

A SHORT ETHNOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF THE ASHKENAZIC JEWS' GROUP IN ALNASHSKY DISTRICT OF UDMURT REPUBLIC

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Wir haben einige ethnographischen Besonderheiten der teilweise isolierten Gruppe der aschkenasischen Juden, die im Rajon Alnaschi der Udmurtischen Republik lebten, kurz beschrieben.

Die Stichwörter sind: Juden, Judentum, alnaschische Juden, Aschkenasim, Subbotniki, Jiddisch, alnaschischer Unterdialekt des Jiddischs, udmurtische Idiom des Jiddischs (Udmurtisch), Udmurtisch, udmurtische Sprache, tatarische Sprache, Rajon Alnaschi, Udmurtien, Russland.

We briefly described some ethnographic characteristics of partially isolated group of Ashkenazic Jews, who lived in Alnashsky District of Udmurt Republic (the Russian Federation) in the XX century.

Keywords: Jews, Jewry, Alnashic Jews, Ashkenazim, Subbotniks, Yiddish, Alnashic subdialect of Yiddish, Udmurt Idiom of Yiddish (Udmurtish), Udmurtish, Udmurt language, Tatar language, Alnashsky District, Udmurtia, Russian Federation.

The Ashkenazic Jews in Alnashsky District (the Udmurt Republic, the Russian Federation) first appeared in the early XX century (in the 1910-1920-ies). Besides, on the territory of Alnashsky District occasionally were the Subbotniks (Hebrew/Yiddish *gerim*; Russian *subbotniki* literally «sabbatarians», *novyye zhidy* literally «new Jews», *zhidovstvuyushchiye* literally «Judaizers», *iudeystvuyushchiye* literally «Judaizers», *zhidovery* literally «Jewbelievers»; Russian endoethnonym *gery* to Hebrew *ger*); they came for a recreation (Varzi-Yatchi sanatorium) or on working affairs.

According to our data, in the middle of the last century, the primary residences of the Jews there were three settlements: the village Alnashi (Russian transliteration *Алнаши*; Udmurt *Anlaš*, *Alnaš*, *Alnaši*, Udmurt transliteration *Анлаш*, *Алнаш*, *Алнаши*), the village Varzi-Yatchi (Russian transliteration *Варзи-Ятчи*; Udmurt *D'z'atča*, Udmurt transliteration *Žamča*; local Yiddish *Džače*, *D'z'ačče*, *D'z'ačča* < Udmurt *Žamča*) and the hamlet Garga or Gorga (Russian transliteration *Гарга* or *Горга*).

In 1940-1960-ies the maximal quantity of the Jews in Alnashsky District was 25-35 humans [1]. There were altogether 5-7 Jewish families who permanently resided in Alnashsky District at the time. We know names of some of them: Weisberg/Vaysberg (Russian transliteration *Вайсберг*), Mal'tsev (Russian transliteration *Мальцев*) and Kuznetsov (Russian transliteration *Кузнецов*) from the village Alnashi; Abramov (Russian transliteration *Абрамов*) from the hamlet Garga; Schlosser/Shlosser (Russian transliteration *Шлоссер*) from the village Varzi-Yatchi.

The Abramovs' family was the most respected family in the Jewish community, as they were the guardians of tradition (Orthodox Judaism), and the head of the family Matis'eh Abramov is carried out duties of shochet. To perform their duties, the Abramovs had to conceal their ethnic and confessional activities and even payed bribes to officials. They celebrated all Jewish holydays (Hebrew *hagim*), except for Tu Bishvat. The most revered feasts were Passover (Pesach), Simchat Torah (Simches To(y)reh), Yom Kippur (Yom Kipper) and “children holydays” – Hanukkah and Purim. It is worth noting that in the hamlet Garga the Zagum'onovs' family (Russian transliteration *Загумёнов*) lived, who probably had Jewish ancestors, inasmuch as the Abramovs and the Zagum'onovs were going together on the Seder. Other Jewish families were less religious.

All the listed families were Yiddish-speaking, apart from the Zagum'onovs. We classify their language to the Alnashic subdialect of Udmurt Idiom (Udmurtish) of Yiddish. One of the characteristic features of the Udmurt Idiom, and in particular the Alnashic subdialect, is a noticeable number of Udmurt and Tatar loan words. For example *ule* «herd, flock, troop, drove» < Udmurt

ull'o (transliteration *уллӧ*) «herd, flock, troop, drove, brood»; *d'z'uče(r)*, *džučē(r)* «Russian (a person is appurtenant to the ethnic group)» < Udmurt *d'z'uč* (transliteration *ӟуч*) «Russian (a person is appurtenant to the ethnic group)»; *kam* «big river» < Udmurt *kam* (transliteration *кам*) «big river»; *šurχ* «river» < Udmurt *šur* (transliteration *шур*) «river»; *botke* «boiled rice, congee» < Tatar *botka* (transliteration *ботка*) «kasha, pap, porridge, gruel, stirabout» and so forth.

We want to point out that many Jews, who have lived in Alnashsky District, spoke Udmurt and/or Tatar languages.

It is interesting that the Udmurts of the District (about the origin of the Alnashic udmurts see [3], [4], [5]) often mistook the Jews for Russians, but sometimes for russianized (russified) Germans or udmurts [2].

In the 1980s, the Jews practically left Alnashsky District, however at present a few Jews live in the district as members of interethnic (Jewish-udmurt) families: Rogover (Russian transliteration *Роговер*), Ivanov (Russian transliteration *Иванов*) and others.

THE INFORMANTS' LIST

Joseph Weisberg (Russian transliteration *Иосиф Вайсберг*), the Jew (Ashkenazi), born in 1947, native of Kazan, secondary vocational education, knowledge of languages: Yiddish, Russian, Byelorussian, Polish.

Alexander Mal'tsev (Russian transliteration *Александр Мальцев*), the Jew (Ashkenazi), born in 1940, native of Alnashi, higher professional education, knowledge of languages: Yiddish, Ukrainian (Surzhyk), Russian, Udmurt language, Tatar language, German.

Alexander (Sander) Abramov (Russian transliteration *Александр Абрамов*), the Jew (Ashkenazi), born in 1932, native of Garga (Gorga), secondary vocational education, knowledge of languages: Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian, Udmurt language, Tatar language.

Mikhail (Moshe) Voronov (Russian transliteration *Михаил Воронов*), the Jew (Subbotnik), born in 1929, native of Sarapul, primary professional education, knowledge of languages: Yiddish, Hebrew, Aramaic (Babylonian Jewish-Aramaic language), Russian.

Anatoliy Rogover (Russian transliteration *Анатолий Роговер*), the Jew (Ashkenazi), born in 1943, native of Taganrog, higher professional education, knowledge of languages: Russian. He was not a member of the Jewish community, and came in Alnashsky District after its disappearance.

Viktor Tuganaev (Russian transliteration *Виктор Туганев*), the udmurt, born in 1941, native of Alnashi, higher professional education, Doctor of biological sciences, knowledge of languages: Udmurt language, Russian.

Vera Kononova (Russian transliteration *Вера Кононова*), the udmurtess (udmurtwoman), born in 1939, native of Varzi-Yatchi, secondary vocational education, knowledge of languages: Udmurt language, Tatar language, Russian.

DIE QUELLENANGABEN

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