resemble the conventional images of everyday life in that they are recurring.

Mythical language seems to be full of metaphoric expressions. The role of figurative expressions in myth tradition is so marked that myths have been described as a special mythopoetic form of thought. Max Müller, the pioneer of religious studies, even talked about `the sickness of language' when describing the poetic language of myths, which has `forgotten itself', meaning the original meanings of expressions. Many researchers, such as Ernst Cassirer, have compared the production of myths with that of poetry or music.

According to the concept derived from Aristotle's poetics, a metaphor is defined as an image attached to some object because of some striking similarity (Aristotle: Dorsch 1965:6). In this respect it comes close to simile, in which both elements are, however, present (Turner 1987:16-21). The cognitivists and interpretation theorists nowadays consider that the classical definition of the metaphor does not do full justice to the nature of the metaphorical expression. For it assumes that the relevant properties of the image and the signified sharing a similarity belong to the semantic field of the metaphor. The metaphor does not therefore add any new semantic dimensions to the signified or influence (e.g. by emphasising, filtering or creating a perspective) its semantic structure. According to Mark Turner a metaphor is a way of examining one conceptual field on the terms of another. For example, the metaphor `seeing is believing' parallels a cognitive and a visionary domain. The concept of believing becomes broader and more complex when equipped with properties usually associated with seeing (Turner 1987:17). A similar definition was arrived at by Lakoff and Johnson, who claim that a metaphor is fundamentally the understanding and viewing of one item according to the potential associations of the other, concentration on some detail, the recognition of broad connections, etc. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:5). Paul Ricoeur underlines precisely this aspect of the metaphor. He claims that a metaphor is created by the tension between the two concepts in the metaphoric expression. The opposition creating the tension and thereby upholding the metaphor basically represents the conflict between two interpretations (Ricoeur 1976:50).

In the metaphor thunder is a bird or lightning is a bird with iron wings a mythic natural phenomenon is described using the conceptual field of another natural phenomenon as its source. Lightning thus acquires the characteristics of a bird (and this special bird of lightning). Mark Turner points out that the characteristics of the expression derive from the field of the signified and from viewing the signified metaphorically on the terms of the other. In the case of a highly worn basic metaphor we do not discern these different types of characteristics (Turner 1987:18). Mythic metaphors are recurring, conventional expressions in which the characteristics of the signified and the image merge. The thunder bird has characteristics of both thunder and a bird: not all the possible characteristics, however – only those belonging to the mythic thought. The metaphor in fact helps to direct the attention at some characteristics vital to the association and at the same time eradicates any unnecessary associative background.

The thunder bird does, however, also possess characteristics that do not represent images normally associated with lightning or a bird. It is made of iron, it inhabits a

place in the other world. It is wrong to regard mythic metaphors merely as poetic expressions. In a mythic metaphor the relationship between image and signified is not founded on comparison; but nor is it founded on the semantic field consisting of two concepts, each of which throws light on the other, or conflicting interpretations. The linguistic image is based on a mental image, which is in turn a concrete image of something believed to be true.

When a shaman is said to be `dancing', `riding' or `flying', the expression is not merely a poetic image of travelling but an act considered to be real. Calling a drum a boat is also more than an expression of figurative language. Mythical images or metaphoric expressions are often understood as a real manifestation of the signified. The drum-boat, for example, can be visualised and sensed as a real object in visions and shaman songs. Mythical metaphors represent a sensory-imaginist form of thought which can be visualised or acted out. In a way mythic thinking can be compared to dreaming.

The metaphoric language of the mythic tradition can be approached from the angle of which Lakoff speaks in presenting the idea of imageable idioms. Contrary to general opinion, words are not of random origin. The use of an idiom is motivated by some association which exists independently and gives sense to the relationship between the idiom and its meaning (Lakoff 1986:448-449). Lakoff's idea is that idioms are often based on conventional meanings, i.e. the ones most common in a given culture. The idiom to keep someone at arm 's length is based on a conventional idiom and on the knowledge that the image usually has to do with defence. In addition two metaphors appearing independently in the conceptual system (intimacy is physical closeness and social or psychological harm is physical harm) create a link between the idiom and its meaning:

> "Given the image, and the knowledge that the image is associated with defence, we get a link to the meaning of the idiom. Keeping someone at arm's length physically is keeping him from getting physically close, and thereby protecting oneself from physical harm. The metaphors map this knowledge into the meaning of the idiom, which is to keep someone from becoming intimate, so as to protect oneself from social or psychological harm" (Lakoff 1986:448).

Mythic discourse incorporates metaphors such as this, occurring independently, determining the meaning and telling what the expression is all about, i.e. they motivate its use. Ukwun's song likewise paints a picture of an iron-winged bird flying over the tops of the mountains with bright red flames flashing from its feet. The context alone proves that this is not just any bird. On the other hand the iron wings and the feet flashing flames determines the meaning of the image more precisely. In the mythic thinking of the arctic peoples, being made of iron indicates that a human or animal is from the other world, that he or it belongs to a different world. Flashing flames are, in turn, a common expression for lightning.

Symbols of the Other World as a Source of Metaphors and Images

As I have said, mythic images are reminiscent of the conventional images of everyday life in their recurrence. They do, however, only recur in certain contexts, i.e. they are genre oriented. The metaphors giving mythic meaning do not only refer to the other world: they also represent it. In representing central phenomena of the cosmos or transcendence they have become established as symbols. Mircea Eliade tried to describe this relationship in examining the concrete symbols of religion. According to him concrete symbols, such as the stone or tree symbolising the centre of the earth or the ladders indicating its levels, point to something beyond the human order that also expresses itself in these sacred symbols (Eliade 1971:437-447; Ricoeur 1976:53). Eliade's symbol theory is founded on his theory of the sacred, which is, in seeking universal conformities, open to criticism. In his opinion the universal, age-old religious symbols, which are for the most part concrete items, tie in with man's subconscious. In this respect his theories come close to psychoanalytic symbol research. The meaning of a symbol is, form the point of view of the person believing in it, nevertheless determined via the aspects he describes. Paul Ricoeur has set out to examine the relationship between the metaphor and the (religious) symbol. Semantically the symbol differs from the metaphor in that it contains an incremental meaning not derived from the linguistic image, in other words its meaning has meaning (Ricoeur 1976:54-55). This special meaning is in turn born of the link between the symbol and the 'Sacred' or holy cosmos. The ability of a symbol to carry meaning is based on the ability of the cosmos to carry meaning. In this respect the religious symbol differs radically, according to Ricoeur, from the metaphor, which is a free product of discourse (Ricoeur 1976:61-62).

If symbols are invariable, metaphors are always being created anew. I have, however, spoken here of the link between the images and metaphors of mythic language and thoughts on and experience of the other world. These too are founded on concepts concerning the manifestation of the other world. We may well ask how the metaphors used in mythical language come into being. Or rather, how they are regenerated again and again as variations on the same basic ideas. The fact that images, being visualisations, come close to observations, or that metaphors are linguistic expressions, does not yet distinguish them from symbols. Symbols can be described visually just as much as verbally. Ricoeur provides the key to the answer in referring to Philip Wheelwright's observations on the hierarchical networks of metaphors of a linguistic community or culture. Some metaphors are so basic that Wheelwright calls them archetypes (Ricoeur 1976:65; Wheelwright 1962). Ricoeur points out that Wheelwright's concept of archetype comes close to the symbol paradigm of Eliade. The symbol system constitutes a serviceable fund of meanings for developing metaphors. Metaphors give linguistic form to the implicit semantic dimensions of symbols. In other words symbols are sought and expressed by means of metaphorical language. According to Ricoeur metaphors thus constitute a superstructure corresponding to the

infrastructure of symbols. This view explains the rich metaphorical language that has grown up around the major symbols.

Mythic images spring from the semantic field of the central symbols of the belief tradition and the other reality they represent. Metaphorical expressions are resorted to in verbal description of the 'otherness' of the other world. The metaphors giving meaning to mythic images often describe features of beings and places. Mythic language is characterised by recurring epithets indicating supranormality. In the North Eurasian tradition they may, for example, be epithets indicating number, colour or a metal. Animals, buildings, and even landscapes are golden, iron, or blue. There is likewise frequent mention of the number of worlds in the universe or the spirits inhabiting them. It is also a typical trait to describe some phenomenon by means of facts that are opposed or incompatible in the human world. The 'logic of the impossible' characteristic of mythic narrative is drawn on to prove that the matters spoken of are not of the everyday world. One recurring image is, for example, that of the hero who sets to work immediately he is born. In Finnish tradition this motif ties in with e.g. Väinämöinen, the eternal sage. In addition to its metaphorical expressions mythic thinking is characterised by images based on the metonymic relations between phenomena, some of which represent the whole or possess its characteristics. The special supranormal link between the part and the whole is one of the underlying thoughts behind many rites and manifestations of verbal magic. For example, a bear's teeth or bones are regarded as possessing the bear's strength.

Since mythic awareness solves the relations between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the normal and the supranormal, the language of the myth is also open and polyphonic. The concealed tradition of illiterate cultures does not provide such a widely accepted model for interpretation. In assimilating the traditional songs and narratives the shaman initiate also learns to give them a world of meanings. The search for meaning characteristic of literate cultures is, however, alien to illiterate religions. The potential uses of tradition are more important than the meanings of its contents. The openness to interpretation characteristic of the mythic tradition is also a feature of rites (Kracke 1987:39).

Although a mythic text has many strands and is open to interpretation, mythic thinking nevertheless has an inner coherence. The images are not just any images or the metaphors just any metaphors. They represent or tie in with the other world. The meanings of mythic images can be deduced from this relationship. All possible interpretations are based on the frame of reference founded on the 'other worldness'. Becoming a shaman demands an awareness of precisely this inner link and the construction of a uniform world of meanings out of the isolated and at times contradictory elements provided by tradition.

Models of Shamanic Knowledge

Narrated myths are expressions of mythical thought. However, they do not reveal all processes of mythical thinking. How do experts in belief and ritual use the elements

and images of mythic tradition? Lévi-Strauss's idea of bricolage (Lévi-Strauss 1971:17-21) is a good starting point for analysing the individual shaman's ability to use elements of shamanic oral tradition to form the narratives and songs telling of his individual experiences. The main thing, however, is that not even the bricoleur shaman is acting without certain guiding lines, knowledge patterns according to which different elements can be connected. It is possible to talk about models of shamanic knowledge in the same way as we talk about models of everyday life.

Cognitive anthropology has been interested in the forms and construction of folk knowledge. The concepts of folk models, cultural or mental models refer to commonly shared, public knowledge, which forms the basis for organising the picture of the world and for actions in this world (Clement 1982, Gentner & Stevens 1983, Quinn & Holland 1987, Kamppinen, 1988, D'Andrade 1989). Ladislaw Holy and Milan Stuchlik work on the premise that social reality is constituted reality. It consists simultaneously of both the social process and the result of this process and is made up of different areas and types of reality (1981:1). Each member of the community has a host of concepts and ideas that are in some way – either in reality or only in theory – relevant to the course of his life. These concepts as a whole may, in their opinion, be compared to the knowledge possessed by an actor. Since manifestations of this knowledge, i.e. action, can be observed and understood by others, the knowledge is shared. It is intersubjective and public. This fund of knowledge, or parts of it, cannot be presented to others in an amorphic or non-organised form: it is represented as more or less coherent structures that differ in their degree of generality. These structures may be called folk models (Holy-Stuchlik 1981:7). Roger Keesing operates more at the level of culture and the community rather than of the individual and social life in describing the concepts of folk models, cultural models and folk knowledge. In his view folk models are cultural and public, they have taken shape in the course of history and become rooted in language. Since they provide models for perceiving the world, they are at the same time cognitive structures (Keesing 1987:373). Keesing also debates the definition of these folk and cultural models so as to cover certain sectors of cultural knowledge without including all the cultural knowledge of the individual. Like Holy and Stuchlik, his primary criterion is that they are shared, and secondly that they are model-like. They may be classified as models because they do not consist of isolated scraps of knowledge but of the world-ordering models either manifest or latent in them:

> "What, then, makes the `models'? Presumably, it is their paradigmatic, world-proposing nature. These cultural constructions of the everyday world do not consist of disconnected bits of cultural wisdom, expressed in precepts, parables, proverbs, or pragmatic, probabilistic operating strategies, but of the world-proposing models embodied or expressed in these bits. Such models, then, are not presented to us in what everyday people say and do in their everyday lives, or in the stuff of metaphoric talk; they are represented in fragmentary surface facets. We must infer the more coherent, if inarticulate, models that lie beneath" (Keesing 1987:374).

Shamanic knowledge has, of course, nothing to do with everyday life. On the contrary, it is a restricted sector of secret knowledge. However, it is reminiscent of

popular knowledge in many ways. It is basically knowledge of oral culture passed from one expert to another. It also has its expression in a diverse range of traditional formulations, narratives, songs and ritual expressions.

The manifestation of folk or cultural models is a problem in itself. Students of illiterate religion know, for example, that oral religion lacking a coherent theology is not organised in clearly formulated structures but more in scattered bits of knowledge and random acts of behaviour, the relations of which are not clear at all. Ladislav Holy and Milan Stuchlik have indeed paid attention to the problems of verbal expression of folk models. They point out that a folk model will not be expressed in its entirety. People formulate partial statements to suit the situation. This means that every utterance is part of some specific situation and is influenced by the speaker's definition of the situation. Finally, the verbal statements of the people are highly indexal.

> "The meaning of what is actually said depends on a far broader background knowledge which remains unstated but is shared by other members, and on the 'logic in use' which people also share but are often unable specially to formulate." (Holy – Stuchlik 1981: 22-23).

This must also be remembered in interpreting shamanic folklore. Shamanic models are not presented as such in the verbal and ritual tradition of shamans, they are represented in narrative and song topics and in the modes of handling these topics.

The models of shamanic knowledge are rooted in the explanation and the functioning of the shamanic institution. The shaman is an expert in reciprocal ecstatic communication between the normal and the supranormal. His function as a mediator is based on systems of beliefs according to which difficulties threatening the even pace of life are caused by representatives of the spirit world, and they can be forestalled and eliminated with the help of the benevolent spirits. Although the tasks of the shaman vary somewhat in different communities, they do have one thing in common in that direct communication with the spirit world is always considered necessary in carrying out the shaman's duties. A shamanic rite is not made shamanistic merely by the nature of the task to be carried out, i.e. the aim of the rite, but by the way in which that goal is aimed at. The key to answering the question of how contact is made with the Beyond lies in the ecstatic rite technique of the shaman and the concept category helping spirits' that is part of the ideological picture of shamanism. Through the technique of ecstasy the shaman makes contact with his spirit helpers, the representatives of the Beyond, when he wishes.

The concepts as to how and where the shaman meets his spirit-helpers and other representatives of the supranormal, of whether it is soulflight or possession, vary depending on the background of tradition in each manifestation of shamanism, i.e. the forms of communication are expressed as culturally bound alternatives. The forms of communication reflect the multiplicity of the belief system, and in the Central Asian and Southern Siberian areas in particular this has become highly chequered under the pressure of tradition from the high religions of the south.

It can be observed that the ideological basis of shamanism throughout North Asia and Siberia contains similar basic structures and forms of tradition. The idea of the

'shaman's journey', metamorphoses, likewise the flight of the soul from the body, as a model for explaining sickness require as their background a very special concept of the soul. Great similarities are likewise found in concepts of the cosmos and its structure: the three-plane cosmos, the tree, column or mountain of the world combining the parts, the roads and paths of the Beyond or the stream of the world as the way of the shaman. Even though an animistic way of thinking has been regarded as typical of shamanic cultures, or reference has been made to the cults of the dead appearing in it, division of the categories of the supranormal indigenous to shamanism is difficult. Due to historical changes and various cultural influences the spirit systems of various peoples have become unique and varied in form. They do, however, all share the existence of a helping spirit model, the idea of a mutual union of man and spirit that is the cornerstone of shamanism.

As research into the phenomenology of tradition upholding shamanism has shown, not all the tradition phenomena to do with the complex are distinctive features purely of shamanism, and they may appear in extensive non-shamanic areas. For example, the death and resurrection experienced in the initiate's vision is a traditional pattern approved by Mircea Eliade as being repeated in different systems of beliefs (Eliade 1964). In being linked with the shamanic tradition complex traditional elements of different origin have become moulded in accordance with the basic ideology upholding shamanism and have gained shamanic significance.

In the mental world of the shaman beliefs and ideas representing the different components of the institutional complex are combined to form one whole. The knowledge of helping spirits or supranormal places, etc. is represented in images and motifs of shamanic tradition. These imageries form frames consisting of associated images and concepts. For example, the imagery of helping spirits contains an idea of their appearance, of their characteristics, of their dwellings and abilities to communicate and help the shaman. The limited imagery of individual motifs ties in with larger mythical knowledge structures.

Finally the network of shamanic images extends to a whole world containing images of its beings, landscapes, roads, means of transport, demonic beings, births or origins of everything in the human world, etc.

It is possible to examine the structures by which the shamanic knowledge is organised. The structuring of the mental world of shamans has been the subject of studies concerning the worldview of shamans manifested in drum drawings, for example (Pentikäinen 1987; Sommarström 1987). Cognitive theory of shamanic knowledge is in turn more interested in the processing, memorising and handling of shamanic information. It can be said that oral knowledge is not fixed in form, but constantly reorganised, reformulated and reinterpreted. This is especially the case in the area of secret shamanic or mythic knowledge. Just as a bricoleur shaman uses conventional knowledge to construct his own world of experience. In doing so he is guided by tradition and the conventional ways of handling traditional information. The creativity in reproducing mythic expressions or views has its own principles. Holy and Stuchlik state that folk models are created and recreated on the basis of a not very high

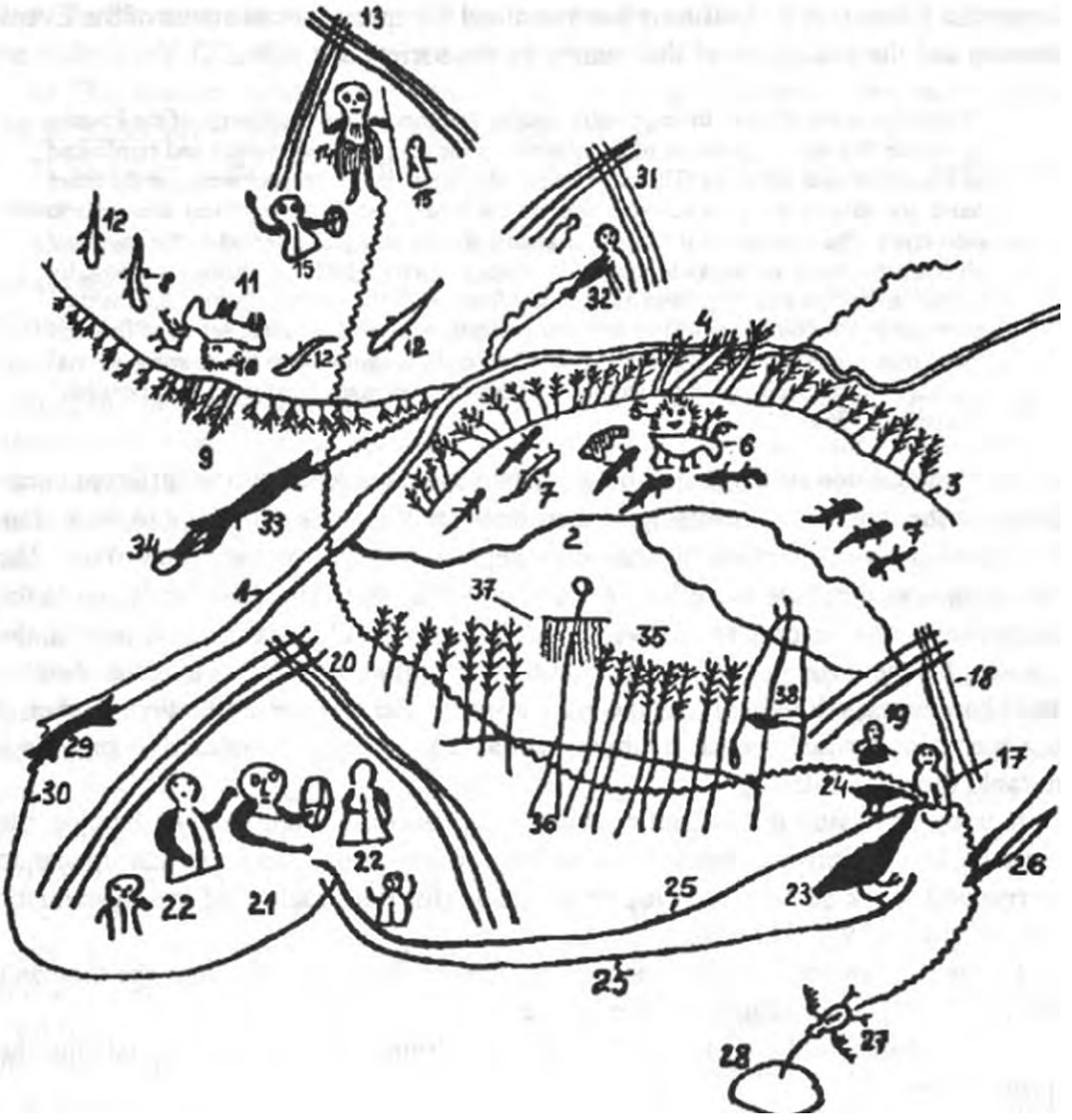
number of theoretical principles similar to those on which any scientific theorising is based: identity, correspondence, analogy, functionality, etc. (Holy – Stuchlik 1981:17). For example, the images of helping spirits in one culture are to a great extent identical; new spirit beings can be constructed on the basis of analogy, etc. In the case of shamanism this case of creative action is especially interesting. Roger Keesing says that in the long run it is more interesting to take folk models not as representing cognitive organisation, but as representing a set of operating strategies for using cultural knowledge in the world (Keesing 1987:380). We may ask how the shaman creates his own vision world on the basis of traditional information.

The Visual Nature of Shamanic Knowledge

In the 1920s and 1930s F.A. Anisimov, an expert on the religion of the Evenks, carried out field work in the Podkammennaya Tunguska region, concentrating on the religious tradition of the Evenki tribes. During his journey Anisimov also collected drawings done by shamans. A drawing by Vasily Sharemiktal, an old Evenk from the Yudukon River, showing a healing séance provides a direct insight into the field of shamanistic reality usually expressed in ritual language (Anisimov 1963:106-107). In his drawing Vasily Sharemiktal outlines the topographical elements and beings of both this world and the Beyond within a single entity, as elements of the shamanistic worldview. It may be that in preparing for the séance the shaman recalled an overall picture of the shamanistic world similar to that in the drawings, i.e. he assembled the cosmos. In addition to the structure of the shamanistic world, the location and tasks of the supranormal beings, the drawing also indicates the reason for the séance and the course of events (often unclear to the outside observer) at the level of shamanistic reality. A misfortune within the community, illness, is explained via events at supranormal level, and the model for solving the crisis is described: the events in the ritual process. The special features of the religious complex of the Evenks are manifest both in the description of the supranormal and at community level.

The drawing in fact presents two alternative models for explaining the disease: the penetration of a demon into the patient's body, and loss of the soul. We also see just how closely Evenk shamanism is bound up with the community structure. The lands belonging to the home and alien clan are clearly marked off and the antagonism between the clans is expressed in determining the origin of the disease demon. The shaman' s role as defender of the clan and as a force actively harming the enemy clan is very clear from the drawing.

The most important unit of the social structure of the Evenks was earlier the clan, with clans grouped into broader tribes. One fundamental feature was that every clan owned a 'river', i.e. an area of its own. The members of one or more clans held reindeer or elk hunts on a collective basis. The catch was then divided up evenly among all those taking part. By the end of the 19th century the patriarchal clan system had lost is economic significance. Shamanism did, however, continue to be bound up with the clan system in certain areas, and for a very long time among e.g. the Podkamennaya



Drawing by an aged Evenk, Vasilij Sharemiktal, from the Yudlukon river (Bajkit rayon, Evenk National okrug, Krasnojarsk kraj) indicating separate features of a shamanistic performance for a sick person: (1) Podkamennaja Tunguska river; (2) its tributaries; (3) the lands of the Momol clan; (4) sacred clan tree, the locality at which the clan's religious ceremonies take place; (5) the spirit of the clan territory, the mistress of the clan lands; (6) the patron-spirit *(bugady)* of the clan; (7) the clan *marylya* (stockadefence) formed by shamanistic spirit-watchmen; (8) the lands of the Nyurumnal clan; (9) the place of their clan cult; (10) the patron spirit of the Nyurumnal clan; (11) their clan *bugady;* (12) the *marylya* of the Nyurumnal clan; (13) the Nyurumnal shaman's tent; (14) the shaman of the Nyurumnal clan; (15) his assistants; (16) the track of the shamanistic spirit sent by the Nyurumnal shaman to the Momol clan in order to destroy the Momols; (17) having penetrated unnoticed through the *marylya* of the Momol clan, the spirit changes into a wood-boring worm and enters the entrails of one of the members of the Momol clan and begins to destroy his corporeal [body] soul; (18) the tent of the sick member of the Momol clan; (19) his wife; (20) the Momol shaman's tent; (21) the Momol shaman begins to shamanize in order to find out the cause of his fellow clansman's disease; his spirits tell him and his clansmen what has happened; (22) the clansmen who have attended the shamanistic performance; (23) a shamanistic spirit, the goose; (24) a shamanistic spirit, the snipe; these spirits are sent by the shaman to the sick man with orders to expel the disease-spirit; the goose and the snipe poke their beaks into the sick man's entrails and try to catch the disease-spirit;

(cont. on next page)

Tunguska Evenks. A.F. Anisimov has examined the special social status of the Evenk shaman and the evaluation of shamanism by the society. He notes:

> "From this point of view, the especially notable features are those concepts of the Evenks by which this special position of the shaman in the clan was maintained and reinforced as a norm of clan ideology. The most essential of these in this respect were, on the other hand, the idea of the clan *marylya* and, on the other, that of the mythical shamanistic clan-river. The concept of the *marylya* among the Evenks [...] referred to the mythical shamanistic fence or stockade made out of spirits, with which the shaman supposedly fenced in the clan so as to protect its members from the designs of evil spirits. The shaman, carrying out the functions of this peculiar defender-leader of the clan, set up to this end the spirits subordinate to him around the clan lands, forming from the spirits a special shamanistic stockade-fence protecting the clan from as many misfortunes as possible" (Anisimov 1963:111).

Sharemiktal describes a battle between two shamans representing different clans. Between the witches shamanising in their tents are the lands belonging to each clan, the *marylya* fences formed by the spirit helpers and the mythical clan-river. The clan-river was the route taken by the shaman both to the other clan's lands and to the underworld. Also leading to this was a path beginning with a special hole used in the drawing by the shaman's spirit helper in the form of an owl. What is astonishing is that Sharemiktal's drawing is not merely a visualisation of a static situation. Rather, it is a script for a ritual drama in which shamanic knowledge is ordered to provide a suitable functional strategy.

It is by analysing the semantic content, the course of events of the healing rite depicted in the drawing, possible to isolate the functional elements that appear to correspond to the sequences in the ritual drama (for the structure of the shamanistic rite see Siikala 1978:320-326):

1) The shaman and some members of the Momol clan have gathered in the shaman's tent (20,21,22) = preparation for the séance

2) The shaman calls up his spirit helpers by drumming (21,23) = actualising the spirit helpers

3) The shaman determines the cause of the illness by discussing with his spirit helpers (21) = meeting the spirit helpers

4) The shaman sends two spirits in the form of birds to banish the disease demon (23,24,25,26) = meeting with the disease demon

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(Notes cont.)

(25) the track of the shamanistic spirits; (26) the disease-spirit jumps out of the patient and tries to escape; the shaman's spirit-helpers, the splintered pole and the knife *[palma]*, catch the disease-spirit; the splintered pole clutches the spirit and holds it; the knife stands guard; (27) on the Momol shaman's orders, one of his spirits, the owl, swallows the disease-spirit and carries it to the abyss of the lower world in order to release it there through the anal opening; (28) entrance to the lower world; (29) the Momol shaman sends his spirit, the two-headed pike, to take vengeance on the Nyurumnal clan; (30) the track of the two-headed pike; (31) the tent of a member of the Nyurumnal clan; (32) the pike-spirit tears the corporeal soul out of the sick person; (33) the pike-spirit takes away the person's corporeal soul; (34) the corporeal soul; (35) the Momol shaman builds a fence out of larch-spirits at the place where the alien spirit penetrated; (36) over the track of the alien spirit he puts watchmen-splintered poles, *khichupkan;* (37) the skins of animals hang on the idol; (38) the hanging skin of a reindeer sacrificed to the supreme deities (Anisimov 1963:106-107).

5) At the shaman's command the spirit in the form of an owl takes the demon to the underworld (27,28) = the spirit helper's journey

6) The shaman sends a two-headed pike to bring revenge on the enemy clan (29,30,32,33,34) = deactualisation of the spirit helpers

7) Sacrifice to the gods in the upper world (38) = sacrifice sequence ending the séance

Sharemiktal's drawing shows that the shaman was able to visualise the events at the séance in a way that others could not. The shamanistic ritual is not only a sequence of ritual acts, it is a drama made up of events in this world and the Beyond which the shaman is able to visualise as a series of images and which he describes to the participants at the séance through his ritual action and his songs. Even the most idiosyncratic images of the shamanistic world and its events are culturally-oriented. For example, Sharemiktal's drawing shows the guises assumed by the spirit helpers of the Evenk shaman. A considerable proportion of shamanic knowledge is conceived in images stimulated by the shaman's songs and narratives.

Shamanic knowledge is handed down in the form of oral tradition. Narratives of former shamans and their deeds, the initiation period and visions of living shamans and their songs are all representations of the shamanic world and experience. The song episodes occupy a central position in the séance procedure. In directing the shaman's thoughts at the supranormal reality they constitute the heart of the mental process required to achieve ecstasy. On the other hand the shaman may use them to pass on information about events in the other world. In my article "Two types of shamanizing and categories of shamanistic songs. A Chukchi case" I tried to demonstrate just how closely the shaman's songs are tied to the mythical tradition. The Chukchi shaman songs repeat the themes of the belief tradition and myths. Comparison of only two shaman's songs revealed that the shamans pick out slightly different images and motifs from the common store of tradition. It is the selection of different mythical images from the choice provided by the broad tradition that makes the songs personal. The images are not, however, just any mythical images; their choice is guided by the models of shamanistic thinking. The basic themes recurring in the songs of the Chukchi shaman represent matters vital to the shaman's function. Such recurring elements are the description of a spirit helper, a call or plea for an answer addressed to the spirit, descriptions of the journey of the helping spirit, of his dwelling place, of the shaman's journey, the activities of the shaman in the underworld, of the supranormal place, of different supranormal beings, demons, etc., a plea addressed to these beings, an explanation of the purpose of the shaman's journey and information on the shaman's return.

Although the choice of images and metaphors is highly individualistic, examination of Chukchi songs reveals that their structure does observe some common schemes motivated by the events of the rite. Shaman Ukwun, for example, structured the mythical imagery of his invocatory songs using the same basic scheme: the songs began by describing the distant borders of the supranormal world and the mythological beings residing there, at the same time mentioning that each spirit-helper moves

through these distant places, and adding an invocation to the spirit at the end of each episode. He then continues with songs in which he describes the forms of his different spirit helpers and the shaman's journey in the underworld in the form of or with the aid of the spirit helper. The shaman thus locates the whereabouts of the spirits, invokes them, describes them and finally identifies with them. In his songs Ukwun literally brings the spirits from the other world to this world, and as his contact with the spirits becomes closer and closer, he falls into a deeper and deeper trance.

Samoyed invocatory songs correspond to the songs of Chukchi shamans addressed to the helping spirits. In summer 1928 Toivo Lehtisalo recorded shamanic songs by Matvej Yadn'ej, a tundra Nenets from the lower Ob who was visiting Finland A song chain connected with a shamanic séance contains the typical elements of shamanic song (Lehtisalo 1947:497 ff.). In the first song the shaman's heavenly spirits, `two times seven heavenly youths', try to catch with a lasso a reddish, full-grown animal from a herd of reindeer, and the shaman then journeys in the form of this one-year-old stag. The shaman describes in song the communication between his soul and the spirits, calling the latter by various euphemisms: `My two times seven widows', `My two times seven lovers'. In the second song we are likewise told how the shaman, transformed into the mythical Minley bird, calls and assembles his spirit-helpers, including the landward spirits, and talks to the `spirits answering the questions'. Matvej's song contains episodes in which the shaman calls the spirits and then says he can hear them coming. Some Samoyed shaman's songs, which could be called invocatory songs, contain these two elements (cf. Lehtisalo 1947, nos. 81,82, 86, 89, 90). One of the most typical features of the songs are the interjections between verses, which could be interpreted as, for example, imitation of the sounds of the spirits. Lehtisalo also reported that the Nenets shaman Gan'kka, in his songs, also described how the spirits came to him. Similarly in the third of Matvej Yadn'ej's songs we are told how the spirits, `My two times seven widows', are dressed and move along the *siimsi*-stave. The themes of Samoyed invocatory songs thus correspond to the songs of Chukchi shamans addressed to the helping spirits.

The construction of clearly structured sequences, which furthermore appear to constitute a logical succession as regards the trance induction, points in the case of invocation songs at the conformities guiding the shaman as he creates his songs. The visionary descriptions of the other world are more free in form. Aulis J. Joki published a song (recorded by Kai Donner on the shore of the upper course of the Ket River) describing the journey of a Selkup shaman:

"Yawning *aj jaa*
I walk, seeing a dream

What spirit is that over yonder?
Cunning, dark cunning,
Cunning – I rejoice – it appeared,
To me, a man of the forest.
There, a smoky gust of fire

There, on the peak of a mountain,
There a maiden, with eyes attentive, speaks.

—

The precious, leashed cradle.
Is being rocked by the *lozi*
The precious, good, leashed cradle,
is rocked by the leash of an animal.
There, further down, cunning, good cunning.
Sat itself on the cradle and continued its journey.
There, the guards (?) of the seven old princes say,
Out loud they say it:
Which way shall you be let through?
There the hero, a copper *Parhāj kwarge*,
There moves the head of the wave waters,
There undulates the wave.

—

There the hero spoke well.
He younder, what disease does he suffer from?
My eyes do not see,
my ears do not hear.
The method, the dark method
The method – I rejoice – it whitens.

—

Seated there, 'the precious throat' (the witch drum)
Sits uttering the branched words
Beginning a tale
On a cold-spring day,
On a long day spent conjuring.
On white finned, judging (?) shaman,
Whither shall I conjure You?
You, shaman, tell me,
My intelligence is not great enough,
You, shaman, know the way ahead.
There, younder – which of your spirits?
What method do you use?
There, the home of the squirrel,
There, the peak of the mountain,
The squirrel river, the animals wander.

—

There my precious god-father
Let animals into the water, taking no pay.
The spirits *(= lozila)* were surprised:
There were not so many branches,
More river animals were born.

—

The shaman pulls
The hard and ironlike handle of the door hereto.
He casts it away, door-post and all,
From there he leaves.
There a black-suited woodpecker (a spirit)
Hide itself in a hole.
The woodpecker screamed.
There yonder, the precious rods of the forest people.
At the base of a clearing,
The son of the shaman's mother.
(Joki 1978:376-378).

The shaman compares what he sees on his journey to a dream. He sees various spirit beings going about their business. There are questions about what he sees in the other world: the shaman is travelling in search of knowledge. The question 'What spirit is that over yonder?' reveals that the shaman must also be able to interpret what he sees correctly and to recognise the beings and objects that might help him with his problems. The question 'What is this?' is a recurring one in the shamanistic tradition. The shaman must get to the root of secrets not easy to identify or describe. In other words he must determine the symbolic value of an image or linguistic metaphor. The repeated expression 'there' proves that he is describing a vision. In the same way the Chukchi shaman Nuwat kept repeating the phrase 'I saw' in the songs describing his journey. The imagery in Nuwat's song was traditional (see my article "Two types of shamanizing and categories of shamanistic songs. A Chukchi case"). In the songs describing the shaman's journey the visions of the other world and meetings with various spirits follow on one from the other.

The straight testimony of the connection of shamanic songs and initiatory visions is given in song sequences referring to the death and rebirth of the shaman candidate. G. M. Vasilevich recorded the summoning of the spirits in spring hunting among the Evenks of the Sym River in 1930:

"Blacksmiths! Blacksmiths!
How many blacksmiths have I
Who forge men !
What have you forged for me? Horns on my back.
How many bellows,
How many manufacturers of metal parts?
Metal, metal, metal (refrain)
Iron filings *zašalel*
I am gathering *zašalel*
Making them much sharper *zašabi*
. . . (refrain)
How many tongs have I
Which do not yield to the *mušun* spirits?
How many hammers have I? *zašalel*
How many tongs have I
Which do not yield to the *mušun* spirits

Women who have worked,
Making stitches with dewlap hairs
Making stitches with bites of their teeth
They are lead and the black paint,
Not spoiling, softening. . .
(Vasilevich 1968:369-370)

The image of the blacksmith spirits forging the novice on the anvil and thus bringing about his change into a shaman is a common theme in initiatory visions. The manufacturing of the metal parts of the shaman's garb was also regarded as the work of these same smiths (Popov 1968:142). The last lines of the fragment hint at the making of the garb by women. In his preliminary song the Sym River shaman thus related his ecstatic initiations and his acquisition of his paraphernalia at the incorporation stage and calls the performers of the initiation, the smith spirits, to his aid. A Nenets Samoyed Matvej Yadn'ej sang the same bnd of song to Toivo Lehtisalo, which he said a shaman recited just before he began to cut himself in the séance. Verses show that the shaman recalls precisely the cutting act that took place during his initiation stage. He first describes the spirits taking part in the body cutting and describes their arrival and their performances, telling how they tore at his flesh. Next the shaman orders the spirits to get their weapons ready for him, so that together with the spirits he may repeat the events of his initiatory vision (Lehtisalo 1947:493-496, nr. 84).

We have seen that individual shamans construct their songs during their initiation period by deriving the content of their imagery from tradition. The mythic knowledge concerning the structure of the universe, the topography of the supranormal world and its various beings, forms a significant part of the material beside the knowledge of shamanic spirits and their deeds. When assimilated into the knowledge of individual shamans, these mythical images became meaningful entities according to the models of shamanic knowledge. Every shaman creates his own picture of the other world. The structuring of images in songs follows traditional patterns, the schemes of shamans' songs, which reflect the happenings of the séance.

Shamanic Knowledge and Guided Imagination

Although the teaching during the initiation period included instruction in the practical side of shamanizing, the use of the drum and in some areas the use of amanita, the main content nevertheless comprised the transfer of the shamanic view of the world, the mythical knowledge. We can conclude from some accounts that this knowledge was in part at least passed on in the form of songs (see e.g. Lehtisalo 1924:146; Tretyakov 1871:211-212). On the other hand myths telling of ancient shaman initiates have also been found among different ethnic groups. One example is the narrative of the forest Nenets Kalljaat told to Toivo Lehtisalo:

"Near Gods lake lived the lame *nannuun-kurjuuts* Samoyed mentioned earlier. Once, while cutting timber in the forest, he felt someone tugging him and found himself on the back of the sacred *mirryy* bird, who thereupon rose into the air so that the ground

was barely visible. The Samoyed began to speak: 'Why are you carrying me away? I would have died here and my bones would have remained in my own country.' He then set off walking along the broad back, came to one of the wings, where he noticed a hole. He thinks: I am going to die anyway, I would sooner climb down through the hole. He crawled into the hole and began to fall. He thinks: I am sure to break all my bones now, and it will be like falling asleep. On waking he moved his hands and feet, he felt no pain, and he finds himself lying unharmed on the ground. He got up and began to go to a mountain on which larches were growing, where he heard what sounded like an axe. Going closer to see, he noticed four resin trolls collecting resin. They shouted: 'Come here!' He went. They asked. 'Where have you come from?' He tells of his adventure and says he is on his way home. They said: 'Your land is up there, this is our land, we live here, it seems you have fallen too far.' Then they set off together for their tent, which as made of larches woven together, there were pots there and all sorts of utensils, just like in a tent. The resin trolls began to play cutting their bodies from top to bottom into two parts with a knife; thus two people were created, who after a time again combined to make one. They did the same to the Samoyed, who felt pain only in his nose. In the morning he went on again. He came to a tent made of interwoven larches, where seven *parnyy* lived. They began to play by snipping pieces of their bodies with a barbed knife; from these came new people, who after a time again combined to make one. They did the same to him. The next morning he went on. He came to a humble cottage. On one side sat an old, grey-haired man, on the other were seven beds. The man said: 'It is uncomfortable here, sit over there on the first bed.' The Samoyed sat down, but at the same time sank as if into a pipe. Up above he could just make out the man's voice saying: 'Guess whose bed you sat on.' The Samoyed pondered: 'There are all manner of disease, this must be the bed of some disease.' 'Right,' said the man, and took him up, then sitting him on the next bed, and each time the Samoyed guessed which disease's bed he was sitting on. On the seventh the man again asked: 'Whose bed are you sitting on?' The Samoyed thinks he has already listed all the diseases, and does not know what to say. After the man's third question he said: 'I do not know, my reason tells me nothing, I would sooner you took me off here.' The man said: 'He he, if you had guessed, you would never have had to die. These are the beds of my sons, I am their father. You did not remember that when a man becomes old his breast begins to decay, now my seventh son will later eat you.' He pulled the Samoyed up who made to go. The man said: 'How are you going to find the way, you poor thing, I will guide you.' He took the man to a path that was like a pipe; as the Samoyed goes along there are earth walls on either side. Light comes from above, and the path ends at the Samoyed's tent, right by he *haehe* sled. From the onwards he became a powerful seer." (Lehtisalo 1924b:229-231).

In repeating the shaman's songs under the teacher's direction or listening to the myths of how men became shamans, the novice did not intemalize only the rite technique and knowledge necessary for his tasks. He also absorbed the knowledge of how a man becomes a shaman, what his initiatory visions should be like, and what sort of scheme they should fall into. Sereptie Djaruoskin's initiatory vision was constructed as follows (Popov 1968). The initial vision (1) led to a decisive event, the falling of the tree (2), when the novice meets his spirit teacher and proceeds to the vision proper. In the company of his teacher the novice travels to the supranormal world (3-4) and here they begin a tour that could be compared to a teaching stage. (6-17). The guide shows the novice all the ways and origins of the diseases. The encounter with supranormal beings repeats the same pattern: the guide and the novice, come to a new tent, the outward features of which are described in detail, and which, like the objects and inhabitants of the tent, bear unusual, mythological significance. This symbolism

is revealed to the novice along a repeated pattern. The novice must himself guess the significance of what he sees, and only in exceptional cases does the guide give the explanation. When the novice accompanied by the guide, has made a complete tour and returned to the start of the expedition, the second stage of the vision (18-20), the ordeal by fire takes place, during which he must show that he is also able to find his own way in the supranormal world. To begin with (18) the guide is still there, though passive, but later the novice continues his journey alone. The vision thus also reflects the mental ripeness of the novice to become a shaman capable of independent action. In the last stage Sereptie Djaruoskin says: "There was nobody near me, but I found it out myself", and the moment he awakes he hears a voice saying: "If you become a shaman, you will live a long time". His fate has been reinforced, he has got through his test.

If we compare the vision of Sereptie Djaruoskin with the other reports of visions or songs telling of the initiation period recorded among Samoyed tribes, we see that the pattern of the visions is roughly the same, in other words traditional, and that the motifs of the visions are repeated in the songs performed while shamanising. Djaruoskin's personal experience, a vision journey in the other world, is surprisingly similar to the forest Nentsy myth described above. The main themes of the proceedings are uniform: 1) the initiate cutting timber meets a supranormal being in the forest, 2) he descends to the lower world through a hole, 3) there he travels from tent to tent encountering various spirits, 4) the appearance of the tents is described in detail, 5) the spirits cut themselves and the initiate, 6) the initiate becomes acquainted with the origin of the diseases, 7) he must himself guess which disease demons he meets, 8) at last one of the spirits acts as his guide. On the other hand comparison of the experiences of shamans of the same ethnic group, e.g. Samoyeds Sereptie Djaruoskin and Djukhadin, (likewise the Yakuts), shows that although the structure and motifs of the visions are broadly similar, they differ greatly in their detail, such as the number and nature of the spirits. The correct approach to the investigation of these factors, the sum of individualities appearing despite the common basis of tradition, would be analysis of the origin process of the shamanic initiatory vision.

During his initiation period the novice formed in his mind an experience model on the basis of shamanic tradition and the discussions and interpretations given by older shamans. Central and recurring elements of the vision model were the encountering of beings and spirits belonging to the supranormal world and the ways in which the shaman made contact with them in his future operations. The visions likewise reflected the shaman's knowledge of the origin of the world and its phenomena and registered precisely the topography of the supranormal world and the paths crossing it. The crucial element was the mysterious rebirth as a shaman: the spirits destroy the former ego of the candidate and turn him into a shaman.

Even though the visions are individual in their detail, they display a variety of mythical images represented by other forms of tradition. Mythical images are frequently used in different religious practices as a means of achieving sensations and experiences of the other world. Waud Kracke noticed that "Dreams move from sensory

images to verbal form, while the myth moves from language to sensory images" (Kracke 1989:37). Using the guided imagination they can be put into action when seeking supranormal experiences. The method of guided imagination has been used by Western psychologists as a means of therapy. Active imagination is something different from what we usually regard as imagination. Douglas Price-Williams says that the process consists of setting aside the critical faculty and allowing emotions, fantasies, and images to surface into awareness. His own experience is illuminating:

> "In hypnosis one time I had a subject who saw a picture on the wall. It was of a house with a path, surrounded by country scenery. While hypnotized, the subject was in a room looking up at the picture. I encouraged this subject to get into the picture, and very soon the subject was walking up the path in the picture. The active imagination process is rather like that" (Price-Williams 1989:247).

Even though the guided imagination practices are not always connected with altered states of consciousness, they may help in seeking visions. In fact, Richard Noll, when explaining shamanic training in vision as a cultivation of mental images, states that "the most effective method employed by shamans for increasing the vividness of visual mental imagery is the deliberate induction of altered states of consciousness" (Noll 1985:447). Noll's ideas of the two phases of shamanic vision cultivation, the increasing of the vividness of images and the increasing of their controlledness, are interesting. On the other hand, he is wrong in claiming that the controlledness of the shaman's mental imagery can only be relative because of the spontaneity of the imaginal contents of visions. As I have here tried to show, the mental imagery of shamans is derived from shamanic and mythic tradition.

We should, in accounting for the mechanisms behind shamanistic visions, pay special attention to the relationship between the shamanistic tradition and vision imagery. Shamanistic narratives and songs are made up of mythical imagery. From these initiates draw the motifs both for their visions and for their songs, which observe traditional schemes. Visions follow traditional models in both their structure and contentual images. During his initiation period the novice must learn to interpret what he sees. In a vision he 'guesses' what each element of the vision represents. It seems obvious that the novice, possibly under the guidance of an older shaman, selects from the stream of his mental imagery items resembling mythic images. Through recognition and interpretation he brings the image into focus, gives it life, and develops it, for mythic images of the other world are made up of frame-type information complexes. Through this image-recognition-interpretation the initiate is able to experience ever widening fields of tradition in his mind. Since the recognition experiences are felt to be significant, it is easy to recall their images at some later date. Gradually the initiate acquires a sufficient store of visual skills connected with the shamanistic world – presages of shamanistic observations. As the shaman seeking trance concentrates on these images to the point that his generalised reality orientation vanishes, these presages come to be real 'observations' in his altered state of consciousness.

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PART 2

SHAMANISM: AN ARCHAIC AND/OR RECENT SYSTEM OF BELIEFS

The last two decades have seen extensive conceptual and analytical debate about shamanism. This paper will trace the specific circumstances which cause us to use the concept of shamanism in a very wide sense, and will also outline the reasons for which it became such a prominent term in anthropological research. Shamanism, as a field of interest in ethnology, has a long history; however, there is no agreement among scholars as to the main features of shamanism among different peoples of the world.

Thee purpose of this paper is twofold: to give an overview of recent studies about shamanism, especially of those unknown to Western scholars, and to redefine the notion of shamanism using the concept of *belief system.* This redefinition is necessary because the social sciences tend to constitute rather than describe the reality under investigation. The symbolic usage of terms such as *mana, taboo, totem* and *shamanism* (Lewis 1981) could be considered an initiatory (shamanic) sickness of our scholarship.

To begin with an account of recent publications on shamanism in Siberia and Eurasia, one should first mention theoretical works by the German scholars Johansen and Motzki (Johansen 1977, Motzki 1977), monographs by Bäckman and Hultkrantz on Lapp shamanism (Bäckman – Hultkrantz 1978), and a comprehensive study by Anna-Lena Siikala on *The Rite Technique of the Siberian Shaman* (Siikala 1978), who argues that *role-taking* should be regarded as the basis of the shaman's communication with spirits, and the structure of seance defines the form of this communication.

In 1978 a collection of studies entitled *Shamanism in Siberia,* edited by Diószegi and Hoppál, was published by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The essays were written by Hungarian and Soviet scholars, with the exception of three papers by Krader, Joki and Hultkrantz. This book enriched Siberian research with new data and ideas, giving, for example, detailed analyses of shamanism among the Buryat and the Baraba Turks (Krader 1978, Diószegi 1978). After the untimely death of Diószegi in 1972, the fieldwork he had begun in Siberia during the sixties (Diószegi 1968) was continued by scholars who survived him. In 1981 a symposium on Eurasian shamanism was organized by Hoppál, in cooperation with V.N. Basilov of the Ethnographic Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Specialist who attended agreed that new data are available, and that field materials from Siberia, the *'locus classicus'* of shamanism, provide a basis for comparisons with the results of recent field work

outside Siberia. The proceedings of this symposium have been published (Hoppál ed. 1984), and some of the results will be quoted in this paper.

A colloquium organized by Roberte Hamayon on shamanism was held in Paris in 1981, and a year later a symposium on 'Shamanism among Lowland South American Indians: A Problem of Definition' organized by Joanna Overing Kaplan took place in Manchester, England. Thus, a boom in shamanistic research exists not only in Western Europe but also in the Soviet Union. It should not be necessary to mention the achievements of Russian scholarship; it is regrettable that the findings of this scientific research have been largely neglected by Western colleagues. One of the reasons for this neglect is the language barrier, the other reason is ideological: Western scholars are embarrassed by the anti-religious terminology used in Russian publications. Within the Soviet Union, however, detailed studies have been published on shamanism, mainly at a theoretical level, which treat it as a *religious* phenomenon of the *past*. It seemed for a time that shamanism had disappeared, at least according to the slogans of the so-called 'newspaper folklore'. Scholarly publications which might correct this view were printed in a very limited number of copies.

At the beginning of the 20th century the collectors of shamanic texts who described first-hand encounters with Siberian shamans were not trained ethnologists, at least in the beginning. They were political exiles, such as L. Sternberg, W. Bogoras, W. Jochelson, and N.A. Vitashevsky, who during long periods in Siberia became experts in local tradition (Siikala 1978:80-82). Then, during the fifties, Siberian shamans went into self-imposed seclusion, sometimes because of persecution, and continued their activities in hidden ways. Professional anthropologists working for one of the ethnographic institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences met acting shamans during their repeated long-term fieldwork, but the texts they collected and the names of the shamans were kept secret in the central archives. The seventies were a turning point in this respect, as a number of new publications appeared in which shamanism was analysed as an early form of religion or of social consciousness, both terms being code names for shamanism. Thus, shamanism was no longer a superstitious old faith *(staraya vera)* alien to the communist ideology.

Especially valuable works were published on the history and terminology of Buryat shamanism and a monograph on the early forms of religion among the Turkic peoples of Siberia (Mikhailov 1980, Manzhigeev 1978, Alekseev 1980) also appeared. These collections of essays include excellent descriptions and materials concerning contemporary forms of Siberian shamanism. Acting shamans were met by anthropologists during the sixties and even the seventies among the Nenets, Selkups, Nganasans, Kets, Nivkhs and other aboriginal peoples of Siberia (Vdovin ed. 1981). Investigation into more modern forms of shamanism are of great methodological importance because only new, sophisticated and well-prepared methods of inquiry will help us to clarify old doubts and misunderstandings about shamanism.

Despite the fact that ethnological literature spoke of shamanism as if it were obliterated, it has turned out from Soviet and other publications of the past years that scholars have met acting shamans all over Eastern Eurasia. Photos, tape recordings,

and even films were made about them. There is, for example, a two-hour long film at the Moscow Ethnographic Institute, unfortunately unedited, taken among the Nganasans (a Samoyed ethnic group). The entire text collected from the shaman in the film, terminology and myths have not yet been edited, although a portion is to be published in the near future (a personal communication by Yuri Simchenko).

G.N. Gracheva, a well-known scholar of the folklore of Finno-Ugric peoples, attempts to reconstruct a belief system on the basis of shaman songs texts she collected among the Nganasans. She maintains that these songs may be instrumental in the acquisition of a familiarity with the world view of participants in the shamanic seance. Between 1969 and 1978, Gracheva recorded several tapes on the Western part of the Taymir peninsula. The word-by-word translations of these texts and the accompanying field materials provide a degree of completeness which until then had not been attained, at least as far as the earlier, rather fragmentary notes are concerned (Gracheva 1981). This abundance of details, the thorough description of the cultural context and the knowledge of the language constitute the particular significance of recent Russian collections.

E.A. Alekseenko collected a great deal of material on the Kets, a small Paleo-Siberian people neighbouring the Ob-Ugrians. In her published studies on Kets shamanism, Alekseenko compares the different types of Siberian shamanism, noting which features are common to all peoples, and which ones vary from people to people. Her analysis is based on her collections made among these people and on highly detailed samples and data, mainly from 1970 to 1972. Alekseenko (1981) deems it important to compare the interrelationship of cultural elements within their system, and not merely the elements themselves, taken at random.

Continuing with contemporary Soviet researchers, Z.P. Sokolova is an expert on the Voguls and Ostyaks. Sokolova took part in nine expeditions between 1967 and 1972. In her article she quotes eyewitnesses who saw acting shamans as late as the 1950s curing the ill, helping women in labour, and sacrificing reindeers and horses at sacred places. Notes from the middle of the 18th century even mention human sacrifices. Sokolova found special tools of shamans still in use among the Voguls, and made photos of their attire and grave idols. At the end of her study she summarized the three characteristic types of Vogul shamans: (1) those working with a drum; (2) those calling the spirits by musical instruments; and (3) those telling fortune. 'Major' and 'minor' shamans were also distinguished among them (Sokolova 1984).

In studies by Russian authors the 'ethnographic present' means in reality the 1960s and 1970s, that is, today's world. V.N. Basilov, in a series of articles on Central Asian shamanism (Basilov 1976, 1978), notes that many of the older informants are still alive, or, if dead, have passed on their knowledge to others who continue to adhere to the old beliefs. Basilov also reviewed research on shamanism presently underway in the Soviet Union (Basilov 1984). The new data make it necessary to prepare a comprehensive monograph in the near future along the lines of Eliade's book (1964).

S.I. Vajnshtein has furnished invaluable data for future analysis, among them his recent studies of Tuvan shamanism (Vajnshtein 1984). He outlines their belief system

and present the cult of *ēren*, a benevolent spirit helping men and shamans. His encounters with the shamans of this small nation of Central Asia from the 1950s on – at which time his father was living in exile near the Mongolian border helping him to collect a vast amount of data. In 1963, for instance, he was able to personally follow a shaman in action curing a sick person, with the exorcism of the sickness-causing evil spirits at the center of the ceremony. He describes in detail the process of ecstasy and the fight with evil spirits, with enormous drumbeats indicating that the shaman shot 'steel arrows' at the spirits of sickness (Vajnshtejn 1975). It is worthwhile to note that in the 1930s, there were still some areas in Tuva where shamans outnumbered lamas (Vdovin 1981:130).

During her fieldwork in the late 1960s, the East German scholar Erika Taube met several female shamans, in addition to the more customary males (Taube 1981). West German scholar, Walter Heissig, an expert on Mongolian religion, reported that Buddhism in present-day Mongolia had completely lost its influence, while shamanism, despite all persecutions, continues as a form of popular religion. Incantations of pure, mixed and completely Lamaized forms can be recorded by field research in all parts of Mongolia even today. In one East Mongolian region, where in the 1940s up to thirty shamans of both sexes could still be counted, shamanism was still in full swing in 1951 (Heissig 1980:45). Various forms of shaman activities have been discovered in the recent past, not only in Siberia and Mongolia, but also in Tibet (Berglie 1982) and Nepal (Höfer 1974, Peters 1981). In Nepal András Höfer carried out extensive fieldwork from 1969 to 1974, collecting ritual texts with the help of religious specialists. There are five types of spiritual leaders there: the *lama*, the *bombo* or shaman, the exorcist of evil spirits called the *lambu*, the *village chief*, who has the most thorough knowledge of ritual texts addressed to the various Hindu divinities. Only the *lama* and the *bombo* undergo some form of lengthy training or initiation. These functions are generally passed down from father to son, although to become a shaman in Tibet, as in other parts of Eurasia, is an affair of a personal 'calling' (vocation). Today the primary function of the shaman is healing by means of his own trance technique with the assistance of his drum. His knowledge encompasses the healing of both man and animals. In the course of development of these rituals, the roles of the lama and the shaman have become distinct from each other, and have come to complement each other. It is worthy of note that in June of 1977, Höfer found six initiated *lamas* as well as six practising *bombos* or shamans (healers) and two *lambus* (exorcist of evil spirits) in a Tamang village of 546 inhabitants. Belief in the power of the rituals performed by these man and in that of the magic activities (offerings and healing) remains unbroken (Höfer 1981:35).

Returning to the Far Eastern regions of Siberia which the aboriginal Chukchis and Nivkhs inhabit, local shamans had played the central role in everyday life until the 1930s, when they were eliminated under the pretext of 'class struggle' (Vdovin 1981:216). C.M. Taksami, himself a Nivkh, met an old woman among the Nivkhs on Sakhalin Island at the beginning of the 1960s, who had quite often practised shamanism in her youth (Taksami 1981:169). Taksami recently submitted an interesting survey

entitled *Survivals of Early Forms of Religion in Siberia* (Taksami 1984). His main field of research, however, has been the folklore of ethnic minorities in the Far East. The work done by him deserves attention all the more for the fact that his recent field research shows that the ancient customs and beliefs are still living among the original inhabitants of the remote Sakhalin Island. These people sacrifice animals to the spirit of the mountains and raise sacrificial heaps along the roads, as a result of their belief in guardian spirits. They respect the spirits of forests, waters and game – a peculiar environmental protection in a modern sense. It is understandable that up to now magic acts linked with hunting have been central to the beliefs of these peoples. This belief system is still functioning and, as Taksami has stated, it is not true that shamanism has entirely disappeared. At the same time, however, it would be very difficult today to find a shaman in the classic sense of the word.

Finally, Korea is situated in the Far Eastern part of Eurasia, and its culture and history have not yet been taken into account by European students of shamanism, even though it is still a matter of living religious practice there. Korean scholars have published several volumes, one of them presenting illustrations and documentary photos only, on Korean shamanism (Kim 1981, 1982, n.d.). The data used and analysed in Taegon Kim's work were collected by himself during fieldwork throughout South Korea from 1960 to 1982. Other analyses have also been published recently in addition to Kim's article (Kim n.d., Cho 1980). These authors report that the practice of shamanism is a living reality there, and ceremonies are performed according to tradition. It is thought-provoking that in South Korea, which has followed the Japanese economic miracle, this old form of religion has been preserved; it has not only survived but is even flourishing.

In the 1960s a new generation of experts appeared both in the East and in the West in shaman studies. In contrast with the armchair scholars characteristic of the first half of the century, fabricating theories about bygone shamanism from their desks, the younger generation summarized their field experiences instead.

Here is should be emphasized that these studies prove unequivocally – even if we disregard South America and other continents for the moment – the shamanism is a living cultural phenomenon. Further on we will consider shamanism on this basis, stressing some aspects which have been neglected up to now.

The Shaman: Patient or Healer

Positivist philology did not really believe in shamanism. It accounted for it by calling it a phenomenon which had been preserved in a number of descriptions, but which remained distant and strange, like a message brought from another planet. Furthermore, a belief was spread according to which shamanism was merely of archaeological interest to philology, valuable only in terms of religious and cultural history, belonging to vanished phenomena of the past. But recent research has shown a growing conviction among scholars that there is indeed some therapeutic value in shamanism. This belief became prevalent, not only because anthropologists have tried the psychoactive

drugs themselves, but also because they have begun to believe in the social function of the shaman's role. In their eyes the shaman in not a trickster but rather a psycho-therapeutic healer who knows the ways of healing and has suffered to acquire that knowledge.

At the beginning of the century, students of shamanism such as V.G. Bogoraz, A. Ohlmarks, N.Y. Vitashevsky and M.A. Czaplicka held that the psychopathological effect of the harsh natural environment in the North played an important role in the formation of shamanism. The psychopathological phenomenology of Siberian shamanism has always been a major consideration (Diószegi 1968b); however, recent investigations and the reevaluation of earlier data have proved that most shamans emerge from among the *healthiest members* of the community.

Although Mircea Eliade argued convincingly against the view that shamans are often neurotic, unstable or epileptic (Eliade 1964:30), such negative views can, interestingly enough, still be held by scholars:

> "Briefly stated, my position is that the shaman is mentally deranged ... there is no reason and no excuse for not considering the shaman to be a severe neurotic or even psychotic" (Devereux 1980:14).

As early as 1959, László Vajda remarked

> "that whatever the connections between psychic disorders and shamanism, emotionally disturbed individuals can bring their strong drives and motivations into shamanic practice and present its transformation into a ritual routine" (Vajda 1959).

As a matter of fact there is no reason to write about the pathological roots of shamanism, as this cannot be used as a point of reference in light of recently collected data. Shamans are much healthier that the rest of the population (Mastromattei 1981:26), due to the psychic and physical strains of the deep trance.

> "Lapp shamans only shamanized until the age of fifty when their teeth fell out. Strangely enough, this was exactly the phrase used for a Samoyed shaman on his retiring" (Hultkrantz 1979:49).

Shamans must be perfectly *healthy* individuals who have the ability to achieve a high degree of concentration at times, keep an excellent physical condition and display keen intelligence (Eliade 1964:27-31).

A Hungarian psychiatrist, A. Kelemen, stated that curative activity includes not only biological but also expressly socio-psychological elements in the context of a given culture. Forms of behaviour observed in shamans, which ethnological literature tends to qualify as neurosis, were examined by Kelemen, a practising physicist, from a pathological point of view, and his conclusion was that the phenomena of shamanism which might be considered psycho-pathological are related either to the symptoms of schizophrenia, or to those of epilepsy or to those of encephalitis. The initiatory experiences of a would-be shaman strictly follow the models prescribed by the culture according to the world concept of the community. The theory of hysteria is similarly misleading, since the shaman carrying out the healing rite must maintain a high level

of composure and concentration, guiding the psychic experience of the group (Kelemen 1980).

In fact, the expectations of the group are decisive in choosing the person who will be shaman, and studies up to now have rather ignored this socio-psychological aspect (Honko 1969, Siikala 1978). Recent psychological tests have also shown that the features of a shaman's personality primarily include creativity and the ability of synthesis, both without pathological traits.

The shaman must first cure himself of the initiatory sickness, and only afterwards can cure the other members of the community. Recent studies in South Asia have shown that, out of more than a hundred Thai and Malayan shamans and mediums, none was mentally ill. Quite the contrary, they had strong personalities and had consciously accepted their highly demanding role as healer of the community (Heinze 1982).

The shaman is rather a psychotherapist than a psychopath. This has already been discussed by M. E. Opler in his article "Some Point of Comparison between the Treatment of Functional Disorders by Apache Shamans and Modern Psychiatric Practice" as early as in 1936. Lévi-Strauss later compared the healing methods of shamanism to those of psychoanalysis in a similar manner, noting that:

> "The shaman plays the same dual role as psychoanalyst ... Actually the shamanic cure seems to be the exact counterpart to the psychoanalytic cure, but with an inversion of all elements ... the psychoanalyst listens, whereas the shaman speaks" (Lévi-Strauss 1967:194–195).

A recent development, though not without antecedents, has been the evaluation of the healing function of shamans from this new angle. When reevaluating earlier ethnographic data, a strong contrast has been revealed between contemporary Western medicine and shamanic healing. Rogers, for example, states that:

> "Thousands of individuals in lesser developed countries and others in more advanced nations experience stresses resulting from dual and antagonistic systems of treating illness in traditional and modern medicine. Medical anthropology and transcultural psychology are needed in order to arrive at intelligent, humane understanding about the use and efficiency of the shaman's healing methods" (Rogers 1982:173).

Ethnographic analysis has shown that in so-called non-literate societies a shaman works as both an expert in medicinal herbs as well as a psychotherapist in the modern sense of the word. With his healing methods, rich in symbols, he relieves the patient's affliction and returns him to a productive role within the community – a characteristic method of the shaman's healing is to symbolically take the illness upon himself, removing the illness by sucking the `evil spirit' out of the patient.

Modern clinical tests have also confirmed some hypotheses built on ethnographic descriptions. It has been revealed that the recovery of North American Indians under modern psychiatric treatment, after clinical treatment had failed, was greatly promoted by the intervention of the `Indian doctor'. The sick person was initiated in the course of a ghost dance ceremony, and the shock effect of the experience and concurrent awareness of belonging to a community mobilized the healing power of the traditional indigenous culture (Jilek 1982a). It has also been revealed that movements reviving

Amerindian ceremonies, which began to flourish in the 1970s, possess an incredible healing power in the life of Indians who have lost their cultural roots, living in big cities and facing identity disorders. Indians who are likely to become neurotic (alcoholics, drug addicts or suicides), for reasons outlined above, are being resocialized by these community ceremonies.

The healing powers of shamans has been recorded for South American Indians in addition to North American. Gerhard Baer discussed the former quite comprehensively in his Manchester lecture. He concluded that, in South American Indian communities, the most important social function of a shaman is the role mediator, serving as a three-way intermediary between the group he is guiding, the inhabitants of the spirit world, and Nature. The essence of mediation is to establish and maintain an equilibrium, first of all, to cure the sick and relieve tensions within the group – which can only be done if the three spheres are balanced. Another important lesson is that the religious system (the belief system and value system) or, more generally, the ideological sphere mediated by the shaman legitimizes the social structure and the structure of power (Baer 1982:11).

Since similar phenomena are experienced in the modern world and not merely among tribes in the jungle, it should be stressed that the life of so-called 'primitive' societies can be viewed as a model, indeed as a living – and not an artificially created – model, the study of which would be instructive. Among other things, the healing model employed by the shaman, though rite with the characteristics of mytho-religious consciousness, is never simply the *right* which triumphs over the *wrong,* but rather it is the *stronger* knowledge which triumphs over the *weaker.* This power can only be obtained by long preparation, fasting, sexual abstinence, purity and concentration in such a way that the shaman keeps order over his immediate environment, maintaining rather a 'psycho-social' than 'psycho-mental' equilibrium over it by remaining in a state of constant mental and physical alertness.

Recent interest in hallucinogenic agents has been a new and interesting aspect in the research on shamanism starting in the 1960s and 1970s (Harner 1973). It is no accident that interest in mind-expanding drugs rose at this time, since these decades coincide with the emergence of the 'drug cult' in the West. It was then that anthropologists started to examine hallucinogenic agents used by pre-literate societies, as well as their function in different cultures (Dobkin de Rios 1976). Although the use of hallucinogenic plants and mushrooms was known to be a part of shamanism, European and particularly Soviet research somehow ignored this aspect. We are in complete agreement with Michael Harner who stated that:

> "Undoubtedly one of the major reasons that anthropologists for so long underestimated the importance of hallucinogenic substances in shamanism and religious experience was that very few had partaken themselves of the native psychotropic materials" (Harner ed. 1973:vii).

By now there are a number of firsthand field reports on different cultures analysing the cultural variables of a drug-induced altered state of consciousness (Dobkin de Rios 1973).

In Eliade's work ecstasy was only a technique. Siikala was the first to compare shamanic ecstasy with altered states of consciousness. There is a chapter in her book which deals with the questions of culturally patterned altered states of consciousness (Siikala 1978:31-52). In order to analyse the mechanism of ecstasy in shamanism it may be helpful to turn to the results of hypnosis research, since hypnosis is an altered state of consciousness which can be induced under efficiently controlled experimental conditions. Traditionally, however, hypnosis is conceptualized as a sleep-slike state – it is induced by procedures aiming at decreasing one's activity level: relaxation instructions, suggestions of sleep and eye closure. This traditional hypnosis excludes the usual forms of ecstasy characterizing the shamanic trance.

Éva Bányai (Department of Comparative Psychology, University of Budapest) developed a completely new active-alert induction procedure by which a hypnotic-like altered state of consciousness could also be achieved under experimental conditions. In this method the subject rides a bicycle ergometer under load, with the eyes open. While exercising in this manner, verbal suggestions are given to enhance his alertness, attentiveness and a feeling of freshness (Bányai – Hilgard 1976). The effect of the active-alert induction procedure was subjected to complex analysis, taking into consideration the subjective experiences, behavioral manifestations and psychological changes. The active-alert induction was administered in four experimental series to a total of 94 subjects. The analysis of subjective experiences revealed that – in contrast with traditional hypnotic induction – the applied induction technique was effective in inducing a hyper-alert ecstatic state, or, as the subjects expressed it, a peak experience. The subjects felt a very active participation in their task. Beside these differences, active-alert hypnosis was also characterized by a relinquishment of the planning function, a lack of reality testing and a notion that attention can be highly focused.

As a result of active-alert induction the hyper-alertness of the subjects was also manifested in behavioral signs. The speed of pedaling increased posture became more tense and movements were accelerated and often exaggerated in extent. Similar to traditional hypnosis, after active-alert induction the responsiveness to every type of test suggestion (motor facilitation and inhibition, positive and negative hallucinations, hypnotic dream, hyperamnesia, analgesia, post-hypnotic suggestion and amnesia) increased in comparison to the wake condition. The manner of administering the test suggestions was essentially the same in the active-alert induction as in traditional hypnosis: dissociations, clear, vivid, dream-like visual imagery, memory improvement without effort, rationalization of post-hypnotic suggestions were present after both inductions (Bányai 1984).

The above analytical results were presented by Bányai at a Symposium on 'Shamanism in Eurasia' (1981) and accepted as a relevant contribution toward the understanding of the psycho-physiological basis of ecstasy.

As the subjective and behavioral modifications induced by active-alert induction demonstrate, active-alert hypnosis may become an appropriate experimental model of the ecstatic trance states of shamanism. These studies have been reviewed here in

order to provide new insights and models of shamanic approaches to the human psyche, through the shaman's way of healing, which is one of their main social functions.

Shaman as Symbolic Mediator

Although Eliade discusses shaman as psychopomp (Eliade 1964), enumerating a series of examples of the symbolism in the shaman's costume and drum, the symbolic aspects of shamanism have been treated in more detail only in the most recent studies.

In his paper 'The Shaman as Representative of his Grouping', Ivan Kortt dealt with the motif of 'dismemberment' and with the symbolism of the skeleton represented symbolically on the shaman's attire. In initiation rituals the dismemberment of the shaman-to-be seems to be a symbol of temporary death followed by rebirth. This means simply that initiation is closely connected with death and the bones of the skeleton symbolize the whole clan or lineage. According to Kortt's analysis, the shaman serves as the representative of his clan in the other world. In Siberian shamanic rituals there is an important hidden meaning connected with symbolic rebirth, particularly in ecstatic initiation, which takes place in the other world (i.e. the spirit world), where the shaman candidate acts as a mediator between the two worlds (Kortt 1982).

Similar conclusions were drawn by Juha Pentikäinen in his paper presented at the symposium on Eurasian shamanism, in which he analysed the Saami (Lapp) world-view. There is – as the Lapps believe – an upper world of skies and heavenly gods, a middle stratum occupied by human beings, and another world, or the upside-down world, the land of the dead. These realms, although discrete, with well-defined occupants and a distinct locus, often interact or manifest themselves in the human realm. These interactions produce observable, experienced phenomena encountered by individuals in the course of their lives. The Saami shaman, *noaide,* in his many roles, is the main leader of this interaction, the mediator between the forces and elements of the three worlds of the universe (Pentikäinen 1984).

In Siberian myths, especially in those of the Buryats, shamanism and human deaths are intimately associated in their very origins. The shaman as a mediator is placed at those extremely critical points where the human and suprahuman spheres do indeed overlap. The shaman's activity covers the liminal spheres of the world which are dangerous for ordinary human beings and for shamans as well. His or her mediating activity relies on beliefs in symbolically taking all the difficulties (pain, sickness, responsibility of decision-making, etc.) upon himself or herself. All these observations and data truly stress the utmost significance of the symbolic aspects of the mediation process. Most recent publications agree that this mediation is a central part of shamanistic ideology. Here shamanism as an 'ideology' is understood not as a religion, but rather as a special system of beliefs centred around symbolic meditation as discussed above. A.L. Siikala paid little attention to the symbolic aspect of shamanism, but rightly stated that:

> "The shaman's function as mediator between the normal and the supranormal worlds is based on systems of belief according to which difficulties threatening the even pace of life are caused by representatives of the spirit world, and they can be eliminated with the help of benevolent spirits" (Siikala 1978:319).

In Siikala's opinion the main task of the shaman is to create a direct and reciprocal state of communication aimed at the spirit world, and the very structure of the shamanic seance reflects this communication.

The same opinion is held with regard to the shamans of North and South American Indians, inasmuch as they are viewed as those who "served as mediators between the sacred and profane worlds" (Bean 1976:110). Or, as B. Myerhoff puts it:

> "The Shaman is above all a connecting figure, bridging several worlds for his people, travelling between this world, the underworld and the heavens" (Myerhoff 1976:99).

As a mediator, the shaman is the restorer of balance. In other words, he maintains a shamanic equilibrium of power relations within his community and the outside worlds. Those who have access to the channels of communication have more power within their community.

The shaman as a mediator is a specialist in ritual communication and in maintaining the fragile state of social/psychological equilibrium by symbolic mediation between worlds of ordinary and non-ordinary realities. He has special symbols which give him power, and all in all shaman ceremonies symbolize the process of eliminating ordinary reality in order to gain access to another state of consciousness, or, to put it even more briefly: symbols make the shaman.

Shaman as Poet/Singer

In this chapter I call attention to another important, but somehow neglected, aspect of shamanism. The so-called poetic aspects of shamans' songs have recently been analysed in three interesting papers (Hajdú 1978, Joki 1978, Simoncsics 1978). Nobody would deny that a strong affinity exists between shamanic performance and the ritualized narration of myth (legend or a heroic epic) by singers of traditional oral narratives. Here the poetic aspect of shamanic narratives is understood at least at two levels: first stylistic, and second functional.

As R. Mastromattei characterized shamanic texts by their ecstatic quality, claiming that "a text becomes shamanic primarily *qua* recited in an ecstatic context" (Mastromattei 1978:7). Since there are only very few studies on the poetics of shaman songs, this would be an urgent task for future research – not only the collection of shamanic texts, but also a detailed analysis of phonetic and semantic levels would seem to be important, given active-alert hypnosis as a model of ecstasy. Similarly, glossolalia can be seen as the audible (phonetic) expression of the neuropsychological trance process (Goodman 1972).

The oral ecstatic performance and collective singing were important features of the pre-ecstatic phase of the Lapp seance (Pentikäinen 1984). In symbolic healings per-

formed by the shaman, magic incantations were used throughout Eurasia (cf. *cantatio* 'singing', Latin *cantio* = song). The shaman mediated between illness and health with the help of songs. Here symbolic, poetic and healing functions are intertwined. In 1968, for example, a therapeutic seance in Northern Afghanistan was performed by a *baxsi* or shaman with the aid of *qobuz* or horsehair fiddle and singing (Centlivres – Centlivres – Slobin 1971:160).

There are data suggesting that the shaman and the singer of oral tradition (i.e., the poet of non-literate societies) were the same person. A.T. Hatto chose 'Shamanism and Epic Poetry in Northern Asia' for his Foundation Day lecture topic, in which he noted that heroic epics were sung by shamans among the Voguls and Ostyaks. Narration was normally in the first person, and the 'voice' was that of the hero. There is an 'inner style' of shamanic epic narration among the Ob-Ugrians, and the roles of shaman and bard once overlapped among the Samoyed as well (Hatto 1970:7-9). Among the Buryats shamans were the principal guardians of the rich heroic oral literature (Eliade 1964:30).

Reference should be made here to V.V. Ivanov's proposal for a new etymology of the word 'shaman'. There is a Sanskrit word *saman* 'song'. This implies that the shaman is literally the person who sings the song with long genealogies, to cure, to conjure, to heal. He is not simply an 'ascetic', but also a wise man and poet. One of the main roles of oral-traditional poetry in culture is to create a bridge between past and present. This again is a form of symbolic mediation with the aim of maintaining group identity by means of oral tradition. The ailing identity consciousness of a given society (ethnic minority) is nurtured by the poet-shamans through repeated ecstatic or quasi-ecstatic oral performances. In modern contemporary poetry, examples could be found to label some modern poets as a continuation or extension of shamanic traditions – employing songs as a psycho-social healing method even today (Zolla 1973, Giordano 1981).

From this point of view a recent renaissance of shamanism could be seen as a new and contemporary form of folklore, one could use the term *folklorism* here which, in contrast to folklore, is a politically or economically manipulated form of contemporary folklore. As a matter of fact, shamans have assumed new roles in the cultural integration of their peoples. With respect to the relationship between native religion and ethnic identity, the former plays an exceptionally important role in the preservation of the traditional system of values and beliefs, or, in a broader sense of the word, in the preservation of a culturally distinctive way of life. Shamans or other religious leaders (native ritualists, medicine-men, folk healers, singers or poets) have played a prominent role, for instance, in the recent renaissance of North American Indian ceremonialism (Jilek 1982a, Posern-Zielinska 1981).

Here again we return to a neglected aspect of shamanism, viz., the role of the shaman in the preservation of cultural identity. This role could be defined as a mediation between the cultural heritage of the past and the present situation.

The performance of shaman songs by a Nganasan shaman (D. Kosterkin) before the participants of the 7th ICAES in Moscow in 1974 (Gracheva 1981:89) could be

seen as folklorism. A South Korean *kut*-ceremony performed in a folk-festival, or a North American Sun Dance ceremony could fall into the same category, but it is necessary to bear in mind that, in spite of their differences, there is a common feature in all of these: these pseudo-shamanic events serve just as much to maintain the cultural continuity of their groups. Contemporary shamans, in their capacity as healer or poet/singer, have accepted the role of symbolic mediation as a means of the cultural policy of identity-preservation. This may well be a contemporary form of folklore, or even a new function of it, taking shape in front of our very eyes. At this precise point we return to the beginning of the present essay, emphasizing the contemporary character of shamanism.

Towards a New Definition

In the literature dealing with the question of shamanism there is a constant dissatisfaction with the definition of the term `shamanism' itself, since it is applied to entirely different cultural complexes occurring within different ecological contexts, not to mention their different inner structures.

The earlier definitions of shamanism are based on the assumption that ecstasy is the main feature of the shamanic rite (Eliade 1964). In any case, however, it was a very widely accepted practice to treat shamanism in general as a religious phenomenon (Voigt 1978:61) or as a form of religion ("certain definite grade of the cult of the spirits" – Diószegi 1968:8) or even as an early form of religion on the evolutionary ladder. This last view is held by Soviet scholars.

Most recently, according to another definition `spirit possession' and shamanism regularly co-exist, and the most analytically fruitful use of the term `shaman' is, as I.M. Lewis argues, to designate a charismatic religious *role* involving the mastery or control of spirits. This role is best described in terms of a recruitment pattern involving separate but interrelated phases: the initiatory trauma; a process of treatment; and finally the achievement of control over the spirits. In the last phase the patient has been transformed into an initiated healer shaman (Lewis 1981). This usage detaches the concept `shaman' from any specific `shamanic' cosmology, liberating it for general cross-cultural use in the analysis of religious functionaries and roles.

Other definitions attempt to understand and define shamanism from social perspectives, as an institution which serves to construct a meaningful semantic universe by the process of symbolic mediation. Shamans as mediators create order and reestablish balance within their groups such that their role is socially embedded in their cultures (Hoppál 1975).

This social integration of shamanism throws some light on the sphere of everyday beliefs. Here I list some examples to illustrate these everyday aspects of shamanism not taken into consideration by previous research. The everyday aspects are to be found in descriptions: sleep (the initiatory or, more exactly, the preceding or closing act of shamanic ecstasy – Dobkin de Rios 1976), yawning (the gesture of taking in helping spirits through the mouth – Hultkrantz 1979:49), dream (a state of acquiring knowl-

edge) or fasting, one of the possible and widespread techniques of preparation for trance in different cultures. A number of data are available in this respect not only in descriptions of Siberian shamanism, but also in accounts taken among the Lapps, Mongolians, Koreans, and Hungarians. Fasting is also mentioned with regard to North American Indians, e.g., the Kwakiutl shaman, before the healing ceremony, purifies himself by vomiting, a hot bath and long fasting, so that fasting was experienced mentally as well as physically. Purification meant a physical and mental, or even psychical, preparation for trance, which improves the efficiency of psychoactive agents (Shepker 1981:102).

> "When a young man decides to undergo apprenticeship, he first spends a month or more in isolation, purifying his body of the substances that would otherwise obstruct his learning and cause bad visions" (Langdon 1979:68).

Fasting, yawning, sleep, trance, possession, motifs of shamanic flight, and drums or bows as means of prophecy are the elements of the everyday system of beliefs, but at the same time they belong to the shamanic complex as well. Thus Å. Hultkrantz tends to give a correct definition of shamanism as the complex of beliefs, rites and traditions clustered around the shaman and his activities. All these traits constitute a well-organized net of interrelationships, a religious configuration *within the religion.* In some hunting and pastoral regions of Siberia, this configuration is so profiled and domineering that observers from the outside have mistaken shamanism for a religion (Bäckman – Hultkrantz 1978:10). In a definition the concept of belief system is of central theoretical importance as a recently accepted term, standing for a set of rules guiding everyday behaviour (Hoppál 1979b).

Shamanism is a complex system of beliefs which includes the knowledge of and belief in the gods of helping spirits in the shamanic pantheon, the memory of certain texts (prayers, shaman-songs, legends, myths, etc.), the rules for activities (rituals, sacrifices, the technique of ecstasy,etc.), and the objects, tools and paraphernalia used by shamans (drum, stick, bow, mirror, costumes, etc.). All these components are closely connected by beliefs given in the shamanic complex.

Of these elements, some always appear jointly with specified others, and, of course, the set of elements which make up the shamanic belief system are always different in different cultures (Siikala 1978:322). On the basis of beliefs the members of a given community believe that shamans are able to get in touch with spirits for different purposes (healing, prophesying) or to take a journey to the underworld in the state of trance, with the help of a rhythmical background music (a drum or other instrument), or hallucinogenic agents, in order to contact deceased.

I suggest to conceive shamanism as a belief system, because this term is more neutral than its alternative definition as a form of religion. The heretofore neglected aspects of this phenomenon which this paper has presented are more secular in character than they are religious.

In our post-religious world it is perhaps more proper to speak about beliefs, attitudes, convictions, or ideological practices (Glaubensvorstellungen), than religion. In this sense shamanism is a belief system which involves the acceptance of certain

social roles (a healer, poet, or ideologue, or all of these together). These are no longer in the sacred sphere of culture today, but on the border of the sacred and the profane; not in that of religion, but rather on the threshold between religious and everyday beliefs. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from the most recent research, and this may be an explanation for shamanism adapting itself to our own everyday life – as the examples cited above demonstrate. It appears in extremely varied forms, but renews, formulated and expresses – with varying degrees of success – an overtly altruistic ideology which, in our egoistic and materialistic times, contains a decisively positive program for life.

ON THE ORIGIN OF SHAMANISM AND THE SIBERIAN ROCK ART

Introductory Notes on the Beginnings of Shamanism

Scholars tend to disagree on the problem of the origin of shamanism. Even such a highly respected author as Mircea Eliade supposed that recent researches have clearly brought out the 'shamanistic' elements in the religion of paleolithic hunters. He referred to Karl J. Narr's theory on the possible connection between 'Bärenzeremoniell' and the shamanism of Stone-Age in Europe. His conclusions are as follows:

> "Animal skulls and bones found in the sites of the European Paleolithic (50.000–ca. 30.000 B.C.) can be interpreted as ritual offerings [...] and in connection with the same rites, the magico-religious concepts of the periodic return of animals to life from their bones, crystallized [...] Soon afterwards, probably about 25.000, Europe offers evidence for the earliest forms of shamanism (Lascaux) with the plastic representation of the bird, the tutelary spirit and ecstasy" (Eliade 1964:503).

These statements about the bird, the spirit helper and the shaman – the so-called 'Dead Man's picture' – were widely accepted in the literature, in spite of the fact that Annette Laming never mentioned shamans in her book (Laming 1959, Tab. 35).

In the 50s it was a kind of scholarly fashion the write books on the prehistory of religion based on the rich illustrative materials of the European cave-art. In these books each human-like creature was labelled as 'Zauberer' or demonic figure, and their supposed activity usually called 'Jagdmagie' (Kühn 1952). J. Makkay, a Hungarian archaeologist, published an article in 1953, in which he interpreted a masked human portrait of the cave Les Trois Fréres, as an important proof of the prehistory of shamanism. This well-known horned creature is supposed to be a sorcerer, or moreover a shaman (Makkay 1953).

Andreas Lommel went even further in the way of unsupported assumptions in his book on 'Medizinmnäner, Schamanen, Künstler' of the early hunters (Lommel 1967:173, Haydu 1970). Lommel argued that the arts of our times (art = in the sense of profession ex Latin) have their origin in the world of prehistoric hunters ('der frühen Jäger'), about 50,000–10,000 years ago. In a chapter on *'Art and Shamanism'* he tries to persuade the reader that the famous X-ray style of the Franco-Cantabrian prehistoric cave art was in connection with shamanism. Lommel's book has to be read with a

critical eye because his lengthy bibliography fails to mention the most relevant works, both on Paleolithic cave art and the recently published (that is, up until the mid-sixties) Soviet books on this topic.

André Leroi-Gourhan, whose valuable works on 'préhistoire de l'art occidental' are well-known, pointed out how difficult it is to demonstrate the existence of shamanism during the Paleolithic time. For instance in publications on the topic, all the female figurines are labelled as 'Venus' (with features of steatopygia) and the males as magicians or sorcerers, these later ones sometimes called 'shamans' (Leroi-Gourhan 1964, 1977).

It is, however, more difficult to pinpoint the beginning of shamanism, and some scholars believe that certain cave drawings, the date of which cannot be established, represent shamans and objects used by them. It has also been suggested that since various metals played an important role in the Bronze Age this could help us in dating (Vajda 1959, Voigt 1977). This is not impossible, but only the most recent publications provide us with new and almost countless data, that can count as tangible proofs, if there are any, in rock art. In this respect the 1960s and 70s were the turning points, during which completely unknown materials have been presented in new publications, from South West Africa (Lewis-Williams 1981, 1983) through the Sahara (Lajoux 1977) up to northern Europe (Glob 1969) and Central Asia (Sher 1980), and from the vast territories of Siberia (Okladnikov 1966, Okladnikov – Martinov 1972, Okladnikov et al. 1979).

It is for the specialists to judge the validity of the theories, based on the materials of rock art of different territories, establishing contacts between the drawings, engravings or paintings, and the magico-religious beliefs of the supposed 'artists'. What seems to be certain, at least in Siberia, the *locus classicus* of shamanism, is that a theoretical possibility exists findings the first expressions of shamanistic rituals and symbols on the rocks of Central and North Asia. Moreover, Siberian rock art could be seen as the earliest documents available to us on the prehistory of Eurasian shamanism, or to use a more precise expression, these data could shed light on the religious belief complexes from which the Siberian shamanism emerged and started to develop.

During the last four decades Soviet scholars discovered and published several hundred articles and books on rock drawings of Siberia. This brand new material has not been systematically examined, however, there have been attempts to determine the beginning of shamanism in Siberia with the help of archaeological data. A. P. Okladnikov stated that shamanism had its start as a complex magico-religious practice about the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C. in the Baikal region (Okladnikov 1955:344-348) and about the first millennium on the Ural and Ob river territories (Okladnikov – Martinov 1972:219). Others also attempted to decipher the early anthropomorphic images (of the Okunev-Culture 2000-1500 B.C.), as possible evidence of early shamanism (Matyuschenko 1962, Leontiev 1978).

Among the anthropologists the first of those who were interested in the problems of early shamanism were the students of the history of religions especially those of Turkish peoples (Potapov 1978).

In the most recently published book one can find on the prehistory of Buryat shamanism, T.M. Mikhajlov's remarks on fertility cult, matriarchat, totemism, cult of the sun, worship of ancestors, and 'magico-religious beliefs' as reflected in the petroglyphs, are typically vague statements without any specification to any tribe or culture. There is only one exception, when he mentions (Mikhajlov 1980:56) the human figures with horns on their head-dress as typical images of Glazkovo period (2000-1000 B.C.) and of the later shamans as well.

N.A. Alekseev, in his book on the early forms of the religion of Turkic peoples in Siberia, made no reference to petroglyphs as possible sources for the study of Siberian shamanism was formed under the late influence of Buddhism (Alekseev 1980). But not everybody shares this view, for instance A.N. Bernstam published some interesting drawings from the rocks of the Fergana Mountains (VII–I centuries B.C.) as evidences of shamanic rituals (Berstam 1952:65-68).

In the following parts of this paper the different types of images from Siberia will be enumerated with some critical and methodological remarks, and finally some ethnosemiotic remarks will be presented.

Distinctive Features of Early Shamans (in Siberia)

If there is no agreement about the beginning of shamanism, then one can find even more varying opinions about the characteristic traits of the supposed sorcerers or shamans In the following, a tentative and preliminary typology will be presented, based on recent publications of Soviet scholars. It must be noted here that our outline of the literature is not complete, because it is almost impossible to gain access to the publications of different regional museums, or research institutes and universities.

I will not take into account here the almost infinite number of animal-images in the Siberian rock art, but only the anthropomorphic or human-like figures will be enumerated. It seems quite natural that only human figures could be counted, and only those of them which have one or more specific traits. It is a reasonable assumption that the early shamans had some distinctive features as well as their later colleagues, since they were not ordinary members of their community. What kind of features should be looked for?

These anthropomorphic figures have special markers which were deciphered by Soviet archaeologists as specific signs which signify shamans, notably in the first place the whole body-image: human-like figures in a standing and/or in moving (dancing) position (figs. 1 and 8). These anthropomorphic figures have either animal heads, or a simple human-head-like image, which sometimes bears horns. The other group of pictures with animal heads can be divided into two groups: creatures with bird-heads and with bearheads (figs. 2, 5, 11). In Siberia near the Tom-river, schematic figures with bird-heads could be found on rocks (dated to the turn of second and first millennium B.C. see fig. 1 a and b) which were identified as being shamans by Okladnikov and Martinov (Okladnikov – Martinov 1972:188). They argued this on the grounds that in Siberia bird-type shamans are well-known and were practising till

Fig. 1 Bird-Headed anthropomorphic figures (2000-1000 B.C.) *a-b:* Tom river; *c:* Tas-Hazaa. – (Okladnikov – Martinov 1972:188)

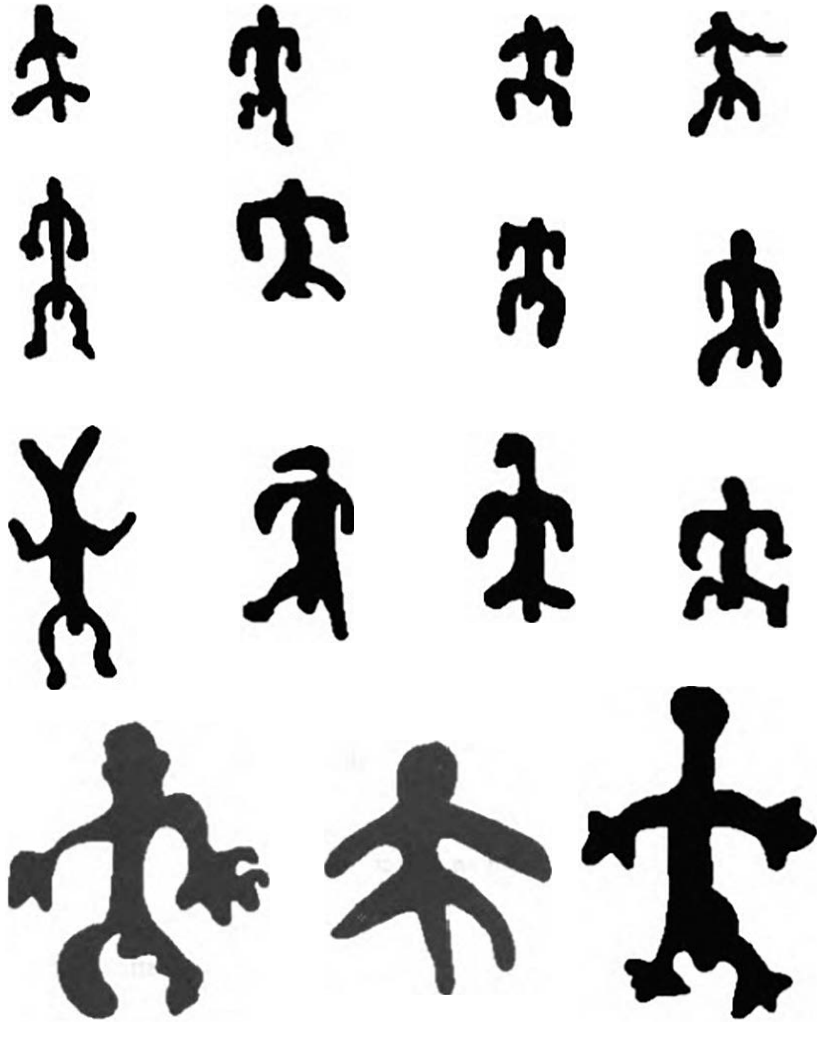


Fig. 2 Anthropomorphich figures (with phallic feature) Baikal region – (Okladnikov – Zaporozhskaja 1970, 2:75)

the turn of the last century. There is a recent example from the 19th century, a rock drawing of Khakasia which clearly depicts a bird-headed creature (Kyzlasov – Leontiev 1980, Tab. 48), possibly a shaman (fig. 5). The hands of the figures also have *diffentia specificae*, for example: bird's claws or human hands, sometimes holding an object, a roundshaped instrument (a drum? or bow and arrow – fig. 3) or a stick like tool (figs. 19, 20).

The stylistic work of engravings also offers another series of distinctive features

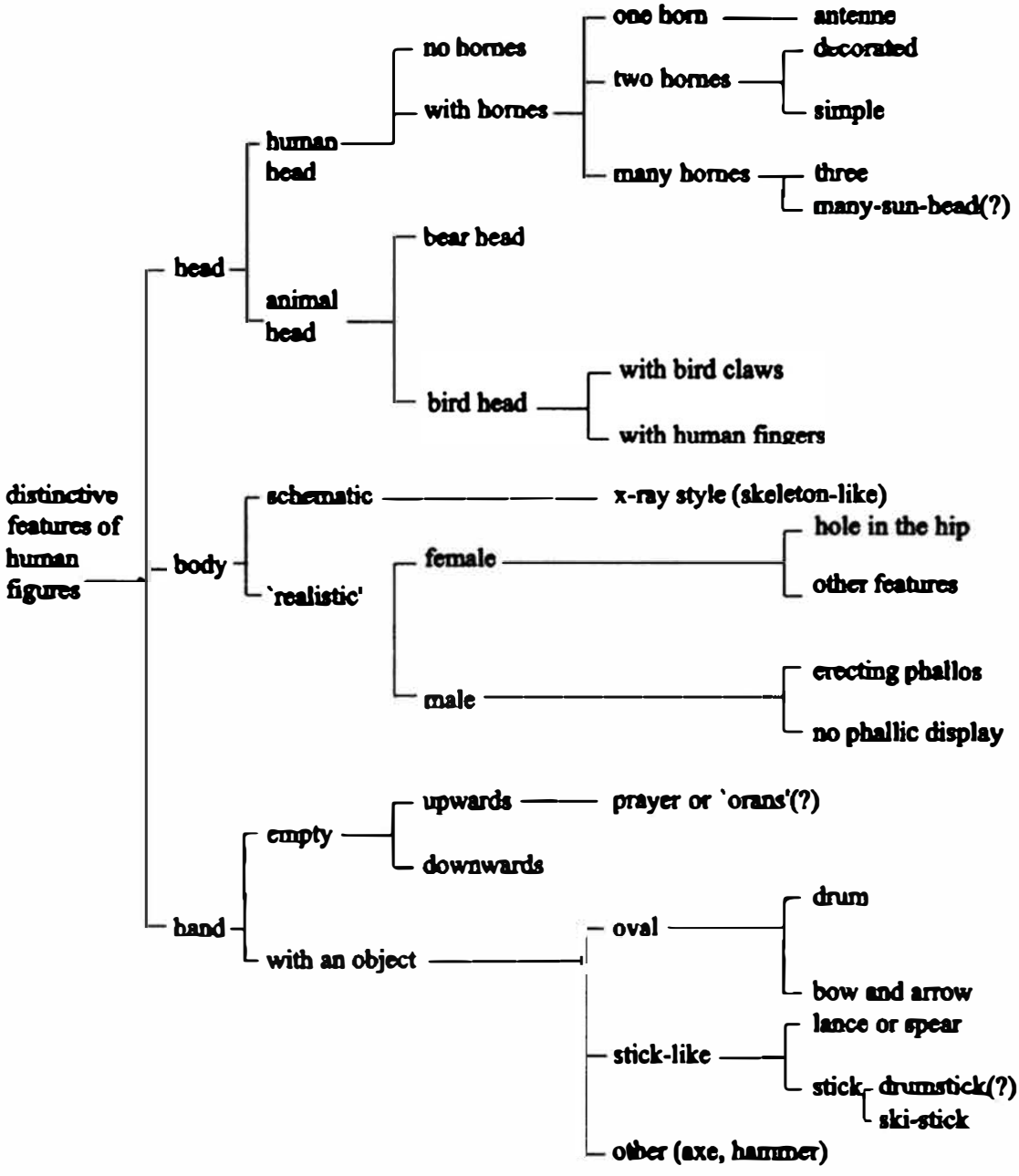


Diagram 1

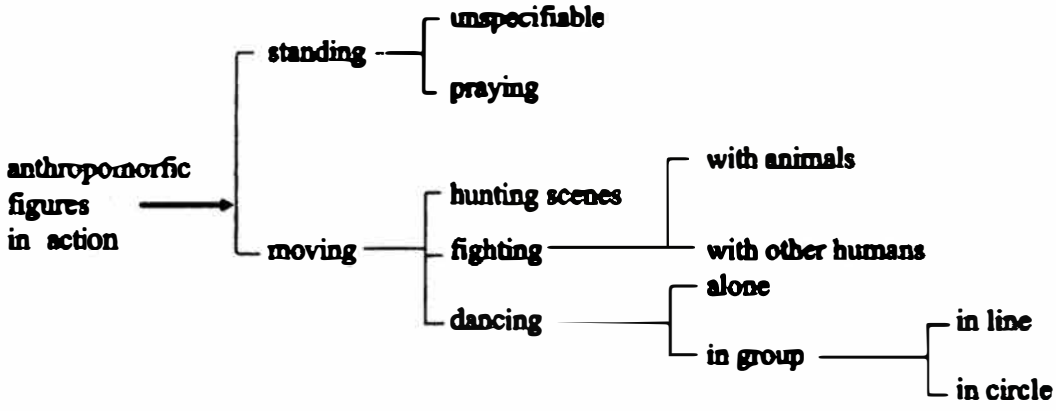


Diagram 2

for a detailed description of rock art images. For instance the 'realistic' as opposed to schematic drawings of the human body (the so-called x-ray style) can be clearly distinguished, as well as the female and male figures. These later ones frequently depicted with an erect phallus (figs. 1.b, 6, 7.a, 12). Rock drawings of the Baikal region have a phallic character (Okladnikov – Zaporozhskaya 1970:76) and Soviet researchers have made efforts to explain these images in terms of the fertility cult, or cults of the snake and of the bull, signifying human figures with phallic features.

Another set of distinctive features could have been derived from the description of acting figures and of the context. Here by context we mean the set of the immediate neighbouring images on the coherent surface of a given rock. This context could consist of human beings or animals of which especially the latter ones seem to be very characteristic of the different cultural areas of Siberia, and clearly show sharp differences in the worldviews on which rock engravings are supposedly based (Okladnikov – Martinov 1972).

By the help of these distinctive features enumerated above (see diagrams 1, 2) a very detailed, more or less exhaustive, description can be made on each figure of every rock drawing and it is also possible to make a tentative typology of anthropomorphic figures of Siberian rock art. According to the opinions of Russian colleagues the following main types of shamanistic images can be found on the rock of Siberia:

(1) bird-head (dancing bird-like figures)
(2) human-figures with phallus
(3) anthropomorphic figures with horns (figs. 8, 17, 21)
(4) masks with horns and antlers (figs. 15, 16, 18)
(5) shamans with drum (figs. 21, 22, 23)

We have already dealt with the first two groups of drawings but there are data to prove that in the whole territory of Siberia, anthropomorphic figures with horns were carved into rocks presumably to denote shamans with antlers, since the deer-type shamans wore headgear with horns during their seance (Leontiev 1978:111). If there are too many little horns or 'radiating rays' on the head of anthropomorphic beings,

Fig. 3 Human figures with instruments (with bows and arrows) Inner Asia, Hobd Somon – (Okladnikov 1980:250)

they could probably rather be compared to the feathers of shaman head-dresses (Diószegi 1968a:310) and shaman's images on Siberian shaman-drums (Hoppál 1983:28, see figs. XXXI, XXXII).

There are rock pictures showing masks only which stand for the whole figure, and it is supposed that the mask is a symbolic representation of a helping ancestor of the shaman (Leontiev 1978:109). Horned masks have a long history in Siberia.

In 1961 a Soviet archaeologist, V.I. Matyuschenko published some fragments of clay vessels of the Samus IV–period (2500–200 B.C.) on which anthropomorphic figures are found with antenna-like head-gear or crones. These heads with their horns could be compared to the Mugur-Sargol petroglyphs, which are dated to the Bronze Age, the first half of the 2nd millennium B.C. (Matyuschenko 1961:268–269). The petroglyphs of the ancient sanctuary were discovered at the site of Mugur-Sargol in the southern part of the Sayan Canyon of the Yenisei river (Tuva Autonomous Soviet Republic). The Mugur-Sargol sanctuary consists of more than two hundred drawings of human masks and other images. These masks, according to M. Devlet's opinion, represent the spirits of ancestors, but the special features of the masks allow a comparison of the horn-like headgear to the shamans' crown with horns. The Mugur-Sargol petroglyphs are dated back to the Siberian Bronze Age, and the drawings are associated with initiation rites (fig. 18.) Masks on the rocks can be treated as the images of the ancestors of the clan (Devlet 1980). Ancestors, heroes, important or powerful persons of the community or shamans were depicted on the rocks – this is the line of association and argumentation offered by Soviet scholars. Finally there is nothing astonishing about the fact that there are rock engravings which clearly show shamans with their drums.

The Khakas, a small and ancient Turkic people inhabit the valleys of the Abakan and Chulym River, the left bank of the Yenisei, and the Altai and Sayan Mountains of Southern Siberia. There are small rockengraving *tamgas,* or property signs, made in the recent past (19th–20th centuries) by herdsmen on the sacred rocks where local cults (of mountains and of fertility) were performed. Participants in these ceremonies left signs on the sacred rocks in memory of their attendance.

Another group of drawings show shamans with drums and their helping spirits depicted in human or in animal forms. One example is a very interesting image: a human body with the head of an eagle (fig. 5). The eagle was believed to be progenitor and protector of the shamans, whose hats were decorated with an eagle head, with the bird's wings attached to the sleeves of the shaman's costume. Other shamans' images are so realistic (fig. 22) with their drums that these drawings could probably serve as visual parallels to the earlier rock carvings.

Fig. 4 Dancing figures with a falcon – Hobd – Somon Baikal region – (Okladnikov – Zaporozhskaya 1970:210)

Fig. 5 Shaman image: a human body with an eagle head (19th century) Khakas Autonomous Territory (Kyzlasov – Leontiev 1980:154)

Fig. 6 Shamans and their ancestor's helping spirit. (Bronze Age) Aspa Mountain – (Leontiev 1978:118)

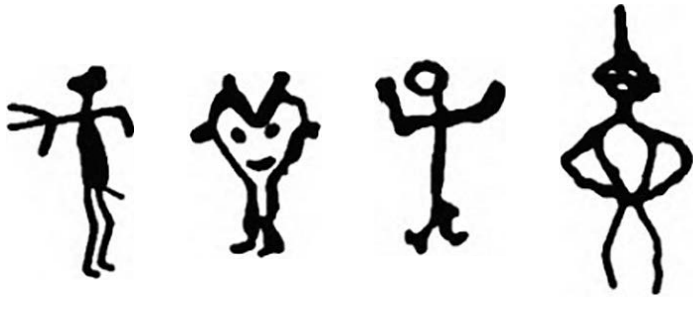


Fig. 7 Anthropomorphic figures (2000-1000 B.C.) Tom river – (Okladnikov – Martinov 1972:209)

Methodological Remarks on the Analysis

Except for the very last group of rock drawing which undoubtedly depicts shamans and which were made in relatively recent times (two centuries ago), the other groups of Siberian rock art (and their interpretations as images or even proofs of the early documents of shamanism) raise very serious questions about the methodology used in the process of deciphering.

Fig. 8 Human figures with horned headdresses. Central Asia – (Sher 1980:192)

Here we intend to discuss at least three of these questions as follows: On what ground can those anthropomorphic figures be labelled as shamans? Do those pictures have any connections with the religion usually called shamanism? Why is Siberian rock drawing called art and is it art at all?

To understand the meaning, and first of all to identify Siberian rock art as shamanistic, researchers often call for the help of ethnologists and students of folklore. Parallels from myths and rituals were usually cited to shed light on hidden meaning of the carved scenes on the rocks. A.P. Okladnikov, who was a leading personality in the field of rock art research, had a strong conviction that there is not such a big difference between the mind and way of thinking of the early man, and of ours (Okladnikov et al. 1979:3). Thus, recently collected folklore texts could provide help in understanding the worldview and religious practices of man living in the Siberian Bronze Age.

Generally speaking the 'ethnographic analogies' have been deliberately used by Soviet colleagues, for instance a skeleton-like and dancing figure found on the rocks near the Oka river (north of Irkutsk) was called a shaman (figs. 17.6.) based on the fact that one can find skeleton-like decorations on the costumes of some Siberian shamans (Okladnikov 1974:81–82). We agree with André Leroi-Gourhan's sharp criticism of the vague usage of *'comparatisme ethnographique'* which gives no help in understanding early man in terms of Australian or Pygmy myths and rituals – these are not equals in any sense (Leroi-Gourhan 1964:148-149).

Somehow, there seems to be an unavoidable mistake even in the best monographs, to use folklore parallels in order to reconstruct prehistoric religion and magico-ritual worldview of early man. Probably Siberia is a place where a

Fig. 9 Sun worship (?) – (1000 B.C.) Saimaly-Tash, Tien-Shan – (Sher 1980:106)

kind of continuity of population is beyond doubt, but even if it is true, one must be cautious since not everything on the rocks has a connection with shamanism or religion.

A very common and serious mistake is made in the process of interpreting rock art,

> "a mistake quite difficult to discover, hidden on a theoretical level, namely when analogies from studies of the history of religion are mixed with examinations of oral or written reports from members of a certain society" (Nordbladh 1978a:202) –

and usually this is the case with ethnographic reports used by the Russians, but not only by them. There is a kind of *`folklore scientifique'* among scholars firmly held by them, according to which

> "the Bronze Age rock-engravings reveal a remarkable imagery, a stylized art employing a sign language full of meaning which, properly interpreted, is capable of yielding invaluable information about the religious life of the time" (Glob 1969:386).

It is absolutely not certain that only religion reflects itself in the imagery of the rocks. Instead of ambiguous notions of religion a new, more natural concept should be proposed: *`belief system'* (Hoppál 1980).

Belief system seems to be a useful term for the whole domain of the ideological sphere of a given culture (it is somehow similar to `Weltanschauung' and worldview). Culture has a number of sub-systems (economy, social structure, ideology, etc.) to maintain itself with the help of the process of reproduction. A system of beliefs is responsible for the reproduction of the mythico-religious ideas within a community or society. A belief system acts as guiding force organising rituals, feasts, `fertility cults', `hunting magic', etc., or perhaps engraving petroglyphs as well. One can say that not only the rock images as signs, but also the sign-production, the whole cultic and not only `religious' activity that acts as a frame, must be taken into account in the course of a modern process-oriented analysis of rock art.

Fig. 10 Sunheaded figures (5000-3000 B.C.) Mangislak, Kazakhstan – (Medoev 1979)

Generally speaking the research on petroglyphs from a methodological point of view is not very impressive because

Fig. 11 Antropomorphic figure with a bear-head-mask (4000-3000 B.C.) Maya, Yakut Autonom. SSR. – (Okladnikov – Mazin 1979:126)

Fig. 12 Mask with human figures – (4000-3000 B.C.) Maya, Yakut ASSR – (Okladnikov – Mazin 1979:128)

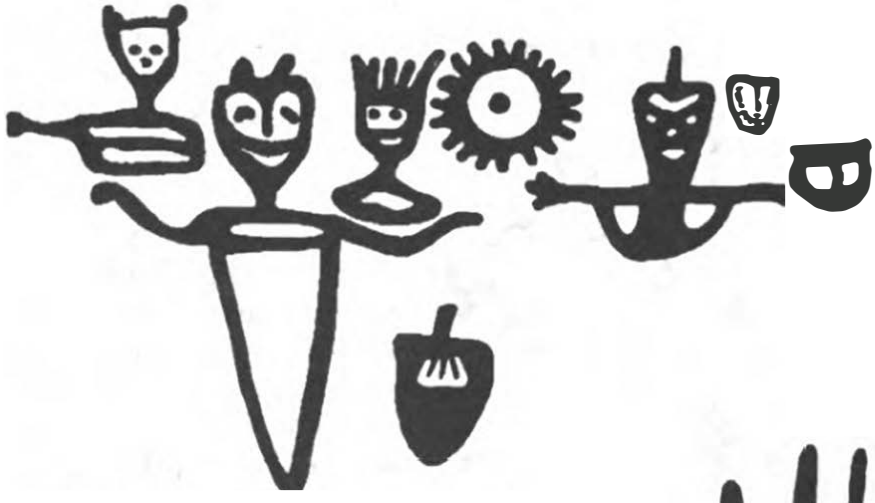


Fig. 13 Masks with sun symbol – (4000-3000 B.C.) Maya, Yakut ASSR – (Okladnikov – Mazin 1979:139)

Fig. 14 Sun-head mask. Lower Amur legion, Sakachi Alyan – (Okladnikov 1971:139)

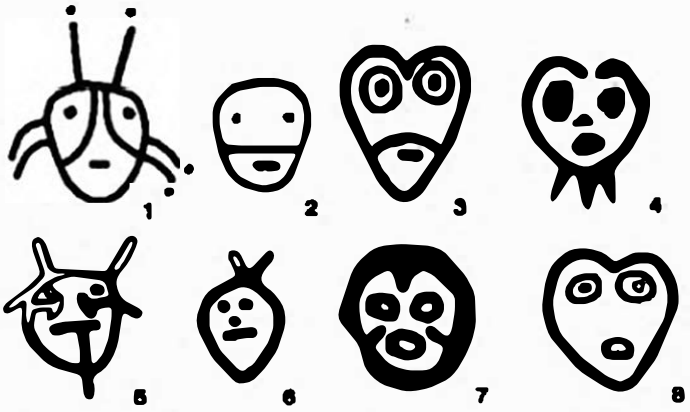


Fig. 15 Masks (from North Asia). *1-2:* Minusinsk Basin; *3:* Tom river rock drawing; *4:* Ural; *5-6:* Angara; *7-8:* Amur. – (Leontiev 1978:100)

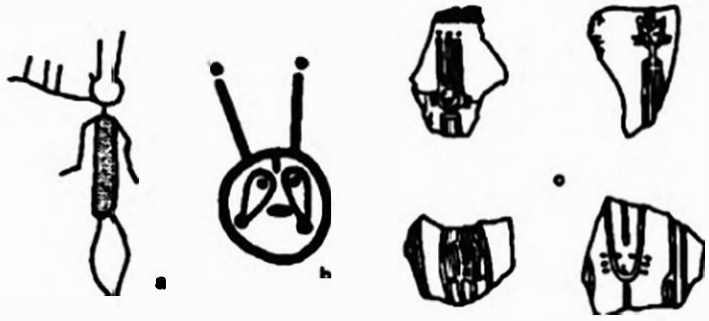


Fig. 16 Masks with homes. *a:* Tom; *b:* Tas-Hazaa; *c:* Samus IV. – (Okladnikov – Martinov 1972)

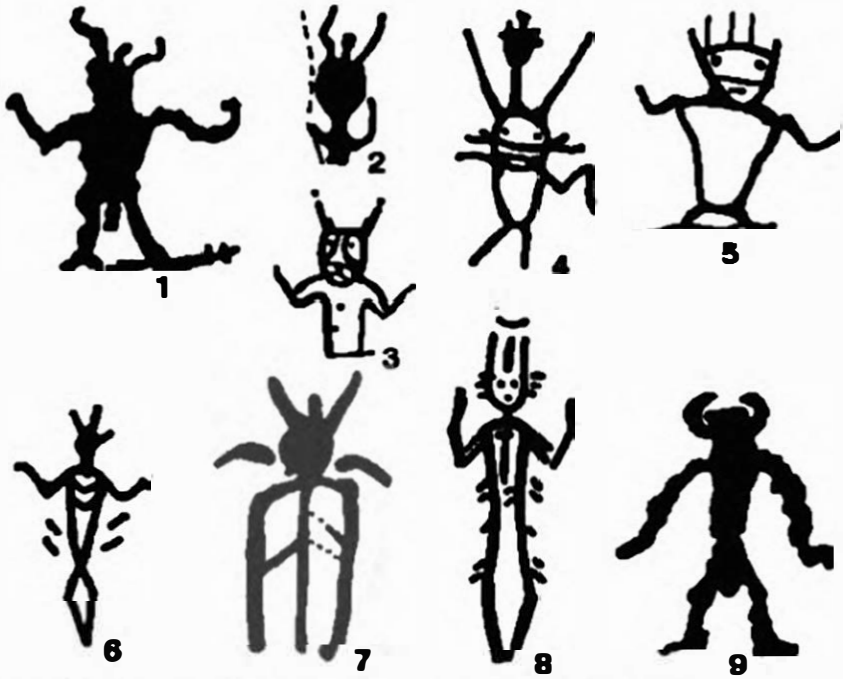


Fig. 17 Antropomorphic figures with homes (Bronze Age). *1-2:* Mugur Sargol; *3:* Kamyshta; *4:* Tepsei; *5:* Shalabolino; *6:* Angara; *7:* Lena (Central region); *8:* Samus IV; *9:* Baikal. – (Devlet 1980:232)

> "the dependence on old scientific traditions is very strong, concepts such as economy, art and religion are used as static references without any attempts at precision and integration. The results are restricted to elaborate descriptions brought together with hypotheses which are not examined" –

here we quoted the opinion of two Scandinavian archaeologists (Nordbladh – Rosvall 1974:49–50).

Only recently a more constructive point for departure would be to regard the rock carving sites as something more than just a collection of pictures. It is reasonable to suppose that the pictures are the remains of one of the complex social activities that took place on the sites, probably sacred places (Siikala 1984). As Jarl Nordbladh said: "The petroglyphs as social phenomena could be seen as a part of communication or messages in context of prehistoric society" (Nordbladh – Rosvall 1974:64). From this point of view, a recent and more dynamic approach focussing on *style* not as an indicator of social/ethnic boundaries, but as a component in the process of boundary-maintenance, seems to be very illuminating (Conkey 1980:229). Reproduction of signs and symbols, and at the same time of beliefs, really helps to maintain ethno-cultural boundaries, or in other words to maintain and reinforce ethnic identity and ties within the community. Again, the researcher's interest focuses not only on the `individual' stylistic patterns but also on the pattern-production as a communication process which must be reconstructed as well, within which the scheme of visual message-chanelling will be understood.

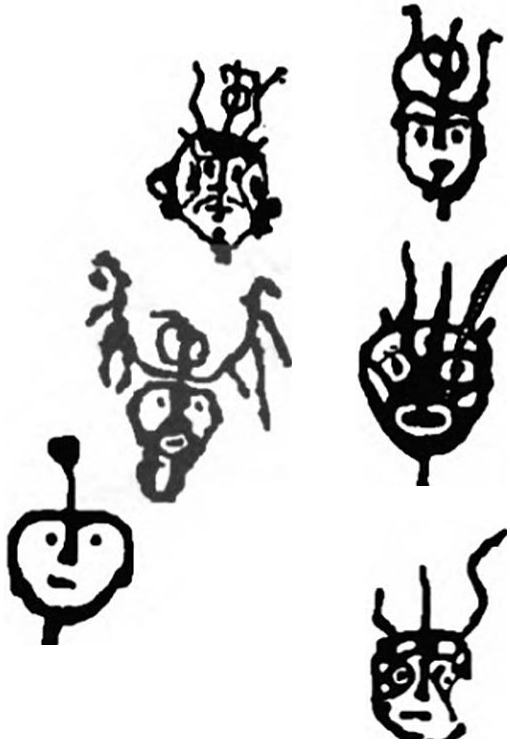


Fig. 18 Masks with horns (Bronze Age – 1500 B.C.) Mugur-Sargol, Tuva ASSR. – (Devlet 1980:226)

And last but not least, a short comment on the terminology `rock art' especially on *art*. From a strict methodological point of view, here *art* is a rather vague term. I fully agree with Jan Rosvall's criticism on the traditional and somehow romantic misuse of the term. It is a scientific mistake to apply this undefined concept of *art* to petroglyphs, first because it is a typical value-judgement which conceptualizes the rock images belonging to the domain of `grand art' (see the title of Okladnikov–Martinov's book *Treasures* of the petroglyphs at Tom River). Secondly, there is a concept of art which is based on the view, that it is permissible, to remove any picture from its original environment and spiritual context in order to treat it as a work of so-called pure art and not on the contrary, to treat it as a part and result of the complex social activity of those times (Rosvall 1978:211). Ritual activity could

Fig. 19 a-b: Shamans (?) on Siberian rock (2000 B.C.) Novoromanovo, Tom river – (Okladnikov – Martinov 1972:133)

be labelled as 'art' but will lead to nothing without any specification. Thus, the above criticism must be taken into account.

Jarl Nordbladh, when he approached methodologically some problems concerning the relation between rock art, religion and society, states that petroglyphs are presented usually as a more or less isolated phenomenon without a defined place in a hypothetical society of their time (Nordbladh 1978a:195) In his very well organized critical essay one can find important thoughts concerning the methodological and theoretical difficulties in the interpretation of rock art – if it is art at all.

Going along with the methodological restrictions mentioned above we have to face the tasks of finding a way out.

In recent years there have been attempts to introduce a semiotic methodology into the fields of ethnography, especially into the analysis of folk art (Hoppál 1975, 1979). In 1975 the same was done first by a Nordic scholar with Scandinavian petroglyphs. In 1978 Jarl Nordbladh published a more elaborate version of his paper presented in Leicester. Here we quote: Prehistoric images – which are not necessarily labelled as *art* – as parts of systems of symbols could be analysed in terms of semiotics, or more broadly speaking in terms of social communication. Communication is always culture dependent and heavily based on the actual contexts in which signs and/or symbols occur. An isolated image can mean anything, but the case is not so concern-

ing rock-art. In spite of this fact – ie. natural setting as context and in the strict sense of the term relations between images on the rocks (Nordbladh 1978b:66).

In the Soviet Union there are a few archaeologists and linguists who are interested in ethnosemiotic studies and wish to introduce its methodology into the analysis of rock art. In 1980 Ya. A. Sher published a book in which he wrote not only about the questions of methodology but dealt with the problems of semantics, as well (Sher 1980, see chapt. 8). V.N. Toporov was also interested in the semiotic analysis of the origin of certain poetic symbols of the Paleolithic period (Toporov 1978).

By ethno-semiotics we mean the description of the production and the understanding of sign-systems used by the ethno-cultural community. According to the classic works of semiotics (by Ch.S. Peirce and Ch. Morris) there are three levels of (ethno)-semiotic description and/or analysis of the different sign-systems, these are as follows:

(1) *syntactic* studies of petroglyphs deal with the relations between signs and sign-complexes on neighbouring rocks. Presumably there are rules which govern the possible connections between signs inside a single picture frame.

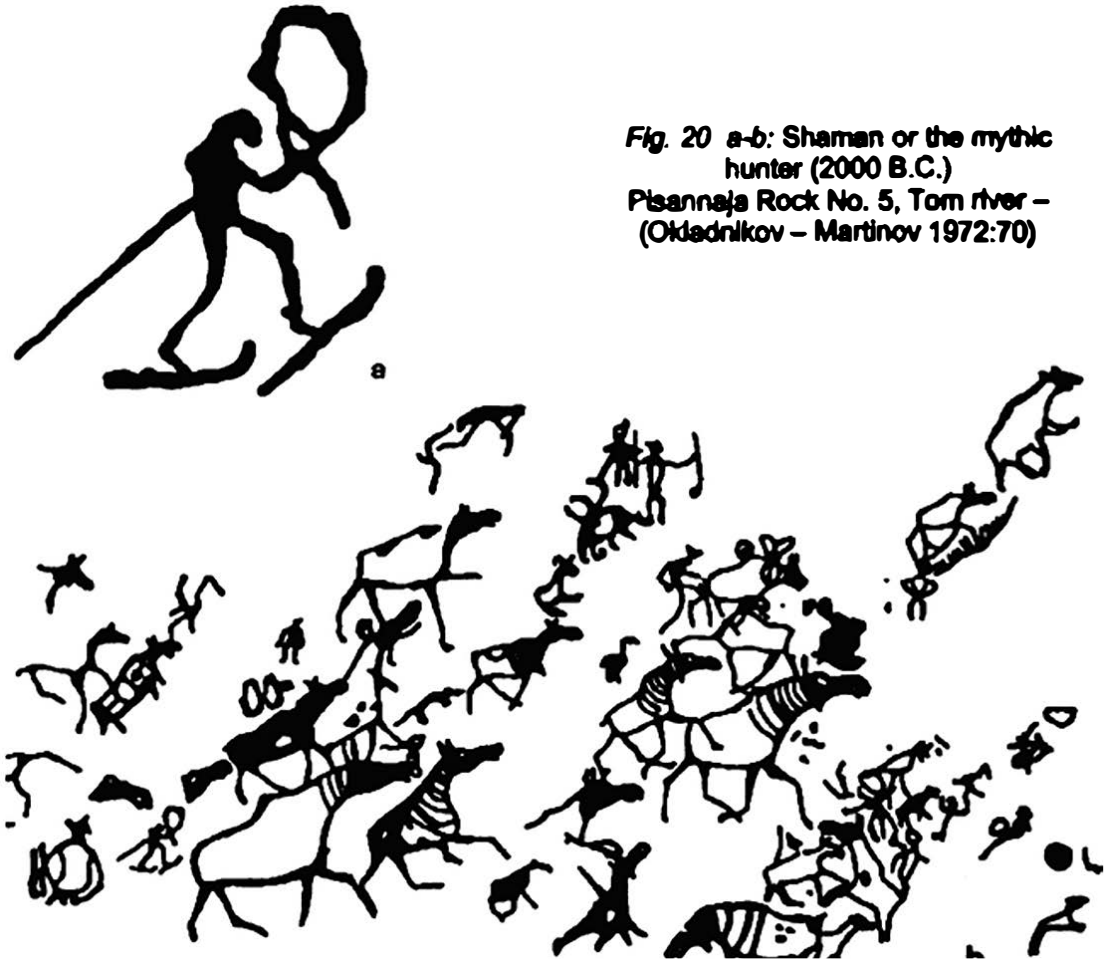


Fig. 20 a-b: Shaman or the mythic hunter (2000 B.C.)
Pisannaja Rock No. 5, Tom river – (Okladnikov – Martinov 1972:70)

Fig. 21 Shaman and his helping spirits (XV-XVIII. A.D.) Mohsoboiloo-Haya, Yakut ASSR – (Okladnikov 1949)

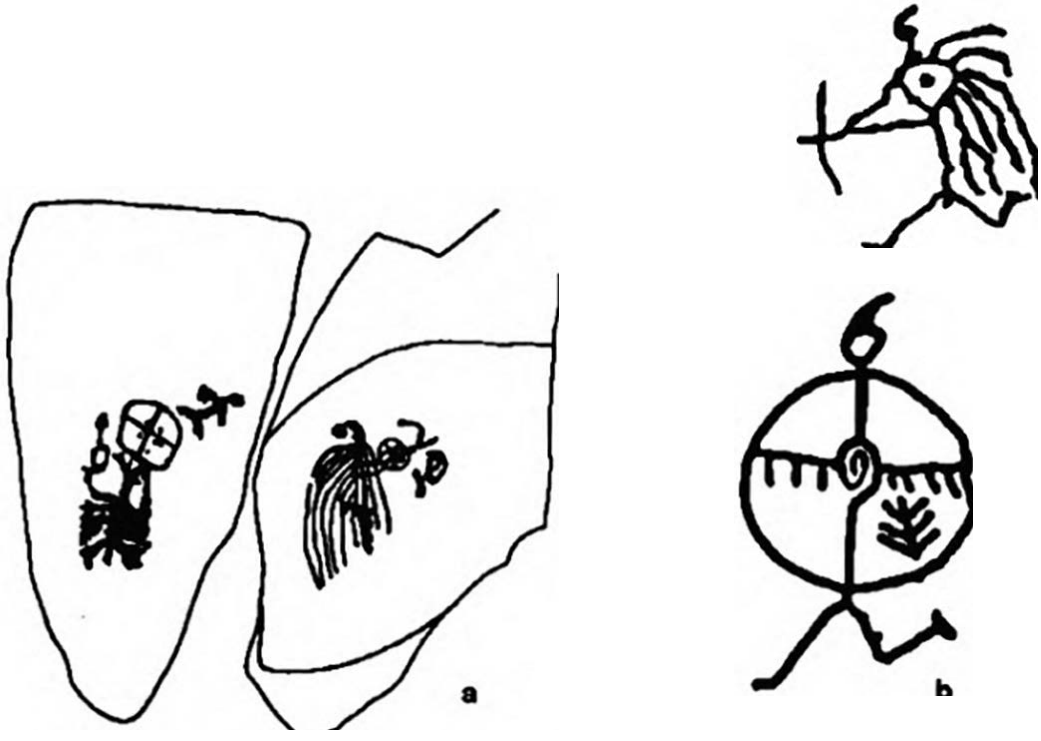


Fig. 22 a-b: Shamans with drums (XVIII-XX. A.D.) Khakas Autonomous Region – (Kyzlasov – Leontiev 1980:117)

(2) *semantic* studies usually deal with the relations between sign and thing depicted (or carved) on rocks. In other words presumably the different signs and symbols have meaning, they simply want to transmit a message. The main problem, however, is still unsolved: the greater majority of rock drawings have never been used in order to understand the content of rock art and its relation to reality.
The problem here is the following: in South East France (Monte Bego) for example about 100,000 pictures on 38,000 rocks were discovered and only some hundreds of them are published (Nordbladh – Rosvall 1974:10-26). In the Soviet Union more than 20,000 rock drawings were published but many more were explored.
Only a little portion of the published data became known to scholars interested in rock art studies and even less to those who are specialists of comparative mythology or shamanism. This means that most of the theories based on rock *art* materials are simply unfounded, because it is well-known to specialists that only fragmentary parts of rock drawings can be considered to have (or convey) 'symbolic meaning' (see diagram 3).

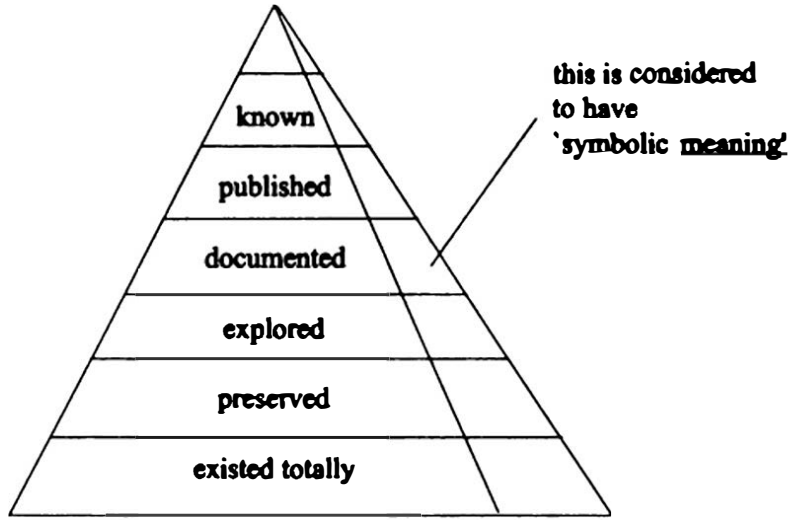


Diagram 3

There are considerable efforts to understand the underlying meaning of rock art through detailed semantic analysis of motifs. For instance, Anna-Lena Siikala rightly suggested that the Finnish rock paintings can be interpreted on the basis of animal-ceremonialism typical of hunting cultures and the shamanistic belief tradition associated with it (Siikala 1984). Her method is similar to what we proposed above (see diagrams 1–2), and she also wants to understand the users of the signs, thus her interpretation starts with the overall type of the cultures in question. These types of study are labelled in terms of semiotics as pragmatic analysis.

(3) *pragmatic* studies usually deal with the relations between users and images, how those signs and symbols were used, by whom, what kind of relations existed

between the users themselves, etc. One can say that all the questions related to the so-called 'religious' use of rock drawings belong to this domain of the pragmatic level of (ethno)-semiotic analysis.

The signs and symbols of rock 'art' could be seen as only one kind of communication system among others used by the early man. As a special sign system it has the function of gathering people, to create the community, the communal atmosphere during rituals at the rocks (Chernetsov 1975:95; Nordbladh 1978b:75). One can agree with Egil Bakka's modest opinion on the pragmatic value of Arctic rock art, let me quote it:

Fig. 23 Drawings on a Teleut shaman drum (self-reflective signs) – (XIX-XX. A.D.) – (Okladnikov – Zaporozhskaya 1970:142)

"... the various abstract patterns and figures, human figures and sexual symbols indicate that rock art should not only be explained in terms of hunting magic pure and simple. The ideas of sexuality, fertility and multiplication of the animal world must have been part of the meaning of this art. I do not regard this a contradiction of the idea of hunting magic, but rather as an important supplement to it, indicating that the purpose of rock art was a complex one, of promoting all what was of vital importance for the Stone or Bronze Age hunters and could be achieved by the use of pictures, patterns and rites connected with them" (Bakka 1975:5).

These three different levels of semiotic analysis seems to be well-founded methodological tools for the understanding sign-systems of the rocks. As far as the origin of shamanism is concerned it can be said that only a more detailed stylistic and semantic analysis would lead from the recent pseudo-theories to more elaborated and well-founded hypothesis. The semiotic approach could help to understand the 'evolution' of the sign-producing activity of our ancestors, and finally, probably, some fragment of their sign-using cognitive process as well.

PAIN IN SHAMANIC INITIATION

In the past decade, anthropological research has turned with increasing interest towards shamanism. Shorter and longer monographs were published one after another both in the West (Siikala 1978) and in the East (Novik 1984), by which primarily the former Soviet Union should be understood. It is necessary to stress this because earlier this area of religious life was taboo (cf. Hoppál 1985, with a further ample bibliography). From the early 1980s onwards, a series of conferences have been held enabling researches – mainly the younger generation – to report on the experience they have gained in the field. These conferences included Sárospatak 1981, Manchester 1982, Vancouver 1983, Nice 1985, and also one was held in Zagreb in 1988. There have been some valuable collections of articles published as well (Diószegi ed. 1968, Diószegi – Hoppál eds. 1978, Hoppál ed. 1984, *Transe Chamanisme* 1986).

The above list suggests that shamanism has come into vogue; this is attested not just by the large number of publications dealing with the subject (both popular and scientific works), but also by the fact that shaman-training courses, demonstration workshops teaching trance techniques are being run all over Europe and America (about these see Hoppál 1984a, Harner 1980). Rather than putting it down to fashion, perhaps we are closer to the truth if we say that shamanism has acquired relevance. Surely, we could learn something from this ancient healing technique!

One such popular publication (Halifax 1982) signals by its very title – 'Shaman: the wounded healer' – that the healing shaman takes upon himself the illness and the pains, for that could be one of the traditional human models of healing. The first picture in Joan Halifax's book shows an Eskimo carving.

> "This Eskimo carving, of a shaman harpooning himself, captures the essence of the shaman's submission to a higher order of knowing which makes him able to handle unbearable pain" (Halifax 1982:4–5).

But one could have selected a much older picture too. The Tungus shaman seen in, finely etched illustrations to J. A. Georgi's book (Georgi 1775) may be regarded as an emblematical figure representing the Siberian shamans. The two pictures portray, from the front and from the rear, a shaman of the region of the Argun river as he is pulling an arrow through his body (or more exactly, through his garment – cf. Gmelin 1751–1752, II:46–49), symbolizing, as it were, the healing shaman, that is, the

'wounded healer' (Halifax 1982). In other words, the healing doctor must take upon himself the pain, the illness – that is one of the pivotal formulas of the shaman mythology.

Pain is a most natural biophysiological phenomenon, which, however, precisely because of the strong impact of psychic factors, medical sciences tends to interpret more as a psycho-physiological process (Sternbach 1968); and although more and more is known about the nature of pain, there is still a lot of mystery surrounding the process of pain perception (cf. Melzack 1973). The problem of imaginary pain (phantom pain), in particular, needs to be clarified. It is also evident (although the exact interrelationships have yet to be elucidated) that the perception of pain is, to a large degree, subject to emotional and personality factors. In addition, the specific socio-cultural situation also determines the sensation of pain (e.g. in war, under strenuous exertion or in stressful situations – Hárdi 1972:97–99). That is understandable enough, as every new physical stimulus tends to block out pain.

What may be of greater interest to the ethnographer-anthropologist is this, viz. that experiments have shown that the perception of pain is affected by the subject's ethnic origin. In brief, the perception of the threshold of pain is culture-bound, as, indeed, the categorization of pain is also a culture-specific phenomenon (similarly to the categories of colour – cf. Ohnuki-Tierney 1981:52–60). The problems of pain perception are further complicated by the fact that the world-image (Weltanschauung) of the given culture – or, in other words, the belief system evolved and used by the community on a daily basics – completely determines the individual's endurance of pain (about the functioning of the belief system, Hoppál 1979b). A case in point is the fact that, in certain cultures, pain is regarded as punishment inflicted by supernatural beings (Rogers 1982:155); therefore it can be cured by shamanic massage. Or, given that pain is the result of an evil spell, the belief system prescribes the removal, the sucking out from the body of the small objects or wurms that are supposed to have caused the disease. This too is the task of the shaman, who, in this way, takes over, as it were, receives into himself the cause of the disease, relieving the patient off the pain.

No less culture-dependent than the perception of pain are the methods by which they try to battle against pain. Thus, for example, in traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture-induced anesthesia has developed almost to perfection the suspension of the sensation of pain (Eke 1986:77–90). In addition to different medicinal herbs, which were also used for anesthesia, rites were developed in the various cultures one of whose principal functions may have been precisely the teaching of the endurance of unbearable pain. These included, in India, various forms of meditation and yoga; fire-walking in Indonesia; and the Flagellant Muslim sects of Turkey and Persia. A common feature in all these is that the individual acts in the altered state of consciousness of ecstasy, that is, of trance. A particularly good example is the sun-dance ceremony of the American Blackfoot Indians (Wissler 1921), which has been revived in recent decades (see Halifax 1982:41 – photo by Richard Erdoes); during the dance, the thongs that the participants fasten onto their breasts tear out the flesh of their own breasts. Pain an important part of the religious ceremony.

But recent research has revealed that there is an important substance that the body generates during the ecstatic rites. It is called endorphin. Raymond Prince concluded his review of endorphins for anthropologists as follows:

> "(1) the body does have an endogenous pain-controlling system that is in part mediated by endogenous opiates; (2) this system is not brought into play by ordinary day-to-day painful stimuli; (3) the system can be activated by artificial stimulation of circumscribed brain areas; (4) oddly, the system may be activated by stimulation of certain nonpain sensory endings as demonstrated by acupuncture; (5) it is possibly activated by emotional excitement and/or intense motor activity" (Prince 1982:311).

The scrutiny of endorphins leads on to the phenomena of shamanism, not simply because endorphins raise the threshold of pain, but also because they provide an explanation for many previously little known problems of the trance state. The other such, by now widely known, reliever of pain is hypnosis, and this technique too sheds light on a new segment of the phenomena of shamanism – for, according to recent research, the so-called 'active alert' state (Bányai 1984) may be one of the best models of the trance state.

Pain had, and still has, an important function in initiation rituals in all parts of the world. That was particularly true of shamanism, and of its *locus classicus*, Siberia. It is interesting, that, for instance, in the Yakut culture, in Northern Siberia, the candidate has to go through two sets of ordeals. In the myths describing the birth of the shaman, the experience of dismemberment is a symbolic experiencing of pain. In addition, concrete exercises in self-torture must be performed as well. Among the Yakuts the novice hide in a forest, threw himself into water and fire, and cut himself. After ten or more days he returned to his village bloodstained and babbling incoherently.

The Indians of the North-West Coast, those young people who sought to take part in a 'spirit dance' ceremony, had to undergo a similarly cruel preparatory training and painful ordeals. Wolfgang Jilek, in his study on Indian healing, wrote, relying on his fieldwork among the Salish Indians.

> "In Salish Spirit Dance initiates are 'tortured' during the repeated 'grabbing' procedures: they are 'rattled' with the deerhoof staffs, slapped, bitten, tickled, and pinched on exposed areas of chest, abdomen, and legs. In the words of a young initiative: They use the dances to work on you because they've got the power, and they bite on you on your side to put their power inside you. You feel a lot of pain when they bite you, you have to scream and holler, and pretty soon your song comes. I felt the pain in the stomach where they bit me. I passed out about three times while they worked on me. They kept doing that to me every morning and night for four days" (Jilek 1982b:336).

In the above sketched ceremonies, pain stimulation is often combined with physical strain through forced hypermotility. The euphoria-producing effect of this combination is manifested by Salish Indian initiates, who or their exercise runs have traditionally whipped their legs with cedar bows in order to feel lightfooted, exhilarated, and tranced – indeed some candidates experienced their power-vision during such a run. One is reminded here of present-day jogging addicts who forcefully overcome the initial running pain in order to then experience their 'jogger's high' – a euphoric trancelike state perhaps attributable to endorphin release (Jilek 1982b:340). It is interesting to

observe the similarity between the two geographically remote, but culturally analogous cultures, as it determines the initiation ritual in terms of pain.

Highly revealing, moreover, is a case which was described by the Jileks, both of them psychiatrists, in terms of intercultural psychotherapy, while working among the Salish Indians. It provides a glimpse of what can be achieved by using, in modern psychotherapy, the differences between cultures. We quote the case as it provides a good example of a severe neurosis induced by the fear of pain.

> "A Salish high school girl from an Indian reserve was brought to the hospital because of a serious suicide attempt. On the psychiatric ward she remained seclusive and depressed, not responding to any of psychotherapy ... But when she realized that she could talk about 'Indian ways' without being ridiculed she then poured out the traumatizing experiences which had led to the suicidal attempt. She lost her father in a fishing accident a few years ago and had felt haunted by his spirit. Her mother, fearing that her daughter would one day be taken by the ghosts of dead relatives to the land of the dead, wished for her to become a spirit dancer in order to be protected against these threats, but could not afford the cost of initiation. When a group of female ceremonialists offered to do the 'work' free of charge if the patient would be the first dancer of the season, there seemed no escape for her. The girl firmly believed that in the process of initiation she would be 'clubbed to death' – an expression used to denote the symbolic death and rebirth which has to take place before one becomes a spirit dancer. She thought that if she had to die anyhow, she would prefer the more peaceful way of taking an overdose of sleeping pills to the ordeal of spirit dance initiation" (Jilek-Aall – Jilek 1984:165).

This concrete – and, moreover, contemporary – example is a fine illustration of the extent to which the belief system at work in the given culture, the all myths, precondition the individual. What we have here is really a symbolic experience of pain. We have essentially the same appearing in a Yakut text, where the theme is the mythical birth of shamans:

> "In the far, far north, say the Yakuts, a great larch with many branches stands at the source of terrible sickness. On these branches are nests in which shamans are born ... When the shaman is to be born, a great eagle with feathers of iron and hook-like claws flies to the sacred larch and lays an egg. If the shaman is of the highest order, the bird stays with the egg for three long years. If the shaman is of a lower order, the time for nesting and hatching is only one year.
>
> The she-eagle is called 'Mother of Animals'. On three occasions during the lifetime of a shaman does she appear. The first, when she gives birth to the shaman; the second, when the shaman undergoes *dismemberment* and sacrifice; and the third, when the shaman meets death for the final time. ... When the neophyte has attained the proper age, his shaman-mother turns him over to three horrific black and gaunt spirits who hack his flesh to pieces. They place his head on a pole and scatter his flesh in all directions. Three other spirits take the shaman's jawbone and throw it as an oracle in order to divine the origin of all disease and suffering. In an oracle falls in a proper position, this means that the shaman can help a patient with the affliction in question" (Lommel 1967:55).

The Yakuts hold that the great shamans have to undergo the ordeal of dismemberment at least three times.

As an intriguing, if remote, parallel it is worth quoting here is an experiment that the contemporary Hungarian poet, Ferenc Juhász, carried out on himself. During the

experiment, he was given LSD under medical supervision. In his account, which he wrote down just after the hallucinations had ceased, he reported that undergoing 'dismemberment' had been one of his most disturbing experiences.

> "I am dead, it flashed across my mind, I got so frightened. The man cut off my head, tore my body into small pieces, and put it in a cauldron ... when it seemed that all my bones had been separated from the flesh, the blacksmith spoke to me, saying 'All your bones have turned into a river'; and, sure enough, I saw a river in the room, with my bones floating in it ... then, taking his pliers, he started fishing them out of the river. When he had hauled all the bones onto the bank, the blacksmith put them together and covered them with flesh, so that my body regained its former appearance" (Juhász 1967:135).

The poet's vision seems to be identical with the belief in dismemberment of the Siberian shamans; afterwards both felt reborn.

The insight of psychiatrist John Weir Perry into the psychosymbolic process of individuals diagnosed as schizophrenic gives us important clues about the archetypal nature of the shamanic complex. For instance, death occurs in the process of dismemberment and sacrifice, the person is tortured, chopped up, and his or her bones are rearranged (see Perry 1974; Halifax 1982:7). It is interesting to observe how identical the archetypal patterns of the shamanic ordeal are from Lapland to Manchuria; not to mention the fact that the shaman's journey symbolized precisely this, that only after enduring pain is the shaman reborn, becoming strong and possessed of knowledge. "The realization of power occurs most frequently in the midst of an ordeal, a crisis involving an encounter with death" (Halifax 1982:10).

Other culture-transmitting figures related to the shaman, such as the priest or the singer of folk epic, also gain their knowledge after the ordeals of initiation. Thus, for instance, in Turkish folk stories on the *aşık* (a Turkish bard), there is the characteristic motif of the sleep into which the hero falls invariably after some painful and exhaustive physical or moral ordeal. Ilhan Basgöz has compared this motif with the three stages of the shamanic initiation ceremony, notably (1) the ordeal; (2) the symbolic death; (3) the reborn personality embarks upon its new life (Basgöz 1966:3–7).

Examples may be furnished from European culture too, i.e. from the world of ancient Greek religion.

Jack Lindsay, in his book devoted to the study of early Greek religion and culture, as well as the origins of drama, claims that there are striking similarities between the structure of the ancient mysteries, the main parts of the tragedy, and the patterns of initiation rituals. Namely, all of them start with the novice's departure *(pompe)*, followed by death and rebirth *(agon* and *sparagmos)*, and, finally, by the return of the initiate *(komos)*. This pattern expresses the suffering, death and rebirth of the god, the pangs of ordeal, death and renewal in the initiation (Lindsay 1965:295).

It is interesting to note here that these commonalities seem to be cultural universals which are structural of shamanic initiation as well.

Surveying the examples enumerated, it may be stated that pain is an important element of initiation rituals – it appears to be something of a cultural universal. The ritual significance of pain is, in all probability this, viz. that the fear felt prior to and

during the initiation is suppressed by means of physical pain; this, sharpened to the point where it is unbearable, subsequently abates, resulting in a sense of rebirth. Every initiation, but especially shamanic initiation, was a preparation for the endurance of pain. Pain, by virtue of its repetition, foreshadows that which is to be expected; this, while aggravating the fear and the pain itself, tends, at the same time, to make them endurable.

The way to get closer to an (ethno-) hermeneutic understanding of cultural phenomena lies through attending to the voice of tradition (Gadamer 1984:258). The myth and the rite, as texts of culture, reveal their message. Pain, according to its anthropological concept, features, in the shamanic initiation, as symbolic dismemberment; yet, it also denotes the endurance of physical pain. The individual, the shaman, suffers alone for the community, because the experience of pain is a pivotal element in the human formula for obtaining knowledge. Suffering is part of the healing process, since healing is invariably a collective action; thus symbolic pain, such as dismemberment is made subservient to the healing of collective fears (social pain). That may represent the anthropological understanding of pain.

TRACES OF SHAMANISM IN HUNGARIAN FOLK BELIEFS

On the Concept of Belief System

A new theoretical study of the early forms of religion should include at least three components. The first is the conception of a belief system, the second is a text theoretical approach to the analysis of narrative structures, and the third is a general ethnosemiotic description of the 'texts' or codes of culture.

The problem of belief system first arose in the 1960s in connection with social-anthropological research. Several experts were interested in the nature of beliefs in psychology, philosophy, sociology and folklore; but their research was isolated and the results were relatively unknown. In the 1970s, however, the first interdisciplinary results appeared, launching a new era in the history of researches.

Here was use the concept of belief (and belief system) in a wide sense similarly to that of American sociology: the belief system represents the total universe of a person's beliefs about the physical world, the social world and the self. In fact, this system corresponds to our everyday knowledge about surrounding reality, with a wide transition between beliefs and established knowledge.

In the literature of the disciplines mentioned above, the statement occurs from time to time that beliefs do not stand side by side in a chaotic disorder, but rather they from a system. We cannot produce direct evidence for this assumption, since it is the human mind itself which serves as data bank and memory. The analysis of various folklore texts revealed, however, the existence of such a latent system. It is not accidental that the first experts who emphasized this fact were folklorists and social psychologists. But and interdisciplinary approach should be developed in mythological research as well. Both on the conceptual and the linguistic level, our knowledge, which is at the same time a part of the whole cultural system, creates a coherent network of associations. Where concepts are built one upon the other and ideas presume one another, we may speak of a homogeneous and well-integrate culture, in which the various beliefs are mutually reinforced.

Perhaps the network is the best graphic model for the representation of beliefs as a system. The network of a belief system may contain such a great number of elements, and their connections may be so very intricate, that a computer is needed to detect and chart the interconnections of the elements.

Belief systems may be viewed as culturally constituted fantasy and are transmitted as cognitive structures from one generation to the next as part of a group's cultural heritage. In the network, each element – node – is in correlation with the other elements, even if through an intermediate element; this interrelation is the very reason why the mythological and/or belief systems are such long-lasting.

The transference of culturally accepted behaviour patterns or, more specifically, the acquisition of culture is not possible, according to our opinion, without the belief system, and in precise relation to that the belief system – like all other `languages' or codes in the culture – is socially determined and its formation takes place at the same time as does the development of the personality in the early period of socialization. Our beliefs are very deeply rooted in our personal and cultural memories as well.

The belief system with the value system is to be considered one of the most important subsystems of the ideological sphere within culture. The belief system alone comprises every sort of historically developed and socially inherited conceptions of the community. Within the given culture, the conceptions and views (for example, on the nature of the universe and man's place within it) create a relatively coherent system – to be more exact, there is a tendency towards the creation of internal coherence.

All cultures have underlying assumptions, and it is these assumptions or `folk ideas' (as Alan Dudes said it) that are the building blocks of a worldview. Anyone's worldview will be based upon many individuals' encyclopedic knowledge of the world. The most important function of a society's ideological system is that it helps to give an answer to every question which emerges. For example: Where is my place in the world? What is the structure of the world like? Answers to this questions (which concern the internal mechanism of the worldview) are given by the cosmological beliefs within the belief system. It is indisputable that beliefs of the worldview are extremely important; the individual inherits and accepts these beliefs just as he does the language. That is exactly why they are useful for a typological characterization of cultures and mythologies. It is important to emphasize here that belief systems and natural languages are extremely closely related.

The reason why spoken language has a central function is that it is the best ordered natural system among, the (nonartifical) semiotic systems used by men. The sphere of religious beliefs plays an important role in every culture, and it is conspicuous in its regularity. This is true especially for the great world religions; but the smaller religions build up a similarly complicated system with their intricate dogmas and rituals. Another important characteristic feature of the system of religious beliefs is that in most cultures this particular subsystem stores the given community's value judgments (in many cases exactly in the form of the religious rules). The elements of a religious system are more rigid and coherent; therefore, they are less easily changed than the system of everyday beliefs built on more open and profane elements.

If one considers shamanism a `religion' or simply a system of beliefs, the above statements are held to be true – at least in an everyday context. Eurasian shamanism, taking into account its main features, is a sacred, but at the same time, everyday phenomenon (curing illness, fortune-telling, hunting magic and sacrifice).

Within the system of everyday beliefs, several subsystems can be found which, to an extent, may overlap one another, for example, the subsystem of ethnomedical knowledge and superstitions, or beliefs concerning hunting and weather. Therefore, in the case of everyday beliefs we have to do with the intereffect of structures built upon the other structures of linguistic, religious-mythological, everyday beliefs. And in the course of the examination we should not neglect any of them.

The system of everyday beliefs is composed of looser or less coherent elements. Naturally, language has an effect on everyday beliefs, too. The beliefs, however, beyond primary linguistic formation, obtain an ultimate form in the codes of the various narratives (genres), for example, in the form of myths, tales, legends, proverbs, sayings, or just simple advice and prohibition. That is why the examination of different texts or, semiotically speaking, codes are extremely important for the researcher of folk beliefs. Our knowledge of the world and linguistic categories form a system which is similar to a lexicon (with entries or words) and to a 'grammar' (which contains a set of rules of possible connections between the 'words'). One may detect in this way the functioning of some sort of a latent 'grammar' which exerts influence on and rules our actions in everyday (and not only everyday) life. One may state: the belief system functions as a program of man's cultural behaviour. (For further elaboration of the above concepts see Hoppál 1979b, 1981a.)

Traces of Shamanism in Hungarian Folk Beliefs

Since the Hungarian language belongs to the Finno-Ugric and, ultimately, to the Uralic language family, all the students of Hungarian folk beliefs tried to find ways of comparison back in Eurasia. There was a long tradition among scholars that the old religion of pagan Hungarians could not have been different from the primitive faith of the Siberian peoples, whose main set of 'religious' beliefs is labelled: shamanism.

Classical examples of Siberian shamanism have been found among the Vogul, Ostyak, Lapp and Samoyed ethnic groups, while the rest of the Finnish groups have preserved only vague traces of the common belief of ancient times. The sacrificer called *tuno* in Votyak and similarly *kart* in Cheremis arranged the sacrificial ceremonies. The ancient Finnish and Lappish magicians were named by the words *noita* and *noaide*, respectively, which are etymologically identical with the Vogul *najt* 'shaman'. The similarity points to the common roots of shamanism in ancient times (Hoppál 1975:236–237).

Earlier literature on Hungarian mythology and folk beliefs often quotes from medieval Hungarian chronicles which contain narratives and scattered references on Hungarians sacrificing horses, mentioning at the same time that the sacrificer among the Hungarians was called *táltos*.

Research interest in shamanism arose at a relatively early time in Hungary. As early as the middle of the 19th century, a romantic urge to discover kindred folks led scholars to visit diverse nations living in the remotest corners of the Eastern world. Less known among the students of shamanism both in Hungary and abroad, are the names of Gábor

Szentkatolnai and Benedek Baráthosi-Balogh. The latter made three field trips around 1880 to the Nanai, Ulchi and Orochi living along the Amur river. From these tours he brought home valuable objects and texts relating to shamanism. The century-old interest in the beliefs of the pagan Hungarians, or more precisely in bringing to light relics of Hungarian shamanism, has not abated to this way. More than a hundred articles and studies have been devoted to this topic.

In 1962, when, as far as I know, the first symposium was held on shamanism in Europe, J. Fazekas wrote an overview of studies on Hungarian shamanism. He presented not only a history of research but of materials as well. In the final analysis one can state that the shamanistic features in the Hungarian material have a strongly heterogeneous character, and some of them strikingly recall Central-Asiatic phenomena (Fazekas 1967:106; the same opinion is also held by Róheim 1925:25; and Solymossy 1929). Investigations into Hungarian shamanism has therefore resulted in the differentiation of four main figures (*táltos, tudós, garabonciás* and *regös*), a series of so-called half-shamans Earlier these were often reduced to one single ancient Hungarian shaman figure (Fazekas 1967:112).

A little later Vilmos Diószegi also published a review on Hungarian contributions to the study of shamanism, especially Eurasian, of which he was one of the most devoted researchers (Diószegi 1971). He succeeded in collecting field materials while "tracing shamans in Siberia" (Diószegi 1968). On the basis of this considerable amount of comparative material, he tried to clarify the connection between Hungarian and Siberian traditions. Up to now his monograph on the traces of shamanism in the Hungarian folk culture has remained the best work of its kind (Diószegi 1958).

After the early death of Diószegi, a number of works appeared, aiming to continue his work and research. Since one of the main tasks of a shaman is to cure illnesses, there were attempts to review data concerning shamanistic practices in Hungarian folk medicine (Hoppál-Törő 1975; Kelemen 1980). It is little known even by the expert scholars that there is evidence in Hungarian folk beliefs concerning the usage of `fly agaric' (*Amanita Muscaria, L. bolondgomba* = `mad mushroom'), a mushroom which has hallucinogenic ingredients, and which was widely used to achieve trance state by shamans It is definitely known that the utilization of `mad mushroom' was a common practice in witchcraft (especially in love magic), but of course there are only very few data, since this practice must have been based on a jealously-guarded secret of the *táltos* or the *tudós-pásztor* (`knowledgeable shepherd'). In Hungarian folklore there is a recurring reference to the *táltos*'s habit of appearing on the doorstep and asking for milk. (This uttered demand of milk is understood by the village folk that the strange looking alien must be a *táltos* according to folk narratives.) This motif, often ignored as a curiosity, seems to make sense when collaborated with the evidence of modern pharmacology, which confirmed that milk is a powerful detoxicant to counteract the impact of fly agaric (Czigány 1980:216).

The figure of the *táltos* has received more and more plasticity, owing to the analysis of the rich belief and legend collections of the past decades. For comparative research, the following characteristic features may be of importance:

- The *táltos* infant is born with teeth.
- When seven, he disappears and roams about (relevant is the occurrence of the number seven in this set of beliefs).
- If he does not disappear, then he is tormented by a disease with symptoms of spasmodic convulsions and swoons.
- He sleeps for days: *rejtezik* 'disappears from the visible world'. This synonym of the above mentioned *révül* 'to be entranced', expresses one of the most important elements of the notional sphere of shamanism: the concept of journey to the world beyond.
- When he comes or returns home, he asks for milk, and if he fails to get the drink, he spreads a storm over the region, which implies that he is endowed with supernatural powers.
- Further, he is characterized by the ability to disappear and transfigurate.

A very important motif is attached to the latter capacity, the narrative motif of flight in the shape of animals. In the narratives of the shepherds of the Great Hungarian Plain, the *táltos* fighting his antagonist appears in the form of bulls of various colours (black vs. white, red vs. blue). Shamans in the legends of reindeer-raising peoples fight in the shape of a reindeer, while in those of horse-keeping nations they assume the form of a horse or a heavenly bull on such occasions (see for more details in Diószegi 1958; Balázs 1967; Hoppál 1975).

It can be established that a shamanistic conception of the world constituted the backbone of the pagan Hungarians' worldview. And it was not a futile endeavour on the part of earlier researchers to associate the image of the tree reaching up to the sky, well-known from Hungarian folk tales, with the tree of shamanistic initiation and other shamanizations, i.e. the hero of the Hungarian folk tale had to climb while in a trance, which symbolized the fulfilment of the aim of the ceremony. In Hungarian folk tales he has either to climb or to fly on his mount up the tree, and Siberian shamans often call their drums the 'shamans' horse' that do service in their flight to the world beyond. (Compare the same phenomenon in Norwegian folktales and legends; and Dégh 1978. Even more far-reaching parallels are mentioned by Hultkrantz [1967:64]: "... a shaman-to-be climbs up the pillar of the world which may serve as a vehicle for the communication between the medicine man and the spirits in the world above".)

There are more critical approaches to the problems of Hungarian shamanism. Vilmos Voigt denies that the ancient 'religion' of the pagan Hungarians would be based primarily on a shamanistic complex of beliefs (Voigt 1976; see also the critique of his view by Goodman 1980).

In recent Hungarian peasant narrative tradition shamanistic motifs have survived mostly in the form of folk belief legends. A few old peasants or shepherds can tell stories about people whom they knew and could fall into trance and then fight in the air in the form of animals, usually as bulls (Bihari 1980:195-196). Other traditional traits known are the surplus bones, the initiation of the shaman (which takes place at the age of seven, fourteen and twenty-one, respectively); other typical shamanistic concepts, such as helping spirits, are absent in Hungarian narrative tradition.

It is an historical fact that Hungarians became Roman Catholics during the 10th and 11th centuries. But in spite of this fact, a number of traits of shamanistic origin could be found in the folk narrative tradition, and Hungarians still seem to remember their once powerful shamans (Dömötör 1970:40) called *táltos* by common village people. They remember only some stories about their activities.

Some Data from the Recent Past

In the middle of 1977 a friend of mine from Czechoslovakia told me that he had met a former shepherd who had told him some interesting stories. He suggested that we should visit him together. In the last week of December we went to see this man, who was then 45, energetic and working now as a tractor driver. He lived with his ten children in a two-room house in a village in the North-East part of the Hungarian language area. The population of the village is Hungarian but belongs to Czechoslovakia today. This border village, surrounded by marshes and reeds, used to be a relatively closed area in the centuries before, and archaic traditions are preserved in the memory of the inhabitants (folklore texts from this region were published in several excellent folk belief legend collections).

A four-member team equipped with a video-tape recorder, cameras and tape recorders, helped me to carry out the first interview. We discovered at the very beginning of the conversation that we had met an informant with a particularly valuable archaic knowledge.

We learned from him that his father was a very famous shepherd known for his curative knowledge even in distant places. The old man was often called on – even in the 1950s – to cure animals. The motifs of these stories coincide with elements in legends about shepherds with magic power.

Our informant is the youngest son of the old 'knowledgeable shepherd', who died some years ago. According to the tradition, the knowledge has to be passed to the youngest boy. Our informant spent his childhood and adolescence with his father as a shepherd. It turned out from his narrative that his 'initiation' also took place at the age of 14, while standing at a crossroad at night in a circle he drew around himself. He had to endure dreadful visions. It is a known epic motif in Hungarian and international belief legends (see Siikala 1978:291) that the crossroad, with its extra territoriality, became the venue of initiation rites, where the frightening monsters and trials are typical models of shaman initiations (Sweeney 1981:13).

Our man told us that with his superhuman (or maybe special) abilities he had cured a girl. It happened in the following way:

> "They came to my house at midnight ... her mouth was moist [presumably the girl had epilepsy, M.H.] ... this is a heart disease – she swallowed herself in convulsion ... Without saying a word I have to take the slip she wore for nine days to a place, where many people pass [e.g. a crossroad]. I should not say a word to anybody. I hang it on a briar and leave it there."

This type of healing is very rare and occurs only in the North-Eastern regions of Hungary (only the unpublished collections of the author contain examples of this). In another narrative he talked about love-charm used to cast a spell upon a cow's milk, how to take it off, keep it or give it back.

> "If there is no milk, 12 kinds of herbs are needed. If there is no butter, 12 others should be added ... One has to go to the cow-house. The first egg of a pullet laid in early spring is needed. It should be either an all-white or an all-black pullet. I put it into a pot which was used many times and I bury it at the threshold or under the manger. This way the milk cannot be taken away."

The elements of this narrative are well-known from the Hungarian belief system; thus, there was nothing astonishing in the shepherd's stories. Still, these memories were imbued with the force of faith, his faith in his own strength, in the justice of beliefs, in the effect of magic practices (although it is evident that in most of the cases it was a spontaneous recovery and cessation of symbols). As to his physique and psyche he is a strong man, being also strong in his convictions and beliefs. This might be an explanation for the fact that many times during the interview he stopped talking and did not want to reveal certain details as if he wanted to protect or keep for himself certain details of the esoteric knowledge he deemed important.

As part of the methods of investigation, I regularly controlled the stories told by our informant about his father and the ancient magical practices of shepherds. One year later and then two years later again I made him repeat the same story, and there are now 2 or 3 variants of the same text (a total of some 300 pages). The other means of control was to visit two of the informant's elder brothers, who also used to be shepherds with their father, even if for a much shorter period. I learned some small details which our informant was at first reluctant to tell me, saying that he did not intend to pass on the entire knowledge. I experienced a kind of mistrust towards me, which is evident since he was asked to share the knowledge which gave him strength and healing power.

In the course of the question-and-answer period about the details, he said that his father used a sieve or shifter, called the `leather sieve' similar to a drum and having the same function. Scholars researching the traces of Hungarian shamanism revealed that the sieve or shifter often played the role of the drum in magic and particularly in healing rituals.

> "Coming in, the old Hódas moved away from the others ... and set down without saying a word. He bowed his head and gazed for a long time into the air. He seemed to sleep with open eyes. The others waited whether he was going to do something. Sometimes he nodded, waved his hand, shook his head. The woman took a sieve from below the bed and put it on the chimney corner seat together with a wooden spoon. Thereupon he began to speak: `Quiet! Don't do anything but keep silent.', he said. `Do not disturb the one who is coming.' He lifted the sieve to his chest, closed his eyes and started to beat it. First slowly, then more and more rapidly. He murmured something. `A big tree grew and three roads met underneath ...', he began. By the time he finished the ditty, he beated his sieve more strongly ..." (Szűcs 1975:46–48).

After this example from the Great Hungarian Plain we could quote another narrative from the Western border region of the country which also suggests that besides fortune-telling the sieve was used for healing:

> "A shepherd from Kunsziget, János Virág, told fortunes with the help of his sieve. He said, for instance, who the thief was who stole the cattle. Once my grandfather's pigs were also stolen. By beating his drum he learned who the thief was. And the pigs were found at that person. He put white and black beans on the sieve, about 41 pieces. The he started to beat one side of his drum with his knife. The beans jumped about on the sieve and at the end he told fortune from their position. We also know about him that he was able to cure with his sieve. He lifted bewitchment. He beat the ring of the drum till the malign was fed up" (Tímaffy 1964:318).

Several other data could be enumerated about the magic use of the sieve in other regions of Hungary (see Dömötör 1982:205, and pictures nos. 22–27, sieves in magic use).

The memory of the drum, the most important tool of the shaman, has been preserved in Hungarian folklore in the form of a children's rhyme:

Stork, stork, turtle-dove	Gólya, gólya gilice
Why is your foot full of blood,	Mitől véres a lábad,
Turkish boy has cut it	Török gyerek megvágta,
Hungarian boy heals it	Magyar gyerek gyógyítja,
With his fiddle, pipe and drum.	Sippal, dobbal, nádi hegedűvel.

(This rhyme used to be sung in the spring when storks were back again.)

May God give us a slow rain	Adj Istenem csendes esőt,
Wash those two together	Mossa össze mind a kettőt
Sieve, sieve on Friday	Szita, szita péntek
Love on Thursday	szerelem csütörtök,
Drum on Wednesday.	Dob szerda.

The drum and sieve belong together, not only on account of their similar shape, but due to the fact that at some places the sieve became the tool of magic fortune-telling. The sieve would be 'turned' in order to find out who had caused the sickness; but there are data for a kind of quackery with the sieve, too. The healing woman would beat the sieve with a knife or a wooden spoon over the sick (Diószegi 1958:171–225; Hoppál – Törő 1975:70).

When we asked our man what the sieve was made of he said it was of leather. It should be pronounced 'bőrosta' in Hungarian but he doubled the first vowel and said '*bőőrosta*', *bőő* = *bő* which means 'large'. Such sieves covered with leather were used in almost all regions of the country until the first half of this century. In 1980 friends of mine took photos of the last pieces in Transylvania, where (in Korond-Corund-Jud. Harghita, Rumania) I also took photos of leather-covered sieves in 1969. Although these sieves were used in everyday life (the first written evidence dates from 1587, see Szabó 1976:1065), the particular (cross-shaped) design of the holes contradicts it.

There are several data which suggest that they were used for fortune-telling, i.e. for magic acts; I made photos of them in the Southern part of Hungary in the second half of the 1970s while shooting an ethnographic documentary film on healing rituals.

Certain data mention the sieve as a tool of the *táltos* (shaman) or of the knowledgeable shepherd:

> "József Rostás of Vajka was a sieve-maker and sold his sieves wandering from village to village. He held the sieve high and looked through the holes – that is how he cured. There had been learned women before in Öttevény and Ikrény who told fortune with the help of a sieve, throwing grains of maize on it. They also put embers on the wishbone of a goose, blowing it until the bone cracked. Then they told fortune from these cracks. 'It was said about a *táltos* shepherd called Kelemen, from Cikolasziget, that he put embers on a sieve, strewed herbs on it and smoked the sick cattle. In the meantime he bewitched `as if he recounted'. He was also invited to former death-watches. He fumigated the evil spirit from the dead so that they leave it in peace' ... 'He put embers on an old sieve and strewed herbs on it.' Others said that 'he put a birch tree's shoot on the embers which sizzled like fat ...'. He beated around the dead with it murmuring something." (Tímaffy 1964:320)

When we asked our informant why he called it `large' sieve instead of `leather sieve', he said: *"Because it is large, it can contain anything."* This reply surprisingly coincides with some elements of a witchcraft trial which took place in 1728 where a *táltos* (shaman) or witch with superhuman force said the following in his testimony:

> "Dániel Rósa accused of witchery in 1728 was asked at his trial the following question: 'Could you take men over the river on a shelf, on a cape or on boat?' He answered: I could have done it if I had wanted, but I never did since *there was room for even 100 persons in a sieve.'"* (Diószegi 1958:204)

Another piece of information from the other end of the country confirmed that this belief about the sieve of special power was generally known:

> "... it was also said about the knowledgeable shepherd that at a time the cattle used to graze at the Bogdány Danubebend and scattered every time at midnight. The shepherd said that at midnight a rolling sieve crossed the river, with 41 pieces of embers on it and this made the cattle run in all directions. They called József Páli to help. He came and ambushed on the bank. After midnight came the rolling sieve full of embers. He took off his magic cracker from his hat, put its snapping end on the whiplash and banged three times on the sieve. All the embers fell into the water and the sieve rolled back to the opposite bank. It never came again and the cattle did not scatter any more" (Tímaffy 1964:320).

As V. Diószegi wrote in an entry of *Encyclopaedia Britannica:* "Sometimes the shaman makes the journey on a river and the drum is his boat..." (Diószegi 1974:640). I.T. Itkonen also collected data among Finnish Lapps which suggest that "the Lappish shaman's drum could be called a boat" (Siikala 1981:22). Actually, in the Hungarian belief system some very characteristic features of shamanism were preserved in the form of *drum = sieve = boat* equation.

Recent Forms of Shamanism

It probably sounds provocative that there are still forms of shamanism to be found, or it is even more unbelievable that one can meet shamans nowadays not only in Siberia, but of course in other parts of the world, not only in remote areas or villages, but in big cities as well. In the United States and in the Soviet Union, during the 1930s, anthropologists met acting shamans. The memories of late shamans, or better 'shepherds of knowledge' in the Hungarian folklore, were not an exception to the rule.

For instance, M.E. Opler found his Mescalero Apache friend, Chris, whose father, mother and mother's sister were all renowned shamans. Chris himself was serving his apprenticeship in the practice of rituals, and though he approached the threshold several times during his life, he never dared to take the final step and proclaim himself a fullfledged shaman. Still, his knowledge about the technics of Apache shamanism was almost perfect (Opler 1969:4).

According to V.I. Vajnshtejn's outline of Tuvan (Soyot) shamanism, based mainly on his field work in Tuva from 1950–1955, shamanism among the Soyots was still flourishing fully at the beginning of the 20th century (Vajnshtejn 1968:331.) In fact, the 1931 census registered over 7000 shamans in Tuva (Weinstein 1964:1). One of his informants started acting as a shaman when he was 40 years old; according to his life-history he became 'ill', and his unconscious state of illness lasted three months, after which he had become a shaman by the help of another shaman (Vajnshtein 1968:332). This actually happened in the mid-1930s, exactly when on the Hungarian Great Plain *táltos*-shepherd performed their healing rituals with drum-sieves (*rosta* in Hungarian; see Szűcs 1975) and our informant's father was active in the northern part of Hungary. In 1966, Erika Taube met with at least three persons (two shamanesses) who were highly respected shamans in Tuva (West Mongolia). She made photographs while reconstructing one of their performances (Taube 1981).

In Central Asia – according to V.N. Basilov's field-notes – in the same period an Uzbek shaman, Tasmat-Baksi (*baksi* meaning 'shaman') 'cured' his patients using drum and wearing a woman's dress (Basilov 1978:283, see figs. 1–2). Basilov collected materials on the vestiges of transvestitism in Uzbek shamanism during the 1960s, when the memory of the late performances were still vivid and fresh in folk narratives. Central Asian shamanism of the 20th century, as Basilov states (and the same is true for the Hungarian and other cases as well), is interesting not only as a local version and characteristic of the later stage of shamanism under complete domination of a monotheistic religion (Basilov 1976:155). It is also important to take into account that shamanism developed not only in connection with the total process of evolution of beliefs in which the society's course of development found its reflection, but also under the influence of contacts between various cultures (Basilov 1981:18). These statements could be accepted as research proposals, in other words: what the mechanism of the transformation is, how the various forms of shamanism survived, where the traces could be found (see Hõfer 1974, 1981).

It is beyond doubt that shamanism is still a living and vivid cultural phenomenon.

Two documentaries were shown to me, both of them made among the Nganasan. These ethnographic documents are excellent evidence of recent forms of shamanism. The Samoyed shaman was visited by an Estonian filmmaker, Lennart Meri, who made a poetic documentary on the culture of the Finno-Ugric peoples. In his film there is a five-minute sequence of a séance. At the end of the 1970s, researchers from the Ethnographic Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR shot a more than three-hour-long film on the same shaman on the Taymir Peninsula. Unfortunately, this material is still unedited (I saw an hour-long uncut version of the raw material in 1980). E.A. Alekseenko collected narratives on six active shamans during her fieldwork in 1971-1972 among the Ket, a Paleo-Siberian people.

But one can find even more recent forms of shamanism in places where nobody would think to find them, namely in big cities. I am sure that these forms are unique only to our century and begin a new era in the 'development' of shamanism. One can ask whether these new forms belong to shamanism at all? Let me present some examples.

In Portland (Oregon, USA), among Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees, there are several small ethnic communities. There are skilled shamans among them. In this new cultural context their help seems to be very important for the other, younger or weaker, members of the community. Mike Sweeney met Jong Pao Vang, a Hmong shaman of Laos, who formerly was a village chief and well respected there just as he is in the Hmong community of Portland. He stated that being a shaman for him meant helping people, Hmong as well as any others who are in need. Such people represent the spiritual and psychological core in the Hmong that is strong and will help them in the transition, or will help them to preserve cultural heritage moving from a remote village into Western city life.

A Hmong shaman had this to say about the encounter of his initiation:

> "You can't learn to be a shaman. It is a gift from the ancestors and from a Hmong god. – It begins with a severe illness or a kind of 'death and re-birth'. – I was dead for seven days. My spirit was gone. My body still breathed. The journey took me to a king's palace, Shi Yi, the king of the shamans. It is not an easy journey, and few shamans make it all the way. Shi Yi sets tests for each person. First you must cross a great field of fire. Second you approach a gigantic creature ... Third, there is a door with slashing blades like scissors. You must be a faithful and trustworthy person who would use the power of the shaman for good. You must never use it to kill people. The scissor door is the place of final decision. If you are a bad person, this door will kill you and you will never become a shaman" (Sweeney 1981:13–15).

Nothing denies the fact that the above narrative of initiation contains all the important features of shamanism, including the specific "role-taking" (Honko 1969) function of shamans which seem to be adopted in a new cultural context as well. It is interesting to observe that there is a psychic process in which a state of weakness is changed into a situation of power. The shaman is not, as has frequently been assumed, a psychopath, but rather a personality with unusual gifts, similar in many ways to the modern psychotherapists. It was a widely shared view among specialists that shamans are mentally disordered (Eliade 1964); but recently this opinion has been sharply

critized (Glick 1970:42), especially by experts in North American Indian shamanism. According to this view "shamanism is not, as if often supposed, a religion, but a psychological technique which, theoretically, could appear within the framework of any religion" (Lommel 1967:69).

At this stage of discussion one can probably find other proposals for future research, as I did when I heard Marian Wenzel's presentation at Leicester in a symposium about a Hungarian artist now residing in Brussels who performs his trance with a drum, bells and a rattle. Wenzel's study is based on a series of conversations, extended over several months, with Jóska Soos in his studio. Here I quote from a brief synopsis of the English anthropologist's paper:

> "Jóska Soos, born in 1921 was trained to be a magician between 1928 and 1941. Although it is not known for the general public or from published literature that these practices continued in the 20th century, there were, in fact, three magicians in the village of his birth, caring about the health of and curing humans, animals and plants, respectively. These magicians observed that Soos could be trained to become one of their members from certain signs which he demonstrated in his childhood. From the time he lost his baby teeth in 1928, he was given instructions by the most powerful of the three until 1941, when the war interrupted this education. These instructions to Jóska Soos are similar to shamanistic introduction, known in several parts of the world, and are remarkably conservative. The shaman carried on his secret pursuits under the outward guise of some humble profession, mainly as a blacksmith. The whole initiation experience, its four stages were seen as the transmutation of the initiate from one element to another, it was appropriate for the blacksmith to be able to transmute both metals and human lives. The blacksmith, moreover, could make the appropriate images of spirit helpers out of forged iron" (Wenzel 1975).

Some personal meetings and experiences with J. Soos convinced me of his deep and single-hearted devotion to old Hungarian spiritual culture. When shamanizing, he extracted from his own scattered memory some ancient elements (or series of units) of the belief system which he heard in his childhood. Frankly speaking, he creates a new form of folklore in an unusual West European big-city context, but at the same time, according to his own belief, he is the descendant of a Hungarian *táltos* family.

For social anthropologists one of the most challenging phenomenon of our electronic age is the question of how the traditional forms of folklore and belief systems survive or adapt themselves to the frame of a modern urban life-style. What is the reason for this survival, or even revival? One can find among others an important point of departure. We witness recent forms of shamanism because this complex phenomenon belongs to the cultural domain of symbol producing activity. The models of production of symbols are culturally determined and heavily influenced by the belief system of the given culture (to which the person belongs, of course). In this theoretical context, symbolism could be defined as a process which is inseparable from the mechanism of ethnic identity. The above-mentioned two examples show very well that this ethnic identity-producing mechanism is still working even within changing cultural milieus. (For a more detailed description of the south Korean shamanism is a present-day modern life-style context see Cho 1980.)

Since ethnic identity has a great importance to both ethnic communities and individuals, the process of reproduction of ethnic symbols could be labelled as redundant, which helps to secure the transmission of folklore traditions. In other words, this symbol processing is a typical multi-channel sign-process which starts in early childhood during socialization and has a clear stabilizing function not only on a personal, but also on a social level. During the last one or two decades, for instance, officially backed ethnic folklore festivals have been organized in Central East Europe to help to maintain national, regional or local identity. Ethnic symbolism in the different forms of folklore (i.e. shamanizing, folkdance, the sun dance of the Indians, or the singing of heroic epic verses in Kirghizia, as I witnessed, etc.), as a meaningful link with a culture's past and a dynamic expression of the culture's shared sense of meaning, is an integral part of life in a multicultural society (or in multiethnic states) and is probably to a large extent its direct outgrowth (Toelken 1981:8). Ethnic features of folklore are powerful means to maintain ethnic consciousness and the identity of a community. With the help of ethnic symbol processing, there seems to be much more resistance to change than was believed earlier. Ideological shperes of culture, including belief system (and including the traces of shamanism), are important parts of ethnic identity (see Kemnitzer 1977 on the question of how shamanic ritual helps organize a diffuse political revitalization movement).

There is continuity in almost all forms of cultural traditions; shamanism, also having its recent forms, is no exception, either. With this assumption we have endless tasks for future research.

THE ROLE OF SHAMANISM IN HUNGARIAN ETHNIC IDENTITY

The national identity consciousness of the peoples in the Danubian region is deeply rooted in their folk cultures and in pagan traditions preserved by the peasantry under the cover of Christianity, which were later discovered and incorporated into high culture by scholars and poets in the era of national awakening. The best-known Hungarian example is pentatonic music, which was handed down in popular tradition for centuries before being discovered and included in written music by Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály after 1900.

Recently, there has been a similar interest in the beliefs current in ancient Hungarian religion, which have shown close relationship with Finno-Ugrian, Mongolian, Old Turkish, Chinese and Japanese shamanism, and which also attracted the attention of Mircea Eliade, the most eminent scholar in the field of shamanism. These beliefs have not only become the focal subject of research in Hungarian religious history, but also a major source of inspiration for modern Hungarian poetry.

Shamanism, dating from before the Hungarians' migration from their original home and preserved in popular beliefs, sorcery practices and tales, as it were, to our own days, received its earliest detailed account to come down to us in 1648. It was written by Marco Bandini, an Italian bishop who visited Hungarians living in the Rumanian principality of Moldavia, east of the Carpathians. He observed that:

> "Sorcerers are as highly esteemed by them [the Hungarians] as discerning and pious scholarly men are in Italy. The practice and study of magic and quackery are honourable and open to everybody. Oh, how many prayers I offered up to God! How many opportunities I had to exercise tolerance when hearing and often seeing the practice of this loathsome quackery! What can be read of ancient oracles in the fabulous stories of antiquity can be personally experienced here. Whenever a sorcerer wishes to learn about the future, he will mark out a certain place where he stands for a while muttering, with his head twisted, his eyes rolling, his mouth awry, his forehead and cheeks puckered up, his countenance distorted, his arms and legs flailing around and his entire body shaking. Then he throws himself down and remains there seemingly lifeless for three or four hours. When he finally regains consciousness, he is a horrible sight for onlookers: first, he slowly revives with trembling limbs, then, as if possessed by infernal spirits, he stretches out all his limbs, fingers and toes so much so that one expects no bone to remain in its socket. Eventually, as though emerging form a dream, he relates this as the future. When somebody falls sick, or loses something, he will turn to the magician. If somebody sees his friend's or benefactor's spirit turning away from him, he will try to win it back by magic. And if they have some enemy, magic is regarded as the best

> way of taking revenge. The practices of various magicians, quacksalvers, soothsayers and charlatans could not be related in a single volume" (Domokos 1931).

This detailed description is rarely referred to, although it undoubtedly provides an accurate account of a trance technique, which was still employed at the time, and also serves as evidence for the fact that divining the future and magic, as based on ecstasy, were established and everyday practices among the Hungarian people.

Interest in pagan Hungarian beliefs and in the discovery of the heritage of shamanism has not diminished in the centuries that have passed since Bandini's relation. The subject had been approached in hundreds of articles and papers, until Vilmos Diószegi, having studied an enormous amount of comparative material, established the Siberian (Uralian and Altaic) connections of some elements of Hungarian popular belief. In the first place, Diószegi found the shamanistic analogue of the Hungarian shaman, the *'táltos'*, among Altaic peoples. As a results of his research, he claimed that many aspects of the beliefs associated with the *táltos* can be proved to date back to the time of the settlement of the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. For instance:

> "The selection of the *táltos* candidate by sickness, by long sleep, or by the disjointing of his body, that is, his acquisition of knowledge through the search for superhuman bones and his initiation through climbing a sky-high tree, in its entirety as well as in its details, represents the Hungarian settlers beliefs about the *táltos* candidate. A single headed drum in his hand, being his vehicle at the same time, an owl-feathered or antlered headdress, a grooved or ladder-like '*táltos*-tree' with representations of the Sun and the Moon – these are the paraphernalia of the Hungarian settlers' *táltos*. His time-honoured activities, on the other hand, are trances and fights in animal form when in a trance, or his conjuring of spirits by means of incantations" (Diószegi 1958:435).

Diószegi's method was systematic comparison between Hungarian popular beliefs relating to the *táltos* and similar beliefs among the neighbouring peoples (e.g. the South Slav *kresnik* and *nestinar*), and he only compared those elements of the former to the respective shamanistic beliefs of kindred peoples living further to the East that were exclusively Hungarian. For example:

> "The section of the Hungarian shaman was a process similar to that used by the Voguls, Ostyaks, Lapps, or the Altaic Turks, Yakuts, etc. This is to say that the candidate's calling was of superior ordination... He will receive his being chosen as a heavy burden, as an unavoidable destiny ... initially he wants to renounce it but finally he is compelled by the 'shaman-sickness' to accept the vocation ordained for him" (Diószegi 1958:56).

This socially-enforced and institutionalized method of role- taking was later considered an important feature of North-Eurasian shamanism by other scholars, too (Honko 1969, Siikala 1978). The innovation in Diószegi's method was the comparison and analysis of not just single elements but entire belief systems, and the consequent ability to prove that these phenomena were not isolated. He also showed, that Hungarian folk culture has got an ancient stratum, that is, shamanism, which had already been a part of the settling Hungarian tribes' spiritual culture.

After the untimely and unexpected death of the eminent scholar in 1972, Hungarian research on shamanism briefly came to a standstill, only to be taken up later on by a

new generation of scholars. A volume of essays on Siberian shamanism collected by Diószegi was published, although unfortunately he could no longer take part in the editorial work (Diószegi – Hoppál eds. 1978). Some years later, an international conference was held in Hungary, the participants of which presented papers on their latest research in commemoration of Diószegi (Hoppál ed. 1984). Some of the papers complemented Diószegi's achievements, since they addressed themselves to subjects not covered by him, Tekla Dömötör, for instance, was the first to deal with Hungarian female shamans (Dömötör 1984). The present author discussed some aspects of shamanism today, the chances of its survival, and also gave an account of his conversations with the last Hungarian *táltos*, or, more exactly, the last *'tudós pásztor'* (knowledgeable herdsman) who could still remember the method of healing with a leather-covered sieve which substituted for the drum (Hoppál 1984). A paper on the delusions and neuroses recalling the memory of shamanism, delivered by a psychiatrist who based his discussion on the accounts of numerous patients encountered in the course of his medical practice (Kelemen 1984) aroused a lively interest at the symposium.

There is a little known article published after Diószegi's death, by Lóránd Czigány, an eminent Hungarian literary historian living in England, on *Amanita Muscaria*, that is, on a certain species of toadstools (Czigány 1980). As is well known, this species was widely used as a hallucinogen by shamans all over the world, (Wasson n.d.) and particularly in Siberia. We also have some data on its use (especially in the case of love charms) from Hungarian popular belief, though the nature of the phenomenon – it was a strict secret since the poison could be lethal – will certainly prevent much more information coming to light. Czigány, however, found an interesting piece of indirect evidence for the use of the mushroom. According to Hungarian *táltos* beliefs, a *'tudós pásztor'* or *táltos* would only *ask for milk* when dropping in at a house in his shabby appearance. According to villagers, this humble request was the sure sign of his being a *táltos*. Let us quote from some recently collected material, which Czigány could not have been familiar with:

> "They were born with teeth and they had to be looked after very carefully until the age of seven. Because when the sky became clouded they were stolen, they were taken away and they could not be looked after carefully enough, they were taken away. The child was taken away. These are the *táltoses* who were born with teeth to govern the clouds when the sky becomes cloudy. And once they came down to the earth, and they went to the people and asked for something to eat. They went into a woman's house and told her that they wanted some milk to drink. The woman told them she had no milk while she did have some. They knew that she had some milk but she did not want to give them any. They said, 'Well, if you have not got any milk, you will have water! And they poured such a rain upon the earth that water was flowing over the threshold and window-still" (Csorba 1980:131).

This motif was considered irrelevant and was totally neglected by scholars, although modern pharmaceutical research has shown that milk could be an effective detoxicant in cases of mushroom poisoning.

Due to the accumulation of material during the last decades, newer and newer dimensions of the *táltos* are revealed in the analyses. The following features can be

important for comparative research: the *táltos* is born with teeth; at the age of seven he disappears (wandering about in the surrounding fields or in the reeds – notice the special role and frequency of the number seven in *táltos* beliefs); if he does not disappear, he falls sick, has convulsions and, finally, falls into a long and deep sleep. For this deathlike sleep there used to be a peculiar word *elrejtezik* (to hide), whose root is identical with that of the verb *révül* 'to become entranced' (Balázs 1967). As is known, *elrejtezés* or *révülés* (hiding and becoming entranced respectively, here both are implied in the meaning of the latter) are essentially symbolic expressions for one of the most important elements in becoming a shaman, the trip to the other world, during the course of which the candidate comes into the possession of knowledge. In Hungarian popular belief, the trip to the other world has been particularly well preserved in beliefs associated with the seer of the dead (Moldován 1982).

Another important feature of *táltos* beliefs is the above-mentioned motif of asking for milk and the *táltos*'s capacity to raise a storm or to send rain on houses or villages if no milk is provided. He is, therefore, clearly in possession of supernatural powers. His next characteristic is especially important for mythological comparison, namely, his ability to change shape: he could turn into a bull, so that he could fight against his enemy in animal form. It is particularly in stories of the herdsman of the Great Plain where lively descriptions of fights between bulls of different colours (black and white, red and blue) abound. These fights can be compared – as was done by Diószegi – to those of the shamans of reindeer keeping peoples, where the shaman's helping spirits appear in the shapes of reindeer bulls. The shamans among horse keeping peoples on the steppe, however, fought in the form of stallions or bulls of divine origin (Diószegi 1958:342-355).

Research has shown that shamanistic beliefs can be considered the backbone of the ancient Hungarian pagan belief system. And it was not futile, even on the part of the earlier generation of scholars, to search for the survival of shamanism not only in mythology, but also in folk tales (Solymossy 1929). The sky-high tree is well known in Hungarian tales and the figure of the young swineherd climbing it has been identified with the protagonist of the shamanistic ritual of initiation (climbing the shaman tree or ladder was a symbol of entrancement). Climbing the tree in fact means the trip to the other world, where the shaman gets into contact with the gods, so that he could play the role of a mediator.

It should not be concealed that there are some critical approaches to Hungarian shamanism in our folklore – approaches which question, if not deny, its existence (Voigt 1976).

Undoubtedly, one hardly negligible problem is posed by the lack of an unambiguous terminology. As early as 1967, a thought-provoking article by Jenő Fazekas drew attention to the fact that in Hungarian folk belief there are four different figures (the *táltos;* the *tudó* or *tudós* – someone in possession of knowledge; the *garabonciás* – wizard: someone disguised as a travelling student, capable of raising storms; and the *regös* – a bard who brings about fertility with his magic songs performed around Christmas) – all of which are comparable to that of the shaman On the basis of their

characteristic features inferred from Far Eastern analogues (Fazekas 1967:106). Fazekas believed that they could be traced back to an ancient personality with a complex social function. In search for the etymology of the word *táltos,* he listed the possible parallels that had been suggested before, among others the Finnish *taitaa* (to know), the Mongolian *dalda* (secret, miracle) and the Turkish *taltys* (to grow weak). In his monumental *Linguistic Remains of the Ancient Hungarian Religion,* the linguist Dezső Pais devoted a separate and elaborate chapter to the description of the Turkish word family *tal,* associated with the root of the world *táltos* and having in its semantic field the meaning `to grow weak', `to faint' and `to get tired', which can be indirectly related to the meaning of the Hungarian word *táltos.*

Although the direct analogues of popular Hungarian shamanistic beliefs have been found among kindred peoples, this is not reflected in similarities of terminology. The old words for the Lapp magus were *noita* and *noiade* (adopted by Finnish, too), etymologically identical with the Vogul word *najt* (shaman). Analogies like that might refer to the common origin of shamanism. The Votyak animal sacrificer was called *tuno,* while the name of the same person among their Cheremis neighbours was *kart.* In early Hungarian mythological literature, the Hungarian sacrificer is identified with the *táltos,* who offered the horse sacrifice. In this case, the only identical practice is that of offering sacrifices, while there is no reference to a common origin in Finno-Ugrian vocabulary. According to a recent etimology, the Hungarian word *táltos* may be of Ugrian origin (cf. Vogul *tūlt,* Ostyak *tolt,* `magic power' – see Hoppál 1975:230).

There is no unambiguous indication of the place of shamanism in the ideology of Hungarians settlers though we have been reminded that the reduction of ancient Hungarian religion to shamanism is untenable (Király 1921:52). It was suggested by Vilmos Voigt as early as 1965 that even if the Hungarians had adopted shamanism before the settlement, it could not be their most highly developed `religious system" (Voigt 1969). In a nomadic pastoral society, which had adopted highly developed military techniques and certain elements of agriculture, shamanism could only be a part of the system. In his article *The social role of shamans in nomadic states,* István Dienes suggested the revision of earlier views on the basis of Menander, Rasid ad-Din, Plano Carpini and other sources. He wrote:

> "Obviously enough, it was the shaman aristocracy at the court that created and popularized the religion-like belief system of a religious conviction more advanced than shamanism. States based on personal dependences were not only bound together by the arms of the prince's retainers, but equally by intellectual factors sanctioned by the court shamans" (Dienes 1982:258).

The archaeologist Gyula László's doubts and `dissent' concerning the ancient Hungarian religion is even more clearly articulated:

> "Both the shaman and the *táltos* are men of the powers above and, consequently, the true religious stratum – be it either monotheistic or a world of spirits – must transcend them. The same can be inferred from the mythology of the related peoples; the world is everywhere ruled by a wise and divine creator *(Numi Torem, Tengri)* ..." (László 1976:68).

Research up to now seems to prove unambiguously that the early Hungarians no longer exclusively adhered to shamanism. Like other Eurasian peoples, they were living within the reach of great world religions: on the steppes surrounding the Black Sea they became acquainted with Nestorian Christianity, Judaism and Islam, and still earlier with the activity of Sogdian Manichean missionaries in Southern Siberia (Hoppál 1981). The latter influence must have been particularly important in the formation of the Hungarians' mythological worldview.

Furthermore, although it is a historical fact that Hungarians have been Christians since the end of the 10th century, but traces of the shamanistic tradition can still be found in folk narratives and tales collected in the last decades. *Táltos*es, memories of whom have remained quite vivid, were characteristic figures of villages and regions, almost each village having its own *tudó, táltos,* or *tudós pásztor*. Recently, people could still remember their deeds as well as the use of the riddle or sieve, reminiscent of the one-time drum, for these ordinary utensils had often been used for magic, like fortune-telling or medication. In other words, it was the practice of everyday beliefs that a one-time shamanism governed. That is, shamanism – as Diószegi has pointed out (1962:13) – rather than being a religion, was a stock of everyday beliefs that helped people to regulate their relationships with nature and supernatural powers. There is still one more aspect to be mentioned, that is, the general function of all ideological systems to regulate the relationship between the individual and his social environment; by providing the members of the community with advice and prohibitions, such a tradition supplies patterns of behaviour and shapes morality.

Tradition has the same social role today, and therefore it is no wonder that writers and poets, who have always played an important part in Hungarian culture, found their roots in shamanistic tradition. Remember Endre Ady's prophetic role and his references to his *táltos* ancestors:

"I am the servant of the sun
who ministers the midnight wake and feast
I am a priest – a pagan, pagan priest ...
I am a martyr of the East ...
a scion of cursed sorcerers ..."

"Ki vagyok? A Napisten papja
Ki áldozik éjszaka torán ...
Én pap vagyok, de pogány pap, pogány
Szent Napkeletnek mártírja vagyok
Táltosok átkos sarja talán ..."

(A Parisian Dawn – Ady 1969:80)

Among the contemporaries, we could mention Ferenc Juhász's visionary poetry and the experiment that the young poet conducted on himself in 1957, in order to experience the entrancement of a shaman under the influence of hallucinogens. He writes:

> "I died, it flashed through my mind, I became so scared. The man cut my head off, slashed my body into tiny pieces and dropped them into the cauldron ... when all my bones seemed to have been severed from the flesh, the smith said, 'All your bones have now turned into rivers,' and indeed, I saw a river in the room, with my bones drifting in it ... he began pulling them out of the river with his pliers. When he had pulled all the bones to the bank, the smith assembled them and covered them with flesh, so that my body regained its former appearance" (Juhász 1969:80).

The poet's vision is much the same as the belief in the shaman's or *táltos*'s dismemberment, followed by a feeling of being reborn on the part of the initiated.

Since folklore and literature are parts of culture with the social function of preserving – or tending – the identity of the community, it is no accident that such motifs appear in literary works. In the dramas of recent years especially, there are some very interesting examples of the shaman or *táltos* appearing among the *dramatis personae*, by the side of Prince Géza (10th century), for instance, in Magda Szabó's *Az a szép, fényes nap* (That Lovely Bright Day); or as King St Stephen's (997-1038) friend, the tutor of his untimely deceased son Prince Imre, in József Ratkó's *Segítsd a királyt!* (Help the King!) (Ratkó 1984). In both cases, the shaman or *táltos* is a historical figure symbolizing the preservation of traditions. The conflict between the adherent of old beliefs and the followers of the new ideology consists not so much in whether the new is necessary at all, but whether the introduction of a new ideology should necessarily be accompanied by the demolition of ancient traditions. The conflict is particularly sharp in the very successful Hungarian rock-opera *István, a király* (Stephen, the King), for here the *táltos* is found on the side of the chieftain Koppány, who is in revolt against King Stephen, a Christian. His songs are always in the old style of folk music. The above examples show that beliefs exalted into symbols – among them the shaman mythology – can become important elements of ethnic identity.

It has been proved the events of contemporary world politics that ethnic consciousness may appear in many different forms from the revival of old religiosity to new messianic movements, or even to the therapeutic renewal of shamanistic practice.

CHANGING IMAGE OF THE EURASIAN SHAMANS

The 17th and the 18th Centuries

A Dutch traveller, N. Witsen, visited Siberia in the middle of the 1600s, and his account of the trip (Witsen 1672) is illustrated by some arresting pictures. One of these finely wrought engravings portrays a Tungus shaman, with giant horns and outsize drumsticks. The square-built figure is dressed in leather garments; on the ornamental headdress the huge ears of a beast are seen, and the human figure has claws on his feet, indicating that the heathen 'priest' portrayed was not considered by the artist to be entirely human (Plate 1).

Most contemporary travellers shared that sentiment, which begot, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the idealized, though not particularly positive, image of the 'savage'.

The Tübingen-based natural philosopher, Johann Georg Gmelin, visited Siberia between 1733 and 1744. He published his observations in a book of travels that featured a host of intriguing ethnographic details. We quote a few excerpts from his work, since shamans seem to have been a topic he liked writing about.

Still, for pictorial equivalents of his descriptions of the shaman's dress, one has to go to a work by Johann Gottlieb Georgi (1776, see Plates 2-3). The horn hammered out of iron, worn on the shoulder, was a characteristic ornament of a Tungus shaman's dress; this is the first 'authentic' description, but the lines also betray an extreme amount of antipathy on the part of the German scientist, which today appears quite incomprehensible:

> "Prior to my departure, I still had an opportunity to watch a Tungus shaman practice his magic. At our request, he visited us the first night, and when we asked him to give us a demonstration of his art, he asked us to wait till the night, which we willingly agreed to do. At 10 p.m. he took us to a distance of one verst, and then made us sit down. He himself stripped naked, then put on his shaman's coat, which was made of leather, and was decked out with all kinds of iron instruments. On each shoulder he hod a jagged iron horn, to the consternation of many. [...] Within the circle formed by our persons, he kept running to and fro along the fire, and made an infernal racket with the iron bells inside his dress [...] At last, he started leaping and shouting, and soon we heard a chorus that was singing along with him. It was his believers, some of whom he had brought with him. Unnoticed, they had slipped into our circle and were singing along with him, so that the devils might hear them the better. At length, after a lot of hocus-pocus and swearing, he would have had us believe that the devils were there. He

> asked us what we wanted to know. We put a question to him. He started his conjuring tricks, while two others were assisting him. In the end, we were confirmed in our opinion that it was all humbug, and we wished in our hearts that we could take him and his companions to the Urgurian silver-mine, so that there they might spend the rest of their days in perpetual labour" (Gmelin 1751-1752, II:44-46).

It is one of those accidents of irony that two centuries later Gmelin's wish was fulfilled and the fate of shamans was sealed; they were taken to labour camps or were simply executed by the communist authorities.

Gmelin describes another scene, too, which also happens to have its illustration in Georgi's book, *The Portrayal of the Shaman from the Region of the Argun River*, namely, the two pictures showing a male shaman pulling an arrow through his body, or, more exactly, through his garments (Plate 3). That stunt was probably well-known all over Siberia as part of the shaman mythology and proof of the shamans' incredible endurance of pain. This is how the German traveller described his surprise:

> "There was only one thing left that we wanted to see, namely, how the old magician ran arrows through his body. But – what a surprise – the old man declared in front of the big crowd of the Tungus that, till then, he had been deceiving them, for he had never run the arrows through his body, only through his coat. [...] 'When I perform that feat,' he said, 'I stick the arrow in on one side of my leather coat, I draw my body in as far as I can, then I pull the arrow in front of my body and, finally, I pull it out on the other side of my coat. I keep one of my hands in this place, and also a little blood in a bladder, and when I pull out he arrow, I allow some blood to be spilt from the bladder. At this point, our silly Tungus believe that the blood is coming from my body.' To prove his statement, he gave a practical demonstration of what he had said, right there, in front of our eyes" (Gmelin 1751-1752, II:46-49).

The image itself is, therefore, just an illustration of a widespread belief, which had been refuted several decades before. Still, the startling 'image' lives on, down to our own days, we might say, and is provided fresh sustenance in the title of a new publication called *The Wounded Healer* (Halifax 1982).

It is to be noted that in Georgi's book we can find the pictures of shamans from four additional regions: a Buryat, a Mongol, a Kamchatka, and one from the Krasnoyarsk area. Hanging from the back of the latter (for frequently both a front and a rear-view is presented of the figures) are the squirrels symbolizing the helping spirits of the female shaman (this rare phenomenon has recently been dealt with by Janhunen 1989); that is, this picture, too, has a real ethnographic value. This is also a piece of information that research has not been able to confirm from the artifacts of the recent past; hence the memory of it must have been kept alive by verbal communications.

The 19th Century

Similar drawings may be found in a work by O. Finsch, where, in addition to a description of the Ostyaks of the Ob region, we find several pictures, including one showing a shaman seance (Finsch 1879:Abb. 47). We can see the interior of a *chum*, a characteristic tent (Plate 5) where, in the dim light of the fire, a shaman is beating

his drum. It is interesting to note the way in which the drumstick is held; the observation is presumably authentic; the middle finger is not used in holding the stick.

Similarly authentic and extremely finely drawn pictures may be found in a book presenting the travels and investigation of Leopold von Schrenck (Schrenck 1895); who, in the middle of the past century, in 1856, made some trips to the Amur region. The third volume of the work is called "Ethnographischer Teil", and was published by the St. Petersburg Imperial Academy of Sciences, in addition to a portrayal of the bear-feast and its details (apart from a few ruined photos by Benedek Baráthosi-Balogh, there are scarcely any authentic pictures of the bear-feast of the Amur region), there is a drawing wonderfully rich in tones that show a Gilyak shaman practicing his healing art (Plate 6). Another one features the shaman's belt or girdle, which is not so important in the other parts of Siberia, but was an essential part of the rite in the Far Eastern areas. That seems to be confirmed by *The Statute-Book of Modern Rituals and Sacrifices. Compiled on Imperial Edict,* which, though compile in the 18th century, has only recently had modern editions, and which deals with the shaman's belt:

> "The shaman woman ties around herself a skirt with a floral pattern on it, she puts on her shaman's belt, decked out with small bells, takes into her hands the small drum and the drumstick, and then bows before the spirits. [...] The shaman woman stands up, and, winding in the manner of a snake, falls into a trance, shaking, in the meanwhile the bells hung on her belt ..." (Melles 1987:74-75).

The role of this characteristic shamanic tool which, however, was used only in the Far East, has been confirmed by the collecting trips of the recent post (cf. Sem 1973:239; moreover, Robert Austerlitz took some photos in the sixties).

Nineteenth-century travellers – the first masters of ethnography, as defined in the strict sense of the word (ethnos + graphos = a 'description of peoples'), in their books and the scientific journals proliferating in the last quarter of the century, were pouring our data and closely observed descriptions of details. As the journals proliferated, so did the number of pictures; still, portrayals of shamans are not as frequent as one would think (Plate 4 – Lankenau 1872:281; see the front view in Krohn 1908:129).

There is, however, a change in the image; in accordance with the spirit of the age the pictures are above all realistic; they try to reproduce reality, aiming at accuracy of detail. Just as the travel accounts themselves are no longer strings of romantic adventures, but scientific descriptions, so too the illustrations (lithographs or engravings) are marked by their lifelike portrayal. The graphic artist was the photographer of his time, and his work had the same function as that of photography later on (Ratzel 1895, II:552).

The 20th Century

From the first decades of our century on, there appeared a steadily increasing number of descriptions of the peoples of Siberia. They also mention the shamans, and indeed, present some photos.

Sakari Pälsi visited the Altaic Turks (Bajangol district, 1909) and took a photo of

shaman Otsir (Fig. 9) and his drum. Also, one gets an intimate, close-range view of the shaman's cloak or gown on the wall of the yurt, with the metal ornaments, mirrors *(toli)*, and embossed work on it clearly distinguishable. These metal artifacts encapsulate, as it were, the history of the development of shamanistic culture. Short of that, they certainly signalize the multiplicity of influences that shamanism has been exposed to.

Of the Finnish researchers, we might mention the name of Kai Donner who, between 1911 and 1914, paid several visits to the Samoyeds, dwelling along the Ket and Tym rivers. In his book dealing with the Samoyeds, the author devotes a special chapter to the shamans (Donner 1922:121-149). Unfortunately, it is impossible to decide with absolute certainty which ethnic groups the two shamans seen in the excellent shaman-portraits (pp. 137 and 140) actually belong to, although the eminent researcher suggests that the first photo was taken in the region of the Ket river, and the second in the Tym region. Both photos are interesting, as each features a particular characteristic piece of the shaman's dress. The first (Donner 1922:137) shows the shaman's apron (a feature of the Enets), while in the second, beside the huge drum, wrought-iron figures of birds (Plate 8), sewn onto the garment, may be seen (Donner 1922:140).

Johannes Gabriel Granö and Kaarlo Hilden visited the Altai region – the Lebed-Tartars, to be more precise – in 1914. While there, they took photos of several shamans. On one of them they took a dozen pictures, a whole series, recording him as he demonstrates the beating of the drum while in a trance. Hilden, later professor of physical anthropology at Helsinki University, took the pictures at a relatively long distance, affording a good view of a group of locals. Granö, on the other hand, was photographing the shaman (Kajum?) at very close range; thus one gets a close and detailed view of his transfigured expression and his closed eyes, as he sings and, indeed, shouts (Granö 1919:223-230, Bild. 55, p. 228). Granö, later a professor of geology at Turku University, also provides Swedish-language translations of the words or lyrics of the song he heard from the shaman. Hilden, for his part, in an article published in a geographical journal, gives a review, drawing on the contemporary Russian literature in the field as well, of Altaic shamanism (Hilden 1916). The photos illustrating the study show shamans in tattered clothes (Plates 9-10), the drums are still traditional, but the shamans have no distinctive dress, so here we are dealing with the downward slide of the classic period (if there was such a thing at all), a downward slide which was to end in the utter destruction of shamanistic culture by the Stalinist persecution of shamans, launched in the late thirties. That is how the photo becomes a part of ethnohistory (Malmsheimer 1987).

One rarely gets mention of the popular magazine *Atlantis*, which features very attractive and apparently authentic ethnophotos. Such are the pictures – from 1934 recording the dance of two Solon female shamans and their assistants (Stötzner 1934), where, arrayed in their richly adorned dress, they make circles around a shaman's ladder. These are rare and precious pictures, as they are unique – and probably the only surviving – records of Solon (a Tungus ethnic group) shamanism. Of the shaman's

ladder, too, supposed to lead to the sky, only descriptions and this one picture have survived! Regrettably, the text which accompanies the pictures, intended to appeal to a moss audience, are blandly uninformative, and they fall far short of the standards of the *National Geographic.*

Unfortunately, the popular German ethnological handbooks published in the early years of the century (Buschan, no date given, but his *Völkerkunde* was published in 1910) feature only a few pictures of shamans, which, however, are of extremely high quality (Fig. 8 – see in Buschan, n.d.:259:Abb. 311, Soyot female shaman; Abb. 308, Yakut shaman). To all intents and purposes these few pictures have been responsible for the image of the shaman, as conceived by European scholars. Presumably, there are a few dozen more photos lying forgotten in Europe's museums (e.g., in Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Paris). Their publication would be important for ridding the image of the Eurasian shaman of all the idealizing romantic attributes attached to it.

In January 1987, I was given the opportunity of working in the archives of the Leningrad section of the Institute of Ethnography of the Soviet Academy of Sciences (it is here I would like to express my thanks to my Russian colleagues for their obliging assistance, in particular to its, Gracheva, Teryukov, and Pavlinskaya). I was especially interested in the old photographic material, that is, the visual aspect of shamanism. What has been preserved in the photos – let us assume, more or less faithfully, that is, free from the artist's embellishing touch – of the old shamans. Vilmos Diószegi, who spent close to a full year studying the material of the museums and archives of Leningrad, never mentioned the old photographic material (Diószegi 1968).

My expectations were fulfilled; I inspected the inventory books from the beginnings up to the end of the thirties, and also the detailed descriptions (the descriptions of the pictures may be found in handwritten pages). As a result, I found over 150 photos which had some bearing on shamanism. They were mostly shaman portraits (with or without the drum, taken in the place of sacrifice or with the shaman standing beside his dwelling), pictures of the tombs of shamans and shaman costumes (details of exhibitions). With the exception of less than two dozen photos, they are all excessively posed, rigid portraits.

Breaking that pattern are the photos of S.D. Maynagashev, on ethnographer of Sagay origin. He took them in 1914, among the Kachins of the Abakan region. He has, for example, a series of pictures (No. 2409–51.-67.) in which he recorded a horse sacrifice (Plates 11-14), led by a shaman. Hitherto unpublished, the sequence documents the beginnings of visual anthropology of Russia. What imparts particular interest to the series is the fact that the photo archive of the Finnish National Museum has in its keeping a photo (VKK 1:bb) taken in the Museum of Minusinsk. It is of a picture painted (by a painter called Stankevitch) in 1889, which represents a horse sacrifice of the kind recorded by Maynagashev's photos. Even the shaman's head-dress is the same, although the two visual documents are separated from each other by a good quarter of a century, and the photographs authenticate the work of the painter. They reveal details concerning the quantity of sacrificial drinks and foods, the movement and gestures of the participants, which even the minutest description cannot convey.

The Sagay researcher took further series of pictures during a shaman's trance inside the yurt (No. 2409–70.-79.) and recording the, again, evening interludes of a wedding (No. 2409–106.-133.). By noticeably, constantly shifting his perspective, he went closer and closer to the birch set up at the centre of the sacrificial rites, and by recording various events of the rite, Maynagashev, for the first time in the history of Russian ethnography, created a genuine "visual ethnographic narrative", as defined in the modern meaning of the term (cf. Harper 1987). There are few examples of that from the beginning of the 20th century. The St. Petersburgh archive may contain a few more series of that type (e.g., pictures recording a Goldi shamanistic ritual [No. 1837–13.-14; 1837–37.-46.]), but not all of them have their negatives, or the positive is missing, as the case may be; and so I could not see the pictures themselves, only their descriptions. One thing is certain: there exist dozens of shaman photos waiting to be discovered (some of these we wish to use in an ethnographic documentary film).[1]

Conclusions

From the lithographs of the 17th and 18th centuries to the photographs (and film) of the 20th century one may see the changes of the image of shamans (viz. from the savage and mystical but nobel magician to the poor and miserable representative of old superstitions). Earlier the pictures of Siberian shamans showed an idealized view but in the 20th century visual media gives a more realistic picture of them. They are very interesting publications, known to us, however, have not been mentioned in the present survey, with rich materials and important pictures, which may be subjects for further studies (see for instance Schefferus 1763; Nioradze 1925; Lindgren 1935).

Visual aspects in anthropology, and at the same time even in the more traditional historico-ethnographical studies, as well, seem to be more and more relevant, since the written ethnography (meaning the real sense of the word viz. description of people) has always projected a rather idealized picture of its subjects.

Note

1. *The Shaman in Eurasia* (An Ethnographic Film Essay) Directed by Mihály Hoppál and Marcell Jankovics (1988) – colour, 35 mm with animations: 34 min. – Budapest, Sponsored by Pannonia – Helios Film Studios and the Hungarian Television.

ETHNOGRAPHIC FILMS ON SHAMANISM

The use of the movie cameras ushers a new era in the history of the research on shamanism. The new era brought a qualitative change in two respects: first, the photo encapsulating the frozen moment gave way to the sequence of images recording the process of movement. It was now possible to encompass the motions, the special gestures, the technique of drumming, and the dance forms, making long sequences of the rite accessible for study. That fact alone is of great significance. More importantly perhaps – and this is the second qualitative change –, the motion picture enables the repeated viewing of the recorded phenomenon, resulting, in turn, in a qualitative improvement of the analysis (and re-analysis). By becoming eye-witnesses, in our own days, of phenomena that actually occurred a long time ago, we can apply ever fresh angles, making for an increasingly multifaceted description of the given anthropological phenomenon.

In the last couple of decades – to be precise, from 1969 onwards, almost every year –, I regularly spent periods of varying length in the state that was then still known as the Soviet Union, where – as part of the exchange agreements between the academies – I studied Siberian shamanism, also familiarizing myself with anthropological films (Hoppál 1988).

Looking back at the history of Soviet ethnographic films, it is usually mentioned that the first documentaries were made in the 1920s and they centred on the material culture and religious rites of little known small ethnics. Among the films still kept in archive include *"Lesnie lyude"* (People of the Forest, 1928) by A. Litvinov, featuring, amongst other things, some beautiful and highly authentic footage of Udehe shamans in the state of trance and dancing, – presumably the first documentary record of the religious practices of the peoples living along the Amur river (Plate 20).

There is an other almost unknown feature film, made by S. Kozintsev in 1930 under the title *"Odna"* (Alone). The place, where the shooting was made, the remote regions of the Altai Mountains, among a Turkish tribe. The young woman elementary school teacher find age old local folk customs including horse-sacrifice and shamanic healing rites. The sequences of this later one shows the breath taking drumming-dancing art of an Altaic Turkish *kham* (shaman).

Russian silent picture classics most probably contain a great deal of ethnographically authentic footages, however, the history of Soviet ethnographic filmmaking is also yet to be written. A young film historian K. Janulaitis had started to work on a

monograph which aims to present the history of ethnographic filmmaking in the former USSR, but he died untimely in 1989.

In November 1986, I was given access to the film archives of the Institute of Ethnography of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. A.V. Oskin, the head of the film section, told me that the archives had some four and a half thousand metres of 35 mm colour film and some 6 thousand metres of 16 mm film material, all of it unedited (which will mean more than twenty films is the future). However, the Institute has only four or five films ready to be presented. In Oskin's opinion, one should distinguish descriptive ethnographic films and educational films made for the general public. An example of the latter category is the film *"Choreographical Art of the People of the North"* (1975), photographed and edited by Oskin, with M.Ya. Zhornitskaya as an expert in folk dance, who also made the sound recording. The forty-minute (35 mm) colour film consist of four parts. By way of introduction, we are given glimpses of today's urban way of life, as well as the life on the tundra of the Chukchis, who are reindeer herders. The images present, for instance, the building of the *yaranga* – a traditional tent dwelling built of poles and covered with reindeer skins – and the ancient techniques of leather-dressing and making fire with wood. According to the film's `story-line', an amateur folk ensemble of young locals visits the remote groups in order to collect traditional dances and songs, and to present their owns. The last quarter or the film is the most intriguing section from the ethnographical point of view, as it simply records the so-called throat-singing, various vocalizations and dance movements imitating animals, the ecstatic vocal effects of group-singing, to which they dance with erotic movements. It is as though one saw the beginnings of music and dance, the genesis of music, developing from simple noises, and the raven-dance – presumably a representations of the North Asian raven myth – is also memorable. Of similar documentary value are the shots (unfortunately, only short sequences really) which record the collective drumming. Here, the lack of synchronous sound proves most frustrating; some commentary would certainly be needed to explain that in those northern regions the shaman tradition is till alive in almost every family.

I also saw another film from the same area, made back in 1962. E. Timlin was the director and cameraman, supported by Yu.B. Simchenko who did the ethnographic fieldwork. Apart from some breathtakingly picturesque scenery, the film contains footage of ethnographic documentary value depicting a lifestyle of a quarter of a century ago (which was then still a traditional lifestyle): the setting up of the tent called the *chum*, the braiding of nets, the tools to make the leather-dressing, the techniques of ornamenting fur and the costume of a shaman. Regrettably, the credibility of this film, too, is marred by the 'red tail' tagged – on to its end – about the beauty of the changing life, with school-children picking flowers and the new school being built in the middle of a sea of mud. The figure of the local shaman, too, appears for a brief flash; yet, his drumming is at once drowned out by a music theme which provides the background for the whole film, and which, written by a composer, has no associations with the local musical tradition.

Still staying with the indigenous population inhabiting the Taymir Peninsula, our

colleagues in Moscow kindly permitted me to see portions of a still unedited film portraying the last Nganasan shaman. Shaman Demnime Ngamtuso Kosterkin (1913–1980), as one who carried on an ancient family tradition, was discovered in occasions (in one, made in 1974, he also performed some of his shaman's rituals. This was released on record in 1982 – Melodia c30–17651 003). In 1976, at A. Oskin's and Yu. Simchenko's request, he agreed to put on his full shaman's costume and paraphernalia, and give a demonstration, for the purpose of the film, of a shaman's weather-forecast ritual. The words of the ritual song were repeated and translated into the vernacular by his wife, who was sitting at his side. It was the beginning of winter, the first snow had just fallen, and he was singing of the kind of weather to be expected. The authenticity with which the shaman's costume and other details of the seance are shown renders these shots a unique document, after all, a trance state is a series of gestures and mechanized movements which neither cameras, spotlights, tape-recorders, nor, indeed, the presence of ethnographers is able to disturb. We hope that the close on two hours of material recorded – which is immensely rich in detail (for instance, the ornaments of the shaman's costume are shown and explained) – will be made into a film in the next few years. My deep conviction is that this film, when completed, will be one the best documentary on the genuine form of Siberian shamanism.

A man who deserves a special chapter in the history of Soviet ethnographic filmmaking is the Estonian Lennart Meri, who was a celebrated prose writer and he started making films in the early 1970s, and the very first project he embarked on was an ambitious enterprise: he wanted to make a film about the Finno-Ugrians, or more specifically, the Uralic peoples. Uralic peoples are those which speak languages belonging to the Uralic family of languages (they include the Finns, Estonians, Lapp, Samoyeds, Hungarians, Obi-Ugrians – the Voguls and Ostyaks, the Finnic peoples of the Volga, such as the Cheremis, Zyryans, Mordvin, Udmurt). His first film was *"The Waterbird People"* (1971 – 42 min.), which is an evocative study of five Uralic groups: the Ostyaks, Zyryans, Cheremis, Karelians and Nenets (Yurak-Samoyed). Based on unique aspects of each culture, the film explores their relationship to the cultural evolution of the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed peoples as a whole.

The themes of housing, ornaments, artifacts, language and ritual are used throughout to emphasize the similarities among these very different cultures which range from the Nenets, who are reindeer herders, to the Karelian farmers. Among the scenes are a Cheremis wedding and an age-old ritual performed by the Ostyaks to appease the spirit of a bear they have just killed.

His second film on the same topic was completed six years later with the title *"Winds of the Milky Way"* (1978 – 55 min.). This film captures many aspects of the daily lives of the Uralic (Finno-Ugric and Samoyed) peoples which have their roots in ancient traditions and systems of belief. Parallels in customs of agriculture, fishing and housing are recognizable among these groups despite the thousands of years which many of them have lived apart in very different physical and social environments. Thus the shape of the fishing boat used by a Hungarian fisherman and an Ostyak are similar

despite the fact that one group lives in Central Europe, the other in sub-Arctic terrain and they have been separate for at least two thousand years.

The film vividly depicts how such ethnographic details are intertwined with folk-song, dance and ritual. In unique footage, we see Demnime, a ninth-generation Nganasan shaman singing (Plate 17), a Veps mourning ritual and an eloquent interview with a Lapp leader about the future of his culture.

Lennart Meri, as author and filmmaker, worked in collaboration with Finnish and Hungarian scholars to document these patterns of culture found among the Finns, Veps, Vote, Mordvin, Ostyak, Vogul, Lapp, Hungarians, and Nganasan (a Samoyed people).

Nineteen eighty-five marked the 150th anniversary of the appearance of Kalevala. For that occasion, Meri made another film, called *"Voices of Kaleva"* (1985), which is a tribute to Elias Lönnrot, the scholar who – as is generally known – compiled, on the basis of the materials he had collected, the national epic of the Finnish people. The important point about Lönnrot's life's work is that he drew attention to the living oral tradition. The Estonian writer and director, sharing his predecessor's aim, has set himself the task of recording and rescuing for the future the surviving narrative tradition of the North. Meri, as well as being a film director, is a highly well-trained ethnographer and a lucky researcher, because in 1985, while shooting his latest film near Tyumen, among the Ostyaks, he managed to film a bear ceremonial.

> "...I went once more to Siberia, hoping to find fragments of the bear ritual I have been lucky to film during my previous expeditions. I chose this time the distant Agan tributary in the Eastern part and unexpectedly fell upon a tribe of Ostyaks among whom the bear ritual is still a living tradition they perform every year. It lasts five days (four, if it's a she-bear), during which they perform ritual sacrifices, dances, maskerades, and, last but not least, all the 270 traditional songs of the bear ritual, about 30,000 verses poetry of the highest quality, roughly twice the size of *'Kalevala'*. We were able to record about ten and to film about one hour of the ritual.
>
> It was and is an amazing discovery. First of all, the songs (and actions) have been preserved in their original order: the structure of the ritual seems to be intact. Secondly, the text part of the ritual is well comparable with *'Gilgamesh'* or *'Iliad'*: it is an epic poem of the Forest zone hunters, more than 3,000 years old, never systematically recorded in its entirety, and existing until now only as an oral tradition in the fragile memory of local hunters. Thirdly, the possibility to record through modern technical means an epic poem simultaneously with its performance is unique in itself and will give us an exclusive insight into prehistoric cultural life, beliefs, and ethics.
>
> In short, it is a major work and probably my last one, if I am able to realize my project. We shall have to film the whole ritual, about 60 hours. This must be done on the spot, in difficult conditions (virgin forest), and without delay: already one of the hunters died last year. After the ritual has been filmed and recorded, the text part must be transliterated and published in an Ostyak and European parallel edition for scientific use and in an artistic translation as an example of unwritten literature. The same goes with the film: in its total length it will be used as a scientific source for researchers; a much shorter edited version could be presented as an educational TV serial, perhaps five parts 30 minutes each. Until now I have had little success in finding a local producer. Our Tallinnfilm is probably ready to support a 40-minute documentary..." (Meri 1987:20).

Fortunately, the film was made, and in 1990 it was presented at the Fourth Pärnu International Visual Anthropology Festival, which had, as its central theme, the protection and preservation of the culture of Nordic peoples. The film, *"Toorumi pojad"* (The People of the God *Torum*), was one of the best screened at the festival. Moreover, it was the first anthropological documentary to profile the traditional structure of the Ostyak bear ceremony.

I note that V. N. Chernetsov – a renowned researcher into the other Ob-Ugrian people, the Voguls – made a short (approx. 20 to 25-minute-long – 16 mm) film about the Manysi bear cult as early as the late 1930s. In 1969, shortly before his death, the old scholar showed this document to a group of Hungarian anthropologist colleagues who were staying in Moscow at the time; that is when I myself saw the material. Today that film – along with other items in the Chernetsov estate – is preserved in the Anthropological Institute of the University of Tomsk.

It is worth mentioning here that, at that film festival, there were another four films featuring shots of Siberian shamans. In 1989, a 'troika' of Swedish filmmakers made a documentary in the same Nganasan group that Lennart Meri had also visited. One of the relatives of the shaman to be seen in his film improvised a display for the benefit of the filmmakers to demonstrate what the shamanic seance was like, what it could have been like in the old days. As the garments of the dead shaman were buried with him, and his drum was placed in a museum, the shamanic tools shown in the film were all newly made – some of them in quite a hurry, specially for the purposes of the filming. Hence *"Nganasan – a Siberian People"* (1989/90 – 29 min.), the work of director Harald Tiren, cannot be regarded as ethnographically authentic. On the other hand, it is highly revealing of the way in which, under the impact of the shooting, among other things, the shamanizing activity, considered to be sacred, is transformed in response to business and circumstance.

The Estonian director Valentin Kuik made a documentary that carries a politically important message – *"Message to the Parliament"* (1990 – 45 min.). It deals with the modern life of the Khanty people – more exactly, the devastation wreaked on the natural environment, the deforestation and the killing of wildlife brought about by oil production. There are only a few elderly people who are still familiar with the old dances and songs. One of them is a shaman whose picture recurs several times in the film.

In the heart of Siberia, in Novosibirsk, there lives and works a film director of Kazakh extraction, Raisa Yernazarova, as member of the Telefilm Studio, she cultivates the genre of the short documentary. In the last decade, she has been making more and more anthropological films. She brought to the festival a finely photographed film entitled *"Istselenie radostyu"* (Healing by Joy. 1990 – 20 min.), which she shot among the Nanai people inhabiting the Amur region. With R. Zvereva as its anthropological expert, the film profiles some spectacular details of the traditional folk culture of the Nanai, including the healing rituals of the shaman women. The central figure of the film is Nura Kile, custodian of folk wisdom on healing and an old female shaman.

In 1990, the prize for best scholarly documentary at the Pärnu festival went to *"The*

Shaman in Eurasia", a film by Mihály Hoppál and Marcell Jankovics. Hoppál had started collecting the pictures for the film back in the early Eighties, setting himself the object of showing the changing image of the Eurasian shaman. As it happens, a good many fine etchings and drawings have survived from the past centuries (16th to 19th centuries), illustrations to the first Siberian travel accounts. Some of these are well known, but many others have never been published. The examples include a series of photos made by Maynagashev, pictures of a horse sacrifice from 1914. We also dug up in the archives the phonograph recordings to go with the pictures – recordings likewise made by Maynagashev. The film features the old photos in conjunction with the original shamanic chants.

As the film was made back in the pre-glasnost period, we had no opportunity to carry out any fieldwork, taking original pictures; we therefore tried to collect the archival material. Thus we used an excerpt – the four or five minutes that were of any use – from Lennart Meri's film *"Winds of the Milky Way"*; the drum dance of the Udehe shamans from an old film by Litvinov (*"People of the Forest"* – Plate 20); a film made in Lakakh by Ferenc Neményi the trance of a *lhapa* (healing shaman); and, finally, footage made in Yakutia by L. Kuperschmidt, which, in the eighties, could not be used to make a film, due to opposition from Soviet officials.

Alongside the researcher-anthropologist, the film was co-directed by a famous director of animated cartoons, Marcell Jankovics, who, as a researcher, has studied the symbolism of shaman's drums. Here is part of the text of the screenplay, a section dealing with the symbolism of shaman's drums:

> "A basic type of shaman drums symbolizes the northern celestial sphere, the shaman's upper world, or its reflected image, which they thought to be the southern celestial sphere, that is the lower world. Some drums have the shape of the face of the Sky God, the well-known image with one eye as the Sun, the other as the Moon.
>
> The drums from the Altai region are somewhat different, they still often bear the face of the highest creature, the Sky God. This image also appears on the drum's handle.
>
> When in his trance the shaman speaks with the God, his spirit helper, as the shaman calls him, he in fact speaks to the image on the handle of the drum.
>
> The longitudinal axis of these drums, that is the line of the nose of the God image, is the Milky Way traversing the celestial sphere.
>
> The ornaments on the rim of the drum characterize the horizon and the middle world, that is a belt of the sky that the Sin, the Moon and the other planets appear to move through.
>
> At certain points of the drum's rims there is no ornament. These points are the passages between the world.
>
> They correspond to the intersections of the Milky Way and the Zodiac, the summer and winter solstices.
>
> Often there are four passages on the drum's rims. They also indicate the seasons and the points of the compass.
>
> The centre, or the navel of the drum represents the Polar Star, the centre of the celestial chart, which all the stars and constellations orbit around. You can see some

drawings of constellations on the drums, but not all of them have been identified. No wonder that this Chukchi drawing gives an image of the sky virtually identical with the image of the ornaments on the shaman's drums.

Some drums from the Altai region and from Lappland show a lateral view of the world. The upper and the lower worlds, that is the northern and the southern celestial spheres can be seen simultaneously together with the Zodiac, the symbol of the middle world.

This drum from the Lappland also show the passages between the worlds.

The handles of the drum are sometimes also part of the world image. The carving on the upper handle shows the face of the God of the Northern Sphere, and the face of the God of the Southern Sphere is carved into the lower handle.

The ornaments on the rim of these drums symbolize the Milky Way, with the depictions of various constellations." (From the script and the voice-over text.)

Jankovics used highly inventive animations to bring to life particular images of Siberian shamanism and the figures of the drums. In fact, the two director creators, who wrote and directed the film together, sought to produce a visual essay drawing on the abundant pictorial material (including photos, engravings, and motion-picture footage). The idea was to have less commentary than one usually gets in educational films and to include more pictures – ones that leap into motion, thereby explaining the phenomena.

Since the film was made, the present writer has come by a great deal of new material, which will be resulted a project of a new, extended version. Indeed, we have also conceived the idea of a separate film to document the modern, urban forms of shamanism. We have plenty of material for this latter project as well. Both films are expected to be completed in 1993.

Andris Slapins deserves a special chapter in the history of the recording on celluloid of Siberian shamanism. A Latvian filmmaker, Slapins died prematurely (at the age of 42) and under tragic circumstances: on January 20, 1991, he was killed, in Riga, the Latvian capital, by Soviet 'black berets' or Interior Ministry troops, as he was filming their attack. We quote from an obituary written about him:

"Slapins who was associated with the Riga Video Center, was filming the attack by Soviet Troops on the independence-seeking Latvian Interior Ministry when he and another film team member were killed. An ardent but non-militant Latvian nationalist, Slapins died in the arms of his mentor and friend, internationally-known filmmaker Yoris Podnieks, who was the only member of the three-man team to escape death. Official Soviet accounts claim the firing upon the film team was accidental, but observers say the group was not in the line of fire. Both United States officials and Russians have noted that journalists and cameramen appear to have been targeted...

In the past few years easing of travel restrictions enabled Slapins to make contact with anthropologists, folklorists, filmmakers and peace organizers outside of Latvia. At the time of his death he was involved in filming projects in Paris, Japan (Kazuo Okada, Tokyo Cinema Inc.), the United States, and Great Britain (British Universities Film and Video Council). His great drive and enthusiasm, his generous partici-

> pation in projects lacking personal financial return, and his willingness to freely distribute his films and photography brought his talents as an anthropological cinematographer rapidly to international recognition. His death is all the more tragic as he was a quintessential victim of the policies of Glasnost that nurtured and gave public expression to his burst of artistic production...
>
> Slapins is best known in North America for his contributions to *Crossroads of Continents: Cultures of Siberia and Alaska*, a travelling exhibition produced jointly by the Smithsonian together with the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR and Canadian and American museums. In addition to a film co-produced with Ted Timrek of Spofford Films, which is part of the exhibition, Slapins supplied two feature films for use with the show. *Chukotka: Coast of Memories*, now nearly twenty years old, is a cinematic masterpiece describing the lifeways and lands of the Chukchi and Eskimo peoples living on the Soviet shores of Bering Strait. Its sensitive humanistic portrayals of character and its blending of folklore, ancient cultural traditions, and landscapes produced a poetic masterpiece which to today's ear is marred only by the need for a more culturally-sensitive sound track. A second film, *Times of Dreams: Siberian Shamanism*, is also Chukchi shamanism and incorporated archival footage shot in the Amur region by A. Litvinov in the 1920s with his own footage of contemporary Evenki shamans curing a `possessed' family member returning from Soviet military service in Afghanistan.
>
> Both films document Slapins' cinematographic as well as his personal drive and courage in travelling and working, often alone or with only one assistant, in remote regions of the Soviet North and Far East. His ability to establish close bonds with native peoples and his instinct for coming in on deeply-rooted cultural traditions marked a unique humanistic style that combines sweeping, elegant landscapes with village life and close-up character revelation. Slapins' technique is most poignantly revealed in his portrayal of elders and children performing rituals, games and songs. He was particularly absorbed in searching for ancient rituals and ceremonies which he documented using natural light in remarkably difficult and sometimes dangerous situations. When Andris was behind the camera his art dominated to the point that nothing else – crashing Bering Sea surf, roaring walruses, polar bears, and nervous `shaman- tenders'– concerning personal security intruded on his consciousness. His single-minded commitment to seeking and portraying truth no doubt was a factor leading to his death." (Fitzhugh 1991:2).

Andris Slapin's film – which he made in collaboration with the anthropologists E. Novik and E. Alekseev – was the one that the panel of judges deemed worthy of the first prize in first festival of ethnographic films held in Pärnu, Estonia. Their 70-minute-long film *"Vremena snovedeniy"* (Times of Dreams, 1982–1986) treats of Siberian shamanism.

It is at last an authentic film about the shamans of Siberia. Moreover, it represents an important breakthrough in that, for long decades – actually, from the 1930s up until quite recently – shamanism was a taboo theme in the Soviet Union. The film portrays four shamans. The first is a relatively young Yakut shaman, who has since been profiled in an other film. The two others Yakuts belong to the older generation, and in their youth they still practised as shamans. Therefore, the reconstruction they gave for the purposes of the film may be accepted as authentic.

The fourth – a woman shaman (Plate 19) – with the trance she produced, provided the most authentic state of ecstasy. A film of this type enables the researcher to observe the many tiny details of the movements, gestures and other things (e.g. the rhythm of the whole rite) – even if the spiritual atmosphere of it all has, by now, completely changed. It is no accident that this was the film to receive the greatest critical acclaim from both Soviet and foreign experts, for in it an ideal cooperation was achieved between the cameraman – director, with his artistic style of vision, on the one hand, and the well-trained anthropologist-folklorist E. Novik and the ethnomusicologist E. Alekseev, on the other. He was an outstanding cameraman – and some wonderful scenes of the shaman performing his rituals, which are extremely difficult to film. Unfortunately, Slapin's untimely death prevented him to build up a coherent overall structure of this film, leaving us with no more than a mosaic of impressions, but anyhow this film is the best one on Siberian shamanism.

Alongside the Russian researchers and filmmakers, the last two or three years have brought the opportunity for foreign researchers, too, to appear and carry out fieldwork in Siberia, making video recordings. One of the first to do so has been Juha Pentikäinen, Professor at the Department of Comparative Religion at the University of Helsinki. Starting with 1989, she took part in several expeditions in the company of some Russian colleagues – in particular, O.A. Donskiy, N. Koskarova and E. Kovgan, who work in Novosibirsk, in the Siberian Research Institute of the Academy of Sciences, studying the languages and culture of the related Ugrian peoples of the Ob. They have primarily set out to describe and salvage on recordings the various dialects; so it is only natural that, in the course of their collecting work, they notate some valuable folkloric texts.

Most probably, the reason why they chose one of the last Ostyak shamans was that this elder had already figured in Lennart Meri's film, which showed the bear feast. He was the younger one of the two shamans conducting the ceremonies. To enable a better understanding of the whole context of the shots, we quote from Pentikäinen's commentary to the film:

> "The Ugric language of the Khanty (Ostyak) is one of those northern Siberian languages whose existence has been threatened by the rapid assimilation to Russian culture as the result of the strong settlement, agricultural and industrial Soviet policy in Siberia since the Revolution. Particularly from the 1930's onwards, the relative proportion of the indigenous peoples in all the northern territories has dramatically decreased, being in the Okrug of Khantimansisk, for example, only 1.2 % of the total population.
>
> The total number of the Khanty speakers has not, however, diminshed but rather slightly increased having been in 1897 19,700 and in the last census of the 1980s ca. 21,000. The recent trend has led towards bilingualism. Most Khanty speak fluently Russian. At the moment, the Khanti with their Mansy (Vogul) relatives seem together to be more than ever before aware of their common roots and have started their struggle for their survival as language and culture.
>
> The elements of the old ethnic religion also seem to be a part of the struggle for ethnic survival. The videofilm shows the shamanic kills and practices in a Khanty

winter village at a by- river of Ob visited by the team in January 1990. The religious leader of the clan is the only one who survived of the nine Khanty shamans imprisoned by Stalin in the 1930s...

The ethnographic documentary was shot at the tip of one of the tributaries of the river Ob in the heart of Siberia. During the period from November to March the nomadic Khanty family lives in the winter village. This is the time of reindeer husbandry, culminating in the reindeer sacrifice. In January 1990 the annual reindeer sacrifice was made to celebrate the arrival of the son and the daughter of the shaman from the oil cities along the Ob together with the research team.

Ivan Stepanovich Sopotsin is the family elder and the spiritual head of the Sopotsin family – the shaman. He is everywhere during the ceremony. It is he who acts as a mediator between this and the other world. His absence is a threat, his presence orders the course of events.

The ceremony begins with a sacrifice to the god of fire which prepares the community for the reindeer sacrifice to be made the following day. The ritualised death adds to the life of the reindeer stock, assures its continuity and at the same time the luck and future of the entire community. It is the women's lot to follow the sacrifice from apart. They are forbidden to come near the sacrificial site in front of the sacred sleigh."

In 1991, at the Fifth Pärnu Visual Anthropology Film Festival, Juha Pentikäinen's film *"Reindeer Sacrifice: A Khanty Shaman in 1990"* (video – 26 min.) won acclaim. In 1991–1992 the Finnish professor carried out fieldwork among the Nanai people inhabiting the Amur region. The present writer had the opportunity to view the more than three-hour-long video recording that he had made, in the autumn of 1991, about the traditional rite. "The *Kasa taori* is the classical ritual of the Nanai to send the souls of the departed as a group to the *buni* which is their abode behind the river." The ceremony was staged by one of the clans, on one of the islands of the huge river. The 1991 Pärnu festival saw the screening, too, of a film focussing on another people of the Amur region, the Ulcha. Arkadiy Morozov's film *"Amur People"* (1990 – 26 min.) was shot in the region that the famous Captain Arsenev visited in the last century, and which he portrayed in his memoirs of travels. It is unfortunate that the film consists of only loosely connected, brief episodes and glimpses of life, a deficiency that even the superb camera work and beautiful pictures cannot fully redeem.

Staying in the Far East and continuing our review of the films showing the life of the peoples of the Amur, I have to mention the anthropological films I saw during a field-trip in China and Manchuria, in particular.

During my stay in Peking in August 1991, I made the acquaintance of the film-makers who work at the Central Institute of Nationality Studies, which operates within the framework of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. These cinematic experts – who combine the skills and functions of cameraman, editor, and director, like Yan Guanghai – worked together with the ethnographers. In the 1957 to 1989 period, they made some 22 films among the ethnic minorities.

As is well known, the territory of the People's Republic of China is home of 56 nationalities, with the total population of ethnic minorities amounting to 60 million.

These nationalities (that is, in fact, the term the Chinese themselves use in English translations of their own articles) stood at varying levels of social development – particularly in the Fifties and even as late as the Sixties. To use the Marxist terminology, some had remained at the level of the primitive communal system of fishing-hunting societies, with others fixed at the stage of slavery or serfdom, and still others, at that of semi-feudal dependence. Given that they were working according to the five-year plan cycles, the Chinese colleagues recorded exactly the three basic rules of the making of anthropological films:

> "Most films were shot and completed from the mid-fifties to the sixties not so far from the years of radical social change. The shooting was conducted following these principles: *First,* going deep into the minority area and shooting on the spot with no artificial setting or professional actor or actress. Before shooting a film the researchers and the scenarist-directors go deep into the thick of life, making investigations repeatedly, making every effort to guarantee the truthfulness of the content. *Second,* emphasis is placed on scientificness. The contents of ethnological films must truly reflect the ethnic minorities' original social features, ways of life and their cultures, so, no fabrication or subjective supposition is allowable. First priority must be given to scientificness. The technique of expression should be simple and unadorned, and combine the recording of actual conditions and scientificness together. *Third,* paying special attention to the ways of life and traditional cultures that will disappear soon and are changing rapidly in the choice of subjects and the establishment of the theme. The traditional cultures and ways of life of the various nationalities that then still lived in the last stage of primitive society or still preserved remnants of primitive communes, of those whose social systems were experiencing great changes but still retaining the slave system and serfdom, and of those living in remote, thickly forested mountains cut off from the outside world, who were so isolated that few people had known them, have all been rush-shot on the basis of thorough investigations of Chinese ethnic minorities' history and social structures, and according to the scientific system. This saved a lot of materials that were rapidly disappearing by means of images and was of great significance for scientific research and ethnic work as well as for spreading cultural and scientific knowledge..." (Du-Yang 1989:69).

In 1959, under the above programme, the film *"Evenki People Along the River Argun"* – directed and photographed by Yang Guanghai – was produced. Naturally, in those days, 35 mm black-and-white film was the standard medium, and only natural light was used. The good quality of the pictures is a credit to the cameraman's work. The well-paced film replicates the daily life of the Evenki, a people of nomadic reindeer-keepers, with pictures of the building and dismantling of tents, hunting, meat distribution, all of them authentic documents. There is, however, a portion of the film that bears some all too obvious sings of it having been deliberately arranged for maximum effect – namely, the bit where the huntsman, in spring, brings in to the Chinese merchant the skin of the animals that he killed during the winter. (This part is highly reminiscent of a corresponding scene in *"Nanook"*; though the makers are unlikely to have seen Flahety's famous film.) Later, we see the Evenki being made drunk and robbed: the antler of the reindeer – to which they ascribed healing powers – is taken away from him. (It is worth noting that, to this day, reindeer antlers are sold at Peking international airport.)

As the film shows, as far as is possible, a full one-year-long cycle in the life of the

community, with all the important details, we get only brief, couple-of-minute-long flashes of fishing, the burial, and the wedding. Similarly, the shamanic healing, too, is given but a one-or-two-and-a-half-minute-long treatment; but there everything, including the costume, the drum, and the movement, is authentic. Yang Guanghai has disclosed that the original uncut negatives are still preserved, offering the possibility of one day presenting the entire material. So far, the authorities have not granted permission for this brief extract to be copied and taken out of the country.

The second film centred on the Oroqen community *("The Oroqen Nationality")*. Made in 1963, it too was photographed by Yang Guanghai, with the former director of the Institute, Qui Pu, as the specialist-ethnographer. The latter, incidentally, has also published an ethnographical monograph dealing with this community of nomadic hunters numbering barely 2,000. The authentic pictures of the shamanic rituals account for about two minutes in the film, which runs for over an hour. The maker of the film revealed that the shaman and his helper had been shamanizing over someone with a real illness (Plate 18).

The third film was made in 1965, among the Hezhe (or Hodzha) people living along the Ussuri river. The film features some extended episodes portraying the shamans and their activities – in fact, these are the longest parts. When engaged in healing, the shaman wears a crown made of metal, an ornamental headgear displaying a bird. We are shown an interesting custom performed in spring and in autumn – i.e. the sacrifice to the spirits of roads. The pig sacrifice lies in front of the triple shaman's tree, set up in the courtyard. This they sprinkle with water.

I asked the Chinese colleagues to provide videotaped copies of these brief, couple-of-minute-long excerpts. However, they turned down my request, saying the authorities would refuse permission, as these films were not for screening abroad.

I was shown yet another film – one of about 35 minutes in length – which focuses on Manchu shamanism. Shot in 1988, it features one shaman helped out by four assistants, performing a full day-long ceremony for the well-being of the clan, that is to say, the extended family. In the film – which was made already on video –, the shamans use three different types of drums, and, what is more important, here too the pig is the sacrificial animal. When the rituals are over, the participants jointly consume the pig.

In a Changchun, where there is a whole research team working on collecting the material of shamanism, I saw two more films. *"Shamanic Dances"* (1987 – 23 min. video) presents Manchu shamanic dances. The film affords some precious insights, as in the scene where we see one of the shamans wearing a crown decorated with three birds. It is visible when he achieves the trance state: at this point, he places glowing embers into his mouth.

Another short documentary was produced in 1990, among the small Oroqen community, along the Amur, in the village of Baina, Huma district. The video film was made on the occasion of a family gathering. The camera work bears all the hallmarks of the amateur; but, at the same time, it is also evident that the ethnographers present did not rearrange the events – except for the fact that one of the sides of the tent had

been taken down to allow more light to get in for the shooting. In the tent thus altered, the shaman performs a round dance, calling on the spirits. It was interesting to observe the shaman's crown, decorated with ribbons and displaying giant horns, as well as the divergent drumming styles of the male and female shamans and the rich ornamentation of the shaman's costume (similar to that seen in the pictures presented by Ethel Lindgren, based on her fieldwork, made in the early 1930s).

Yet, the greatest experience I had during the whole of my stay in China was a film spotlighting Manchu shamanism. In 1988, a professional team made an over one-hour-long film about the shamanism of the Manchus inhabiting the Jilin district – more exactly, about a local variant of that shamanism. In their work, they relied on the local field experience of the Changchun researchers led by Fu Yuguang and Wang Hong-gang. They produced over five hours of material recording the ceremonies which lasted for three days. We quote from the description of an eye-witness, a young Chinese colleague:

> "... the major task of the clan shaman is to conduct the annual offering rituals for each family in the clan. During these rituals, the shamans chant traditional scriptures and creation myths containing the names of numerous gods, deified ancestors, and wild spirits. The offering rituals basically have four parts-offerings to the deities of agriculture, hunting, darkness, and the sky pole.
>
> Before each family's annual offering ritual, the clan chief and the master shaman are invited to open the clan's ancestral box (a wooden trunk) that contains genealogical records, idols of clan deities (often mythologized ancestors) and other ritual items. This sacred box is said to be the residence of the clan ancestors and guardian spirits above the ninth heaven.
>
> Although the clan shamans do not have a major role in maintaining genealogical records, the records play an important part in the shamanic rituals. Every four years (in the traditional zodiac years of the Dragon, Tiger, and Rat), the clan chief conducts a ceremony to add deceased clan members' names to the genealogical records which are kept in the ancestral box and displayed at the annual offering rituals. During this ceremony, an election is held for the position of clan chief, traditional laws and honour codes are recited for the benefit of all clan members, and myths and legends are passed on to the younger generations.
>
> The offering ritual I observed was led by Guang Borong, a master shaman in his fifties. I later learned that Guang Borong had become a shaman at the age of twenty-seven, after he was selected by a call from the ancestral spirits and then trained by the master shaman Guang Zhiyuan. Guang Borong is highly respected among his people for his intelligence, his excellent handwriting, his caring for the people, and his endeavours to preserve their shamanic scriptures and traditions.
>
> The ritual started before daybreak. Millet cakes and burning incense sticks had been placed on the offering table. After cleaning their hands and faces, the four participating shamans donned ceremonial skirts, trimmed with cloud designs, and cone-shaped waist bells-the sound of which is said to symbolize thunder. Then, drumming and chanting, they invoked the Farming Guardian, *Wuxin-endure*, from the upper-world and asked for his protection so that the crops and livestock would flourish.
>
> Amidst the almost-deafening drumming of the three assistant shamans, Guang

Borong began to dance and to sing: "Among countless clans like willow leaves on Earth, the Guar'jia clan is one of the most prestigious. The great shamaness created the ancient scriptures, and I am selected as a shaman to serve the deities..." As he beat the hand drum and jumped from side to side-his cloud-design skirt swaying and his cone-shaped bells clapping-Guang Borong seemed to be flying into a thunderstorm.

Shortly after daybreak, a huge black pig was butchered as an offering. It was sliced into several blocks for boiling, and the cooked sections were then reassembled on the altar. The drumming quickened, and the lead shaman chanted: "Following the decree of our ancestors, we prepare the sacrifice at the altar. The ritual meat is offered to you, deities. Please descend to share the game meat..."

While the shamans continued dancing and chanting scriptures, with occasional breaks, throughout the day, the other clan members busily prepared a feast. This part of the ritual concluded with an invitation to the deities of Heaven, war, and hunting to attend the feast.

That evening, after dark, all lights-except for some candles-were suddenly turned off. The clan members knelt, and the shamans began to dance and drum ecstatically. Guang Borong chanted, asking for the protection of the deities-primarily golddesses-in charge of darkness and safety.

Later that evening, the sacred genealogical records and ritual items were returned to the ancestral box and placed on the sacred west side of the *kang* (heatable brick bed), where they would remain until the next family in the clan was ready to hold an annual offering ritual. The offering food was removed from the altar, and homemade rice wine was served. Then, after dancing and chanting all day without eating, the shamans enjoyed the feast with the other clan members.

The following day, the clan held the sky pole offering ritual. The pole used in this ritual must come from a straight tree growing on a mountaintop and must be nine chi (approximately three meters) in height, representing the nine layers of Heaven. The sky pole, symbolizing the passageway to the upperworld, was erected in the middle of the courtyard. The top of the pole was smeared with animal blood as an offering to the deities. Grains and pig intestines were then attached to the pole as offerings to ravens and magpies, the scred messengers of the gods. As all clan members knelt before the sacred pole, the master shaman chanted to the heavens, asking the deities for protection.

Finally, there was a ritual in honour of *Fuduo Mama* (Goddess of Fertility), who is in charge of pregnancy and infant health. Offerings of food were hung on a willow tree-its countless leaves symbolize fertility-and women tried to grab the food as symbolic blessings. Colourful threads were tied to the children's hands, as lucky talismans from Fuduo Mama.

Fu Yuguang explained that, after all the offering rituals are finished, the bones of the sacrificial pig are scattered on a mountaintop or into the Songhua River. (Mountains and rivers are mythic symbols of easy access to the other world.) For three days, birds and natural forces are allowed to clean the blood and offerings off The sacred pole; then it is thrown into the river or planted on top of a mountain to carry the clan's best wishes to the heavenly deities. In some clans, families keep the sky poles in their courtyards throughout the year, until new poles are blessed and inaugurated at the next annual offering ritual." (Shi Kun 1991:25–26).

This Manchu film is immensely rich in ethnographical details. It will, no doubt, become one of the classics among the films profiling Eurasian shamanism, serving as a standard reference. We ourselves are preparing to offer a longer and more detailed review and analysis; this has been intended to be just a preliminary survey.

ILLUSTRATIONS

to

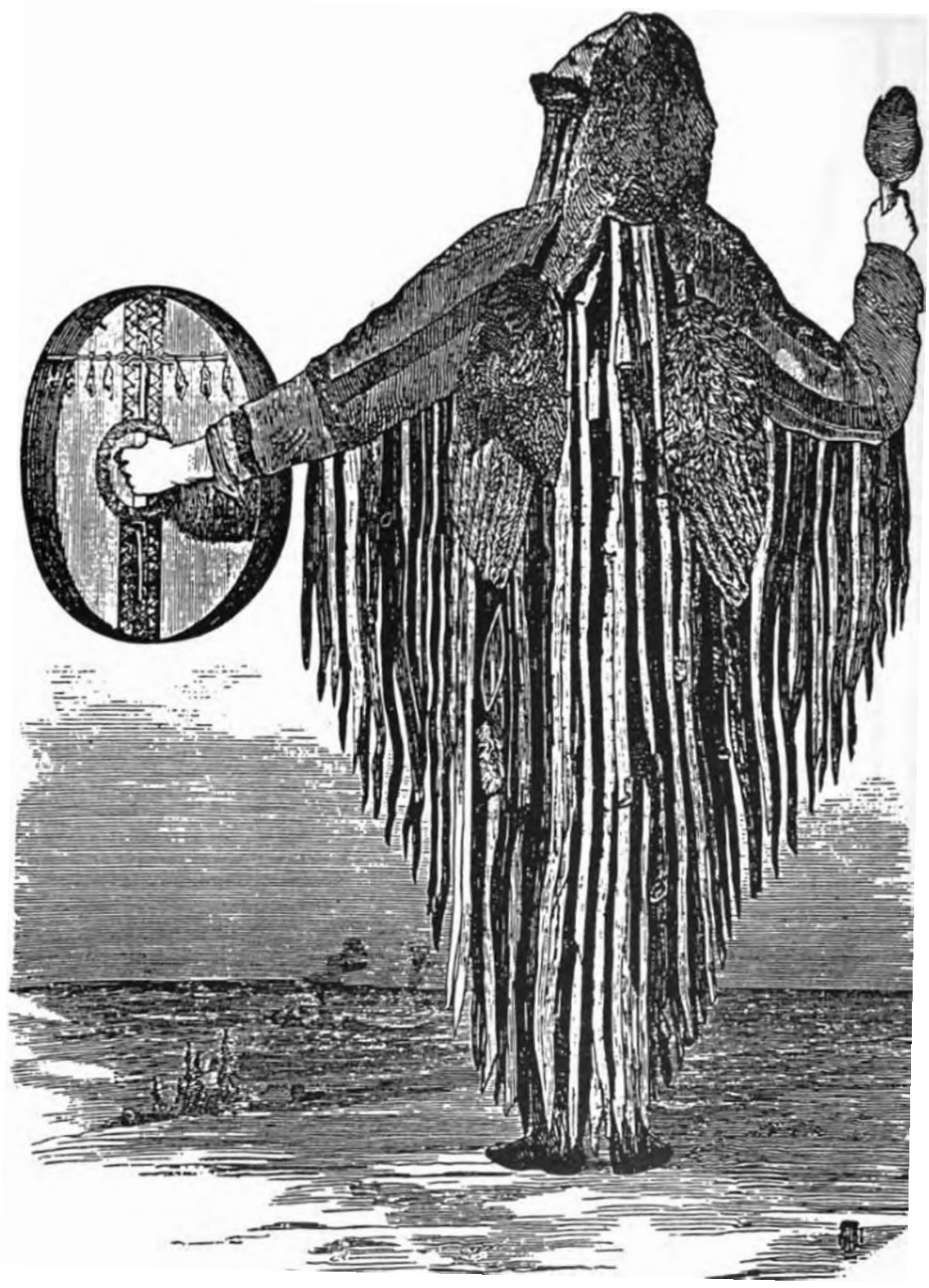
„Changing Image of the Eurasian Shamanism"
and
„Ethnographic Films on Shamanism"

Plate 1 Tungus shaman – Witzen 1672

Шаманка красноярская съ тыла.
Eine Krasnojarskische Schamanka rückwärts
Une Chamane ou Devineresse de Krasnojarsk par derrière.

Plate 2 Shamanness with squirrels on her back – Krasnojarsk region – Georgi 1776:Abb. 45

Plate 3 Shaman with an arrow
– Argun river region – Georgi 1776:Abb. 62



Ein Schamane (Rückansicht).

Plate 4 Shaman of the Altai region
– Lankenau 1872:281

Plate 5 Ostyak shaman's seance
– Ob region – Finsch 1879:Abb. 47

Plate 6 Gilyak shaman
– Amur region – Schranck 1896:Abb. 4

Plate 7 Otsir *böö* (Bayangol district) – Photo: Sakari Pälsi (1909), National Museum of Finland – VKK 156:6

Plate 8 Samoyed shaman – Photo: Kai Donner (1911–1913), National Museum of Finland – SUK 205:1

Plate 9 Altai Turk shaman – Photo: K. Hilden (1914), National Museum of Finland – VKK II:2

Plate 10 Lebed Tatar shaman – Photo: J.G. Granö (1914), National Museum of Finland – VKK II:17

Plates 11–14 Horse sacrifice led by a Sagay shaman (Abakan region) – Photo: S.D. Maynagashev (1914)

Plate 12

Plate 13

Plate 14

Plate 15 Ivan Sopotsin, the Nganasan shaman

Plate 16 Shooting of the film „The People of the God *Thorum*"
– Photo by the courtesy of L. Meri

Plate 17 Demnime, the Nganasan shaman
– Photo: Aado Lintrop

Plate 18 Oroqen shaman – Photo: Qui Pu

Plate 19 An old Evenki shaman woman
– Ex: „Times of Dreams" (1982) – Photo: A. Slapins

Plate 20 An Udehe shaman dancing and drumming
– Animation cartoon picture from
„The Shaman in Eurasia" by M. Hoppál and M. Jankovics (1988)

URBAN SHAMANS A CULTURAL REVIVAL IN THE POSTMODERN WORLD

The combination 'urban shamans' sounds somewhat strange, and perhaps it would be better to write postmodern or simply contemporary shamanism. Most likely, however, even that adjectives will puzzle the armchair scholars sitting at their desks, as they have read in the literature that shamanism is a dead cultural phenomenon. That was, at least, the case in the sixties and the seventies, for that was what Mircea Eliade's classical monograph and the earlier Soviet publications suggested (Eliade 1964).

From the end of the sixties, however, and particularly at the beginning of the eighties, the situation radically changed. A great number of works were published which took shamanism as their subject-matter. This boom and the plethora of relevant publications went back to at least two causes: one is that many of the researchers, labelled everything as 'shamanism', hence all activities involving a healing or spiritual guide who employed trance or ecstatic techniques were compared to shamans. The other cause was that young researchers carried out fieldwork in areas where previously shamanism had not been the prime subject of study (Basilov 1984).

Despite the large number of articles, essays, and monographs, there is no consensus among scholars as to the definition of shamanism. Almost every scholar has his/her own definition, which, in most cases, they have adjusted to the phenomena of the cultural area they have been studying. My definition, in which I stress the everyday character of shamanism, is no exception, either. Shamanism is a complex belief-system organized around the figure of the shaman, who has to condense within him the *knowledge* determined by the culture and has to be familiar whit certain *instruments* (such as the drum), the *technique of the rite*, and certain sacred *texts* that he uses. The beliefs melt the ritual texts, the ecstatic technique, and the objects into a single complex. In the preponderant majority of the cases observed and described so far, this complex of knowledge and beliefs pertains not to the religious or sacred but rather to the profane sphere of everyday life (Hoppál 1985).

The most important distinctive feature of the contemporary forms of shamanism is precisely this profane character together with the healing function as probably the principal feature. In the ensuing chapters of the paper, we shall furnish – primarily from an urban milieu – a few characteristic examples of the present-day manifestation forms of shamanism. Previously, anthropology concerned itself with the study of so

called `primitive culture' – mostly those living a long way from Europe; recently, however, it has become obvious that we do not have to go so far afield, as the world of metropolitan areas and their postmodern mass culture holds within it just as many intriguing phenomena waiting to be explored as the world of `primitive' peoples. The urban jungle is at least as mysterious as the real rain forest.

The following examples are meant to convince the reader that, after a prolonged silence, shamans have reappeared on the stage of modern cities, in order to help, by their healing ecstatic techniques, their city-dwelling fellow humans. At a time of technological progress, the scientific-technical revolution, an ancient method of healing has reemerged from the limbo of cultural values once judged to be out of date.

Let us begin our survey with Siberia, the possible birth-place of shamanism. The descriptions originating from the first decades of the present century are the sources of ethnographical works on shamanism. Authentic reports, from the subsequent decades, however, grew sparser, resulting in the appearance of what were mostly vague generalizations and summarizing works, that is to say, repeated analyses of the earlier data. That was due mainly to political, or more exactly, to ideological reasons. The adherents of ancient traditions, the upholders of old customs, including the shamans, were persecuted as representatives of nationalism and the old faith.

Fortunately, in the past two decades, the Russian anthropologist and folklorist colleagues carried on their research in the remote areas of Siberia, and, according to the evidence of the latest publications,they actually met active shamans even as late as the sixties and the seventies (see Vdovin ed. 1981). What is surprising about that is, perhaps, not the fact that the profession of shamanic healers has survived in the remote forests of the *taiga* (after all, there were no doctors but there were people who had to be healed), but rather the circumstance that, in the seventies, permission was granted for a film to be made about one of the last Nganasan shamans. An Estonian writer and film director, Lennart Meri, produced a fifty-minute-long documentary film called *"Winds of the Milky Way"* about the life and cultures of Finno-Ugrian peoples. The documentary contains a five-minute shot showing a Nganasan shaman living on the Taymir peninsula, as he sings his ecstatic song and beats his drum. The voiceover of the film has said that the showing of a genuine Nganasan shaman was the first exposure given over the official Soviet mass communication media of a real Siberian shaman.

Still more interesting, as a cultural fact, is what happened at a folk music evening performance organized, for the participants of an international ethnological conference, by the Soviet hosts. On that occasion, a shaman appeared, too, among the singers of various nationalities. The interesting point about his performance was that, after he had begun his chanting and invocation of the spirits, he, when the ten minutes permitted to him were up, could not or would not finish, as an interruption of this kind ran counter to the rules of the rite and of the tradition. He literally had to be shoved off the stage. That is to say, the appearance, to him, was not a mere performance, but a faithful reproduction of a folk ritual.

In 1976, I had a similar experience in Kirghizia, when, in the local Ethnographical

Institute in the Kirghiz capital, a folk singer sang from the old heroic songs, the Manas epic. After half an hour, this singer could scarcely be stopped, he identified with his role with such emotional intensity. In Central Asia, as is known, the role of these singers and of the shamans partly overlapped. They were the ones who carried on the oral traditions, they were the mediators between the historical past and the present. Their role is of great importance to their people to this very day, as they are the ones who keep alive ethnic identity within the compass of a multi-ethnic state. They are the maintainers of identity, the doctors of the soul, if you like, amidst a tide of world history that mixes peoples together. And even if, in the course of their stage, television, and radio appearances, they can present only a few elements of the authentic folklore, their appearances have great significance; for it is not the authenticity of the performance that matters (after all, the folklore production, when separated from the original cultural milieu, stands on its own) – what is important here is the role of the social message in strengthening the collective or ethnic identity.

To sum up, it might be said that this new 'urban' shamanism tends to be in the service of social healing, for the most part, since it is a maintainer of the collective consciousness, and thereby it naturally helps the individual as well.

Naturally, there are some other areas in the Soviet Union where the shaman is still active in his original capacity of 'religious functionary'. Unfortunately, we have rather few descriptions of this kind, and these, strangely enough, happen to have been written by foreign researchers. An American scholar visited the Khanty (i.e. the Ostyaks) of the Kazim in 1976, and she still found a healing shaman though, admittedly, he only practised his art on rare occasions (Mandelstem-Balzer 1983). Unfortunately, the persecutions of shamans in the thirties and the fifties considerably undermined the social prestige of these local healers.

All that, however, has not prevented shamans from finding a way of keeping alive the old faith, of organizing the religious sacrificial ceremonies inherited from their ancestors – and doing so, indeed, with the participation of the workers of the socialist kolkhozes, as seen in the Buryat Autonomous Republic, in Siberia. The British scholar (Humphrey 1983 Chapter I-III), in her essay, demonstrated how the dogma-free, secret, and easy-to-acquire system of Buryat shamanism had enabled it to survive down to our own days, defying time and the ideological constraints of social development.

It is open to debate how far shamanism, when uprooted from its original cultural context, remains identical with itself. It ought to be seen clearly, however, that, whether the shaman stays in his place, living his/her life as a member of the kolkhoz, or whether he appears on TV, the world around him/her has changed. Indeed, it is changing, so drastically that it is wiser to take account of this changing context, as the actual cultural continuum. And that is true not only of the Soviet Union (Kulemzin 1983) but also of Korea (Cho 1983) or Peru (Luna 1984) and the United States of America (Lyon 1984). All around the world, alongside the officially promoted shamanism and grounded in local traditions, and its philosophy. In the religious system of American Indian cultures (Jilek 1982) the shaman (or medicine man) played a vital, one might say, central, role;

which may be one of the factors explaining the dramatic upsurge of interest (Jilek 1983), in recent years, in the phenomena of shamanism.

In 1984, two conferences were held in the US, which were devoted, to the problems of shamanism and, more specifically, to gaining a better understanding of its contemporary, new forms, which are still alive and are still to be encountered (Heinze ed. 1984). At the other conference, also held in California, in 1984, distinguished scholars gave lectures on the recent results of research into altered states of consciousness, trance and ecstatic techniques, and shamanism itself. The conference was organized by Michael Harner, and the presenters were hosted by the Esalen Institute.

Also attending the conference, as audience, were some fifteen students of Harner, who took part in a course conducted by him, which might be described under the title "How to Become a Shaman"? The expensive course promised shamanic initiation within four weeks. In any case, it was quite a spectacle for the European traveller to watch the wild tribe of American 'aboriginals', the WASPs, go out each morning to the coast of the Pacific and, turning towards the east on the edge of the cliffs, greet the rising sun with a ritual song, in preparation for their 'shamanic' journeys to be made, to the sound of drums, under the guidance of Michael Harner.

Harner started his career as an anthropologist, and between 1966-1969 he made three visits to the Jívaro Indians of South America, about whose culture, and especially their shamanism, he gave a highly detailed anthropological description (Harner 1973). It was not until the seventies that Harner began to involve himself with practical shamanism, when he founded his institution called *Center for Shamanic Studies*. In 1983, he already held 'shamanic training workshops' in Europe as well; the basic training course was called *The Shamanic Journey, Power and Healing: An Experiential Exploration*. He also conducted courses, in places such as Switzerland (Davos), France (near to Paris), West Germany (in Munich), Austria (in Vienna) and Sweden (in Stockholm). The venues of the two- to three-day practical courses advertised in the Center's Newsletter of Spring 1985: Berkeley, Seattle, and Chicago – in the US; in Europe, he held four courses in Austria.

At the basic course, the participants acquaint themselves with the technique of the 'shamanic journey' in practice, so that, by the help of the traditional drumbeat and dance, they may attain the 'shamanic state of consciousness'. They make journeys to the Lower and the Upper Worlds, and, in the course of these journeys, the participants learn how to use the experiences of the trips for the restoration of some kind of self-healing power – how to gain knowledge thereby and how to solve personal problems.

In addition to the *Basic Shamanic Training Workshop*, Michael Harner offers three other kinds of courses, all of them essentially of a curative character. The first – the *Shamanic Extraction Training Workshop* – is concerned with the localization of psychic diseases and pains and their removal by means of the shamanic therapeutic method. The second, called *The Dream Dance and the Bone Game*, promises the revival of healing rites through learning about the visionary techniques of North American Indians.

It is an interesting development in Harner's activity that, alongside the earlier orientation, which tended to focus on the merely ritual aspect, and which could essentially be interpreted as a relaxation technique, – well, alongside that earlier aspect, the healing side has come to the fore. It was probably public demand that pushed him in this new direction, one of whose results is a successful book entitled *The Way of the Shaman* (Harner 1980). Although, in this work, he still uses the traditional anthropological literature, the larger part of the book is devoted to a description of a healing method that he himself has `reconstructed' and of the `shamanic state of consciousness' (SSC).

Still, the most fascinating part of Harner's work is something we may learn about from the Spring 1985 issue of the *Newsletter* of the *Center for Shamanic Studies*, where we are told that, prompted by pressure for such a service, Harner will demonstrate the shamanic practice he has developed for peoples or communities where earlier – perhaps even as late as the beginning of the century – shamanism was still alive, but where it has been forgotten since then (thus, for instance, among certain North American Indian tribes, the Eskimos of Alaska, and the Lapps of Sweden and Norway). The white shaman reintroduces the healing ritual, teaching it to the youth of the formerly shamanic peoples.

> "In this work, Michael teaches only `core-shamanism', the minimal general methods consistent with those once used by their ancestors, so that members of these tribal societies can elaborate and integrate the practices on their own terms in the context of their traditional cultures" (CSS-Newsletter Spring 1985-4).

In the postmodern world the intellectuals of minority or ethnic origin, a writer and film director, who salvages the ritual by recording it on celluloid, transmitting it to urban dwellers. That is to say, an ancient healing ritual and ecstatic technique today becomes a social rite. Firstly, it is one of the purposes of social gatherings, because people come together to practise a ritual, deemed to be important, of the forgotten tradition; and, secondly, they select from the past a segment which is suitable – or, at least, seems to be suitable – for expressing and maintaining, with vital intensity of feeling, the emotional ties of attachment to the ethnic group. In other words, this neo-shamanism could be an excellent symbol – and, at the same time, technique – of the reproduction of ethnic identity in a postmodern milieu.

In a big-city environment, however, where ethnic bonds have already been eroded and even their remnants have ceased to be alive, there it is the therapeutic function that comes to the fore – indeed, in two respects. One is what the exercises advertised themselves promise – namely, that the participants can learn the technique of discovering psychic disorders and of reinforcing the awareness of the self. In addition, participation in the practice, in itself, provides and offers good relaxation in the stressful milieu of urban living. The other important aspect which, though seldom emphasized, follows directly from the inner contents of the technique of the shamanistic rite is the common experience. It is the togetherness, the psychic experience of collective action, that has an immensely beneficial influence on the participants. It is something that I myself experienced during a workshop held in Budapest by one of Harner's students;

there, within the three days, the small group of people gathered together managed to develop a wonderful team spirit (in 1989); and clearly, the latter, too, has some therapeutic effect on the individual, particularly on the urban individual deprived of his small communities, the 'lonely' mass-man.

At this point, let us turn our attention to our present-day European examples. One of Harner's students, Hugo-Bert Eichmüller, who comes from Germany, has paid a visit to Hungary. By training, this young man is a psychologist and social worker. In February 1984, he attended, in Big Sur (California), the Introductory Shamanic Workshop, conducted by Harner, and in the autumn of the same year he opened his private institute in Nuremberg, the *Institut für schamanistiche Studien*. In this institute, as well as in other cities of West Germany (e.g. Hamburg, Essen), he regularly holds series of exercises under the title *The Use of the Shamanic Journey in the Reinforcement of Personal Abilities in Everyday Life*. These are usually held over weekends (Friday-Saturday-Sunday), in the form of morning and afternoon sessions. What does such a seance look like, and what happens there?

During the course held in Hungary (February 1-3, 1985) each occasion was attended by an average of fifteen to twenty participants. The sessions invariably began by the people sitting down in a circle. (I note that this had probably been the first instance of shamanizing in Hungary since the 12th century, when, precisely for this crime, the last pagan shamans were executed!) In the darkened room, just dimly lit, the leader-shaman, shaking a rattle, went round the participants, shaking the rattle separately over each person's head. Then, standing in the middle of the circle, he shook the painted rattle over a small fire-'altar' or censer there, which had incense burning in it, – he shook it in the direction of the four cardinal points, and then also towards the upper world. This short ceremony, if its symbols are interpreted in the light of the known ethnological parallels, might, in fact, be regarded as a purifying ritual.

Then followed the first exercise, which required the participants to stand up facing one another and, raising the knees high, simulate running without advancing, while swinging the arms high up in the air. The chief shaman and his helper (also having a drum) were running round between the rows, persistently beating their drums. The next exercise – as opposed to the previous row dance, which had strictly set moves – was a series of unplanned, elective bodily motions, which might be described as a round dance. Standing in the middle of the room, the chief shaman and his assistant were again beating their drums for about a quarter of an hour, while the participants were walking round and then running, jumping, crawling, and writhing on the ground, depending on the particular species of animal in which they had found their helping spirit. The strong and rhythmical drumming mingled with the sounds of involuntary cries, screechings and neighings; as the people themselves related in the ensuing stage of the seance, some had imagined themselves to be horses, while others had fancied themselves to be eagles, which prompted them to flail with their arms and scream. After this exercises, designed to induce a sort of altered state of consciousness came the actual 'trip', achieved by the help of the sounds of the drums. Instead of drugs or

any other kind of substances, the drum was the instrument that helped the participants achieve the altered state of consciousness.

The third event of the seance, then, is the experience of the 'journey' prior to which the guide asked the participants to picture, during the change in the state of consciousness induced by the sounds of the drumming, – well, to picture and, consciously or unconsciously, to spiritually take part in a journey which first leads into the bowels of the earth. After the tunnel experience – i.e. the trip made to the subterranean world –, the trips to be made to the Upper World and the Middle World usually take place on the second and the third days.

The interesting thing was that, in the course of the discussions following the 'trips', there were always quite a few participants who provided highly accurate and detailed descriptions of the 'reality' they had come to know (or thought they had seen) during their altered states of consciousness. It was interesting to observe which were the recurrent visual and narrative patterns that figured in the accounts of the four or five people who were listened to on each occasion. Let us quote a couple of these:

> "I tried to find the passage leading down, but I couldn't find it. And now the drumbeat began. It was at this point that something sucked me into a deep hole. I think it was a HEART. I don't know how I know that, what this heart was like. I didn't see it; I felt it must be heart, because it was throbbing vigorously. The deeper inside I got, the louder the throbbing grew, changing into a booming sound. There was a rope hanging down. I started climbing downwards. Yet, I was afraid. I forced myself to carry on and I went downwards. After a while, the drumbeat turned into a soft humming. I couldn't see anything; there was a small light down there, which seemed as though it was a floating wick. It was that I was trying to reach. I had pleasant sensations – some kind of euphoria... I kept going, climbing downwards, hanging down the rope; but my destination was an infinity away, it was a tiny point I could just about make out.
>
> At that point, in fact, I didn't even hear the drumbeat signalling the return, bit I was gripped by a sense of fear, and I started coming back. It was easier than going down. I would have liked to reach my goal, but equally, I wanted to come back. By the time the drumming ended, I had just reached the surface (an error of phrasing: woken up). By this time, it was not the heart, but it seemed as though I had come up from a pit. There was no throbbing." (K.K.)

> "The entrance to the cellar of Vál appeared before me, with the year 1823 to be read on its door. Then, without opening the door, I entered and found myself in semi-darkness. No details could be distinguished; I sort of instinctively knew where I was. Then I felt as though I was in infinite darkness, and all around there were dim points of light to be seen. Then direction of my progress pointed not downwards but towards my feet (I was lying on my back). It felt, by turns, as though I was in infinite space, and then again, as though I was in a tunnel whose walls could not be seen – a tunnel encircled by faint, glimmering patches and, at other times, by points of light. It was not by physical eyes that I saw! I was seeing internally, and no visual experience had a sense of material reality to it. From time to time, I forced my progress, and then it seemed as though I was squeezing myself deeper and deeper into the tunnel: the circular, growing rings kept coming towards me; but this, too, was not pictorial

in effect but rather an insubstantial glimmer. After a while, I was again floating forwards in the void, while, hovering above the drumbeat, there was the sound of a female choir, giving of its singing endlessly on a single tone. Throughout, I could hear the drum well; at times I was wrapped round by the pounding. For a few brief moments, I returned into my body, I felt myself lying; then my body once again became immaterial, with merely my sense of a sketch of the body providing the experience of forward motion. At the signal to return, however, I started on the way back forthwith. I was sorry that no clearer experience had presented itself, but I didn't force the advance any further. On my return, I emerged through a fissure in the lower recess at the back of the cellar, and the I again saw the door with the date." (A.K.)

"The third was my most successful animal round dance. My movement became progressively more bearlike; more and more, I became the bear: at a quicker sound of the drum, my movement gradually slowed down. The drum aroused strength within me...

The *first* trip (finding my bearings in the Lower World). I consciously searched for the passage leading down, which, on the basis of a tale heard in childhood, I found in a lift. After a time, there followed an intense *sensation* of falling, which later gave way to a sense of horizontal advance. I was racing forwards – in some kind of cave – in a vehicle that scratched the earth. The drum gave me a strong sensation of booming, setting my whole body trembling. After that, unfortunately, I had to come back; it seemed as though something was pulling me upwards..." (Gy.R.)

The exercise itself might, in fact, be conceived of as a simple relaxation technique. During the `shamanic journey', the participants – slightly exhausted and relaxed from the first gymnastic exercises – lay comfortably on their backs on the floor. The room was darkened and, furthermore, the eyes had to be closed. The monotonous beating of the drums helped one concentrate – that is to say, it helped the subjects make a `journey' in accordance with the programme given. Just as, in the old days, in Siberia, the Siberian shaman would obtain the information necessary for the decision (for the diagnosis) – the information required for the concentration of strength (and so for the cure, too); – well, as the Siberian shaman used to obtain that information in the course of his journeys to the other world (or the other `separate' realities, here in this `new' shamanic technique the shaman-guide only helps the participants develop their own abilities and concentrate them on one thing. This is a fundamental change regarding the function of the shaman, who has been active up until now and now has become passive; where, in olden times, he or she used to make the journeys, now it is the participants who make them.

`Trip' is, in all conscience, one of the key words of our times. Yet, alongside mass tourism, a significant group of our contemporaries also have a need of a spiritual journey, which they seek to achieve by the help of drugs, but not in Esalen.

Let me quote here some of the reports given to me written by the participants of the `Two-Week Advanced Course in Shamanism and Shamanic Healing' taught by M. Harner and assisted by Sandra Ingerman in 1989.

"When I first did the *Power Dance* I travelled down inside myself, asking whatever beings I met along the way if they were my source of power, and each said no.

I kept travelling down, thinking I would never find anything, when in the darkness, deep down in myself, I came across a giant sleeping dragon. He slowly began to wake up. The dragon was at a position in my body of about the lower abdomen.

As I watched, he began to slowly wake up, to move, to breathe fire, and to roar. Slowly he began to move up through my body, roaring as he went.

During the first *Power Dance* the dragon got up to the area of he heart in the chest. I did not get up and do the dance, but I did get the beginnings of a power song, which I began to use, and felt grateful that I had gotten in touch with this source of power inside myself.

When the *Power Dance* at Esalen started, I realized that the dragon was at the same position that he was in when the first *Power Dance* ended, that is, in my chest area. I was happy to realize that he was there, and greeted him as an old friend. About a month before, someone had done a power animal retrieval for me, and the animal was a small dragon. Having that power animal helped in this process of getting in touch with this power source.

As the *Power Dance* continued, the dragon continued to slowly make his journey through my body, but this time faster than in the previous *Power Dance*. He also was more active and roared more loudly. He finally went through my head and was sitting on top of my head. Each time the drum beat sounded, he roared loudly in unison. I could feel the power of that roar through my entire body. With a dragon sitting on top of your head it is difficult to remain seated.

During this time I had also received a *Power Song*, so I stood up and began to sing the *Power Song* which was the voice of the dragon. I did not use the rattle in my hand at first, and Michael motioned to me to use if. Once I began to use the rattle, the song developed in power, and the rattle began to take on a power of its own.

This power continued to grow until it was very powerful when the drummers let me out of their circle to do the *Power Dance*. I had expected that I would do a graceful dance of some sort, but the rattle was in control and had other ideas. This dance seemed to me more of an expression of raw power.

I knew I should not try to touch anyone, for I was not in control enough to handle it. I had to hang onto the rattle with both hands, and felt that it was leading me around the room. I kept my eyes closed during most of the dance, and I could not sing either; the rattle had taken over for the duration of the *Power Dance*, and I was not entirely aware of what was going on.

As a result of the *Power Dance*, I realized that my fear is what blocks me from accomplishing things in my life, and that if I face and go through the fear, as the dragon went through my body, when I can begin to accomplish more in my life." (B.W.)

Dream Dance with Michael Harner in Esalen – Dream related to receiving *healing from the drum.*

"I am running away from a dark shadow-like presence. At last I get away and am alone in the forest. I'm very sad and weep. It is getting closer to night and coldness is settling in. The feeling of coldness and being alone sets in deeper – my body

shakes in spasm, like a seizure. Bears begin to edge in and surround me. They gently nuzzle in and I fall asleep in a nest of fur.

I awake and find there is a fire. I'm startled as I don't know how it got there. My eyes scan around and see that animals (owls, rabbits, snakes, bears, squirrels, other birds) from the forest have formed a circle around this space. I sit up and find a mirror image of me sitting across from me. A deep pain rips through my chest. Pogo appears and I begin to realize this is a peace parley. The two of us are quite angry with each other. It's not clear what the issue is, but it has something to do with not being able to stay in agreement over the direction to go in our life. Every time we move towards some sort of reconciliation, the animals make loud noises of approval. Whenever we strongly disagree, Pogo tickles our hearts with a feather and the tickle makes us smile again. At some point an agreement is reached. A peace pipe is smoked and we hug.

A dance ensues around the fire with the animals. It is a circle dance with spinning motions. We dance through the night and gather at dawn to watch the sun rise to a new day. ... When I wake from this, my mouth tastes like I've been smoking tobacco and my legs are very tired as if I danced all night." (M.E.)

"From the *dream dance,* I wrote the following. I decided not to edit or rewrite it, so I've copied it exactly as I wrote it the first time.

In Nanny's kitchen: saw her face so clearly – at once as I feel, I was in her kitchen in Thanksgiving. A very little girl, I felt revulsion at the women dismembering the turkey with their bare hands.

I see them now – Armenian women, forced from their homeland, celebrating an alien holiday complete with turkey. But even here a lesson to be learned – their hands directly touch this bird – no fancy knives and forks – a full connection with it only is occurring just as when Nanny makes the kufta and kneads the meat – her strong hands so much of the earth, her soft, always soft, sad, sad Armenian brown eyes.

We must eat together with only our hands. Nanny said we must also make an offering to the sea of our food." (K.M.)

The following notes of a journey were given to me in Esalan in 1989.

"Dismemberment Journey to Lower World – Down tunnel to lower world, in meadow, I tell panther the plan: I am to be dismembered and he is to allow it. Then I go down another tunnel in lower world, full of jagged slate. It starts to cave in on me, crushing my flesh and bones, ripping chunks of flesh from my arms as the tunnel sides move along my body. Then a red-hot lava flow moves through the narrow opening where I am being squished, and it burns me completely. The lava flow engulfs me and we flow toward the sea – where my skeleton is dumped on the ocean floor. Little fish peck at my bones. Then a dolphin swims by – and signals to a large school of dolphins. The whole school moves in – each grabbing one of my bones and flinging these bones in the air. It's a school of 50 dolphins playing CATCH with my bones. Very playful. Feels *good* to have all remaining parts of me flung into the air in all directions.

Then, slowly, one by one, they put me back together, bone by bone. Starting with toes ... They give me a tailbone! I laugh – 'Oh, no! Not a monkey!' They laugh.

`Yes, know your place. The monkeys are your relatives. And the sea is your mother. Always remember that.'

Then they take away my tailbone, but keep one extra vertebrae, saying, `just so you don't forget your place in the world'. Then they add flesh. Now I am naked floating out in the deep blue sea, surrounded by this large school of loving dolphins – encircling me. Then one flings me in the air – and I land on shore – on partner's back. I ride him back to the entrance to tunnel. He jokingly flirts with me – `Here's looking at you, babe.' We laugh, and I leave the lower world." (L.L.)

"Dream Dance – Esalen – February 1, 1989 – When I fell down, I immediately saw an old man who took my hands and said, `Come here, I'll show you.'

Then I saw a village with people coming and going. To one side, there was a large hole, about eight feet across, which was very deep, it went down to the center of the earth. There was fire in the bottom, at the core of the earth. There were women who were guarding this hole.

I watched this scene for a while. I got impatient and asked `Well, what about the ritual?' And I heart "This is the ritual.' I felt that this was impractical, because we couldn't very well dig a hole to the center of the earth.

All this time there was an old woman sitting on a stool next to the hole, with her back towards me. She turned around and looked at me and said, `Here, I'll show you.'

She started to draw a circle with a stick or chalk. She traced the circle three times. Then she drew a cross in the middle of the circle. In each quadrant she placed something – grain, mineral (stone), meat (flesh on a bone), and water. Then she put something in the middle which she said was to represent the hole in the ground. This kept changing and I felt I wasn't seeing it clearly. Sometimes it was fire; sometimes a bowl of water; sometimes a circle of black mirrored glass that looked infinite; sometimes a real hole...

A while later, four women came in. One was a crone, one a young mother, one a virgin. I couldn't see the fourth one very clearly, but it may have been a child. Each one came, went around the circle three times, and sat at one point of the cross. They put things into the `hole' in the center. One put grain. The young mother squirted milk from her breast into the center. I couldn't see the rest. The crone explained to me that it was important to return the gifts of the earth to the earth." (H.G.)

"From Grandmother in Dream Dance to P. – So you want to heal Nokomis? (Grandmother) Hmmm ... You know things are some different now and healing is good to do.

Life is a ceremony, the way we hunt, cook, make our homes, care for our families, look after the old ones, walking, breathing, sleeping, talking. It is all sacred. It is ceremony.

That is the way the Great Spirit intended. But many times we forget; maybe we lose our way. So this is why we do it here.

You know these rituals are needed when humans have lost their understanding of the greatest ceremony – life itself.

These are things you already known. The greatest ceremony you can do is to live each day in a sacred way. Then you will be well-off and so will those around you.

> Be careful of the *Bish* (water), for she is sacred. Treat her with great care, as you would your own child. Same with all living ones.
>
> Look up ... follow the Sacred Ones!" (P.)

At the same time, we witness a growing trend in the opposite direction, too – namely, the increasingly powerful European movement of Environmentalists; as, indeed, there is growing skepticism, too, of the omnipotence of technology and science.

People are turning to natural cures, they drink herbal teas. In any case, it is almost unbelievable that, simultaneously with the diffusion of personal computers, the village of Alpbach, in the Tirol, hosted, in the summer of 1984, the third international gathering – attended by over a hundred participants – devoted to the topic of shamanism and healing. It was attended, among others, by Rolling Thunder, a famous Indian healing shaman from the US, and the 'peintre shamaniste' Jóska Soós from Brussels, who was born in Hungary in 1921, in addition to his painting, he also conducts shamanic seances, where he demonstrates and transmits to his students an ecstatic technique that he himself has elaborated. I consider it to be a remarkable cultural fact that, in the shadow of EURATOM, it is a 'shaman-painter' (Wenzel 1975), who should attract the attention of middle-class Belgians.

We could mention another example, too, from the tranquil Dutch town of Utrecht, where Ronald Black Horse Chavers, an American of Afro-Indian extraction, held regular "shamanistic training" courses in the *Center for Natural and Cultural Sciences*, set up by himself, where the learning programmes on offer included everything from the Japanese tea ceremony, through gong therapies, dance and breathing exercises, to exotic cookery lessons and the total theatre. The list is not meant to be a value-judgement, merely a reporting of the facts – the medium, the cultural context of present-day urban shamanism (Chavers 1984:50-51).

There is no doubt, therefore, that urban shamanism, as a cultural phenomenon, is on the rise, as, in addition to the examples enumerated, I could also cite my personal encounters with urban shamans in South Korea in 1991. It is a global phenomenon that former villagers, the rural population, are moving into the cities; thus it is no surprise that they take their (religious) beliefs with them. Urban shamanism is a present-day phenomenon of folk culture, with all the characteristic features of that, including a degree of transformation that has prompted some to ask whether we are talking about the same phenomenon? Is it shamanism, in the proper sense, at all? Both the forms and the authentic cultural contexts have changed; but, for all that, the social function of the entire complex of phenomena does function, its internal meaning exercises an influence on the individual and the community alike. Indeed, its international or even supra-national character is the most important trait of this new and postmodern urban shamanism.

How is all that possible? What is the basis of that revival? The study of this phenomenon represents a real challenge to the social anthropologist, for what we are witnessing here is that a complex of erstwhile rituals and beliefs is adapted to the modern, urban way of life of our computer age. We are aware of the major role played, in this day and age, by the pervasive influence of business and fashion. Neo-Rousseau-

ean emotions of 'Back to Nature' and a manipulative exploitation of them do have an impact; still, we tend to adhere to the view that there could be another explanation, too.

One of the causes of the survival or even renaissance of this new shamanism – and this is an important anthropological starting- point – in its present-day forms constitute one of the symbol-creating processes of culture. The reproduction of symbols is an important cultural mechanism, which is regulated precisely by the system of beliefs and values. Viewed in this theoretical context, symbolic behaviour is – in urban life no less than it has been in the rural areas in the past – part of the mechanism which maintains ethnic identity.

The other reason is presumably the enhanced prominence being given to the healing function, as, in a hopeless situation, the patient often has nowhere to turn. In these cases, the metropolitan shamans use the practice as a meditation technique to strengthen the self and help concentration. Its advantage is that, during the group sessions, the individual receives the experience of belonging to a community; and this is important, for otherwise he is lonely.

It is interesting to observe how an ancient belief-system – probably by virtue of its relatively simple and non-overcodified system of elements and by virtue of its flexible structure – has been able to adapt to the most diverse cultures and religions (Lamaism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam) and, precisely for this reason, even to the demands of the modern age. There is a great number of recently published books on new-age shamanism (Nicholson comp. 1987, Doore 1988, Lōrler 1989, Goodman 1990, King Kahili 1990, Roth 1990, Walsh 1990, Cahill – Halpern 1991, Ingerman 1991, Uccusic 1991), which will beevaluated later somewhere else. As anthropologists, we have the duty to describe the cultural phenomena to observed around us, including urban shamanism in a postmodern age, because they carry a message for us, and perhaps even for future generations! The modem application of this ancient method of healing may offer the chance of developing a way of life model that is more responsive to both the surrounding natural environment and human nature itself.

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NAME INDEX

Ackerknecht, E.H. 21, 107
Ady, E. 174, 211
Ahlbäck, T. 107
Alekseenko, E.A. 119, 166, 211
Alekseev, E. 189, 211
Alekseev, N.A. 107, 118, 134, 184, 211
Allen, V.L. 32, 107
Anisimov, A.F. 13, 35, 36, 65, 66, 96, 98, 107
Anokhin, A.V. 13
Antropova, V.V. 55, 107
Austerlitz, R. 178
Baer, G. 124, 211
Bakka, E. 149, 211
Balázs, J. 160, 211
Bandini, M. 169
Banzarov, D. 13
Baráthosi-Balogh, B. 159, 178
Bartók, B. 169
Basgöz, I. 154, 211
Basilov, V.N. 18, 107, 117, 119, 165, 197, 211
Bányai, E.I. 30, 107, 125, 152, 211
Bäckman, L. 117, 130, 211
Bellah, R.N. 58, 107
Berglie, P.-A. 120, 211
Bernstam, A.N. 134, 211
Bihari, A. 160, 211
Bishop, J.G. 84, 107
Bleibtrau-Ehrenberg, G. 14
Boas, F. 13, 110
Bogoraz, W. (Bogoraz, V.G.) 13, 19, 42, 43, 45, 50, 107
Bouteiller, M. 18, 107
Buddruss, G. 87, 109
Buschan, G. 180, 212
Cahill, S. 209, 212
Campbell, J. 60, 107
Carpelan, Ch. 56, 107
Cassirer, E. 89
Centlivres, M. 128, 212
Centlivres, P. 128, 212
Charpentier, J. 15, 108
Chavers, R. 208, 212
Chernetsov, V.N. 149, 186, 212
Cho, Chungmo 121, 167, 199
Christiansen, R.Th. 20, 108
Clements, D.H. 93, 108
Closs, A. 20, 108
Cooley, C.H. 108, 144
Cooper, L.A. 88, 113
Csorba, Cs. 171, 212
Czaplicka, M.A. 13, 18, 21, 82, 108, 122
Czigány, L. 159, 171, 212
D'Andrade, R. 93, 108
Devereux, G. 21, 108, 122, 212
Devlet, M. 138, 144, 212
Dienes, I. 173, 212
Diószegi, V. 4, 14, 19, 22, 23, 31, 41, 87, 108, 117, 122, 129, 138, 150, 159, 160, 163, 164, 170, 171, 172, 174, 180
Djanoskin, Sereptie (shaman) 104, 212
Dobkin de Rios, M. 124, 129, 212, 213
Domokos, P.P. 170, 213
Donner, K. 100, 179, 213
Dorsch, T.S. 89, 107
Dömötör, T. 161, 163, 171, 213
Dundes, A. 41, 108, 157
Edsman, C.M. 61, 108
Eliade, M. 2, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, 91, 95, 108, 119, 122, 125, 126, 129, 132, 166, 169, 197, 213
Ellis, H.R. 83, 84, 108
Erä-Esko, A. 65, 108

Fazekas, J. 159, 172, 173, 213
Findeisen, H. 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 34, 37, 42, 45, 47, 50, 88, 108
Finsch, O. 177, 213
Fischer, R. 16, 28, 109
Freud, S. 88, 109
Friedrich, A. 87, 109
Frolov, E.A. 66, 109
Fu Yuguang 194
Gadamer, H.G.. 155, 213
Ganander, Ch. 70, 109
Gentner, D. 109
Georgi, J.G. 150, 176, 177, 213
Gill, M.M. 31, 109
Glick, L.B. 167, 213
Glob, P.V. 133, 141, 213
Gmelin, J.G. 150, 176, 177, 213
Goodman, F. 127, 160, 213
Goody, J. 19, 109
Gracheva, G.N. 109, 119, 128, 180, 213
Grambo, R. 214
Granö, J.G. 179
Gregus, A. 30, 107
Guillemoz, A. 214
Haavio, M. 62, 64, 72, 74, 76, 79, 85, 109
Hako, M. 71, 109
Halifax, J. 150, 177
Halpern, J. 209, 212
Hamayon, R. 118
Harner, M. 20, 29, 109, 124, 150, 200, 201, 214
Harva (Holmberg), U. 13, 14, 18, 19, 63, 64, 75, 109, 214
Hatto, A.T. 128, 214
Hautala, J. 62, 69, 109
Hárdi, I. 151, 214
Hästesko, F.A. 70, 109
Heinze, R.-I. 123, 200, 214
Heissig, W. 120, 214
Hermanns, M. 13, 18, 109
Hilden, K. 179, 214
Hilgard, E.R. 30, 107, 125, 214
Holland, D. 109, 112
Holy, L. 93, 96, 109
Honko, L. 14, 31, 53, 58, 71, 109, 123, 166, 170, 214
Hoppál, M. 14, 22, 24, 109, 110, 117, 118, 129, 130, 138, 141, 145, 150, 151, 158, 160, 163, 171, 173, 174, 182, 187, 197, 214, 215
Hovens, P. 215
Höfer, A. 120, 165, 215
Hudyakov, I.A. 35, 110
Hultkrantz, Å. 14, 19, 20, 58, 63, 110, 117, 122, 130, 160
Hummel, S. 62, 110
Humphrey, C. 199, 215
Huurre, M. 56, 110
Hvarfner, H. 110
Itkonen, T.I. 67, 110, 164
Ivanov, V.V. 62, 110, 128
Janhunen, J. 215
Jankovics, M. 187, 188
Jilek, W. 123, 128, 152, 153, 199, 200, 215
Jochelson, W. 5, 13, 19, 29, 35, 36, 55, 61, 110, 118
Johansen, U. 117, 215
Joki, A. 100, 102, 110, 117, 215
Juhász, F. 153, 216
Juvelius, E.W. 110
Karjalainen, K.F. 13, 34, 37, 53, 63, 110
Kamppinen, M. 110
Kaukonen, V. 79, 110
Keesing, R.M. 93, 96, 110
Kelemen, A. 122, 159, 171, 216
Kemnitzer, L.S. 168, 216
Kim, Taegon 121, 216
King, A.R. 60
King Kahili, S. 209, 216
Kirchner, H. 60, 110, 216
Klintberg, B. af 69, 75, 110
Knuts, U. 78
Kodály, Z. 169
Koivu, L. 110
Kopponen, T. 71, 110
Kortt, J. 126, 216
Kosslyn, S. 88, 110
Kracke, W. 88, 92, 105, 110
Krader, L. 117, 216
Krohn, K. 76, 85, 111, 178, 216
Kulemzin, V.M. 199, 216
Kuusi, M. 79, 111
Kuznetsova, V.V. 55, 107
Kühn, H. 132, 216
Kyzlasov, L.R. 31, 136, 139, 147, 216
Lajoux, D. 133, 216

Lakoff, G. 88, 89, 90, 111
Laming, A. 132, 216
Langdon, J. 130, 216
Lankenau, H. von 37, 111, 178, 216
Laufer, B. 2, 14
László, Gy. 173, 216
Lehtisalo, T. 13, 34, 35, 37, 53, 100, 103, 104, 111
Lencqvist, Ch. 69
Leontiev, N.V. 136, 137, 138, 139, 143, 147, 216
Leroi-Gourhan, A. 133, 140, 216
Lévi-Strauss, Cl. 88, 93, 111, 123, 216
Lewis, I.M. 129, 216
Lewis-Williams, J.D. 133, 216, 217
Lindgren, E. 181, 194, 217
Lindsay, J. 154
Litvinov, A. 182, 187, 189
Loeb, E.M. 21, 111
Lommel, A. 18, 60, 65, 111, 167, 217
Lopatin, I.A. 14, 35, 111
Lönnqvist, B. 64, 111
Lönnrot, E. 70, 71, 72, 76, 79, 111, 185
Lörler, M.-L. 209, 217
Ludwig, A.M. 27, 28, 111
Luho, V. 65, 77, 111
Luna, L.E. 199, 217
Luukko, A. 77, 111
Lyons, W.S. 199, 217
Makkay, J. 132
Malmsheimer, L.M. 179, 217
Mandelstam-Balzer, M. 199, 217
Manker, I. 111
Manzhigeev, I.A. 118, 217
Marcus, G.E. 16, 111
Martinov, I.A. 133, 134, 143, 218
Mastromattei, M. 122, 127, 217
Matyuschenko, V.I. 133, 138
Maynagashev, S.D. 180, 181, 217
Mäntylä, I. 73, 111
Mead, G.H. 32, 111
Mebius, M. 62, 67, 111
Melles, K. 178, 217
Melzack, R. 151, 217
Meri, L. 184, 186, 187, 190, 198, 217
Mészáros, I. 30, 107
Michael, H.N. 14
Mikhailov, T.M. 22, 111, 118, 134, 217
Mikhailovskii, V.M. 18, 111, 217
Moberg, C.A. 58, 111
Motzki, A. 117, 217
Munkácsi, B. 37
Murphy, R.F. 113
Müller, M. 89
Myerhoff, B. 127, 217
Nachtigall, H. 14
Narr, K.J. 132, 217
Neher, A. 32, 111
Németh, J. 2, 14
Nicolson, Sh. 209, 218
Niemi, A.R. 111
Nioradze, G.K. 13, 18, 112, 181, 218
Noll, R. 24, 106, 112
Nordbladh, J. 141, 144, 145, 149, 218
Novik, E.S. 22, 112, 150, 189, 190, 218
Ohlmarks, Å. 13, 21, 75, 81, 85, 86, 112, 122
Ohnuky-Tierney, E. 151, 218
Oinonen, S. 112
Okladnikov, A.P. 133, 134, 137, 138, 139, 140, 143, 144, 147, 149, 218
Opler, M.E. 123, 165, 218
Oskin, A.V. 183
Overing, J. 118
Pais, D. 173, 218
Paproth, H.J. 62, 112
Paulaharju, S. 62, 71, 112
Paulson, I. 19, 20, 47, 60, 112
Pavlinskaya, T. 180
Pälsi, S. 178
Pentikäinen, J. 95, 112, 126, 127, 190, 218
Perry, J.W. 154, 218
Peters, L.G. 31, 112, 122, 218
Piela, M. 112
Pike, K.L. 112
Plano Carpini 173
Popov, A.A. 12, 13, 24, 103, 104, 112
Porthan, H.G. 69, 112
Posern-Zielinska, M. 128
Potapov, L.P. 133, 219
Price-Williams, D. 31, 106, 112
Prince, R. 112, 152, 219
Propp, V. 112
Quinn, N. 109, 112
Rasid ad-Din 173
Rasmussen, K. 62, 112

Ratzel, Fr. 178, 219
Reichborn-Kjennerud, I. 76, 113
Ricketts, M.L. 15, 16, 113
Ricoeur, P. 89, 91, 113
Rogers, S.L. 123, 151, 219
Róheim, G. 159, 219
Rosvall, J. 144, 219
Roth, A. 209, 219
Ruysbroek, W. 15
Rychkov, K.M. 19, 113
Saar, M. 113
Sadovszky, O. von 14, 215
Saliba, J. 16, 113
Salminen, V. 71, 75, 113
Sarbin, T. 30, 32, 53, 107, 113
Sarvas, P. 56, 64, 65, 113
Schefferus, J. 181, 219
Schmidt, W. 13, 21, 113
Schrenck, L. von 178, 219
Schröder, D. 14, 21
Sem, Yu.A. 178, 219
Shephard, R. 88, 113
Shepker, H.-J. 130, 219
Sher, Y.A. 133, 140, 146, 219
Shi Kun 196, 219
Shimkevich, P.P. 14
Shirokogoroff, S.M. 13, 21, 25, 33, 35, 113
Shor, R.E. 30, 113
Siikala, A.-L. 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 33, 53, 71, 83, 113, 117, 123, 125, 127, 144, 148, 150, 161, 164, 170
Silverman, J. 21, 113
Simchenko, B. 119, 183
Slapins, A. 188, 190
Slobin, M. 128, 212
Sokolova, Z.P. 119, 219
Solymossy, S. 159, 172, 219
Sommarström, B. 95, 113
Soos, J. 167, 219
Stadling, J. 18, 19, 113
Stankevitch 180
Sternberg, L. 118
Stevens, A.L. 109
Steward, J.H. 59, 113
Strömbäck, D. 113
Strunk, O. 28, 114
Stuchlik, M. 93, 96, 109
Sunden, H. 28, 31, 114
Sweeney, M. 161, 166, 219
Szentkatolnai, G. 159
Szűcs, S. 162, 219
Taavitsainen, J.P. 56, 62, 114
Taksami, C.M. 120, 121, 220
Taube, E. 120, 165, 220
Teryukov, A. 180
Tinnaffy, L. 163, 164, 220
Toelken, B. 168, 220
Toivonen, Y.H. 72, 114
Toporov, V.N. 146, 220
Törő, L. 159, 163
Tretyakov, P.I. 103, 114
Tschubinov, G. 18, 114
Tuovinen, P. 110
Turner, M. 89, 114
Turner, R.H. 114
Uccusic, P. 209, 220
Vajda, L. 14, 21, 114, 122, 133, 220
Vajnshtein, V.I. 119, 165, 220
Valonen, N. 62, 114
Vasilevich, G.M. 102, 103, 114
Vdovin, I.S. 19, 22, 114, 118, 120, 198, 220
Virtanen, L. 74, 81, 114
Vitashevsky, N.A. 118, 122
Voigt, V. 129, 133, 160, 172, 173, 220
Walde, P.H. van der 27, 31, 114
Walker, S.S. 28, 29, 114
Walsh, R.N. 209, 220
Walter, V.J. 32, 114
Walter, W.G. 32, 114
Wang Honggang 194
Wartiainen, E. 69, 114
Wenzel, M. 167, 220
Wheelwright, P. 91, 114
White, R.M. 30, 114
Witsen, N. 176, 220
Wordrop, J.O. 12
Zaporozhskaya, B.D. 137, 139, 149
Zhornitskaya, M.Ya. 183
Zolla, E. 128, 220

SUBJECT INDEX

Abakan 138
active-alert induction 125, 152
Afghanistan 128
alcohol 11
Altai 9, 13, 74, 138, 179, 182
Altaic peoples 5
  ~ Tartars 4
  ~ Turks 178
altered state of consciousness 1, 26, 28, 29, 32, 38, 53, 106, 111, 124, 125, 127, 200, 202, 203
Amanita Muscaria L. 29, 34, 159
Amur 14, 111, 143, 159, 178, 182, 191, 194
ancestor spirit 6, 194
anesthesia 151
Angara 143
animal ceremonialism 56-67, 148
  ~ mother 8
  ~ sacrifice 4, 182
Antuvansalmi 64
Apache 123, 165
Argun river 150, 192
arrow 150, 155
ascent-to-the-sky 20
asik 154
assistant 36, 77
audience 12, 38-39, 54
Australia 21
baksi (baxsi) 128, 165
balance 127
Baykal 133, 137, 143
bear 9, 63, 178, 185
belief system 94, 117, 128, 130, 141, 153, 156, 161, 167
bells 195
bicoleur shaman 93, 95
bird (as helping spirit) 9, 36, 58
bird-type shaman 134, 135
birth 3
  ~ (of shamanism) 33
Blackfoot Indians 151
black/white shamans 5
blacksmith 167
boat 46, 57, 62, 65, 67, 74, 90
bombo 120
bone (surplus bone) 160
bôô 163
Bronze Age 138, 139, 140, 143
Buddhism 2, 134
budtode 4
Buryat 2, 4, 6, 126, 177, 199
calling song 52
Caribou Eskimos 62
Carpathian Basin 170
Central Asia 15, 21, 86, 119, 133, 140, 199
Cheremis 158, 184
Christianity 169
Chukchi 3, 6, 12, 33, 34, 39, 41-55, 99, 102, 120, 189
Chulym river 138
chum 177
clan shamanism 7, 10, 36, 96, 194
cognitive universals 24
competition (between shamans) 4
cosmic journey 27
  ~ pillar 7
  ~ tree 10
crossroad 161
cult of the dead 111
dalda 173
dancing 11, 28, 32, 90, 137, 182, 193, 194, 200, 202, 204, 205

d'ano 4
dead 85, 153
death 154, 166
deer 9, 10, 64, 66
  ~ type shaman 137
disease 96, 104
dismemberment 152, 153, 154, 155, 175, 206
dog 83
dream 31, 100, 105, 106, 110, 112, 125, 129, 169
  ~ dance 206, 207
drugs 124
drum 10, 34, 65, 74, 76, 77, 82, 111, 126, 136, 138, 160, 163, 170, 178, 179, 187, 193, 200, 202, 203, 204
  ~ as boat 47, 90, 164, 182, 195, 205
drumming 12, 28, 61, 98
eagle 10, 82, 83, 138, 139, 153, 202
east 49, 200
ecstasy 1, 12, 26, 77, 94, 125
ecstatic communication 94
  ~ experience 7, 8, 52
  ~ frenzy 34
  ~ initiation 126
  ~ trance 125
e'iji 61
elk 57, 63, 64
elrejtezik 172
emotion 28
endorphins 152
entrancement 172
Entsy (Enets) 4, 179
epilepsy 19, 21
equilibrium 124, 127
ēren 120
Eskimos 150
ethnic consciousness 175
  ~ identity 167, 169, 199, 201
Evenki 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 21, 35, 36, 37, 66, 96, 99, 189, 192
exorcist 120
fasting 10, 28, 130
female shamans 179, 180, 187
fertility 195
fighting 160, 170, 172
Finnish 158, 173
  ~ shamanism 76
Finno-Ugrian 24
fire 10, 206
fish 9, 43, 58
fly agaric 159
flying 90
folk epic 154, 199
  ~ healer 128
  ~ models 110
folklorism 128
free soul 47
galdr 75, 81
game (taboo) 64, 65
garabonciás 152, 172
ghost dance 123
Gilgames 185
Gilyak 178
Glazkovo period 134
Goldi 181
Greek religion 154
guardian spirit 63, 75
haehe-sled 104
hallucinations 27, 125
hallucinogens 10, 124
hand(s) 62
head-dress 134
  ~ (shaman's) 9, 71
healer 3, 120, 121
healing 123, 128, 178, 187, 199, 200
  ~ séance 72
  ~ trance 28
Hel 83
helping spirit 37, 95, 120, 138, 139
hermeneutical phenomenology 16
Hezhe (Hodzha) 193
Hmong 62, 166
Hobd-Somon 138, 139
horse 4, 9, 83
  ~ (sacrifice) 86, 158, 182, 187
hunting cultures 60, 62
hyper-alertness 125
hypersuggestibility 27
hyperventillation 28
hypnosis 11, 29, 30, 125
hypnotic behaviour 32
  ~ trance 30
hysteria 5, 11, 122
Icelandic saga 71
Iliad 185

illness 96
improvisation (of shaman's songs) 52, 55
incantation 69, 72, 74, 78, 81
increased alertness 28
initiation 4, 5, 6, 7, 23, 28, 65, 103, 106, 153, 155, 160, 166, 170, 172
initiatory experience 122
~ period 51
~ sickness 5
~ vision 24, 33
Inner Asia 13
invocation (of spirits) 37
invocatory song 34
invoking spirits 72
Inuit 9
Iron Age 67
joiku 75
Joukahainen 74, 80
journey to the otherworld 48, 55, 83-85, 203, 206
Kalevala 62, 74, 79, 185
Kamchatka 177
Kannus 76, 82
kantele 73, 77
Karelia 70, 184
kart 158
kasati 4
Ket (people) 7, 166
Khakas 4, 136, 138, 139, 147
Khanty 34, 186, 190, 191, 199
Kirghizia 168, 199
knowledge 161
Kola Peninsula 75
Korea 121, 129, 167
Koryak 3, 8, 13, 46, 110
Krasnoyarsk area 177
kresnik 170
kut-ceremony 8, 129
ladder 172
Lamaism 2
langeta loveen 76, 82
Lappland 73, 85
Lapps (Lappish) 76, 82, 117, 127, 130, 158, 201
Lascaux 132
Lebed Tartars 179
levt 75
lhapa 187
lozi 101
lozila 101
luonto 82
magic 76, 169
~ power 173
~ protection 62
~ song 73, 77, 172
~ stone 76
magician 158, 169
magus 173
Manala 80
Manchu 33, 35, 36, 193
Manichean missionaries 174
Mansi (see Vogul)
marylya 3, 98
masks 142, 143
Maya 142
mediator 26, 36, 94, 124, 126
meditation 29, 151
mental imagery 106
~ images 88, 89
~ models 87
Middle Ages 76, 79
Mielikki 64
Mielu 64
milk 160, 171
Milky Way 188
mimicry 38
minyy-bird 103
Minusinsk Tatar 12, 37
~ Basin 143, 180
mirror 179
misfortune 61
Mongol (Mongolia) 2, 10, 120, 130, 165, 173, 177
moon 10
Mugur-Sargol 138, 143
mushroom 159
music 32
musun 102
mythic discourse 90
~ hunter 146
~ language 92
~ tradition 90, 106
mythical thinking 87, 88
najt 158, 173
nakedness 207
Nanai 5, 10, 11, 14, 35, 37, 159, 191

Nanginen 50
narration 127, 185
ndit 85
nenati 4
Nenets (Nentsy) 9, 13, 34, 35, 103
neo-shamanism 201
Nepal 120
nestinar 170
neurosis 122
Nganasan 3, 13, 24, 119, 128, 159, 166, 184, 185, 198
Niemi 73
nine (layers of heaven) 195
Nioikh 120
noaide 76, 126, 158, 173
noita 76, 77, 85, 158, 173
north 83
Northern Lights 49
North Star 7
Novoromanova 145
Numi Torem 173, 186
Ob 190
Ob-Ugrians 9, 11, 12, 63, 128
Odin 74, 81, 86
oracles 169
oral poetry 128
~ tradition 99
ordeal 154
Orochi 11, 35, 159
Oroqen 194
Orpheus theme 85
Ostyak 53, 74, 119, 128, 184
otherworld 5, 7, 10, 90, 91, 172, 196
out of body experience 204
owl 10, 64, 99, 170
Paleolithic 133, 146
Persia 151
Peru 199
phallos 136
pig (sacrifice) 193, 195
possession 11, 21, 36, 169
power 124, 166
~ dance 205
~ vision 152
prayer 130, 137
pseudo-shamanic events 129
psychopomp 126
psychosis 21
rattle 202, 205
rebirth 62, 155, 166
regös 159, 172
reindeer sacrifice 191
reindeer 46, 61
rejtezik 160
religious ecology 58
~ specialist 20
revival 167, 175
révülés 160, 172
ritual process 96
role-taking 31, 36, 38, 117, 166
Saami 126
sacred place 62
~ pole 196
sacred/profane 127, 186
sacrifice 46, 50, 62, 99, 173, 191, 193, 199
Sakhalin Island 121
Salish 152, 153
Samoyeds 6, 33, 53, 100, 104, 105, 128
Sanskrit 14
sawode 4
schrizophrenia 21
séance 6, 9, 10, 15, 29, 33, 34, 38, 52, 55, 61, 71, 74, 96, 166, 177
seeing 35
seer 71, 85, 111, 172
seid 72, 75, 76, 81, 82
seite 62, 67, 111
Selkup 100
seven 9, 31, 100, 160
shaman (as artist) 132
~ (as mediator) 191
~ (as poet) 127
~ (as singer of epic) 199
shamanic contest 48
~ dance 193, 194, 202
~ disease 5, 31, 170
~ rite 94
~ state of consciousness 201
shamanistic initiation 160
~ ritual 181
~ singing 68-78, 81
~ tradition 174
~ worldview 56-67, 96
shaman's belt 178
~ costume 111, 126, 138, 183, 184
~ crown 194

~ drawing 97
~ dress 9, 62, 179
~ function 127
~ head-dress 180
~ horse (= the drum) 160
~ journey 7, 12, 37, 39, 42, 45, 53, 54, 95, 154, 200
~ song 6, 11, 41-58, 128
~ tree 7, 172, 193
šaman 1
sha-men (Chinese) 2
sharp blades (in shamanic contest) 49
Shor 39
sieve (as substitute of drum) 162, 163
singer (shaman as ~) 154
singing 38, 72, 74, 195
siurinka 4
sleep 51, 129, 170
sleipnir 83
small-group shamanism 8
smith spirit 8
smoke 11
snake 9, 82
Sogdian 174
Solon 179
song 6, 33
sorcerer 132, 169
soul 61, 112
~ dualism 2
~ flight 2, 12, 42, 95
Soyot 9, 165, 180
spirit ancestor 8
~ dance 152
~ helper 5, 8, 9, 12, 23, 27, 33, 34, 35, 41, 47, 53, 94, 98, 100, 104, 167
~ lover 8
~ world 54
śramana (Sanskrit) 2
squirrel 101, 206
staff 65, 71
Stone Age 132
sun 10, 142, 174, 200
~ dance 129, 151
~ worship 85, 140
superfluous bones 170
symbolic mediation 128
symbols 91, 127, 187
Sym river 102
taboo 64
taitaa 173
táltos 158, 161, 164, 165, 167, 170, 171, 172, 174, 175
taltys 173
Tamang 120
Taymir 119, 166
Teleut 149
thunder 43
~ bird 89
Tibet 120
tietäjä 69-76, 110
Tofa 23
toli 179
Tom river 134, 139, 143, 145, 146
torture 31
trance 11, 20, 22, 26, 33, 39, 71, 76, 77, 82, 87, 152, 160, 169, 170, 172, 190, 194
transformation (from human into animal) 82
transvestite shaman 8
tree 95, 160, 170
~ of the world 83, 86
tudó 172
Tungus 13, 110, 150, 176
Tunguska river 3, 8, 98
tunnel experience 203
tuno 158, 173
Tuonela 81, 83, 84
Turkish 173
Tuva 4, 138, 144
tūlt 173
Tym river 179
Udehe 182
Ulchi 159
underworld 7, 99
upper world 49, 99, 200, 203
Ural Mountains 17, 133, 143
Ussuri river 193
Vasyugan river/region 63
Väinämöinen 65, 73, 74, 79, 81, 84, 92
ventriloquism 12, 39, 54, 55
Vipunen 75, 79, 84
vision 6, 51, 106, 175, 200
~ (in song) 37, 54
vocation 120, 170
Vogul 76, 119, 158, 173, 186, 191
Votyak 158

[illegible] 151
west 195
wine mats 80
witchcraft 159
wolf 9, 36, 85
worldview 141
x-ray style 136
Yakut 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 35, 105, 147, 152, 153, 180, 187, 190
yamyang 129
Yenisei river 138
Yelogir 2, 11, 13, 35, 55, 61
Yurak 13
zoomorphic spirit helper 11, 37, 65