

Religious Anthropological Analysis of Unnatural Rituals: An Example from Northeastern Shamanic Culture

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Abstract: This paper discusses and introduces shamanic culture in Northeast China. First, this article will show the steps and equipment used in common shamanic rituals, and introduce what shamanic worship is and its influence in Northeast China. It will also analyze the scientific principles of natural rituals as they manifest therein. This article will also explain why it is effective in some cases, why this ritual is not a substitute for formal medical care and the influence of shamanic culture on modern culture in Northeast China. Finally, this article will discuss how to preserve and pass on the positive cultural influences of shamanic rituals and discard the cultural influences that come with them.

Keywords: Folklore, Sociology, Shamanism, Religious Rituals

1. Introduction

This passage will mainly discuss how religious rituals affect people's society [1], giving an example of the practices claimed to cure many diseases in mysterious ways in Shaman culture in Northeast China and Russia. Shaman culture was formed in prehistoric times and spread throughout the world. Shamanism is most worshiped in the Volga River Valley, areas inhabited by Finns, Eastern Siberia, and Western Siberia. The ancestors of the Manchus, the Jurchens, also practiced shamanism. In the 13th century, the invasion of Mongolians brought the Shaman Culture into mainland China, thus buying the first attachment of Chinese and the Shaman Culture. After the retreat of the Mongolians in the Yuan dynasty, Shamanism went with it for a while, too. --- Until the appearance of Jurchens, nomads from the far northeast of China nowadays. They believe in Shamanism and select it as the state religion. So, as people can see in the old days, Shamanism always appeared in Northeast China and Russia. During the period of rule by the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China, shamanism was recognized as a cult and disappeared.

The Shaman believes that all things have a soul, so Shamanism often gives fire, mountains, trees, sun, moon, stars, thunder and lightning, clouds, ice and snow, wind and rain, rainbows, and certain animals with personal imagination and mystified spirituality, as gods who dominate nature and the world. In particular, the concept of ghosts and gods formed by the ancestors' dead spirits and the fear caused by various diseases and deaths in the world are the core of shamanistic ideas of gods. It is believed that all kinds of gods have the same will, desires, and desires as human beings and are more divided into good and evil and cannot be violated or violated. All kinds of gods have different attributes and functions. Each is in charge of its affairs. Each has its side, has generally equal status, rarely belongs to them, most of them have no hierarchy, and there is no God who rules everything.

This article will use the case study method to conduct a series of analyses and studies of Northeast Shamanism. Discuss how it works and in what ways it affects people. This article will first explore the historical origin and development of shamanism, secondly, describe the symbolism and harm of rituals in shamanism, and finally briefly describe the enlightenment it brings us. People are looking to the future development of practices. Finally, people will discuss what shamanic culture has brought us and how people can continue its desirable parts and discard its pseudo-science. This investigation will help people understand the formal structure of Shamanism and study how people can make the most of unnatural rituals, inherit some desirable parts, and discard some pseudoscience in them.

2. The Process of Traditional Samon Healing Ritual

The Ritual must be completed by two people, the first and the second. The first is believed to be the object of soul possession, and the second is the helper. In this ritual, the first is mostly "spinning," and the second plays drums. There are fixed tunes and words of invitation, and after God invites them, the second is responsible for "communicating" with God to answer people's questions. Sometimes, the "invited" ones are the so-called immortals, and sometimes the "souls" of the dead. It was believed that the blessings from the immortals could cure people's diseases or expel the curse that is given from an evil soul or someone's wronged soul. Depending on the patient's symptoms, the Samon will perform different rituals if it is believed that a "foreign ghost" is causing the disease, a bonfire is built outside the gate or on the edge of the village, and the shaman jumps around the campfire and makes a symbolic shooting to exorcise ghosts. If a disease is believed to be caused by offending a particular god, pigs, cattle, or sheep are killed for sacrifice, and the shaman presides over the gift to "ask God for forgiveness." When a critically ill patient thinks that his "soul" has left the body and has arrived in the "netherworld," he makes sacrifices at night, and the shaman's god goes to the "netherworld" to bring the patient's "soul" back and attach it to the body. It is said that shamans can cure people in different ways, no matter what kind of disease people have or how severe it is. Many tools are also used in the practice of these rituals. The god robe is a tight-fitting placket-like robe, usually made of deerskin and decorated with copper mirrors, small mirrors, waist bells, etc. Behind the lower body is a streamer. The divine drum uses slats as the drum edge and goatskin, calfskin, or roe deer skin as the drum head. In addition, there are tools such as divine swords and wands. The shaman dances the god and beats the holy drum" rhythmically, and the large and small copper mirrors and waist bells beat each other, and the streamers fly in all directions to show the majesty of the gods [1]. As the Samans believed, the illness that affects our body is caused by the soul's departure, as the witch doctor ritual can revive the lost soul taken by the great spirits, as mentioned before, of the sick person [2, 3].

Also, many rituals in Shamanism involve using hallucinogenic drugs and anesthetics to channel the spirit [4]. This is similar to the religious worship of psychedelic mushrooms consumed by indigenous people in Sahara, Africa, and the worship of hallucinations and mirages by indigenous people in Arizona [5]. Unlike hallucinatory worship in other regions, the drugs used in shamanic rituals are mainly to uplift the spirit of patients and ritual hosts, and their ingredients contain substances with specific analgesic and calming effects. In their ways, psychics use drugs to perform a series of hypnosis and sedation on the patient to achieve the effect of dispelling the disease

3. Analysis of Symbolic Meaning and Mechanism of Northeast Shaman Culture

Scholar Meng Huiying has suggested that: "Shamanism is a primitive religion, which means that shamanism is spontaneously produced, and there may be very famous great shamans in its history, but there is no obvious founder, and its main beliefs and rituals are spontaneously formed in clans, tribes, and national societies, and passed down from generation to generation" [6]. As mentioned earlier, shamanistic masks and costumes often have a strong symbolic meaning. In northeastern China,

the image of a grim-looking or scowling older man refers to the mountain god or the land god in charge of a bountiful harvest. In shamanic ceremonies, sacrifices wear masks of this image to perform "psychic rituals." The transformation of abstract land and mountain gods into more understandable figures accelerated the popularity of shamanism in the northeast [7].

According to the study, some shamanic rituals use herbs and animal materials to make incense and use them on site, which have specific calming and pain-relieving effects and have a particular soothing impact on some patients suffering from diseases. At the same time, holding shamanic ceremonies also plays a specific role as a placebo [8]. A patient who believes that shamanism can cure their illness may mentally feel that their need to be treated has been met after this ceremony. This result may lead to a strengthening of the immune system and a weakening of the condition. Coincidence due to certain other factors may also make the ceremony seem adequate.

However, shamanism ultimately has no formal medical treatment. Even according to common sense, it can be concluded that simply performing rituals cannot cure physical ailments. Using hallucinogenic drugs will also inevitably cause factual damage to the human brain. Also, it is considered a cult in today's society. It has inevitably had a negative social impact and harmed some people's physical and mental health. Moreover, the values it promotes are detrimental to most people's physical and psychological health. The resulting superstitions further bogged patients and believers into a quagmire that perfectly fit the definition of cult - chaos, madness, and danger [9]. Therefore, this study argues that shamanism is not bad, significantly reducing the occurrence of patients in rural areas afraid of medical treatment and scammers pretending to be shamanic priests to defraud property.

4. Inspiration and Development of Unnatural Rituals

However, from a modern perspective, shamanic culture is only valid. The cultural elements preserved in its rituals are indeed worth studying. For example, the duo performance in Tohoku culture is partly derived from the music of shamans when they worship gods [10]. The performance form of the two actors working together and singing is similar to the dancing god in shamanic culture. In addition, due to the large number of deities worshiped, shamans often take different forms of gods alone during sacrifices. For example, when an eagle god is invited to the top, he will act like a real eagle and dance like an eagle. When the bear god is asked about the body, the shaman will also turn to show the characteristics of bears. As seen, the duo who inherits his mantle often has this phenomenon of the same person playing different roles in the performance. The correspondence between the male and female actors and the characters in the play could be more stable and often changes as needed. For example, when the plot requires it, the older woman of seventy or eighty turns around and becomes a girl aged eighteen. There is no need for costume changes or further sets. Two people can complete the interpretation of multiple scenes and characters. The diverse role-playing of shamanic rituals is the prototype of this unique form of duo-turning.

Moreover, some nature-revering shamanistic rituals chose another method to uphold their creed after founding the People's Republic of China. Some of them became rangers, guarding their sacred mountains and forests differently.

5. Conclusions

The above descriptions and research findings show that the shamanic culture and sacrifice in Northeast China have a long history and complex rituals and belief systems. Although the rituals used and the drugs used in the rituals may have a positive effect on people's physical and psychological diseases, their effects are not a substitute for formal medical treatment. The occasional "healing miracle" of rituals can also further spark superstition and worship. However, shamanic rituals and culture have greatly shaped the folk culture of Northeast China today. The cultural elements of this

ritual cannot be overlooked. people should try to protect the culture while rejecting cults' influence. This article aims to explore further and study the range of possible scientific influences and cultural worship behind shamanic rituals, and to explain to the general public what people can learn from this unnatural ritual. This paper examines and compares shamanic rituals with similar religious rituals and nature worship religions in other countries. And discover the similarities and differences between them. Admittedly, there are considerable research deficiencies in this paper. The author has not seen a real shaman or visited the site where the ceremony was held. Most of the author's understanding of this belief comes from paper materials and oral accounts of elders, and there may be some shortcomings.

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