

Symbol of identity or just everyday life – the role of religion of Mari people during 2000s

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The everyday life of Mari people has experienced many different changes. The Mari is an old ethnic minority and in spite of their interesting and long-time their own religion has survived many dramatic changes. The role of their own everyday life has played an important role also during the last decencies, when their own culture became more visible and had more effect in their political life. Although, the latest changes in the beginning of 2000s have had its own effects of the Mari culture. E.g. the role of Mari language has changed dramatically.

I have studied Mari people in a rural village, which is situated on the border between Mari El and Tatarstan. My interest has been on the everyday life of the Mari people. I had planned to continue my fieldwork with my Mari research assistant, but first Covid-19 was against our field trip and then Russia's attack against Ukraine prohibited our final field work and my dream to continue field work went in vain. During Covid-19 my research assistant made some interviews concerning on Mari identity issues, I will use this material to discuss the current everyday life of the Mari people and concentrate also on the role of their own religion. My questions are e.g: What is the current Mari identity today and which features are important in it? What role does the current language politics play in this and what is the role of Mari religion in their current identity?