

## **Shamanism or Shamanisms, A Comparative Approach Toward Siberian Shamanism**

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## **Abstract**

Shamanism has been considered as a singular phenomenon in most of the studies carried out about Shamanism so far, and it has not been taken into consideration that there are different types of Shamanism. Shamanist beliefs, which were developed in a very large region such as Siberia, were divided into different branches as a result of different social, cultural and political effects in Siberia, and led to the emergence of Shamanist practices called Paleo-Siberian Shamanism and Neo-Siberian Shamanism.

**Key Words:** Neo siberia; siberia; paleosiberia; shamanism

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Shamanism is one of the most discussed topics in the academic community. Issues such as shamanistic practices and the homeland of shamanism have made shamanism an element discussed by researchers. In my thesis, I aimed to bring a new perspective to these discussions by examining Siberian Shamanism from a comparative perspective. As known, Shamanism is a wide concept which has been discussed since long time ago. The discussions focus on its nature, on its homeland, on its practices and on this difficult question; Is it a belief, is it a religion or is it a mental and psychological illness? My thesis will answer those questions by adopting a comparative approach toward Siberian Shamanism. However, the real aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that there is not a single Shamanism but Shamanisms in Siberia.

## **RESULTS**

I took two groups of Paleo-Siberians and two groups of Neo-Siberians to study. I studied the shamanistic practices of Koryaks and Chukchi in the Paleo Siberians group, and the shamanistic practices of Yakuts and Buryats in the Neo Siberians group. Again, before going into the summary, I would like to mention what this subject has given me while examining the subject. First of all, I gained a serious knowledge about the studies in the field of Siberian ethnography. Examining the transformation of the discipline of ethnography from its birth in the 17th century to the 19th century, when it reached its peak, and recognizing the authors who work in this field will contribute to my future studies. Learning about the establishment and development of the ethnographic museum in Russia, studying the field studies in Siberia in the 19th century, being aware of a great exploration study such as the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, which investigated whether there was a connection between the indigenous peoples living in North America and the tribes in Siberia, greatly improved my mental world. Carrying these huge steps taken in social sciences even further should be the goal of every individual who wants to take part in the academic community. As a result of this thesis, I realized how important social sciences and branches such as anthropology are. Engaging in this type of study at a time when the

interest in reading books and social sciences decreased in the world reinforced my conviction of how important social sciences are in the life of a society. My biggest wish and expectation regarding this thesis are that this thesis will contribute to the future social science studies in Turkey. I hope that such studies will increase in Turkey in the future.

Paleo-Siberian languages are also known as Paleo-Asiatic languages or Hyperborean languages. Leopold Von Schrenck was one of the first scientists to elaborate the Paleo-Siberian theory according to whom Paleo-Siberian languages form the remnants of a more broadly dispersed language family of a community which had to leave its homeland due to pressure of the newcomers (Field, Prostov, 1942 p.391). Schrenk puts forward that Paleo-Siberian tribes were established on a much larger area than today but had to leave their land because of the new migrations (Field, Prostov, 1942 p.391). There are four groups of language among Paleo-Siberian languages (Yeniseian, Luorawetlan, Yukaghir and Nivkh). Turukhansk region is the region where the Yeniseian group is spoken. Ket language (formerly called YeniseyOstyak) constitutes a living member of Yeniseian group and is spoken by about 500 persons. Another living member of the Yeniseian group is Yug which is facing a risk of disappearing. The Luorawetlan family is composed of Chukchi, Koryak, Kamchadal, Aliutor (Aliutor can also be a Koryak Dialect) and Kerek. Regarding Yukaghir language, it comprises a group of 200 speakers and two areas. One of them is Tundra Yukaghir in the Sakha Republic and Forest Yukaghir also called as Northern Yukaghir along the bend of Kolyma River. Nivkh comprises a group of 1000 speakers who are divided into two areas: Amur River and the other half of Sakhalin Island.

## **DISCUSSION**

Paleo-Siberian languages are also known as Paleo-Asiatic languages or Hyperborean languages. Leopold Von Schrenck was one of the first scientists to elaborate the Paleo-Siberian theory according to whom Paleo-Siberian languages form the remnants of a more broadly dispersed language family of a community which had to leave its homeland due to pressure of the newcomers (Field, Prostov, 1942 p.391). Schrenk puts forward that Paleo-Siberian tribes were established on a much larger area than today but had to leave their land because of the new migrations (Field, Prostov, 1942 p.391). There are four groups of language among Paleo-Siberian languages (Yeniseian, Luorawetlan, Yukaghir and Nivkh).

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important information about the mythology and religious life of the peoples living in the Kamchatka region. In the 19th century, it is seen that new studies were added to the ethnography of Siberia. As in other academic centers in the Western world, it is seen that there was an increase in studies in the field of anthropology in Russia in the 19th century. These studies are divided into two, private studies and institutional studies. Written by the German scientist Otto Von Böttlingk in 1851, the work entitled as «Über die Sprache Jakuten-On Yakut Language» is the first work who systematically examined the languages of the tribes living in Siberia (Feuerhann, 2010, p.166) In addition to this, another work that should be emphasized is *Reise in den denäussersten Norden und Osten Sibirien* (Travel to the North to the East of Siberia) written by Alexander von Middendorf, a German scientist. The related work is the product of Middendorf's expedition to Siberia between 1842-1845 and offers a wide range of information on Siberia. This wide range consists of four volumes in total, and the third volume contains a Yakut-German dictionary and information on Yakut Grammar (Feuerhann, 2010, p.169)

The word shaman appears for the first time in modern languages in the writings of the Russian tsar's ambassador, Everard Isbrand, regarding his Chinese expedition in 1693-1695 (*A journal of an Embassy from Muscovy to China by Land*) According to the narrative of the German researcher Adam Brand, who participated in the journey, the embassy delegation met the Tunguses, a warrior tribe, after crossing the Yenisei River (Nişanyan, 2019, p.515) .In the Tungus tribes, there is a magician or priest called as shaman. The notes written by the ambassador Everard Isbrand will appear twenty years later as an appendix to the Dutch Cornelius van Brujn's travel to Asia . Brujn calls the priests of Samoyeds living in the north of the Ural Mountains as shamans and describes their ceremonies. However, Brujn does not give any indication of whether the word shaman exists in the Samoyed language.

The *History of Siberia*, written by the historian Johan Eberhard Fischer, also contains important information on Shamanism Shamanic tradition is widespread in Siberia and its environs, Buddhist Mongols also had shamans. The work written in 1780 by William Toke contains the term «Shamanism».As the information about shamanism increases, the prejudices about the subject begin to increase as well.For example, the French

philosopher Benjamin Constant used the term shamanism to describe primitive tribal religions. Thanks to the increasing knowledge over time, new theories about shamanism were emerging. Max Müller, one of the founding fathers of modern Turcology, counted shamanism among the cultural characteristics of Turani tribes. Entitled as «Alaska and its resources», published by the American naturalist William Dall in 1870, the religious practices of the Eskimos and other Alaskan Indians were defined as shamanist (Nişanyan, 2019, p.515) «In the life of the average native, especially in the far north, there is little but a struggle for existence with a niggardly environment. Their festivals are few and consist chiefly of eating and violent motions, termed dancing for want of a better and more characteristic word, or in donations where the host is the giver. Their shamanistic performances, full of excitement and interest, still have little to satisfy the love of enjoyment latent in every human being». (Dall, 1878, p.2)

By 1848, the American historian and missionary Samuel W Williams definitively revealed the origin of the word «shaman». The word shaman is primarily Mongolian, used in Chinese as well. In the Buddhism school adopted by the Mongols and the Tibetans who learned from them, monks of the monastery are called shamans. Buddhists who follow the path of the Dalai Lama are shamans. In ancient Indian the word «Sramana» means someone who abandons worldly affairs. Buddhism, an Indian religion reached the Mongols through the Central Asian Sogdians, and the religious literature of Buddhism was translated into these languages through Sogdian. In Sogdian, shaman means Buddhist monk. (Nişanyan, 2016, p.516)

The nature of shamanism has been a question of debate since long time ago. Everard Isbrand, the first to use the term shaman described shamans as idolaters. (Roux, 1961, p.41) In «Short Descriptions of the Ostyak People» by Gr Novisky, shamanic activities were described as demon's work and shamans were portrayed as servants of demons (Arvas, 2014, P.51) It seems that this negative point was still dominant at the second half of XVIII century. Traveling scholars Gmelin and Pallas accused shamans of charlatanism. The striking point in the comments made by the first European observers is the general juxtaposition of the shaman figure and the devil figure. In the 19th century, it was revealed that the studies on shamanism were handled more comprehensively, and the concept was not unique to Siberia. Russian researcher Mihalovsky examined shamanism

within the framework of the development of other religions and underlined the point that the concept is not unique to Siberia.

Whether shamanism is a Siberian concept or not has led to new debates, and I think taking these discussions further will lead to new findings about shamanism. German ethnologist Fritz Graebner defined shamanism as a characteristic element of arctic cultures within the scope of the «Kulturkreis» theory that he putted forward. V Shmidt and Alexander Gas who supported the theory putted forward by Grebner, thought that shamanism had passed from south to north and they claimed that Buddhism had influences on shamanism in this way Swedish researcher Ohlmarks, who puts forward a thesis diametrically opposed to this theory, stated that shamanism is a phenomenon that can only emerge under difficult conditions in the North (Arvas, 2014, p.52)

In his book entitled as «Studienzum Problem des Schamanismus» Swedish author Ake Ohlmarks examines the phenomenon called shamanism (Åkerlund, 2006, p.201) In his book, Ohlmarks, evaluates shamanism as an arctic hysteria and argues that geographical factors are effective in the formation of this psychopathological state of mind (Åkerlund, 2006, p.212) Ohlmarks divides shamanistic activities into two separate categories as large and small shamanistic activities. He states that the shamanistic rituals called «Large» are seen near the northern arctic regions and the rituals performed last longer. On the other hand, the shamanistic rituals called Small exist in the arctic as well as the Sub Arctic Parts. The phenomenon introduced by Ohlmarks and called the Small Shamanistic Ritual has a special importance since Ohlmarks characterizes this type of shamanism as original shamanism. Although the effects of geography on lifestyle are undeniable, it is not a very reliable approach to accept the phenomenon called Shamanism which includes years of experience and is based on deep-rooted traditions, as hysteria.

Polish scientist Maria Czaplicka, who had the opportunity to make many observations about the region as a result of her field studies on Siberia, opposes the idea that shamanism is a hysteria (Kubica, 2015, p.6) Stating that the Siberian natives have a very deep respect for the world of belief that they have created at the end of many years, Czaplicka stated that this term, which was put forward by European travelers, was created on the basis of some pathological symptoms seen in Europe. Maria Czaplicka, who took Paleo Siberians and Neo Siberians as her reference point while explaining



shamanism, describes the shamanism seen in Paleo Siberians as family shamanism (Czaplicka, 1914, p.53) Stating that each family has its own drum and comes together on special occasions, Czaplicka mentions that Family Shamanism is different from Professional Shamanism seen in Neo Siberians. (Czaplicka, 1914, p.53) Stating that professional shamanism is under the influence of Christianity, Czaplicka states that professional shamans have more people around them during ceremonies. Czaplicka mentions that the different climatic conditions in Northern and Southern Siberia led to diversity in shamanistic rituals.

One of the first striking elements in Koryak Shamanism is the separation of shamans into professional and family shamans. Family shamans who perform their duties in rituals and festivals practiced by the family work for the family to lead a prosperous life (Magnarella, 1972, p.26) Vladimir Jochelson, a Russian anthropologist who conducted field research in the area where the Koryaks were living, as part of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition defines family shamanism in the Koryaks as follow «common ritual practices seen in many native Koryak households, such as playing the drum and uttering incantations» (Plattet, 2013, p.70) German botanist Steller and Russian geologist Krasheninnikov, who conducted field research on the Kamchatka peninsula in the 18th century, stated that they did not coincide with professional shamans in Koryaks (The Jesup North Pacific Expedition, Shamanism and Incantations, 2005). Stating that there is no need for any qualifications to be a family shaman, Jochelson stated that Professional shamanism emerged later in the Koryak society.

The professional shaman is called enenalan in Koryak society. It refers to a man inspired by spirits Professional shamans are inspired by special spirits and their opportunities to display their power were not limited to a particular group of people, spread their activities to a wider base Professional shamans have a protective spirit that will protect them against diseases and struggles with other shamans, and these guardian spirits manifest themselves in the form of an animal The wolf, the bear, the raven, the seagull, and the eagle appear as the most common guardian spirits (The Jesup North Pacific Expedition, Shamanism and Incantations, 2005). Professional Koryak shamans who are the guardians of the social order established by the big raven perform their duties to ensure that the

Koryak society attains a prosperous structure (Magnarella, 1972, p.26) It is seen that the Big Raven figure is at the forefront in the shamanistic rituals practiced by the Koryaks. (Jochelson, 1904, p.417) Big Raven appears as the assistant of the will that created the world, gave people the light, showed them how to hunt, and also guided shamans on how to fight evil spirits (Jochelson, 1904, p.417) An anthropomorphic quality has been attributed to Big Raven and is believed that he had his own children, wife and sister (Magnarella, 1972, p.25). There are different views on Big Raven's disappearance, including the view that people did not heed Big Raven's advice and as a result Big Raven disappeared (Magnarella, 1972, p.26) Big Raven, who has declared a war with his son against the underworld invaded by evil spirits, has won this war by using different tools (Jochelson, 1904, p.417)

Big Raven takes its place in Koryak mythology as an actor who stands on the side of good in a struggle between good and evil. The supreme will which is the assistant of Big Raven and called as Supreme Being is called with different names in the mythological texts about the Koryaks. He is seen as Universe, World, Master of the Upper World, the one on the High, Master, Existence, Being or Strength (Jochelson, 1904, p.417). Based on this mythological structure, the question of how to explain the relationship between Supreme Being, Big Raven and Shamans becomes important. At this point, the impression of a hierarchical order emerges. The Supreme Being creates the world with the help of Big Raven, and shamans are entrusted with certain tasks to maintain order in the world. Within the framework of this hierarchical structure, can we describe the shamans as a clergy class in Koryak society? The mythological narrative based on this hierarchical structure gave the impression that Koryak shamans also formed a kind of clergy in the society. (Jochelson, 1904, p.418)

The social structure of the Chukchi society is divided into two groups. One of this group is Reindeer Chukchi and the other one is called Maritime Chukchi. This social distinction is a result of the difference in economic activities in the Chukchi society. Hunting of sea animals and fishing constitute the main economic activity of Maritime Chukchi (Bogoras, 1901, p.87). On the other hand, reindeer breeding stands out as the main economic activity of Reindeer Chukchi (Vaté, 2005, p.49). As it is in Koryak Society, the Chukchi's mythology and beliefs are products of social conditions in Chukchi's society.

When the world of belief of the Chukchi is examined, one of the first features that stands out is the role that fire plays in the Chukchi society. One of the roles that fire plays in rituals is to drive away evil spirits. The housewives who set fire to the tundra after their husbands go to the tundra to graze their animals think that this fire will protect their husbands. (Vnré, Beyries, 2007, p.404) Fire is also lit during funerals to keep evil spirits away from the house. Fire is also seen as a marker of family identity. It is forbidden to mix fires from two different. Being in close contact with a fire from a house outside of one's own is considered as a threat to the family. Based on the relationship between the house and the fire of the house, it can be said that each member of the Chukchi society belongs to the house (called as *Yaranga* in Chukchi language) she was born in. This relationship, between the family member and the *Yaranga*, is renewed by making pictures from coal fire and sacrificing reindeer in seasonal rituals. The ritual that puts an end to the relationship between family member and home is marriage. The person who left his home after marriage now emerges as a threat to the fire of the house because she herself came into close contact with the fire of another house. (Vnré, Beyries, 2007, p.414) Considering the role of shamans in Chukchi society, it is seen that the fire factor is again in the foreground (Bogoras, 1901, p.97) The fire of another house is seen as destructive and is believed to harbor evil spirits. (Bogoras, 1901, p.97) The task falls to the shamans in the fight against these evil spirits. Chukchi shamans are fighting at the front against evil spirits that bring diseases to people and are shown as the cause of death. This type of shaman is also accepted as healer in Chukchi society. In addition to this type of shaman, there are two other types of shamans in the Chukchi society. One of these shaman types transmits some messages that they say they heard from the unknown, they are called as ventriloquists. The task they perform is seen more as an element of entertainment. Other types of shamans are shamans who make predictions about the future and share their visions of the future (Bogoras, 1901, p.99)

The adjectives attributed to Chukchi shamans also give important clues about the place of Chukchi shamans in society. People with shamanic abilities are called *lygeplaiānvytynpynasgyt*. It is possible to translate it as «experienced old man» This adjective also shows that shamans are attributed to wisdom (Zoia, 2007, p.265) The shaman, who goes to the realms in an ecstatic mood that ordinary people are not able to

enter, achieves this ecstatic mood by singing and playing the tambourin. These songs sung by shamans, were also used while hunting whales and other sea creatures. During the transportation of the whale, which is very heavy, the pain caused by the weight of the whale is tried to be relieved by singing. It is seen that shamanic elements are used for the successful completion of the hunting process (Zoia, 2007, p.265)

The fact that the concept of the soul is at the center of the belief world of the Chukchi community also gives the Chukchi shamans an important position in the society. Chukchi people believe that everything that surrounds them has a spirit. The Chukchi society, which protects themselves against evil spirits through the spells and talismans made by the shamans, also performs the purification process to purify themselves from evil spirits when they enter their homes. (Lykkegård, Willerslev, 2016, p.3) If a ranking is made among the spirits in the imagination of the Chukchi society, it will be necessary to open a separate parenthesis about the spirit named Kely. Kely is seen as a constant concern in Chukchi society, is associated with death in Chukchi society (Vaté, 2007, p.232) In order to prevent death by Kelly, the Chukchi sacrifice a dog or a reindeer to Kelly. Vladimir Bogoraz, who obtained important findings about the Chukchi because of his field research in the north of Russia, mentions that there are 3 types of Kely in the Chukchi society. Bogoraz also sees the spirit named Kelly as the assistant of the Chukchi shamans (Vaté, 2007, p.222)

As it is in Koryak society, the mythological world of the Chukchi also contains important clues about the Chukchi shamans. The sun, stars and moon have a very important place in this mythological narrative (Siimets, 2006, p.131) In the Chukchi belief, the most important character in the heavens is the Sun. The relationship established between the sun and the moon also points to the dualist structure in the Chukchi mythology. Chukchi shamans are also included in this dualist structure (Siimets, 2006, p.134) The evil spirit of the sun is symbolized as the moon. Chukchi shamans seek help from the moon when they want to curse someone. Chukchi shamans believe that looks addressed to the moon will drag people to different realms and they are convinced that the moon catches people thanks to its lasso.

As in the Paleo Siberian example, Neo-Siberian shamanism was shaped under the influence of local factors and geographical conditions. Neo-Siberian shamanism is shaped in line with rich local traditions carries the characteristics of the region it originated from. In this chapter, the shamanistic practices of the Buryats will be examined. The shores of Lake Baikal in Southern Siberia today are considered the homeland of Buryats. Northern Mongolian language is spoken among Buryats (Perrucho, Sévin, Sazhinova, Bazarov, Konovalov, 2006, p.200). One of the most important issues to be mentioned regarding Buryats is Lake Baikal and it divides Buryats into two different worlds. One side of these two worlds is the forest, on the other side is the endless steppes. Described as a symbol of fertility in Buryat society, the forest is called Bajan. This nomenclature is an important clue regarding collective consciousness of Buryat society. It is accepted by the Buryats that the forest which is called rich also contains many spirits. As will be seen later, one of the important pillars of Buryat shamanism is the forest. In the Buryat collective memory, the steppe is a symbol of fertility and the proliferation of the herd, the expected from the steppe is the increase of the herd. (Hamayon, 1990, p.73)

In all Mongolian languages the shaman is called *Böö*. Shamanic terms were created in Buryat society based on this etymology. While the shamanic session is called *Böölöön*, shamanism is expressed by the phrase *BööMürgel* (Hamayon, 1990, p.142) This etymological term carries important clues about Buryat shamanism. The word *bögü* in the Buryats one of the neighboring peoples of the Turks in Siberia, refers to the shamans as *bögü* in old Turkish. (Nişanyan Sözlük, Büyü, 2021) On the other hand, shamans are called *Enanalan* (The Jesup North Pacific Expedition, Shamanism and Incantations, 2005) In Koryak society and they are known as *LygeplaiänvytYnpynasgyt* in Chukchi society (Zoia, 2007, p.265) Buryats who share a common cultural circle with Turks in Siberia, also have parallels in terms of terminology related to beliefs.

The shaman himself was at the center of the shamanistic tradition that has survived among the Buryats (Krader, 1975, p.111). The male shaman was called *Bö*, and the female shaman was called *Odogon*. However, within the framework of Buryat shamanistic belief, there is not only one type of shaman, but both white shamans and black shamans. White Shamans are in the service of the Gods in the West and are described as benevolent. On the other hand, Black Shamans are in the service of the Gods

in the East and are described as destructive to humans. This dual situation, which is revealed in the separation of shamans is also due to the status of shamans in Buryat society. On the one hand, shamans, who were respected and held in great esteem, were also figures who were feared in society and sometimes killed because they were seen as witches. Another factor in the decline of their prestige was the Buryat's recognition of the dominance of the Russian Empire. In the early days of Buryat culture, they lost their titles and qualifications such as religious leadership and law-making, which they had in the eyes of the society, because the Russian Empire did not see themselves as the representative of Buryat Culture. When it comes to the question of how to become a shaman among the Buryats, one of the most important qualifications to be possessed was the necessity of having another shaman in the family tree of the person who wanted to be a shaman. The family elder who had a shaman spirit was called *Utxa* in Mongolian (Krader, 1975, p.115)

Yakut Turks live in the Sakha Republic which is in the Russian Federation today. As in Koryak, Chukchi and Buryat societies, Yakut Shamanism was shaped under the shadow of historical dynamics, environmental conditions and local culture. To get to know the Yakut shamanism closely, it is necessary to know their mythology first. Yakuts believe that there are higher beings in the sky who are divided into good and evil. Yakuts, who believe that the sky itself is divided into different layers, believe that good spirits live in the upper layers of the sky and evil spirits live in the lower layers of the sky (Roussy, 1887, p.24) Good spirits are called *Ai Tanyara*, while evil spirits are called *Abassis, Ajarai*. On the top of this mythological structure sits *Ai Toione*, who is believed to have created the world. In this mythological framework, the shaman is consulted to destroy the effects of evil spirits (Roussy, 1887, p.25) It is believed that among the meat sacrificed, the devil loves the heart and lungs the most. The Yakuts, who respected the animals sacrificed to the devil and did not cut their tail and mane strictly, called the shamans when it was necessary to kill these animals. This situation constitutes an important example in terms of showing the social prestige of the shaman in Yakut society.

The qualities that the Yakuts attributed to the person believed to be the first shaman also explain the social prestige of the Yakut shamans. It was believed that the first shaman, who was given the title of great, could perform miracles, healing the sick, resurrecting the dead, and even enabling the blind to see. At this point, it can be asked whether there are syncretic elements in Yakut shamanism (Roussy, 1887, p.31) These miracles attributed to the first shaman were the miracles believed to have been performed by the Prophet Jesus as well. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Jesus, 2022). With the arrival of Arshevek Ivan Veniaminov to Yakutia in 1852, Christianization activities gained momentum in Eastern Siberia (Duchesne, 2020, p.36) It is a normal phenomenon for different beliefs to be influenced by each other and it is an important question to what extent this influence transforms Yakut Shamanism.

The dualistic relationship established between good and evil also shows itself in Yakut shamanism. The concepts of White Shaman and Black Shaman which manifest themselves in Buryat shamanism are also present in Yakut shamanism. White shamans take their origins in the spirits of the upper world, they do not wear shamanic costume and do not have a drum. Their rites are performed during the day and they enter into communication with good spirits. They participate in marriages, fertility rites and the healing of the sick, whose function is rather that of healers. Black shamans take their roots in the lower world, they make travels between the worlds, especially the middle world and the lower world. They extract evil spirits, and they may be harmful to humans. Their rites are practiced in the dark (Duchesne, 2020, p.36) During the rituals they practice, white shamans and black shamans travel to the sky and the underworld (Stépanoff, 2014, p.119) In Yakut mythology, White Yakut shaman appears as an assistant to *AyyToione*, who is believed to have created the universe. This task performed by the White Yakut shaman shows itself in the healing process undertaken by the shaman. In Dolgans who speak Yakut language, the white shaman first removes the evil spirit from the patient's body and sends this evil spirit to where it came from. After this process is done, the soul must be purified by *AyyToione*, who is believed to have created the universe. The quality that distinguishes the shaman from ordinary people shows itself here as well, because *AyyToione* is visited by the Yakut shaman, which ordinary people are not able to see (Stépanoff, 2014, p.119)

One of the issues that should be mentioned about Yakut Shamanism is the relationship between shamans and animals. Bear, Tiger, Snake, Eagle and Sheep are animals with shamanic symbols. At this point, it is necessary to open a separate parenthesis about the horse. Because the horse, which is an inseparable part of the life of Yakuts, also shows itself in Yakut beliefs (Maj, 2006, p.76) In Yakut traditions, being compared with and likened to horses is a positive case. Ethnographic descriptions prior to the Soviet period mention that, among the Yakuts the shaman could also be identified with a stallion. Emphasis is placed on the strength and masculine aspect of the Yakut Shaman by the analogy of the stallion. This importance attributed to the Yakut shaman also shows itself in the duties entrusted to the Yakut shaman. In Yakut society, shamans are used to ensure the continuity of the society and the safety of agricultural activities. Expecting help from a shaman in a vital activity such as agriculture indicates the shaman's central position in Yakut society. During the feast of Yhyakh, Yakut shamans ask *D'öhögöj*, the guardian spirit of horses to give birth to new foals (Maj, 2006, p.7)

In the rituals performed by the Yakut shamans, the horse symbolism also shows itself in the shaman's relationship with the drum. In some shamanic rituals, the Yakut shaman sees himself as a horse, neighing and leaping like a horse. The tambour, which is one of the factories of shamanism, is seen as well by Yakut shamans as their horse. In the Yakut society, where the horse figure plays a central role, the mythology and world of belief are also heavily nourished by the horse figure.

## CONCLUSION

When Paleo Siberian and Neo Siberian shamanisms are examined, it is seen that both types of shamanism are the products of the geographies they originated from. It would not be the right approach to put the shamanism practiced by all four societies in the same category, since the mythological structures built by each of the four societies are different from each other. The common points that shamans have in these four societies are the reputation attributed to them by their society and the right to have a say in vital issues concerning their society. In this respect, it would be correct to see the shamans as an opinion leader in



these four communities. Another common point is the dualist structure that manifests itself in the shamanist practices of the four communities. Another common point is the dualist structure that manifests itself in the shamanist practices of the four communities. On the other hand, when the subject is analyzed in terms of world vision and rituals, serious differences emerge in Paleo-Siberian and Neo-Siberian shamanism. The Big Raven notion among Koryaks, Yaranga notion among Chukchi, Zegete Aba ritual among Buryats, and vast Taiga among Yakuts are the basis of shamanistic beliefs. Each community has applied these four key concepts to perceive the world that surrounds them. Each world narrative and universe vision are different from each other. While reindeer and whales have an important place in the theatricality of Paleo Siberian shamanism, an important source of theatrical elements in Neo Siberian shamanism are horses and hunting activity. These four communities which make their living thanks to these animals, have given wide space to these concepts in their mythological constructions. A history of Koryak and Chukchi cannot be written without including whales and reindeer, and no analysis can be made of Yakuts without mentioning horses.

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