

GRANDMOTHER'S SANCTUARY AT NYAMBOITO LAKE: THE MATERIALS OF THE 2024 EXPEDITION

The article examines a cult site located on Lake Nyamboito in the Lower Taz basin. The new ethnographic materials about the sanctuary obtained during the authors' expedition to Taz in 2024 supplement the only existing description made by Tyumen scientists Yurii N. Kvashnin and Aleksandr A. Tkachev in 2014. The study provides arguments for the Selkup origin of the sanctuary and determines the name of the revered spirit — Old Woman Ilyntyl Kota or Grandmother Ima Kota, the main deity of the Selkup pantheon. The sanctuary is about a hundred years old. Over the past century, the Selkups of Lower Taz have been assimilated by the Nenets. Currently, the sanctuary is used by the Nenets, who simply call the spirit "Grandmother", and treat it as a Nenets spirit, and protect it from vandals. Such treatment suggests there was a reciprocal cultural influence of the Selkups on the Nenets. The ritual to honor the spirit, performed by the Nenets, is no different from the Selkup's ritual, but this points to the ritual's universal qualities common to most Siberian peoples rather than to cultural borrowings. Nenets informants told a family legend about how their ancestors came to the lake and built the sanctuary. However, the analysis of the legend did not confirm the idea of a Nenets origin of the sanctuary or many of the facts contained in it, which were probably "made up" by the informants, who tried to place the main episode of the legend in the context of general history. The increased interest of informants in their origins allowed us to conclude that a new ethnic self-awareness was forming among the indigenous population of the Taz region.

Keywords: *Selkups and Nenets of the Lower Taz, sanctuary on Lake Nyamboito, spirit worship ritual at the sanctuary, ethnic history, traditional culture and its modern transformations*

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