

Article

The Double Identities of the Shaman and the Dualistic Attitudes of the State: An Exploration of Contemporary Organizational Shamanism in Northeast China

Feng Qu ^{1,2} 

¹ Department of Cultural Heritage and Museology, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing 210097, China; fqu@alaska.edu

² Arctic Studies Center, Liaocheng University, Liaocheng 252000, China

Abstract: This paper presents a case study of the first shamanic organization in China and argues that organizational shamanism in Northeast China is characterized by the double identities of the shaman and the dualistic attitudes of the national authorities. The analyses in this paper reveal how the shamanic organization created a modernized and globalized space for traditional shamans and specialists to connect with the outside world, enabling them to gain empowerment, legitimacy, and agency. Chinese authorities hold dualistic attitudes towards shamanism: the positive attitude of seeing shamanism as part of cultural heritage has always been coupled with the negative attitude of seeing shamanism as superstition. The studies in this paper demonstrate that organizational shamanism in Northeast China has played a crucial role in negotiating with political authorities and linking local traditions with global discourse. In this sense, the traditional eco-cosmological way of maintaining relationships with natural forces and nonhuman beings has been irrevocably transformed into a cosmopolitical form for the shaman, where the animistic world engages with the outside world, global currency, and political forces.

Keywords: organizational shamanism; double identities; heritagization process; dualistic attitudes; superstitious



Citation: Qu, Feng. 2024. The Double Identities of the Shaman and the Dualistic Attitudes of the State: An Exploration of Contemporary Organizational Shamanism in Northeast China. *Religions* 15: 415. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15040415>

Academic Editors: Haiyan Xing and Gerald Murray

Received: 21 February 2024

Revised: 21 March 2024

Accepted: 26 March 2024

Published: 28 March 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

If Siberia can be called the “cradle of shamanism” (Price 2001, pp. 43–119) or “the homelands of shamanism” (Devlet 2001, p. 43), we can also refer to Northeast China as “the homeland of shamanism in China.” After a crippling decline when they were strictly forbidden during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and the 1970s, shamanistic practices have been greatly revitalized in the last four decades among Tungusic and Mongolian groups, as well as Han Chinese groups, in Northeast China (Qu 2021, 2023). When scholars have examined the “traditional” elements of Mongolian and Tungusic shamanism (Dumont 2021, 2023; Guo 2008, 2009; Heyne 1999, 2009; Hoppál 2005; Humphrey and Onon 1996; Kara et al. 2009; Noll and Shi 2009; Qu 2021; Sa 2023), the “new” or “neo” elements of contemporary shamanistic practices in Northeast China have been excluded from the research field. Comparing Russian and Chinese shamanism among transborder indigenous groups, Maxim Mikhalev argues that shamanism on the Russian side is characterized by organizational associations, while shamanism on the Chinese side is characterized by individual shamans who are not organized (Mikhalev 2023). However, he may not have noticed that what he calls “organizational shamanism” also emerged in Northeast China in the first decade of the new millennium.

In 2005, the Chinese Folk Literature and Art Association (CFLAA) granted the title “Chinese Shamanic Culture Transmission Base” (CSCTB) to a tourism company based in the *Saman Huanle Yuan* (meaning “Shamanic Joy Park”) resort on the eastern outskirts of Changchun City, Jilin Province. This was the first shamanic organization in China to be

approved by the state authorities. It soon attracted more than 3000 registered members, who were shamans, specialists, and spirit mediums from both Han Chinese and minority communities (Manchu, Mongolian, Daur, Evenki, and other ethnic groups). Most of them came from northern China, particularly the northeast. They gathered at the resort to perform shamanic trances and rituals for tourists and enjoyed the meeting time, where they could exchange traditional knowledge about healing, ancestor worship, ceremonies, and the world of spirits. This is undoubtedly a “new” phenomenon in the history of Chinese shamanism. But why is it “new”, and how is it “new”? Can we see it as a Chinese variant of globalized Western neoshamanism? Is there any actual interaction between the CSCTB and Western shamanic organizations such as Michael Harner’s Foundation for Shamanic Studies (FSS)? And are there any essential differences between this new form of shamanic practice in communist China and neoshamanism in the capitalist West?

I started to think about these questions in 2021, the year when the CSCTB was closed by the CFLAA and its sixteen-year history finally ended. Unfortunately, I have no experience of observing the shamanic and spiritual activities in the Shamanic Joy Park and other places during the sixteen years of organization by the CSCTB and its chairman, Mr. C.W. My data for this paper research are collected from multiple interviews with Mr. C.W. and other informants from 2021 to 2023. It is worth noting that I took the opportunity to attend a week-long shamanic workshop organized by the CSCTB in September 2021. To be more precise, it was actually organized by Mr. C.W. and his business company, as the CSCTB was forced to close just before this event.

2. A Brief History of the Chinese Shamanic Culture Transmission Base

Mr. C.W., born in 1952, started his supermarket business in Changchun in the 1990s and was very successful. In 2002, Mr. C.W. shifted his supermarket business to the tourism industry. He founded the Jilin Provincial *Saman* Tourism Development Company, Ltd. (JPSTDC) and created the Shamanic Joy Park on 120 acres of land in the eastern suburbs of Changchun, which he leased from the local government. According to my interviews with Mr. C.W., inspired by the deep roots of shamanic cultures in the northeastern lands, he tried to pursue the commercialization of shamanic traditions and aimed to combine shamanic elements with the tourism industry in order to create a culture of regional north-east tourism.

His shamanistic career and tourist park have been greatly supported by Yuguang Fu 富育光 (1933–2020), an internationally recognized scholar of shamanism studies, and Baoming Cao 曹保明, the chairman of the Jilin Provincial Folk Literature and Art Association (JPFLAA), who is keen to protect the local shamanic heritage. In August 2004, the Seventh Conference of the International Society for Shamanistic Research (ISSR) was held in Changchun, hosted by Changchun Municipal Government and the CFLAA. Highly recommended by Fu and Cao, the Shamanic Joy Park was chosen as the venue to perform shamanic rituals for the conference participants. A number of indigenous shamans were invited, including Manchu and Daur specialists. Among them was the world-renowned Daur master shaman Siqinguan.¹

The shamanic performances organized by C.W. in his tourist park were greatly appreciated by Hoppál, the president of the ISSR, and Gengsheng Bai 白庚胜, the vice president of the ISSR and vice chairman of the CFLAA. Encouraged by Bai and supported by Fu and Cao, the JPSTDC submitted its application to establish a shamanic organization after the conference. In August 2005, the CSCTB was approved by the CFLAA (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The opening ceremony of the Chinese Shamanic Culture Transmission Base at the Shamanic Joy Park. The person on the left is Gengsheng Bai, Vice Chairman of the Chinese Folk Literature and Art Association. Photo credit: Weiguang Cheng.

The organization CSCTB helped C.W. reach the peak of his tourism business with the Shamanic Joy Park and beyond. In 2014, the Shamanic Joy Park's land was taken back by the city government for a new government land plan. So, C.W. moved the CSCTB base to Jingyue Mountain Villa, a resort not far from the Shamanic Joy Park. The new base was renamed *Saman Huanle Gu* (meaning "Shamanic Joy Valley") and operated for three years before C.W. moved his CSCTB base to the Changbai Mountain area in 2016. During the Changchun period from 2004 to 2016, numerous shamanic and ethnic activities and events were organized. Manchu wild and domestic rituals were performed by shamans from the Shi clan and Guan clan.² A Hezhe family was invited to perform traditional fish skin manufacturing, fish skin painting, and spiritual drumming. Their handmade fish skin artefacts became a popular tourist purchase (Figure 2). The base also hosted shamanic dances, conducted shamanic costume shows, and held shamanic festivals. Both the Joy Park and the subsequent Joy Valley became hot tourist destinations. The restaurant in the park almost never had an empty table during the summer. Selling food and gifts and offering accommodation generated substantial income for the base.

The move to Changbai Mountain played an important role in C.W.'s ambitious shamanic tourism project. According to his knowledge, or rather his imagination, Changbai Mountain can be regarded as one of the cradlelands of world shamanism because Manchu shamanism is one of the oldest magico-religious traditions in the world and Changbai Mountain is revered by the Manchus as the cradle of their ancestral culture. From this perspective, he dreamed of building a world-famous shamanic base in the Changbai Mountain area and making it an international spiritual center for shamans, scholars, and tourists from all over the world.



Figure 2. A Hezhe woman introducing her fish skin products to a journalist at the Shamanic Joy Park. Photo credit: Weiguang Cheng.

In 2013, C.W. began building “Changbai Mountain Nayin Tribe Shamanic Culture Tourist Resort” on leased land in Heihe Forest Farm at the foot of Changbai Mountain, 200 km away from Changchun. Heihe Forest Farm belongs to the State Forestry Administration, not the local government. The land lies in the quiet and peaceful taiga forest next to a clear stream called Manjiang River. Following Manchu mythology, C.W. erected 12 huge wooden totem poles carved with images of spiritual animals. An altar was also built for people to worship Changbai Mountain. There were three statues on the altar, and the central one was the famous “Changbai Mountain Goddess.” In 2016, C.W. moved his JPSTDC and CSCTB bases to the new resort in the Changbai Mountain area. However, he never expected that the new location of the base would be the Waterloo of his tourist shamanism career.

When all the construction work was finished in 2017, something unexpected happened. Another businessman turned up at the CSCTB base with a lease in his name for the same land. That means that the forest farm had been contracted twice with different contractors. The person’s contract had been signed a year earlier, so C.W.’s contract had no legal effect on the land. It is hard to say whether this was a careless mistake made by the Forest Farm or whether C.W. was the victim of an elaborate scam. Surprisingly, the second leaseholder had no intention of evicting C.W. from the land but asked to co-own the tourism business with C.W. C.W. calmly rejected his proposal and resolutely left the invested land. In January 2023, I visited the resort at Heihe Forest Farm and found that all the animal poles and the goddess altar were still standing, and even the goddess was still receiving offerings and incense-burning from local residents.

However, this incident did not dampen C.W.’s enthusiasm for his Changbai Mountain dream. In August 2017, he again moved the CSCTB base to a nearby tourist resort—Neyin Ancient City, which belongs to the Changbaishan Administration Committee.³ C.W. and his base were allocated a building called *Qifu Tang* (meaning “Hall of Bless-Asking”) free of charge by the Changbai Mountain Administration. In 2017 and 2018, the CSCTB held the “Master Shaman Ceremony” twice. About 1000 shamans gathered in the Hall of Bless-

Asking to perform rituals to worship the sky, mountains, rivers, trees, and other spiritual beings (Figure 3). Although these activities attracted a relatively large number of tourists to the area, the CSCTB had a limited role in Neyin Ancient City, and C.W. received almost no profit from the resort. In addition, the resort was dominated by Taoist powers, who had a temple in the center of the city and constantly tried to occupy the Hall of Bless-Asking for Taoist use. C.W. was forced to look for other locations for the CSCTB base in the Changbai Mountain area.



Figure 3. Master shaman ceremony held at Neyin Ancient City in 2017. Photo credit: Weiguang Cheng.

In 2020, C.W. moved into a large house in Songhezheng, Fusong County, which is administratively part of Baishan City. In May 2021, C.W. rented it as the new home for the CSCTB base and began renovating the courtyard and interior rooms. The name registered with the local government for the new base was “Home of Shamans” (Figure 4).

The sign CSCTB was hung on the wall of the meeting room at the Home of Shamans. Unexpectedly, the word “Chinese” in the title CSCTB raised concerns among the local township government. Songjianghe Township immediately reported this to the higher government and eventually to the Party Central Committee, appealing for the CSCTB to be withdrawn because it was not appropriate for a town in a national remote area to have an organization representing “China”. On 30 June 2021, the CFLAA accepted the appeal and issued a document entitled “A Decision to Withdraw the Chinese Shamanic Culture Transmission Base”, which was published online. In November 2021, the “Home of Shamans”’s business license was also revoked by the local government.



Figure 4. The front gate of the Home of Shamans. The top tablet denotes Chinese words “Home of Shamans”. The red banner writes “Welcome the Inner Mongolian Master Shaman Alatancang’ team gets home. Pray for the people in the disaster area”, implying that the “Home of Shamans” has been engaged in charity. Photo credit: Weiguang Cheng.

3. Organizational Shamanism and Shamanic Tourism: Linking the Local with the Global

According to Wallis (2003, p. 1), neoshamanism (also called New Age shamanism or modern shamanism) can be defined as “a wide variety of ‘spiritual’ practices for personal and communal empowerment among Western peoples”. Similarly, Jakobsen sees neoshamanism as “a form of shamanism that has been created at the end of the 20th century to reestablish a link for modern man to his spiritual roots, to reinforce shamanic behavior into lives of westerners in search of spirituality” (Jakobsen 1999, p. XI). Neoshamanism emerged in the 1980s in North America and Europe and has become intertwined with individual movements such as New Age and Neo-Paganism (Townsend 2005). Most practitioners are “modern, urban middle-class Westerners” from diverse societies (Hammer 2015, p. 24). Scholars generally agree that the emergence of neoshamanism was catalyzed by three shamanism theorists: Mircea Eliade, Carlos Castaneda, and Michael Harner (Boekhoven 2011; Fotiou 2016; Hammer 2015; Hendrickson 2015; Jakobsen 1999; Luhrmann 2012; Noel 1997; Townsend 2005; von Stuckrad 2002; Wallis 2003; Znamenski 2007). These “shamanthropologists” and “shamanovelists” (Noel 1997, p. 10) have approached a universalized, individualized, romanticized, and psychologized model that reduces indigenous spiritual practices to a set of “ecstatic” techniques (Qu 2023, p. 21; Wallis 2003, pp. 49–51). While Eliade is seen as the “forefather” of neoshamanism, as Noel (1997, p. 23) suggests, because his theory provides primary sources for neoshamans, Harner is usually seen as the “creator” and “prime mover” of core shamanism because he has created a method that “distills the core elements” of traditional shamanism cross-culturally (Townsend 2004, p. 51). Thus, Harner’s neoshamanism is also called core shamanism (Harner 1980).

Despite its deep commitment to individualism and its focus on self-healing and self-transformation, neoshamanism is, in Hammer's view (Hammer 2015, p. 16), "a fully organized cult movement" which is characterized by social associations and organizations. In 1983, Harner founded the Center for Shamanic Studies in New York, and in 1987, transformed it into a non-profit educational FSS in Mill Valley, California. On the one hand, the FFS rapidly spread shamanic courses and workshops from North America to Latin America, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, and Europe; on the other hand, it also aimed to rescue shamanic traditions by sending training teams to various indigenous groups, including the Inuit in the American Arctic, the Saami in Scandinavia, and other societies in Siberia (Harner 2005; Townsend 2004). Following the FFS, local shamanic organizations emerged in northern Europe and Siberia, including the Swedish Association for Nordic Shamanism in Sweden (Townsend 2004, p. 54), the Shamanistic Association in Norway (Fonneland 2015), and the Association of the Shamans of Buryatia (Zhukovskaya and Humphrey 2000). These shamanic organizations inevitably succeed in "linking their local knowledge and their own narrative advantageously to global developments" and in "converting local knowledge into global currency" (Vitebsky 1995, p. 192).

It seems undeniable that C.W.'s organization, the CSCTB, played a part in the trend in global shamanic associations. But we have to note that there is a striking difference between the two phenomena in China and in the West. In the West, the members of associations are "new shamans" from Western cultures who pay for shamanic training to learn spiritual techniques distilled from traditional societies for self-spirituality. In China, CSCTB members are existing shamans and specialists from local minority and Han communities. They are not "new"; they are performing their own traditions for outside tourists rather than learning from others.

More importantly, both Chinese tourist shamanism and Western neoshamanism are essentially "a fad of supermarket society" (Townsend 2005, p. 7) in a modernized and globalized world. Both commercialize indigenous knowledge for use by outsiders and treat shamanism as a valuable commodity to generate income, making new forms of market-oriented shamanism (Hammer 2015; Fotiou 2016; Vitebsky 1995). This spiritual commodity becomes a subjective actor, with consumers of shamanic knowledge and sellers of indigenous knowledge. Together, they actively reshape the relationship between local traditions and global market flows. As Vitebsky (1995, p. 198) puts it,

At the global level of decision making, it is the impetus towards action which drags indigenous knowledge into being a commodity rather than a way of doing and ensure that it could never take root in a new context. Action also pulls it towards current concerns which may not be local. This is clearest when we see indigenous peoples themselves bringing their 'indigenous knowledge' to what is now called the 'marketplace'.

One of CSCTB's marketing strategies was to organize events. In August 2003, two years before the CSCTB was founded, C.W. and his JPSTDC successfully organized a "Shamanic Art Week" at the Shamanic Joy Park. During the event, local shamans and their assistants from the Manchu Shi, Guan, and Zhang clans were invited to perform clan rituals. A *paohuochi* ritual (跑火池, running barefoot over burning coals) performed by the Shi clan shaman and other clan members evoked great fascination in tourists and brought fame to the park⁴ (Figures 5 and 6). These Manchu rituals were also performed at the Seventh ISSR Conference in August 2004. The successful work of these organizing events helped C.W. and his Shamanic Joy Park to obtain the organizational status of the "CSCTB". C.W. undoubtedly drew much inspiration from local Manchu resources. When he decided to develop shamanic tourism at the Shamanic Joy Park, he also invited scholars of Manchu cultures as academic advisors, including Yuguang Fu, a pioneer of shamanic research in China and a world-renowned expert on shamanism. In collaboration with the Jilin Provincial Folklore Association, the CSCTB held a Manchu "banjin inenggi" (Man, the anniversary of the creation of the Manchu name) ceremony in September 2007. It is worth noting that the indigenous actors in these events were actually collaborators with the CSCTB base

and were paid by the organizer. The consumers of local traditions are tourists rather than organization members in the Western context.



Figure 5. A clan ritual is performed by the Manchu Shi clan members at the Shamanic Joy Park. The drummer at the center is the master shaman Zongxiang Shi 石宗祥 (1939–2011). Photo credit: Weiguang Cheng.



Figure 6. The shaman Zongxiang Shi performing a *paohuochi* ritual at the Shamanic Joy Park. Photo credit: Weiguang Cheng.

In 2014, C.W. launched an annual “Master Shaman Ceremony”. From 2014 to 2020, the CSCTB held this ceremony six times in the Shamanic Joy Valley, Heihe Forest Farm, Neyin Ancient City, and other tourist spots, where a large number of CSCTB members (counting from 800 to 1000 people) gathered from all over the country. Shamans and specialists conducted rituals to worship the sky, the mountain, the river, and other natural phenomena and performed séances, drummed, and danced. The CSCTB also issued certificates from the shaman to its members. At such events, the spiritual specialists themselves are consumers of the tourist resort. But they are not consumers of traditional knowledge. Rather, they are owners of the local shamanic traditions.

The shaman certificate issued by the CSCTB is reminiscent of that used in FSS workshops in the West. One might ask whether the CSCTB in China had any real interaction with the FSS in the USA. According to my interviews with C.W., the answer is yes. In 2006, Susan Grimaldi, an internationally renowned Native American shaman and field associate for the FSS, coordinated by Kun Shi, a Chinese American scholar, visited the Center for Shamanic Culture at Changchun University and the Research Institute for Shamanic Culture at Changchun Normal University.⁵ While in Changchun, Mr. C.W. had the opportunity to meet Grimaldi and listen to her lectures on shamanic healing at both centers. After Grimaldi returned to the USA, she helped C.W. to register as a member of the FSS. Since then, C.W. has regularly received the FSS’s newsletter and other documents, from which he has learned a great deal. According to C.W.’s narratives, the establishment of the “Home of Shamans” in 2021 was aimed at using the workshop mode of the FSS to develop a series of training courses on shamanic healing. He successfully held the first term of the course in September 2021. However, the second term, scheduled to open in October, could not be held because all the recruited members were locked down in their homes due to COVID-19.

4. Double Identities of the Shaman: Shifting between Context and Decontextualization

Similar to this shamanic association in China, the association of shamans in Siberia also has traditional shamans as members. Zhukovskaya and Humphrey, in their article on Buryat neoshamanism, have posed an important question: “Why does shamanism need an Association?” As they write,

If we look at the history of shamanism it is clear that the shaman as a specialist was always deeply individual; furthermore, he or she shamanised on his native land, where his own ancestor spirits and those of his kin lived, and where their cult sites were located. (Zhukovskaya and Humphrey 2000, p. 27)

As Zhukovskaya and Humphrey argue, the main reason for Siberian shamans to join the association is the legalization of their religious practices (Zhukovskaya and Humphrey 2000, p. 27). In China, however, the question of the legitimacy of shamanic practices is more crucial. Although religious practices have been tolerated by the state in China since the 1980s with the advent of economic reform and openness, it is clear that shamans in China still appear to be “socially marginal beings” in society (Kister 1999, p. 88).

In 1997, the People’s Khural of the Republic of Buryatia enacted “On Religious Activity in the Territory of Buryatia”, which recognizes shamanism as one of the four traditional beliefs of Buryatia (Zhukovskaya and Humphrey 2000, p. 27). This means that shamans in Russia have a legal status with state support. However, the situation in China is very different. Naran Bilik has found that the Chinese government actually has a dualistic and contradictory attitude towards shamanism. On the one hand, the Chinese authorities may treat shamanism as a dangerous and banal religion; on the other hand, they may alternatively neutralize it as a cultural practice (Bilik 2021, pp. 222–23). Therefore, a government-approved organization and a certificate are likely to be useful for shamans: it is assumed that they can protect their practices by avoiding them being called “superstitious”.⁶ A Qu specialist from a remote area in Anshan, Liaoning, told me that she is a member of the CSCTB and has also obtained a shaman certificate. I asked why she needed a certificate

and membership of the organization. She replied: “My practices include the exorcism ritual, spiritual healing, divination and so on. All these activities used to be considered superstitious. Even now, sometimes people still consider them superstitious. With the certificate and membership of the organization, I feel that our practices will be no longer be called superstitious”.⁷

In 2004, China signed the UNESCO Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). Since then, a dramatic “heritage boom” in the heritage tourism industry has emerged in contemporary China (Fraser 2019; Svensson and Maags 2018). A state-led heritagization process of local traditions has thus been popularized (see Zheng 2023, p. 16). In this sense, ethnic and rural rituals and cultural practices, once considered backward and superstitious in the 1950s and 1960s, are now recognized as ICH and valuable cultural resources (see Milan 2023, p. 4). In this state-wide heritage-making process, the heritagization of shamanic practices plays an important part in Northeast China. For example, some colossal shaman statues have been built in some tourist attractions, such as Daur Ethnic Park, Sifang Mountain, and Sajimansheng Hill in the Hulun Buir region, Inner Mongolia, in order to present ethnic exotics to urban tourists. Some modernized and simplified shamanic rituals are performed at these tourist sites.⁸

The C.W.’s CSCTB was obviously part of this shamanic heritage trend in Northeast China. At the Shamanic Joy Park in Changchun, C.W., advised by Fu Yuguang, built a shamanic altar, spiritual animals on the altar, and an eagle-headed goddess statue (Figure 7). Later, a large penis pole symbolizing fertility was erected at the top of the park. At the Changbai Mountain Nayin Tribe Shamanic Culture Tourist Resort, twelve wooden totem poles were erected, and an altar with a statue of the Changbai Mountain Goddess was also built (Figures 8 and 9). The construction of these symbols shows how traditions have been reinvented and how a cultural past has been imagined through heritagization within a touristic framework, which has also created a process of legitimization of shamanism.



Figure 7. The eagle-headed goddess statue in the courtyard of the Home of Shamans. It was originally placed in the Shamanic Joy Park. Photograph taken by Feng Qu in September 2021.



Figure 8. Totem poles at the Changbai Mountain Nayin Tribe Shamanic Culture Tourist Resort. Photograph taken by Feng Qu in February 2023.



Figure 9. The altar at the Changbai Mountain Nayin Tribe Shamanic Culture Tourist Resort. The tablet below the left statue denotes “Fertility Goddess Fotuo Mama”, the central tablet denotes “Changbai Mountain Goddess Fokulun”, and the tablet below the right statue denotes “Dream Goddess Abukahehe”. Photograph taken by Feng Qu in February 2023.

It is worth noting that at the CSCTB base, different local contexts were inevitably appropriated and represented in the new space, in what appears to be a style of what Lindquist calls “creolization”, in which “cultural flows moving from different directions feed into each other” (Lindquist 1997, p. 217). Celebrations at the CSCTB base included not only Manchu rituals such as “running over burning coals” and the Hezhe fish skinning performance but also Mongolian and Daur ritual dances and other local seances such as Han rituals. During the “Master Shaman Ceremony,” over a thousand shamans and specialists from different areas of China gathered to celebrate their own festivals. According to C.W.’s accounts, when shamans and specialists were gathered, they often competed to show off their trance techniques. In my view, it is likely that anthropological trance theory has had a major impact on how magico-religious practitioners understand their own practices.

In September 2021, I observed a week-long shamanic workshop organized by Mr. C.W. at the “Home of Shamans” at the foot of Changbai Mountain. There were about 20 participants from different areas, including three Kazakh shamans from Northwest China. Most of them were basic-level spiritual practitioners. During the day, the participants were taught healing, divination, and vision request skills from a variety of sources, including Han Chinese Buddhists and Taoists. In the evenings, they were organized to hold séances and share their knowledge of nonhuman others. Inspired by the drumming of a master shaman, who was one of the teachers in the training class, a young female Han practitioner from Heilongjiang Province was possessed by spirits for the first time. Although she had previously communicated with nonhuman spirits through visions and auditory illusions, she had never experienced body possession. It is obvious that the trance technique played a central role in C.W.’s shamanic workshop. However, three Kazakh shamans only performed exorcism and blessing rituals by praying, singing, and dancing rather than ecstatic performance, suggesting that they might have had their own understanding of shamanic practices. Nevertheless, the convergence of spiritual knowledge from different directions at the CSCTB base seems to suggest that the concept of a shaman presented here, in Bužeková’s words, “referred to so many individual notions and practices that it could be virtually anything involving spirituality” (Bužeková 2010, p. 122). The focus on individual psychological experiences and the syncretism of different spiritual sources at the CSCTB base manifest a model of decontextualization and universalization proposed by “shamanthropologists” such as Mircea Eliade, Carlos Castaneda, and Michael Harner (see Boekhoven 2011; Noel 1997; Wallis 2003). It is important to note that a shaman who is a member of the CSCTB is not really a “neo” shaman as they would be in a Western association. After an experience in the decontextualized circumstances of the CSCTB base, the shaman would return to his/her traditional context and regain his/her traditional shamanic status. That is, a shaman as a member of the CSCTB shifted in status between decontextualization and context.

However, not every shaman was able to have a successful experience in decontextualized circumstances. For example, the Daur master shaman Siqingua was invited to attend the Seventh Conference of the ISSR in August 2004. When she performed a séance for the conference participants at the Shamanic Joy Park, her ancestral spirits refused to descend because it was not a service to her community. Sadly, the ritual failed. Since then, she has never again performed spirit possession in a decontextualized setting.

According to Maréchal (2023), the heritage process in the tourist circuit is also a legitimization process for traditional shamans in Northeast China. I certainly agree with this conclusion, but there is more to be said here. When shamans and specialists from different contexts came together at the CSCTB base, they formed what Lindquist has called a “communitas-based fussy community” (Lindquist 1997, p. 180), in which a “shared temporality” and “a shared cultural clock” were constructed (Lindquist 1997, p. 183). As a special kind of community, the CSCTB base provided its members with a liminoid space or a “*ludic* space” where humor, play, and entertainment were introduced into the domain of the sacred (Lindquist 1997, p. 180). It seems to me that, on the one hand, shamans sought empowerment in the new liminoid space in order to strengthen their social status; on the

other hand, they sought immersive experiences by connecting with the outside world in a modernized and globalized environment in order to resist social marginalization. In this way, the traditional eco-cosmological mode for the shamans could be transformed into what Ivan Tacey has termed a “cosmopolitical” realm, in which local cultures and shamanic practices are increasingly connected to national and globalized forces (Tacey 2021).

A shaman who was a CSCTB member in China thus acquired a double identity. While acting as an active actor on the organizational stage to gain legitimacy and agency, he/she also needed to maintain his/her traditional status to serve his/her rural community. Here, inspired by Bingzhong Gao’s concept of “double identities” (Gao 2014), I argue that the double identities of the shaman could help them to cope with rapid social change and enabled the shaman to move freely within social structures. These double identities are mutually supportive, and they usually do not replace each other but complete each other. Thus, these double identities of the shaman are actually expected “to overcome the tensions between history and the contemporary, tradition and modernity, and the small-circle and big-society forms of belonging” (Gao 2014, p. 570).

5. Dualistic Attitudes: Superstition or Heritage?

During the heritagization process in Northeast China, many shamanic items have been listed as ICH practices and ICH transmitters at the national, provincial, municipal, or county levels. The listed shamanic ICH items can basically be divided into three categories. The first category is musical art, including the Mongolian *Boo* dance (Inner Mongolia), Ning’an Manchu sacrificial music (Heilongjiang Province), and Wula Manchu shamanic music (Jilin Province). The second category is material culture, including Evenki shamanic costumes and implements (Inner Mongolia) and shamanic bone idol-making skills (Jilin Province). The third category is sacrificial customs, including the Daur Shamanic *Oboo* Sacrifice (Inner Mongolia), the Yang clan’s shamanic eagle sacrifice (Heilongjiang Province), and the Shi clan’s ancestor worship rite (Jilin Province) (see Qu 2020). It is clear that all the shamanic ICH items listed are emphasized as cultural elements rather than religious and spiritual elements. This seems to demonstrate what Bilik has termed the “dualistic attitudes” of the Chinese government. As he puts, “The dualistic treatment of shamanism as much as Islam and other religions by the Chinese government can either regarded as dangerous religion or neutralize it as a cultural practice. Such ambiguous treatment of shamanism betrays both complexity and vulnerability of spiritual life in China” (Bilik 2021, p. 223).

Accordingly, in Bilik’s analysis, “the Chinese authorities do not openly authorize the establishment of any shamanic society even for academic purposes” (Bilik 2021, p. 223). Therefore, on the one hand, the CSCTB as a state-approved organization was obviously a beneficiary of the cultural heritage policy. On the other hand, the CSCTB faced great challenges and political pressure in no religious elements being recognized. In September 2003, C.W. and his tourism company held a “Shamanic Culture and Art Week”, during which the local Manchu shamans and other clan members were invited to perform traditional rituals, including “running over burning coals” and board-spirit inviting. After the event was covered by the local media, including television and newspapers, it caused nervousness in the local party committee. A deputy secretary general of the committee, Mr. Tian, recognized the superstitious nature of the event and decided to use political force to close down the Shamanic Joy Park. As C.W. narrates, “Sixteen police cars descended on my park and destroyed all the shamanic artefacts in the exhibition, including the shaman’s instruments, costumes, and ritual books. Many items were confiscated, including my camera.” However, two officials from the city government expressed their support for C.W. and reported this to Gengsheng Bai, the vice chairman of the CFLAA. In 2004, Bai visited Changchun twice and decided to use the Shamanic Joy Park as a venue where shamanic rituals would be performed for the Seventh Conference of the ISSR. At the same time, he encouraged C.W. to apply for the establishment of a shamanic organization. Shortly after the ISSR conference, however, something dramatic happened: Mr. Tian was arrested for

bribery. After that, the Shamanic Joy Park was unhindered. C.W.'s story shows that the dualistic attitudes towards shamanism are actually represented by two different political forces within the government body.

Svensson and Maags argue that while the Chinese government has produced Chinese "Authorized Heritage Discourse" (AHD), which has been used as a resource for political legitimacy, soft power, and economic development in a top-down way, a range of actors, including experts, scholars, organizations, and ICH transmitters, have also been involved in heritage-making in a bottom-up way in terms of the legitimation process of local history and traditions (Svensson and Maags 2018). The bottom-up form here recalls the concept of "repurposing" proposed by Susan McCarthy (2013), who argues that religious organizations can expand the spaces and forms of their practices beyond the limits imposed by the state by repurposing state discourse. The case of the CSCTB reflects how Chinese AHD was repurposed through organizational shamanism to produce local heritage discourse.

According to McCarthy (2013, pp. 53–54), repurposing usually takes four forms: special repurposing, in which sites and spaces are imbued with religious and spiritual meanings; behavioral repurposing, in which profane activities are transformed into religious practice; organizational repurposing, in which a state-sanctioned organization functions as a faith community and site of religious practice; and discursive repurposing, in which state discourse is appropriated and reinterpreted "in ways that render these coherent with religious ideas and values" (McCarthy 2013, p. 54). From the above narratives, we have seen how the tourist site used as a base for the CSCTB was constructed with religious and mythical symbolism imbued with cosmological notations, how it became the site for articulating spiritual practices with the tourist market, how spiritual and sacred meanings were evoked through shamanic performances, and how the state-sponsored discourse was reinterpreted through organizational and tourist shamanism.

In 2016, when the CSCTB base was relocated to Heihe Forest Farm at the foot of Changbai Mountain, a package of ICH items, including six shamanic practices and eighteen transmitters, submitted by C.W.'s tourism company (Nayin Tribe Tourism Administration Company, Ltd.) was approved by the Changbaishan Administration Committee. The six listed ICH practices were the Legend of the Goddess in White Cloth; Changbai Mountain Eagle Dance; Shamanic Paper Cutting; Mongolian Changbai Mountain Sacrifice; Changbai Mountain Fire Sacrifice; and Changbai Mountain Sacred Tree Sacrifice. Eighteen shamans and specialists, including both Mongolians and Han Chinese, were listed as ICH transmitters of these spiritual practices. Although these listed transmitters came from different areas, the CSCTB base provided a space for them to link local knowledge with the state AHD in order to construct alternative narratives to gain social power and agency.

The success of ICH's application seemed to be the first step towards C.W.'s dream of establishing Changbai Mountain as one of the centers of world shamanism. Undoubtedly, the realization of this dream required strong support from and close cooperation with the local government. However, when the CSCTB base was moved to Songjianghe Township, belonging to Fusong County, there was no longer support for the base from the local government. As a result of the township's report against the CSCTB, the CFLAA published its decision to withdraw the CSCTB online on 30 June 2021.⁹ It said:

Our association's document (2005) No. 34 designates "Shamanic Joy Park" in Changchun, Jilin as "Chinese Shamanic Culture Transmission Base". The applicant is the Jilin Provincial *Saman* Tourism Development Company, Ltd. Our review shows that the Changchun Shamanic Joy Park has ceased to operate and no longer has realistic conditions and practical basis for the transmission and preservation of shamanic cultures. Our association decides to withdraw the "Chinese Shamanic Culture Transmission Base" as of today.

There is no doubt that the CFLAA's announcement was euphemistic. However, a meeting held by the Jilin Provincial Bureau of Religious Affairs ten days later, on 11 July 2021, directly conveyed the government's latest stance on the CSCTB and C.W.'s shamanic

tourism. The news from Jilin Province's Ethnic and Religious Research Centre, published on WeChat, stated,

Fifteen scholars and government officials attended the meeting and they all agreed that shamanic culture is a world historical and cultural heritage. Jilin Province, with its rich living remnants of shamanic culture, is the home of the "living fossil" of shamanic cultural remains recognized by the academic community. Rescuing, protecting, excavating, compiling and researching shamanic culture is of great value in enriching the history of the ethnic groups in Northeast China, the history of the frontier region, folklore, literature, art, the Manchu language, and other fields. However, under the guise of rescuing and protecting shamanic culture, some (organizations) are engaged in illegal activities such as setting up the training base and issuing certificates for the purpose of making profit.

It is clear that the judgement of these experts in the news actually represented the attitude of the government, which now recognized the illegality of conducting shamanic training and issuing certificates.

It is important to note that heritage as a new cultural policy in China ultimately serves multiple purposes. First, heritage discourse has been used to display China's cultural "soft power," to build a "harmonious society," and to promote cultural diversity (Maréchal 2023, p. 14; Milan 2023, p. 6). Second, in the context of heritage tourism, heritage-making is seen as a means for economic growth and regional development (Maréchal 2023, p. 14; Milan 2023, p. 4; Svensson and Maags 2018, p. 17). Third, heritage management and ICH listing can also be used as a tool of governance to control and manage cultural traditions and religious practices and "to steer people's memories, sense of place, and identities in certain ways" (Svensson and Maags 2018, p. 20). The CSCTB attracted registered members from both the Han Chinese majority and ethnic minorities, demonstrating China's cultural diversity. Moreover, this organizational shamanism did indeed promote local development of the tourism industry. However, its repurposing of the state's heritage discourse, its dream of building a world shamanism center, and its market strategies probably created great tensions between the state's heritage policy as a new form of governance and organizational shamanism as a new form of spiritual practice. As McCarthy points out, "Although religion in China has experienced remarkable revival and growth in recent decades, it remains tightly supervised and constrained. The state employs a variety of discursive, administrative and spatial strategies to contain religion and limit its influence in other areas of social life" (McCarthy 2013, p. 49). Bilik also realizes that "when shamanism is synonymous with religion, its nature will change from neutrality to antipathy according to the political barometer of the government due to its uncontrolled and uncontrollable prevalence in everyday life" (Bilik 2021, p. 223).

The news from the meeting held by the Jilin Provincial Bureau of Religious Affairs also announced that the aim of the meeting was to distinguish ancient shamanic cultural remains such as Manchu rituals from *tiaoshen* (Chinese, literally meaning jumping spirits) or *chuma* (Chinese, meaning initiation) in order to protect the study of proper shamanic cultures and to shut down organizations that engaged in illegal activities. *Tiaoshen* in the government context here refers to Han Chinese rituals for communicating with spirits through séances; *chuma* here refers to the initiation ritual of a Han medium. Even in the heritage process, Han spiritual practices are always considered superstitious, unlike the practices of ethnic minority shamans, which are considered cultural heritage. Therefore, from the government's point of view, shaman training, shaman certificates, and Han *tiaoshen/chuma* were now treated as "illegal". From the bottom-up view, however, whether it was the creolization style of the shamanic events, the celebration of re-invented shamanic festivities, the issuing of shamanic certificates, the commercialization of local shamanic traditions, or reinterpretations of cultural heritage, they all represented a modernized, transnational, and globalized discourse in a neoliberal context resisting powerful state discourse within an authoritarian system that sees shamanism and other spiritual practices as dangerous, superstitious, and banal. In Mayfair Yang's argument, the state's negative attitude towards

shamanism may stem from the progressive nationalist historical narrative that has “cast peasant religious and ritual life as *anti-modernity*” (Yang 2011, p. 5).

6. Conclusions

In this paper, I have argued that organizational shamanism is characterized by the double identities of the shaman and the dualistic attitudes of the national authorities. My analysis shows how this shamanic organization created a modernized and globalized space for traditional shamans and specialists to connect with the outside world, enabling them to gain empowerment, legitimacy, and agency. In my view, both organizations and individual practitioners are active agents in the heritage-making process and represent the bottom-up dimension of the reinterpretation and reinvention of traditions. A shaman simultaneously possesses double identities that allow this individual to combine “the vertical dimension of history” with “the horizontal dimension of social connections” (Gao 2014, p. 570). Tradition in a historical context and modernity in the context of spatial expansion can thus coexist in both an individual shaman and shamanic organization. In this way, organizational shamanism in China is “both community-based and a new sort of world religion” (Vitebsky 1995, p. 193). While appropriating local knowledge to repurpose AHD through a process of heritagization, the organization also appropriated strategies of world neoshamanism to localize a global discourse. In other words, organizational shamanism in Northeast China not only converts “local knowledge into global currency”, as Vitebsky suggests (Vitebsky 1995, p. 192), but also transforms global discourse into local narratives.

Although shamanic practices have been tolerated by the Chinese government since the 1980s due to a policy of openness, and the state heritage policy since 2004 has provided opportunities to revitalize shamanism through the heritage process, the negative attitude of the state towards shamanism has never actually disappeared and has always been coupled with the positive attitude of seeing shamanism as part of cultural and historical heritage. The opposite attitudes of the state inevitably coexist in the same authoritarian system. This phenomenon indeed reflects the “complexity and vulnerability of spiritual life in China”, as Bilik points out (Bilik 2021, p. 223). Nevertheless, it should be noted here that both attitudes actually lead to a single governmentality strategy, namely a way of governing and controlling cultural and religious practices (see Svensson and Maags 2018, p. 20).

Tacey rightly points out that “contemporary experiences of climate change, environmental degradation and socio-political subordination” have significantly reshaped local cosmologies, shamanic forms, and human relations with nonhuman entities (Tacey 2021, p. 92). Shamans in Northeast China are also experiencing a rapidly changing world. In this sense, the traditional eco-cosmological way of maintaining relationships with natural forces and nonhuman beings has been irrevocably transformed into a cosmopolitical form for the shaman, where the animistic world engages with the outside world, global currency, and political forces (Tacey 2021). The studies and research in this paper show that organizational shamanism in Northeast China has obviously played a crucial role in negotiating with political authorities, linking historical context with spatial expansion, and transforming “local knowledge into global currency” (Vitebsky 1995, p. 192), or global currency into local knowledge.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Data Availability Statement: No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank C. W. for his generousness in provide documents and photographs for this research. I respect his suggestion to keep his name anonymous in this paper. I thank the colleagues including Jinghe Chen (1940–2023), Lichun Zhu, and De Zheng, who assisted me in the fieldwork of this research project. Additional thanks are due to Naran Bilik, whose brilliant paper (Bilik 2021) gives me great inspiration in this research.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

- ¹ Concerning Siqingua's shamanic profession, see (Hoppál 2005; Kara et al. 2009; Qu 2021).
- ² Concerning contemporary Manchu rituals, see (Qu 2023).
- ³ Neyin Ancient City is not really ancient. According to Manchu legends, Neyin was an old Jurchen tribe inhabiting the Changbaishan area. The city was constructed by the local government in the 2010s for tourism development.
- ⁴ The *paohuochi* ritual is a trial to test an aspiring shaman's spiritual ability in order to prove his mastery of the spirits among Manchus. The shaman is expected to run barefoot on fire without burning himself and without his clothes catching fire in the ritual (see Eliade 1964, p. 54).
- ⁵ About Susan Grimaldi's visit to Changchu, please see Grimaldi and Shi (2006).
- ⁶ On 21 March 2017, a new shamanic organization—Anshan Society for the Study of Shamanic Folk Culture, in Liaoning Province of Northeast China—was officially established with the approval of the local government. I conducted fieldwork with this society in February 2023 and February 2024 (see also Bilik 2021).
- ⁷ Data are from my interview with the Qu specialist in Anshan on 5 February 2023. She is also the head of a branch of the Anshan Society for the Study of Shamanic Folk Culture.
- ⁸ Data are from my personal fieldwork in the Hulun Buir region during the period from 2018 to 2023.
- ⁹ This document was published on WeChat by the CFLAA.

References

- Bilik, Naran. 2021. Unblocking the Blockage between Earth and Heaven: Shamanic Space for Cultural Intimacy in China. In *Dealing with Disasters: Perspectives from Eco-Cosmologies*. Edited by Diana Riboli, Pamela J. Stewart, Andrew J. Strathern and Davide Torri. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 213–32.
- Boekhoven, Jeroen W. 2011. *Genealogies of Shamanism: Struggles for Power, Charismas and Authority*. Groningen: Barkhuis.
- Bužeková, Tatiana. 2010. The Shaman's Journeys between Emic and Etic: Representations of the Shaman in Neo-Shamanism. *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* 19: 116–30. [CrossRef]
- Devlet, Ekaterina. 2001. Rock Art and the Material Culture of Siberian and Central Asian Shamanism. In *The Archaeology of Shamanism*. Edited by Neil S. Price. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 43–55.
- Dumont, Aurore. 2021. Community, Faith and Politics. The ovoos of the Shinehen Buryats throughout the 20th Century. *Études mongoles et sibériennes, centrasiatiques et tibétaines* 52: 1–28. [CrossRef]
- Dumont, Aurore. 2023. Sacred Land Carins and Shamanic Burial Sites on the Sini-Russo-Mongolian Borderlands. *Asian Ethnicity* 25: 1–20. [CrossRef]
- Eliade, Mircea. 1964. *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Fonneland, Trude. 2015. The Rise of Neoshamanism in Norway: Local structures-Global Currents. In *Nordic Neoshamanisms*. Edited by Siv E. Kraft, Trude Fonneland and James R. Lewis. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 33–54.
- Fotiou, Evgenia. 2016. The Globalization Ayahuasca Shamanism and the Erasure of Indigenous Shamanism. *Anthropology of Consciousness* 27: 151–79. [CrossRef]
- Fraser, Richard. 2019. Cultural Heritage, Ethnic Tourism, and Minority State Relations Amongst the Orochen in Northeast China. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 26: 178–200. [CrossRef]
- Gao, Bingzhong. 2014. How Does Superstition Become Intangible Cultural Heritage in Postsocialist China? *Positions* 22: 551–72.
- Grimaldi, Susan, and Kun Shi. 2006. Good News Regarding the Tungus Shamans in Northern China: Field Notes from Changchun and Wulajie in Jilin, China, May 2006. *Shamanism* 19: 2–11.
- Guo, Shuyun. 2008. Religious Education in Manchu Shamanism. *Shaman* 16: 47–64.
- Guo, Shuyun. 2009. Analysis of the Grandfather God of the Manchu Shi Clan. *Shaman* 17: 29–52.
- Hammer, Olav. 2015. Late Modern Shamanism: Central Texts and Issues. In *Nordic Neoshamanisms*. Edited by Siv E. Kraft, Trude Fonneland and James R. Lewis. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 13–29.
- Harner, Michael. 1980. *The Way of the Shaman: A Guide to Power and Healing*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Harner, Michael. 2005. The History and Work of the Foundation for Shamanic Studies. *Shamanism* 18: 5–10.
- Hendrickson, Brett. 2015. New Shamans, Curanderismo and Scholars: Metaphysical Blending in Contemporary Mexican American Folk Healing. *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 19: 25–44. [CrossRef]
- Heyne, F. Georg. 1999. The Social Significance of the Shaman among the Chinese Reindeer-Evenki. *Asian Folklore Studies* 58: 377–95. [CrossRef]
- Heyne, F. Georg. 2009. Among Taiga Hunters and Shamans: Reminiscences Concerning My Friend, the Scholar of Manchuria, Anatolii Makarovitch Kaigorodov (1927–1998). *Shaman* 17: 53–78.
- Hoppál, Mihály. 2005. Trance and Sacrifice in a Daur Shamanic Healing Rite. *Shaman* 13: 61–78.
- Humphrey, Caroline, and Urgunge Onon. 1996. *Shamans and Elders: Experience, Knowledge and Power among the Daur Mongols*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Jakobsen, Merete D. 1999. *Shamanism: Traditional and Contemporary Approaches to the Mastery of Spirits and Healing*. New York: Berghahn Books.

- Kara, Dávid Somfai, Mihály Hoppál, and János Sipos. 2009. A Revitalized Daur Shamanic Ritual from Northeast China. *Shaman* 17: 141–69.
- Kister, Daniel. 1999. Present-Day Shamanism in Northern China and Amur Region. *Shaman* 7: 77–95.
- Lindquist, Galina. 1997. *Shamanism Performances on The Urban Scene: Neo-Shamanism in Contemporary Sweden*. Stockholm: Stockholm Studies in Social Anthropology.
- Luhrmann, T. M. 2012. Touching the Devine: Recent Research on Neo-Paganism and Neo-Shamanism. *Reviews in Anthropology* 41: 136–50. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Maréchal, Anne Dalles. 2023. The Usage of Embroideries Among the Hezhe in China and the Nanai in Russia. A Comparative Study of heritagisation Processes and Their Local Appropriation. *Études mongoles et sibériennes, centrasiatiques et tibétaines* 54. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- McCarthy, Susan K. 2013. Serving Society, Repurposing the State: Religious Charity and Resistance in China. *The China Journal* 70: 48–72. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Mikhalev, Maxim. 2023. Zhong E Dangdai Buliyate Samanjiao Bijiao Yanjiu 中俄当代布里亚特萨满教比较研究 (Comparative Studies of Contemporary Buryat Shamanism in China and Russia). In *Difangxing Zhishi Yu Wenhua Shengtai: Zhongguo Jinbeiji Minzu Yishi Renleixue Yanjiu* 地方性知识与文化生态：中国近北极民族仪式人类学研究. Edited by Feng Qu and Liying Wang. Shanghai: Shanghai Sanlian Shudian, pp. 146–65.
- Milan, Pascale-Marie. 2023. From Social Bonds to Cultural Identity. Changing Meanings of Na Dances in Tourism Context and Heritage Making. *Études mongoles et sibériennes, centrasiatiques et tibétaines* 54. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Noel, Daniel C. 1997. *The Soul of Shamanism: Western Fantasies, Imaginal Realities*. New York: Continuum.
- Noll, Richard, and Kun Shi. 2009. The Last Shaman of the Oroqen People of Northeast China. *Shaman* 17: 117–40.
- Price, Neil S., ed. 2001. *The Archaeology of Shamanism*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Qu, Feng. 2020. Samanjiao yu Bianjiang: Bianjiang Wenhua Shuxing de Zairenshi 萨满教与边疆：边疆文化属性的再认识. *Yunnan Shehui Kexue* 云南社会科学 5: 121–30.
- Qu, Feng. 2021. Embodiment of Ancestral Spirits, the Social Interface, and Ritual Ceremonies: Construction of the Shamanic Landscape among the Daur in North China. *Religions* 12: 567. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Qu, Feng. 2023. Deconstruction of the Trance Model: Historical, Ethnographic, and Contextual Studies of Manchu Shamanism. *Religions* 14: 496. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Sa, Minna. 2023. Deities System and Ritual Practice: A Case Study of the Daur Shamanic Oboo Ritual. *Religions* 14: 661. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Svensson, Marina, and Christina Maags. 2018. Mapping the Chinese Heritage Regime Ruptures, Governmentality, and Agency. In *Chinese Cultural Heritage in the Making Experience, Negotiations and Contestations*. Edited by Christina Maags and Marina Svensson. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 11–40.
- Tacey, Ivan. 2021. Batek Cosmopolitics in the Early Twenty-First Century. In *Dealing with Disasters: Perspectives from Eco-Cosmologies*. Edited by Diana Riboli, Pamela J. Stewart, Andrew J. Strathern and Davide Torri. Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer, pp. 75–99.
- Townsend, Joan B. 2004. Core Shamanism and Neo-Shamanism. In *Shamanism: An Encyclopedia of World Belief, Practices, and Culture*. Edited by Mariko N. Walter and Eva J. N. Fridman. Santa Barbara: ABE-CLIO, pp. 49–57.
- Townsend, Joan B. 2005. Individualist Religious Movements: Core Shamanism and Neo-Shamanism. *Anthropology of Consciousness* 15: 1–9. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Vitebsky, Piers. 1995. From Cosmology to Environmentalism: Shamanism as Local Knowledge in A Global Setting. In *Counterworks: Managing the Diversity of Knowledge*. Edited by R. Fardon. London: Routledge, pp. 182–203.
- von Stuckrad, Kocku. 2002. Reenchanted Nature: Modern western Shamanism and Nineteenth-Century Thought. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 70: 771–99. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Wallis, Robert J. 2003. *Shamans/Neo-Shamans: Ecstasy, Alternative Archaeologies and Contemporary Pagans*. London: Routledge.
- Yang, Mayfair. 2011. Postcoloniality and Religiosity in Modern China: The Disenchantments of Sovereignty. *Theory, Culture & Society* 28: 3–45.
- Zheng, Shanshan. 2023. The Heritagisation of Rituals: Commodification and Transmission. A Case Study of Nianli Festival in Zhanjiang, China. *Études mongoles et sibériennes, centrasiatiques et tibétaines* 54. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Zhukovskaya, N. L., and C. Humphrey. 2000. Neo-Shamanism in the Context of the Contemporary Ethno-Cultural Situation in the Republic of Buryatia. *Inner Asia* 2: 25–36. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Znamenski, Andrei A. 2007. *The Beauty of the Primitive*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.