

Congressus Octavus Internationalis Fenno-Ugristarum  
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## **Pars II**

# **Summaria acroasium in sectionibus et symposiis factarum**

Redegit

Heikki Leskinen

Curaverunt

Paavo Pulkkinen, Risto Raittila, Tõnu Seilenthal

Moderatores

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the old ones.

The throwing games are represented mainly by various (folk and sport) balls games; old games using knife or stone can be met rarely.

**Vladimir Vladykin**

**Izhevsk**

### **UDMURT PAGAN PRIESTHOOD: STATUS, HIERARCHY AND FUNCTIONS**

There were still no professional priests in the traditional Udmurt society when one could see a certain group of people performing worship service. Udmurt pagan priesthood was usually represented by electoral members of community with a special status.

According to the names of the two main sacred places there were usually two endogham worship groups in the Udmurt village: *Kua/la vyzhy* and *Lud vyzhy* (*Kua/la* and *Lud* kins). Accordingly there was a certain priest for each worship complex. There was specially worked out ceremony of the election of the main priest – *vös'as'*, *kuris'kis'*, *kua/lalud utis'* – 'person who prays; person who asks god for something; person who keeps sacred place'. And it was a wizard (*tuno*) who by special shaman means of witchcraft could determine future main priest. And only married man belonging to the priest's kin (*vös'as' vyzhy*) could be chosen as a main priest. Besides people preferred to choose red-haired man as the most loveable by god. Sometimes even a child could fulfil the function of the main priest and in such case there should be chosen the so-called "tutor". Usually the main priest was elected for the period of twelve years, but sometimes for life.

Those people who took a lower position in the church hierarchy, helped the main priest: they were his assistants: *kanul kutis'* ('person taking the main priest under his arms'), *parchas'* ('person sacrificing animals'), *tyals'* ('person responsible for the sacred fire'), *tus'ty-dury mis'kis* ('person responsible for the ritual dishes'). Usually

two persons should be responsible for each kind of duties mentioned above. Highly original figure among the members of the Udmurt priesthood was *türo* ('a person taking place of honour'). Besides one could see the so-called "priests for one day" in the Udmurt priesthood. The function of a priest for one day was fulfilled by the people of one and same faith in turn.

The priests of the Udmurt pagan worship were not only the founders and keepers of the worship etiquette rules, but they were creators of religious-mythological ideas, they were the interpretators of these ideas and to some extent mediators between the god and their kindred.

**Tatjana Vladykina**

**Izhevsk**

### **GENRE METAMORPHOSES OF THE UDMURT WEDDING SONGS**

The following genre varieties should be found in the modern Udmurt wedding song: *s'uan gur* (bridegroom's tribe tune), *börys' gur* (bride's tribe tune), *kel'an gur* (seeling off tune).

The comparison of some local peculiarities of modern and archaic wedding ceremony and also the analysis of figurative symbolism and motives as a structural components of the text makes possible to see the evolution of the wedding song genre.

Ritual complex *s'uan-börys'* (a fiest at the bride and bridegroom) and *s'uan-börys'gur* which is closely connected with ritual complex itself are considered to be obligatory attributes of the wedding ceremony. Possible it is one of the innovations in the wedding ceremony description.

The wedding ceremony in accompanied by folklore means. but one can see some changes in the system of folklore means which appeared as a result of ceremony evolution and contamination of the tunes of the archaic farewell songs belonging to the bride's tribe (*kuin' maj krez'* 'a tune which is sung on a third day of the wedding ceremony', *nyl bördyton gur* 'a tune which