

PREFACE

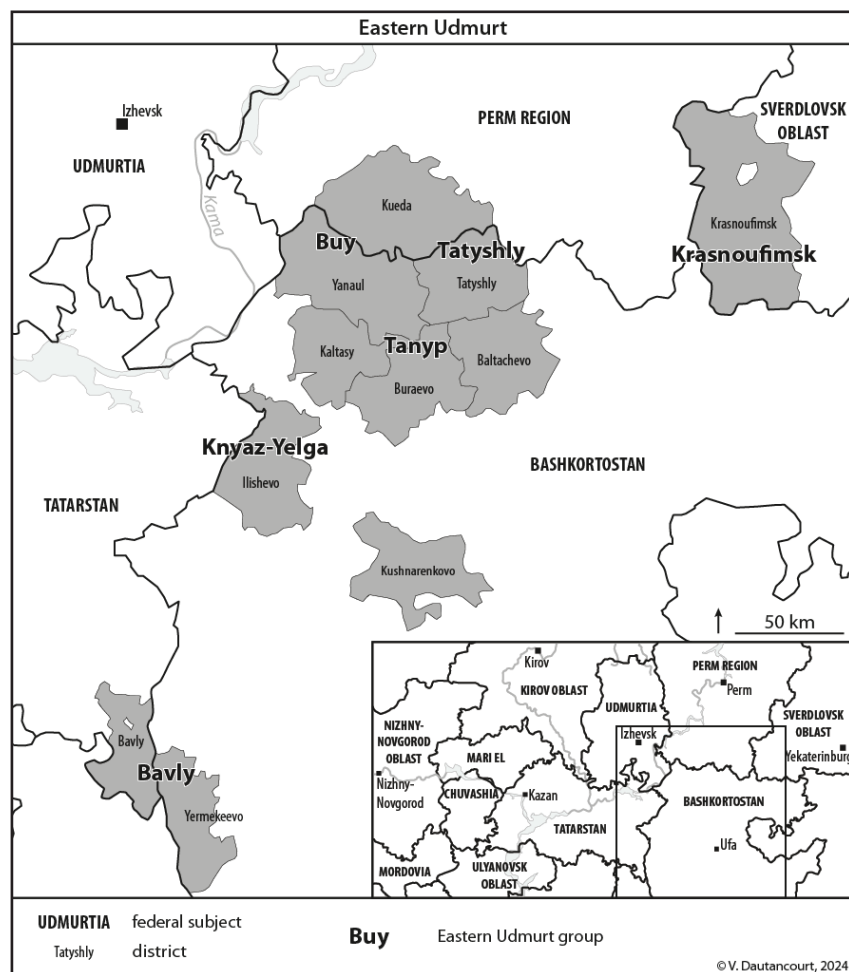
The Eastern Udmurts are an ethnographic group of Udmurts who received their name because of their geographical location in relation to Udmurtia, as they live beyond the Kama River in the Baltachevo, Buraevo, Ilishevo, Kaltasy, Kushnarenkovo, Tatyshly, and Yanaul districts in the Republic of Bashkortostan and in Kueda district of Perm region. The Eastern Udmurts also include the subgroups of Bavly (in Bavly district in the Republic of Tatarstan and Ermekeyevo district in the Republic of Bashkortostan) and the Krasnoufimsk Udmurts (Sverdlovsk region) (Nasibullin, 1972; Minniyakhmetova, 2000, 2003; Sadikov, 2001, 2008, 2019). However, recent works of an ethnographic and linguistic nature distinguish the Bavly Udmurts as a separate group from the Eastern Udmurts (Tarakanov, 1958;

Kosareva, 2000, pp. 162–163; Atamanov, 2004; Atamanov, 2005, p. 113; Kelmakov, 2006, p. 42). It should be noted that the issue of the inclusion of the Bavly Udmurts in the Eastern group has repeatedly caused discussion due to the distinct historical, cultural and social features of this group.

The Eastern group was formed as a result of the migration of Udmurts to Bashkir lands between the 16th and 18th centuries, which took place in three stages for various reasons: the first stage began in the 16th century shortly after the fall of the Kazan Khanate and subsequent events; the second stage, associated with the introduction of a poll tax, fell at the beginning of the 18th century; the third stage, which began in the middle of the 18th century, was marked by the forced Christianisation of the non-Russian population (Luppov, 1901, pp. 214–215; Atamanov, 2005, pp. 116–119; Nikitina, 2016, p. 42).

The Eastern Udmurts as an ethnographic group has a community of traditional material and spiritual culture. According to ethnographer Ranus Sadikov, “despite the commonality of historical origin, culture and language, several local subgroups stand out among them, which are characterized by certain ethnocultural and linguistic features that are also manifested in the religious sphere” (Sadikov, 2019, p. 8). Linguistically, the Eastern Udmurt speak the peripheral southern dialect of the Udmurt language (Maksimov, 2009, pp. 45–46). Based on dialectological data Linguist Rif Nasibullin has proposed a division of five subgroups, each of which is characterised by its own dialect: Tatyshly, Shagirt, Buy-Tanyp, Tashkichi, Kanly (Nasibullin, 1972, pp. 2–3). Later, based on a development of Rif Nasibullin’s work, and with some additions and clarifications, Ranus Sadikov proposed his own classification. Analysing the linguistic characteristics, historical development, and ethnographic data (including costume, religious practices, etc.) of the Eastern Udmurt, Sadikov identified nine distinct subgroups: Tanyp, Tashkichi, Kanly, Buy, Shagirt, Tatyshly, Bavly, Krasnoufimsk, and Knyaz-Elga (see Map 1).

According to Ranus Sadikov, the southern Udmurt groups, in particular the Zavyat (Arsk) and Udmurt-Kalmez from the central regions of modern Udmurtia, were involved in the formation of various sub-groups of the Eastern Udmurts. A very small and difficult-to-define group was made up of the northern Udmurts, the Votka. According to some sources, the Eastern Udmurts also included a small component of Besermyans (Sadikov, 2019, p. 17). According to linguist Mikhail Atamanov, who specialises in Udmurt onomastic research, 30 *vorshud* tribal groups contributed



Map 1. Map showing the territory of settlement of ethnographic subgroups of the Eastern Udmurts according to the classification of Ranus Sadikov.
Author Vincent Dautancourt, 2024

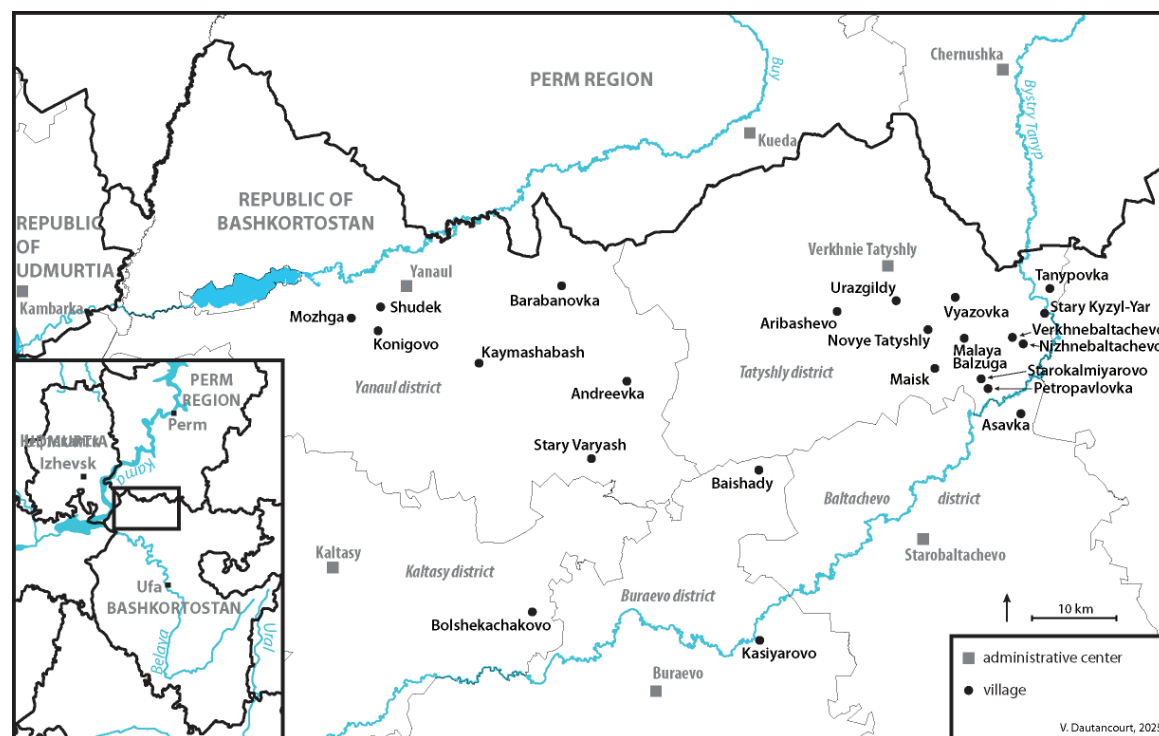
to the formation of the Eastern Udmurt group, with 23 contributing to the formation of the Buy-Tanyp group (Atamanov also includes the Shagirt and Kanly Udmurts), and 16 to the Tatyshly group.

It is interesting to note that eight *vorshud* tribes (*Kaksya, Chabya, Chudya, Poska, Budya, Jatcha, Pelga, Mozhga*) participated in the formation of both sub-groups of the Eastern Udmurts, while the remaining 22 (*Jikya, Egra, Conga, Imyos, Monya, Jumya, Schelta, Dokya, Bigra, Sura, Ucha, Chola, Durga, Sanya, Yus, Pokol-Dukya, Yubera, Chudna, Kotya, Tuklya, Palyaka and Vamya*) are found only among the Buy-Tanyp and Tatyshly sub-groups.

This and other factors probably influenced the formation of the Eastern Udmurts and caused the separation of Buy-Tanyp Udmurts from the Tatyshly group – the Buy-Tanyp Udmurts considered the Tatyshly group *soos muket dinys*, of ‘another root, tribe’. Atamanov notes that “there was a certain estrangement between these groups: public prayers were held separately, marital and family ties were extremely rare. The Tatyshly group did not participate in the famous *Elenves*, the tribal prayer of the Buy-Tanyp Udmurts, and the Buy-Tanyp Udmurts did not participate in the *Merenves*, the public prayers of the Tatyshly group. There were significant differences in language, national dress, and the tribal system” (Atamanov, 2005, p. 114).

Thus, as the materials on history and ethnogenesis show, the ethnic group of the Eastern Udmurts is a population that migrated from various locations in its original homeland to the territories of the modern Republic of Bashkortostan, Perm Krai, and Sverdlovsk Oblast, which had not previously been inhabited by the Udmurts.

This publication, which continues the series of books on *Udmurt folklore*, aims to combine examples of the song tradition, and provide a general overview, of the musical and folkloric heritage of the Eastern diaspora, if possible. As with all previous collections in the series, this volume is structured according to local and genre principles.



Map 2. Map of Udmurt localities, marking the places where the song samples presented in this book were collected and recorded.

Author Vincent Dautancourt, 2025

The primary source of information was the expedition reports conducted in Baltachevo, Buraevo, Kaltasy, Tatyshly, and Yanaul districts of the Republic of Bashkortostan between 2016 and 2023. These reports were part of a French-funded project titled the Interdisciplinary Study of an Animistic Minority in Russia: Rituals, Customs, and Community Engagement Among the Eastern Udmurts Today (2018–2022), led by Professor Eva Toulouze. The participants, Nikolai Anisimov and the ethnomusicologist Ekaterina Sofronova, collected samples of songs and melodies performed on the accordion in 18 Udmurt villages in Bashkortostan. These villages include Andreevka, Barabanovka, Kaymashabash, Stary Varyash, Shudek in Yanaul district, Verkhnebaltachevo, Malaya Balzuga, Petropavlovka, Stary Kyzyl-Yar, Aribashevo, Vyazovka, Starokalmiyarovo, Nizhnebaltachevo, Novye Tatyshly, Urazgildy in Tatyshly district, Asavka in Baltachevo district, Kasiyarovo in Buraevo district, and Bolshekachakovo in Kaltasy district. In terms of genre, this collection mainly includes guest songs (in various terminologies), both original (the Tatar and Russian) and those translated into the Udmurt language. The songs include wedding, funeral, recruitment, and several examples of calendar tunes (*budjynnal kui / gui; verva / verba kistyr / verva kistyk / vervastyk / vervachyk / buzjynnal bashlan kui; oshorok takmakyos / kui; vei kui; gondyr ektyton*). Labor songs such as the chant of the alloy of logs (*pur kelyan kui*) and the chant performed during sowing (*kizyon dyrya gui*) are also included. Furthermore, there are non-ritual songs, including lyrical, descriptive, playful, humorous, and ditty-like compositions, which are not included in this collection.

An additional valuable source of information were records stored in the archive of the Udmurt Institute of History, Language and Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences made in 1977, 1982, 1990 and 1991. These records were collected by employees of the institute (Tatiana Perevozchikova (Vladykina) and Irina Nurieva), as well as teachers from the Udmurt State University (Vladimir Vladykin), in Tatyshly, Yanaul, and Buraevo districts in the Republic of Bashkortostan. The records include information from the villages of Verkhnebalachevo, Starokalmiyarovo, Maisk, Tanypovka, Mozhga, Konigovo, Shudek and Baishady. These expedition materials also reveal the dominant position of guest tunes among the Eastern Udmurts. In addition, recruitment, wedding, and funeral songs are recorded, forming the core of family and ancestral rituals. Calendar tunes are presented in small numbers (*bydjynnal kui / gui, oshorok gui*). Some song samples from Yanaul district (Shudek village) in the Republic of Bashkortostan from the expedition collections of 2005 were kindly provided by Ranus Sadikov, an ethnographer and chief researcher at the Ethnographic Department of the Rail Gumerovich Kuzeev Ethnological Research Institute¹.

In general, the collection includes song materials from 23 Udmurt settlements located along the interflow of the Buy and Bystry Tanyp rivers (see Map 2). This area was chosen because it is where groups of Eastern Udmurts live compactly, representing the heart of the ethnographic, dialectological, and song traditions of the diaspora. This is confirmed by the research of Mikhail Atamanov, who identifies two large groups of Eastern Udmurts, the Buy-Tanyp (including Shagirt and Kanly), and Tatyshly (Atamanov, 2005, p. 115). The area of residence of these groups coincides with the area covered by our materials².

The recordings of the songs were conducted during a meeting with folklore groups and individual skilled performers. The informants were mainly women aged fifty years and older who know song folklore and have vocal skills. It is necessary to note the significant role of folklore groups in preserving traditional local melodies, especially those that no longer function in the festive and ceremonial culture of the Eastern Udmurts.

¹ Folklore and dialectological expeditions organised by the Faculty of Udmurt Philology at the Udmurt State University (now the Institute of Udmurt Philology, Finno-Ugric Studies and Journalism at the Udmurt University) represent a valuable source of information. In the years 1990, 1992, 1993, 2002, 2007 and 2008, under the guidance of professors, students collected and recorded samples of speech, folklore, and ethnographic narratives and songs from the area where the Eastern Udmurts reside (Yanaul, Kaltasy, Tatyshly, and Ermekeyevo districts in the Republic of Bashkortostan). These materials require detailed analysis and research. The list of modern collectors of the musical and instrumental traditions of the Eastern Udmurts can be expanded to include Andrei Prokopyev (Udmurt ethnographer and ethnochoreographer) and Miklós Demeter (Hungarian musician and master of traditional instruments). In 2017, students from the Nazib Gajazovich Zhiganov Kazan State Conservatory, led by Leisan Khafizova, visited Udmurt villages in Tatyshly district. And in 2019, teachers and students from the Aleksandr Konstantinovich Glazunov Petrozavodsk State Conservatory worked in the same region of Bashkiria with the help of Pekka Huttu-Hiltunen, the Head of the Finnish Runo song Academy.

² The traditions of Ilishevo district, Republic of Bashkortostan, which, according to all scholars, remains poorly understood for various reasons, remained outside the scope of our research. The Udmurts residing in Ilishevo district (the villages of Knyaz-Elga, Votsky Meneuz and Tashkichi), which is geographically distant from the majority of the local diaspora, have been subject to strong Turkic influence. Furthermore, the populations of the villages of Knyaz-Elga and Votskiy Meneuz, who maintained long-term close contact and marital relationships with their Kryashen neighbours, have experienced strongest ethno-cultural influence from these neighbours (Sadikov, 2008, p. 13), leading to the loss of their native language, ethnic identity, and self-identification as Kryashens (Atamanov, 2005, p. 114; Sadikov, 2019, p. 282). In this context, the statements of ethnomusicologist Gennady Makarov, a professor at the Nazib Gajazovich Zhiganov Kazan State Conservatory are interesting: in one of his posts on the VKontakte social media platform, talking about his own expedition recordings of music and vocal samples from the Udmurt community in Ilishevo district in the Republic of Bashkortostan (the villages of Knyaz-Elga and Votsky Meneuz) he wrote that local musical folklore reflects Kryashen cultural symbiosis (Makarov, 2017: electronic resource). Udmurt identity, cultural heritage and native language have been preserved primarily among the residents of Tashkichi village. The study of this Udmurt group warrants special attention.

The song traditions of the Bavly Udmurts are documented in the Songs of the Udmurts from Bavly District in the Republic of Tatarstan compilation. This research has revealed that the musical expression of the Bavly Udmurts differs from that of the Eastern Udmurts in terms of their song heritage.

The musical folklore of the Krasnoufimsk Udmurts has not yet been the subject of special research, unlike that of Bavly Udmurts. Scientific studies on linguistics, history and ethnography have shown the strong influence of neighboring Mari culture on the local Udmurts and the loss of their native language, leading to their gradual assimilation. Due to these circumstances, as well as current difficulties in collecting Udmurt materials, this group was not included in our study.