

## CULT LEXICON AS A KEY TO THE WORLD PERCEPTION

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**Abstract:** In this article the problem of the reflection of the world perception in the Selkup cult lexicon is investigated. The terms of Selkup shamans are taken for consideration. These terms are part of the semantic cult paradigm - subjects of cult. All terms were formed from different roots which had their own meanings but in the course of their development under the pressure of cultural context came to the expression of common semantic sign, e.g. became synonyms. Shamans' terms are on one hand of secular on the other hand of sacramental nature as the etymological analysis shows.

**Keywords:** Selkup lexicon and culture, lexical semantics, etymology, synonymisation.

### 1. THE SEMANTIC CULT PARADIGM IN SELKUP LANGUAGE.

Each nation has its own lexicon and culture where the perception of the world is reflected. An important part of spiritual culture is the sphere of the cult. For some people in historical time cult was more appropriate than religion. Cult relations characterize any religion. The Samoyeds as other peoples of Northern Asia were touched by shamanism. Shamanism was an integral part of the world outlook and culture of Samoyedic peoples and Selkups as well. The question arises whether shamanism is religion or not. It is still being disputed. But in fact shamanism and cult relations have close ties. A lot of questions concerning Selkup shamanism are still mysterious for they are explained either from ethnographic or religious positions only. One must take into consideration that their elements are presented not only in ethnographic descriptions, but also in linguistic materials. Words and their semantics help to penetrate into the core of the cult sphere. The knowledge of Selkup word stock, its functions, using in folk-lore and cultural contexts, permit to build the following semantic cult paradigm: subjective = shamans and the like; objective = souls; locative = places of cult actions; instrumental 1 = shamans attributes (tambourines, peddals, dress etc.); instrumental 2 = sacrifices; adessive = supernatural creatchers (gods, spirits ect.). The starting point in this paradigm is the human being = the initiator and the recipient of cult action. In this paper the first case in this semantic paradigm - the subject of cult (some Selkup terms to signify shamans) is offered for consideration. There are 10 terms to signify Selkup shamans. They developed from different roots but they have common semantic core which one can describe in the following way: *a man or a woman different from other human beings through their*

*power to receive secret information and help from supernatural forces (spirits, idols, dreams ect.) and use their secret knowledge for doing something good or bad for people.*

## 2. LEXICAL FIELD OF SUBJECTS OF SELKUP CULT.

The concept of subjects of Selkup cult is realised in different lexical units which are found in various sources - dictionaries, texts, ethnographic descriptions. The retrospective look at them may serve as a key to the understanding of the world.

### 2.1 Shaman *tety*py.

According to the data of the last and this century the Selkup word *tety*py is predominantly found in the language of the Tas and Baikha Selkups, e.g. it is connected with the ethnos living in the North: (Tas) *tety*py; (Kellog) *tō*tety, *ty*tyby, *t̃*tytyȳ qup; (Bajicha) čuežebel qum; (Karasino) tutebe, tytebel-qum 'shaman' (Hajdú, 1963). Rare forms fixed in the southern dialectal area have phonetical differences in the beginning of the word: (Ket) twettəp; čwarpə; (Middle Ob) čvöcebe 'a shaman, a priest' (Joki, 1978; Helimski, 1983). In all these dialects the word-forms bear regular phonetic correspondences t~ č~ž- (Prokof'eva, 1981).

This term was possibly used to signify the highest rank in the hierarchy of Selkup shamans, because his influence extended on the upper, middle and underground world.

Morphological analysis singles out the stem *tety*- and *-py* which is a verbal/substantival suffix (Sebestyén, 1961). The approximate period of the formation of the word can be referred to the presamoyedic time because such a suffix is found in all Samoyedic languages: Nenets - b'e, -bei, -be, -b'e, -pea, -peä; Enets -be; Nganas. -p-; Kamas. -bu,, -bo; Selkup -py, -pyi, -be-, bel. The word *tety*py refers to the common presamoyedic layer of the lexicon because it is found in many Samoyed languages. Presamoyedic lexeme was reconstructed by J. Janhunen as \*cācāpā (?~\*cārāpa) 'wizard, shaman' (Janhunen, 1977). The Hungarian linguist P. Hajdú relates the stem *tety*- to restored original form \*tādā 'having rut, half crazy' (Hajdú, 1996). The common stem is not found in Preuralic and that fact testifies that it could have been the common samoyedic production or influence of some other ethnos during the Presamoyedic. In this connection it is interesting to give E.D. Prokof'eva's opinion about relation of the samoyedic lexemes to old-turkic *jadč* 'magician, charmer' taking into consideration the semantic and phonetic aspects. Apparently the term *tada*~*tade*~*təty*~*čueže*~*tute*~*d'ädž*~*jadč* is very ancient (Prokof'eva, 1981).

There are certain Selkup examples which demonstrate the greatest degree of generalization of the term, especially when it is met in one and the same context where other words signifying shamans are used: (Tas) *ukkyr tēty*py na *zumpyqolamny* - one shaman begins to shamanize; (Farkovo) *tona tytypo sombyrea coaty kumytyp tep coaty uciko quraltypyqyt* - that shaman is the shaman because he was conjuring and forcing people to work for him. As it is seen from the sentences the shaman *tety*py is performing actions which are conveyed by the stem *somby*-/zumpy-, , etymologically connected with the name of the other shaman - *sumpytyl'* qup (with its phonetical variants shown below).

Further semantic development of the term was greatly influenced by the Russian culture: after the christianization of Selkups the priests in some places (especially in the Narym region) were often called after the analogy of generalized name for a shaman, e.g. (Kostenkino) č<sup>w</sup>öcəpə, (the Middle Ob) čvöcebe, čwäcp (Helimski, 1983).

On the basis of the etymology of \*tada the semantic dynamics of the Selkup word *tetypy* may be presented as follows: being in rut > being in sexual ecstasy > being in excitement > performing cult actions (in excitement) and being distinguished from other people by this excitement (state).

In the Khanty language there can be found the parallel to such a development. In Khanty the terms *kojan* 'tambourine (of the shaman)' and *kojamlanta* 'to utter mating-calls' (to beat the tambourine) are fixed in the Khanty-Russian dictionary (Vas'ugan dialect) collected by Khanty M. Mogutayev (1996). These terms grew out of the natural phenomenon by metaphoric metonymy. This way of the development of the Khanty cult terms helps to imagine the development of the Selkup term. The correlation of the observed reality is the following: Khanty wood-grouse uttering mating-calls (the excitement of the birds) > shaman's actions; Samoyedic rein-deer's rut (the excitement of the animals) > shaman's actions.

## 2.2 *Shaman sumpytyl' qup.*

This is the name which Selkups give to shamans, who perform ritual actions in 'the clear nomadic tent' (e.g. under the light). Some variants of this lexeme are met in Selkup dialects: (Ket, Tschaja) *sombernaj*, 'zaubern, singen' (conjuring), *somberi-gum* 'Zauberer' (wizard); (Karasino, Tas, Bajicha) *sumban* 'zaubern, singen'; *sumbedel gum* 'Zauberer' (wizard); *sumpyqo*, *zumpy-*, *zūmpy-* 'conjure, sing', 'conjure with tambourine in a clear choom', 'beat the tambourine', 'whistle'; *zumpytyl' qup*, *zūmpytyl' qup* 'a conjuring man, a shaman'; *sumban* 'sing, conjure', *sumbedel qum* 'a shaman'; (Tym) *mat sumblak* 'I will tell fortunes', *mat kotonogo sūmbās* 'tell my fortune', *sūmbydel' gop*, *sumbodel' ġop* 'a conjuring man', *sumtal dǰūidǰūr* 'tell fortunes with the help of a shaman's stick', *sumbugu* 'conjure'; (Karelin) *sombərərəq!* 'conjure'; (Belyi Jar) *sóbbyrġu* 'conjure', *sobbyri qum* 'a shaman'; (Makovskoje) *sombargu* 'conjure', *sombri ġum* 'a shaman'; (Ust'-Ozeroje) *sombərġu* 'conjure', *sombərri qum* 'a shaman'; (Tschaja) *sombernaj* 'conjure'; (Ket) *sompy* 'sorcery', *sompaargu* 'charm, conjure', *soomprəsa* 'treat (medically)', *sompere-qum* 'a shaman'. We can single out of all these examples the lexeme *sompi*, which was fixed by K. Donner on the Ket' and was translated as 'magic, sorcery' (Joki, 1978). It is most probable that the following words are connected with this stem: (Tas) *zumpäptyqo* 'hum, croon, sing'; *zumptä* 'a song', cf. (Tas) *anDōqɛnDɛ tiłçilæ lōZɛ-ira karræ noqqolnɛ*, *ZumBæptɛlæ takkɛ tūqɛlBa* 'having placed himself in a dugout the devil -old-man pushed (his dugout away from the bank into the river) down the hill, singing and rowing down the river'; *lōZɛ-ira konDʂɛinDɛ jannæɬ* *ZumBæptɛmBɛlæ* 'the devil-old-man appeared (in front of s-b) singing'; *niɬ'ç'ik* *ZumBæptɛmBa* 'in this way (he) is singing'.

Thus in the Selkup language the words 'conjure' and 'sing' have one and the same stem. This fact permits to decipher their etymological connection. According to their semantic value all the examples of different dialects may be divided into two groups. The semantic dominant of the first one can be defined as 'musical sounds produced by the voice', 'pitch sound produced by the air passing through the pressed lips', cf. singing or whistling; the characteristic feature of the other group is defined by the actions of the minister of religious worship (the attendant of the cult) - 'conjure, tell fortunes, beat the tambourine under one's singing etc.'. Probably, the first sememe (the most concrete one) is defined and motivated by the inner form of the word. The lexemes 'sing' and 'conjure' become homonyms, because the verb 'sing' has developed a new meaning thanks to metaphoric metonymy. The sense group may be arranged in the following line: sing > sing songs of a special kind (of cult meaning) by a certain man (a shaman) > conjure (or practise witch-craft).

The first part of the word-combination - *sumpytyl' qup* has relationship to *sompi* 'magic, shaman's skill', *zumptä* 'a song' and *zumpiqo* 'sing'. Structurally the word consists of *sumpy* - 'shaman's skill' and - *-tyl'* which is the exponent of the present participle; the second component is *qup* 'a man' (Prokof'eva, 1949). Thus the name of this shaman can be interpreted as a 'shamanizing or singing man'.

Presamoyedic reconstruction was done on the basis of Enets, Nenets, Selkup and Kamasin languages - \*sämpæ 'conjure' (Hajdú, 1963). As to the semantics of this word in other Samoyedic languages it signifies the shaman of the lower rank in Enets, whose task is to perform the funeral ceremony and accompany the soul of the dead to the lower world (Prokof'eva 1949). The Nenets shaman performs the analogous function with the only difference from the Enets shaman that he always has a tambourine while performing (Hajdú, 1963). Thus, the essence of shaman ritual includes singing. This fact permits taking this meaning as the primary one whereas the meaning 'conjure or practise witch-craft' ought to be considered as the derivative one.

### 2.3 Shaman *qamytyryl' qup*.

*Qamytyryl' qup* - is a shaman who was conjuring without tambourine in a dark tent. The morphological analysis of the word-combination shows: the first part - *qamytyryl'* is a present participle of the verb *qamytyrqa* 'to shamanize in a dark tent (without a tambourine)'; the second part - *qup* is a substantive 'a man', e.g. the whole word combination means 'a conjuring man'. This meaning of the shaman was fixed in the Tas dialect: joBma...pit qamътырънь 'Jompa is conjuring at night (without a tambourine)' (Prokof'ev 1935); Njĭ'cyl' εppa wəɾqy qamytyryl' qup 'such a big shaman conjuring in a dark choom' (Kuznetsova, *et al.*, 1993). The names for shamans with the stem *qam-* /*kam-* in other samoyedic languages are absent. So logically this stem could have penetrated into the Selkup language from ethnoses which lived close to the Selkups.

The explanation of the Selkup word, which was proposed by Hajdu, is connected with Turkic *kam* 'a shaman' (Hajdú, 1963). Among Turkic people the name for a shaman-foreteller is widely spread: osm., uig., mtü. *kamči* 'a whip, lash'; čag., osm. *kamla*, leb. *kamna* 'to shamanize', 'to move in the space (about birds)'; jak. *χamnan* 'to move, to start moving' (Räsänen, 1969). The two last meanings are interesting for semantic reconstruction of the word *qamytyryl'*. 'Birds' moving' can signify its primary meaning. It is seen in the cultural paradigm that shows many 'birds' elements in the shaman's dress and behavior (Prokof'eva, 1949).

### 2.4 Shaman *kedyl' qup*.

*Kedyl' qup* - is a shaman who was predicting something. The first part of the word-combination is an adjectival form of the substantive *kety* 'wisdom, shaman's skill'. This term goes back to the verb with the meaning 'tell', which is represented in presamoyedic reconstruction in the form of \**kēty* (Janhunen, 1977). The analysis of the Selkup texts shows that the vital element of a shaman's (*kedyl' qup*) action is singing, crying and telling, therefore this term may be linked phonetically and semantically with the verb *ketyqo* 'tell, relate'. This meaning is well shown in the following context from the Tym-Vas'ugan areal: *Tabyn ad'ad'a kydyul kup εya, kydyca. Kydyul ara aĭ okkyr ara t'oŷak, kydyceŷak. Qaupind holap čačoqombaR, parčoŷymbaR: šok, šok! Holaq al'tija fak. Hsldi loŷalikat tōŷadyt. Ira našaŷyt lēryliŷa, kadyŷat miReni: üčēdelikan fang edžēla.* - Her futher was a shaman, he shamanized. The shaman and one more old man came-two of them, shamanized-two of them.



They threw a spoon on a kerchief, cried: *shok, shok!* The spoon fell in a good way. Seven devils came. Then the old man started singing and said: it will be good for the boy.

The semantic dynamics of the word can be presented in the following way: tell > foretell > charm > shamanize (conjure). We have some motives to consider it like this. The case is that in many cultures WORD was identified with something magic, bewitching. It is by not by chance that the English word *rune* 'a character cut in the stone' is related to Anglo-saxon *rūn* 'a rune, mystery, secret colloquy, whisper' and the English word *spell* 'to tell the names of the letters of a word' had more ancient meaning: 'relate, declare, tell, speak' and the noun has preserved the meaning close to sorcery - 'a form of magic words, incantation' (Skeat, 1933). Many people of the North and Siberia up till now have preserved the idea about the word not only as the bearer of their wishes, intention etc., but as of something material as well.

### 2.5 Shaman *qütäptypyl' qup*.

E.D.Prokof'eva gives one more rank of a shaman *qütäptypyl' qup* 'a dreaming man'. In this word combination the first word is a participle from the verb *qütäptygo* 'dream, be delirious' (Prokof'eva, 1981) This lexical unit in her opinion, defines "the nature of people of this profession" (Prokof'eva, 1953), cf. (Kostenkino) *küde'ptä-* 'see in a dream', *küde'ptembydimyn* 'dream' (Helinski, 1983); (Ket) *qüdyrbygu* 'see dreams', *qüdyre* 'the power of seeing', *aoj qüdyr'e* 'a bad dream'; (Tym-Vasjugan) *qüty/qödy* 'illness', *qödečegu* 'to shamanize'. The Tym-Vasjugan word meaning 'illness' reflects the meaning of Presamoyedic reconstruction - *\*käjtä* 'illness' (Janhunen, 1977).

Apparently the name of an element of a shaman's dress - *qütyn* 'an apron' ought to be referred to the same etymological row.

### 2.6 Shaman *kondykba*.

*Kondykba* - is a name given to people who could see and interpret prophetic dreams. This term was put down on the Ket' by the professor-ethnographer V. Kulemsin. The parent words are *qontogo/kondygu* 'sleep' and *qontyptä/kondyk* 'dream' (< *\*kontä* 'sleep'). So the meaning of this term is motivated by its inner form. The morphological analysis singles out the stem *kondy-*, the word-building suffix *-k* and the wordbuilding suffix *-ba*. The latter is likely to be seen in the lexeme *tetypy* and in such formations as *kubal* 'the dead, deceased', cf. Nganasan *kuobuo* 'the deceased', *gambuo* 'a sleep, a sleepyhead, sleepy' etc., in which the secondary wordbuilding suffix *-ba /-bo / -bu / -buo / -bye* is singled out (Sebestyén, 1961).

### 2.7 Shaman *sejdyrnan*.

A.F. Plotnikov mentioned another term to signify shamans -*sejdyrnan* 'a clairvoyant'. Such people possessed some features of a clairvoyant or magnetic power (Plotnikov, 1901). The analogous word was found in Grigorovski's writings: *sejdyrnan* 'a clairvoyant'. In E. Helinski's opinion, who was dealing with this materials, it is more likely to be not a substantive, but a verbal form of the 3-rd person present tense from *sejdyr-* 'be a clairvoyant', cf. (Tas) *seraŋ-* 'foresee, foretell', *serasä* 'with clairvoyance' (Helinski, 1983). Evidently these words are derivatives of the word *sej* (*\*səjwā*) 'an eye' and represent motivated formations in which the inner form of the word motivates the meaning of its derivatives. The similar term exists in the Nenets language that makes it possible to presuppose the existence

of shamans of that type in common Samoyedic epoch: *seβntana* 'a clairvoyant' (a man that sees dreams or visions), cf. materials from N. Terestchenko's dictionary (1965): *seβ* 'an eye', *seβāndāna* 1) a shaman, who sees prophetic dreams; 2) sorcer (quack).

## 2.8 Shaman *kwel'žynba/kwel'džbat qula*.

*Kwel'žynba/kwel'džbat qula* signifies a sorcerer-foreteller. This word may be related to *kwel'žynbyqu* 'tell' and *küeldšut* 'a heroic song' (Castrén 1860). G. Pelikh found among shamans of the Narym Selkups the name *kwel'džbat qula*. As eye-witnesses testify "these people were not considered real shamans, but sorcerers and true shamans even despised them". The characteristic feature of their sorcery was the usage of "bear elements", e.g. the bear mask and bear's paws (Pelikh, 1972). Probably the Selkup word is of Samoyedic origin and goes back to the Presamoyedic form \*wāṣ- 'tell' (Janhunen, 1977).

## 2.9 Shamans *košty qup*, *swa qup*.

*Košty qup* - was making harm to a man (*košty* - bad) his opposite was *swa qup* - making good to a man (*swa* - good). According to V. Kulemsin there were not powerful shamans but people like shamans. They had special idols which helped them to "spoil" or to "cure" people. The words *košty* and *swa* are of Presamoyedic origin, their Presamoyedic reconstructions are \*wāṣj 'bad', \*sāṣmā 'good' (Janhunen, 1977).

## 3. INTERPRETATION OF LINGUISTIC MATERIAL.

3.1 The investigation of Selkup lexicon revealed the following regularity: any cult notion presents a complex entity, which is composed of concrete elements reflected in language (Kim 1997). This situation concerns the sphere of cult subjects: there are 10 terms to signify shamans. The concrete cult action was connected with a certain person, who had a special name. But the word *tetypy* got more abstract meaning - 'shaman in general'. The inner form of the given terms helps to define their meaning. The inner form is also linked with the shaman function or with the technique of performing cult action. The diagram is shown bellow.

3.2 The above-mentioned Selkup terms, which were formed from different roots and which had their own meanings, in the course of their development under the pressure of cultural paradigm came to the expression of common semantic sign, e.g. became synonyms (where the basic sememe 'shaman' was opposed to the sememe 'mortal').

3.3 All the given terms on one hand refer to secular and on the other hand to sacramental nature. Etymological analysis of the names of Selkup shamans helps to single out the vital domains which influenced the appearance of these terms: the domain of feelings (*tetypy*<sexual excitement); the domain of parts and functions of man's organism (*qūty-* - <illness, *kondy-*<dream, *sej-*<eye); the domain of communication (*kety*<speak, *qweldž*<tell, *sumpy-*<sing). The latter allows us to perceive shamanism not as a closed system but as a dispersed one dealing with various spheres of life. Linguistic data are very important in deciphering this phenomenon, for language penetrates all spheres.

4. 4 The terms for shamans evidently appeared rather late, more likely after the disintegration of Uralic linguistic community and their cult meaning appeared as a second conceptualisation.

4.5 According to the structure one can divide all analysed Selkup terms into 4 groups: 1) terms with the wordbuilding suffix -pV/-bV (*tetypy*, *kondykba*, *kwel'žynba*); 2) word-

combinations: participle + qup (sumpytyl' qop, qamytyryl' qup, qütäptypyl' qup); 3) wordcombinations: adjective+qup (kedył' qup, swa qop, košty qup).

According to their origin one of these terms is a Turkic borrowing (qama-) and the other terms are of Samoyedic origin.

Cultural contexts showed interweaving functions, the usage of similar attributes and the technique of performing rituals by different shamans. Shamans *kondykba*, *sejdyrnan*, *qütäptypyl' qup* are connected by the ability to see and to interpret dreams and visions; shamans *sumpytyl' qop*, *kedył' qup*, *kwel'žynba* act by means of the word; shamans *kedył' qup*, *kwel'žynba* have close ties with bear cult, shamans *swa qop*, *košty qup* are oppsed to each other.

term	dialect	world	functions	attributes
tety< *tādā (excitement)	Tas Narym	upper middle under	prediction in extasy	spirits- helper
sumpytyl' qup (cf. sumpyqo 'sing')	Tas Narym	upper middle under	healing, prediction in singing	tambourine, paddle, dress, spirits
qamytyryl' qup (<tü. 'move')	Tas	under	telling fortunes with the help of spirits	paddle, spirits
kedył qup (cf. ketyqo 'tell')	Narym	under	healing, telling fortunes	paddle, idols, spirits
qütäptypyl' qup (cf. qüty 'illness')	Tas	middle	dreamteller with ill imagination	
sejdyrnan (cf. sej 'an eye')	Narym	middle	clairvoyant	
kondykba (cf. kondygu 'sleep')	Narym	middle	dream interpreter	
kwelžynba (cf. kwel'žut 'song')	Narym	middle	prediction	bear mask
košty qup	Narym	middle	doing harm	idols
swa qup	Narym	middle	doing good	idols

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