

Chapter 16

The Symbolism of Archaic Rites, Signs, and Superstitions of Teleuts

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ABSTRACT

The chapter is devoted to the description of the cultural traditions of the indigenous people of the North-Teleuts, which currently numbers approximately 2,600 persons. It gives an analysis of signs and superstitions of the Teleut people. There are considered two archaic ritual symbol of female “эмегендер/emegender” and male “сомдор/somdor” amulets. The burial ceremony of Teleuts and Telengits is described. The chapter consists of three sections, written by the project executors “Language and culture of Teleuts,” which is supported by grant RHSF/RFBR № 17-04-00252 ONG/18.

INTRODUCTION

Teleuts is one of the indigenous minorities of the North of Turkic origin. The number of Teleuts in Russia reaches 2,650 people, in the Kemerovo Region there are 2,534 people. Currently, representatives of the Teleut ethnos live in the Belovo district of the Kemerovo region (the villages of Bekovo, Chelukhoyevo, Ulus, Verkhovskaya) and in the village of Shanda of the Guryevsk district. Part of the Teleut villages entered the boundaries of Belovo city (the villages of Cherta, Teleut, Zarechnaya).

In the past, Teleuts were nomadic pastoralists, who practiced shamanism in the 18th – 19th centuries. As they were assimilated with the Russian population, they began to lead a sedentary lifestyle and gradually adopted Orthodox traditions. This determined the uniqueness of both the material culture of Teleuts and their ideas about a man, his purpose and way of life.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7853-6.ch016

The Teleut language belongs to the Kyrgyz-Kipchak languages of the Turkic group of the Altai language family as a separate language.

Today the study of the Teleut language is relevant: Teleuts are the indigenous minority of the North, whose language is on the verge of extinction. At the same time, every nation, regardless of its number, retains cultural concepts in the language that are important for ancestors, descendants, as well as for researchers. Every language is a unique view of the world. In total, language pictures of the world of different peoples allow scientists to find out the features of every nation's worldview, to determine the peculiarities of cognition of world objects.

Archaic view of the peoples are of particular interest, preserved in modern people's lives to the present time. Such phenomena include amulets, burial rites, as well as signs and superstitions, used in everyday life.

The Chapter presents description of the burial ceremony of Teleuts and Telengits, archaic rituals, directed to cure diseases with the help of female (эмегендер \ emegender) and male (сомдор \ somdor) amulets, as well as description of beliefs and superstitions of the Teleut people.

BACKGROUND

A significant part of the population is bilingual in the multicultural ethno-geographic space. Bilingualism, enriched by the heritage of two cultures, creates favorable conditions for learning a foreign language. As a rule, modern studies speak about bilingualism, associated with knowledge of modern world languages that is necessary for the development of economic, political and intercultural relations in developed countries. Meanwhile, a large number of people, who speak both the state language of a country and their genetically native language, live in the territories of different countries. This language situation is typical of Russia. The issue of preserving the languages and culture of the indigenous minorities of Russia is particularly acute. The Teleut language is such a language, there are about 2600 speakers. Teleuts assimilated with the Russian population. Adoption of Christianity in the early twentieth century played an important role in it. At the same time, it should be noted that Teleuts live compactly in the villages of the Kemerovo region, engaged in breeding of sheep, horses, cook national food, celebrate Teleut holidays. Teleuts remember their birth (сеоки \ seoki). To date, they have preserved amulets, funeral rites, used both archaic and new, modern signs. Description of the symbols of rites, amulets, signs and superstitions allows complementing the linguistic worldview of Teleuts, to identify the features of their linguistic personality.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

The Funeral Rites in the Teleut and Telengit Linguocultures

Each culture has topics that are closed to strangers. This is the topic of the funeral rite in the Telengit and Teleut cultures.

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