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People of the Deer Living near Lake Baikal: Dynamics of Ethno-Cultural Identity of Modern Tofalars (Northern Asia, Eastern Siberia)

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The article presents the results of an integral study of the ongoing ethnic and cultural identification of the Tofalars, an indigenous small-numbered Siberian people who belong to the Turkic group and are concentrated in the Irkutsk Oblast.

The main methods of analysis were repeated interval field studies, comparative studies of the historical dynamics of Tofalars ethnic transformation, critical analysis of scientific sources. The author interprets the obtained results and gives certain forecasts of the ethnic, linguistic and cultural transformation of the Tofalars in the 21st century.

As the main conclusion, it should be noted that the increase in the number of Tofalars has been replaced by stabilization. The Tofalars make up more than half the population in Tofalaria. However, as regards the language, it is on the brink of extinction, the process is irreciprocal, the linguistic indicator is rapidly approaching zero with every decade, as generations change. Due to the limited number of representatives of any other nation, the number of mixed marriages has ceased to grow, and even has begun to decline, but still this indicator remains high. As a result, the share of ethnically and anthropologically mixed population for the Tofalars is on the rise: practically all Tofalars of the younger age groups are mestizoes.

Keywords: Eastern Siberia, Eurasia, indigenous peoples, Tofalars, ethnic identity, cultural identity, linguistic processes, interval studies, field studies, statistics.

Research area: culturology.

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Introduction

“Deer people”, or people of the deer, is the self-name of the smallest in number Turkic people of Eastern Siberia – Tofalars, who were called Karagas people in the 19th

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century. The Tofalars belong to the indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East (Fig. 1) and live in a remote areas – in the Mountain Tofalaria, located in the Irkutsk Oblast of the Russian Federation on the slopes of the of the Eastern Sayan massif, along the rivers Biryusa, Uda, Kan, Gutara, Iya (Fig. 2). Today, Tofalars actively fight for their fundamental rights, including the right to their native land where their ancestors – reindeer herders once roamed (Kerzelli, 1925; Petri, 1927; Pomishin, 1971; Sergeev, 1956). Modern Tofalars make up for a living by fishing and hunting, the northern groups of Tofalars – by reindeer herding. Deer are used by the Tofalars primarily as a means of transport.

The Tofalars today are dissatisfied with regional economic policy, when non-local businessmen enjoy the right to cut down cedar forests on the lands where the Tofalars lived¹. For the Tofalars these cedar forests are their hunting grounds.

Most Tofalars live compactly in three settlements in the Nizhneudinsk District of the Irkutsk Oblast. This is a very beautiful and isolated mountainous region called Tofalaria. You can get to it by air only. In winter, there are practically no men living in the villages of Tofalaria, as they all go into the taiga for hunting (however, some women are also in hunting). Today this is practically the only source of income for local residents. Tofalaria is abundant with sable, ermine, squirrel, Siberian weasel.

Tofalaria villages are supplied with all the necessary things by air. Therefore, helicopters carry not only people, but also food. Until 1948 industrial gold mining was developed in Tofalaria. After its termination, the region turned into an absolutely subsidized by the state area. The village of Alygdzher is the administrative centre of the Tofalar municipal district. Located on the right bank of the Uda River, 93 kilometres south-west of Nizhneudinsk, Alygdzher (in Tofalar meaning “wind”) is cut off by impassable mountains from the “big land”. Only a helicopter can be used to reach the village. Winter way is along the frozen riverbed, but this is a rather long (dozens of hours) and insecure journey.

In July 2017, residents of Tofalaria suffered a “transport shock”: the Nizhneudinsky District administration cancelled all benefits for air transport between Nizhneudinsk and Tofalaria settlements. Earlier, a ticket for a helicopter to Nizhneudinsk for Tofalaria residents cost 750 rubles, while beneficiaries flew for free. Now they have

¹ Tofalary, kotorykh ostalos' ne bolee 800 chelovek, obratilis' k Putinu – vyrubayut kedrovye lesa na ikh iskonnoj zemle [Tofalars, of which there are no more than 800 people left, appealed to Putin – they cut down the cedar forests on their ancestral land] (2018). In NEWSru.com. Available at: <https://realty.newsru.com/article/01jun2018/tofa>

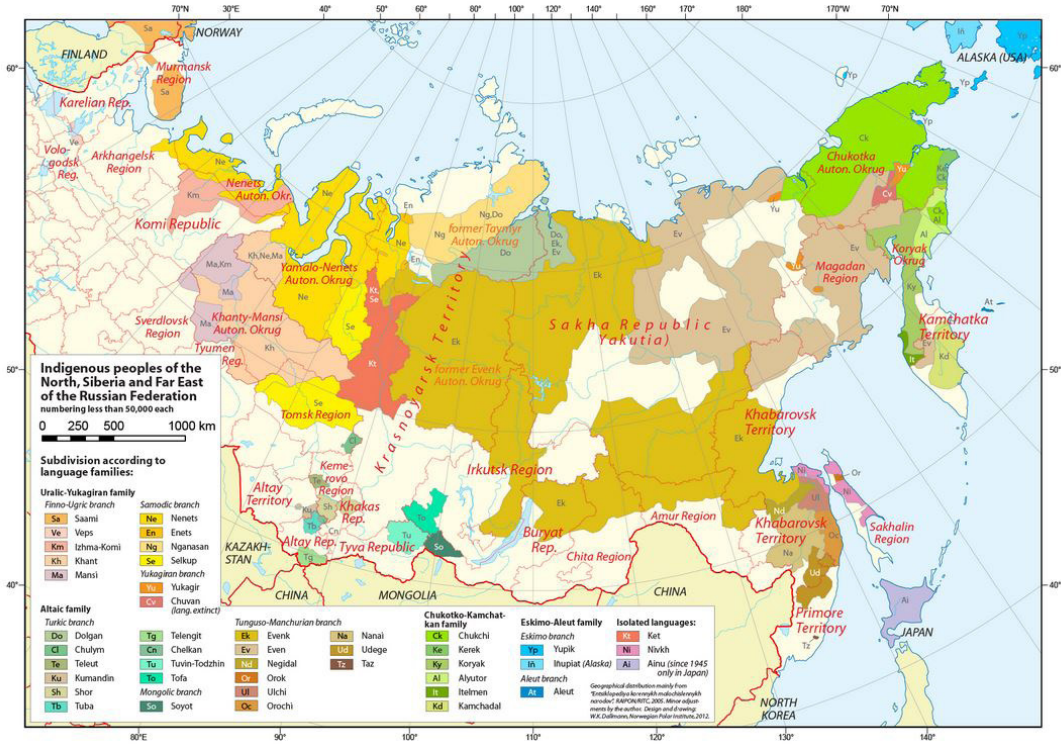


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

established a new fixed cost: the flight to villages Alygdzher and Upper Gutara costs 1500 rubles, while to the Nerkha village – 1300 rubles. At the same time, 7000 rubles is an economically justified ticket price. The difference is compensated by the local budget. Nevertheless, the Tofalars treated an increase in the cost of travel with great concern. They believe that the indigenous small-numbered peoples should have the right for moving for free on their land.

The Tofalar village Upper Gutara has a population of about 400 people. The settlement was established in the 1920s. A little later, there was a kolkhoz “Kyzyl-Tofa” (“Red Tofalaria”) and a fur farm was founded to breed foxes. The farm soon went bankrupt. Kolkhoz was disbanded in 1967 and included in the Tofalar cooperative fur farm enterprise. In Upper Gutara (as well as in other Tofalar villages) there is no telephone connection, only a radio set. Electricity is made by diesel generators. First planes reached Upper Gutara in 1953 only, before that, all deliveries had been made by the winter road, while in the summer nothing had been delivered to the village, so the population was starving. However, the construction of the airfield had not only positive consequences: the largest meadow with grass was turned into an aerodrome, local cattle breeding suffered because of the fodder reduction.

These cases show that modern Tofalars think of themselves as the indigenous people with specific rights to their territory. The level of ethno-cultural identification of the Tofalars is very high, despite the fact that today it is the smallest one (no more than 800 people) of the Turkic peoples in North Asia.

How did the Tofalars manage to maintain their indigenous identity in conditions when other peoples (for example, the Kereks – the Paleo-Asian Siberian people, the Alyutors – the disappearing Kamchatka people) have already lost this identity? And what is the basis of this identity in the third millennium, the era of globalization and modern technologies?

The purpose of this study is to reveal the dynamic processes of ethno-cultural identification of the Tofalars and current foundations for this identification.

Overview of Tofalar studies

Southern Siberia and the ethno-cultural groups that inhabit it have long been the subject of numerous scientific studies of various kinds (Vasilevich, Levin, 1951; Dolgikh, 1960; Weinstein, 1960, 1968; Forsyth, 1994; Ziker, 2002, 2003; Donahoe, 2004; Donahoe, Istomin, 2010; Evstrpyeva, 2013).

Reindeer husbandry as a traditional occupation for the Turkic peoples (including the Tofalars) in Siberia is the topic of lively scientific discussions (Kerzelli, 1925; Kudriavtsev, 1927; Chernyshev 1970; Anderson 1996, 2000; Kuryshov, 2006; Rassadin, 2013).

The Tofalars are analyzed in thorough scientific publications, including a number of monographs focusing on different aspects of their history, language and culture (Dioszegi, 1968; Rassadin, 1966, 1971, 1978, 2015, 2015; Mel'nikova, 1994). The undeniable merit of these works is that they are based on a comprehensive field ethnographic material – a unique source to study folk culture of any ethnos, to expand and deepen understanding of the research problems.

Ethnographic studies of the Tofalars date back to the birth of ethnography in the 19th century. The ancient name of the Tofalars is the Karagas people. Under this name the Tofalars were studied by such scientists as Iu.P. Stubendorf (1854), M.A. Castren (1857), P. Prelovskii (1868–1869), N. Kostrov (1871), A. Kolm (1873), I. Popov (1879), N.M. Astyrev (1889), I. Angarsky (1890, 1891), N.F. Katanov (1891), N.V. Zaleskii (1898), N.V. Vasil'ev (1910), I.A. Evsenin (1916, 1919), K.N. Mirotvortsev (1921), Ia.N. Khodukin, M.E. Zolotarev (1926), B.E. Petri (1926, 1927a, 1927b, 1927c, 1927d, 1928a, 1928b, 1928c), I. Pervukhin (1930), B. Chudinov (1931), Al. Smirnov-Sibirskii (1932a, 1932b), K.H. Menges (1959a, 1959b).

The general ethnological descriptions of Tofalars were made by such researchers as M.A. Sergeev (1940, 1956, 1964), V.P. Krivonogov (1987, 2008, 2016), M.V. Mongush (2012). The peculiarities of the traditional Tofalar economy were analyzed in the works of D. Solov'ev (1920), I.V. Rassadin (2000), M.V. Ragulina (2008). Traditional and modern forms of the Tofalars' social organization were studied by K.D. Harrison, G.D. Anderson (2008), S.A. Bakhtin (2010), S.A. Weinstein (1968, 1970). The Tofalar folklore was recorded and examined in the works of R.A. Sherkhunaev (1975), A.V. Prelovskii (2007), V.I. Rassadin (2013). Linguistic studies were conducted by N.P. Dyrenkova (1963), V.M. Nadeliaev (1969), L.D. Shagdarov (1968). Ethnic transformations of the Tofalars and peculiarities of their health state were investigated by V.P. Krivonogov (1988a, 1988b), L.V. Krivonogova (2007), L.I. Kolesnikova, V.V. Dolgikh, L.F. Sholokhov, E.E. Khramova, O.V. Kravtsova, V.I. Mikhnovich, T.V. Mandziak (2013).

For a long time the Tofalar language has not had a writing system. Creation of the writing language entailing relevant opportunities for the preservation and reproduction of the ethnocultural identity is a scientific feat of the outstanding Russian and Soviet

ethnolinguist Valentin Ivanovich Rassadin who not only created the Tofalar alphabet and compiled the primer, but also published dictionaries and textbooks for schoolchildren; he also made numerous linguistic studies of the Tofalar language (1965, 1968, 1969, 1972, 1976, 1985, 1989, 1995, 2005, 2008, 2009).

Integral study of the Tofalars

For the study of modern ethnic processes in different nations, interval research is often used as it is one of the most effective and efficient methods. Repetition of ethnosociological research at specific time intervals (most often once in 10 or 20 years) allows researchers to measure the dynamics of the ongoing ethnic processes and provides data for forecasting. Usually scientific papers refer to only two consecutive studies. But in Tofalaria we managed to carry out four interval studies according to one and the same procedure, respectively in 1985, 1995, 2005 and 2015 (Krivonogov, 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 2008, 2016). The Tofalars after the 1930s transition to a settled way of life live in three villages: Alygdzher, Upper Gutara and Nerkha, included in the Nizhneudinsky District of the Irkutsk Oblast. Tofalaria is the usual name for the southern, mountainous part of the Nizhneudinsky District. Connection with the non-mountainous areas, with the district centre, is mainly carried out by local aviation. In each of the four expeditions, a mass (100-percent coverage) survey of the Tofalar population was conducted with the help of a special ethnographic questionnaire. Besides adults, all children took part in a survey answering questions as retold by their parents in a reduced form. This article outlines the main dynamic indicators of ethnic processes for 4 distinctive times. The main attention is paid to the dynamics of population size, demographic indicators, ethno-linguistic processes, the dynamics of nationally mixed marriage and their consequences, i.e. the process of interethnic and interracial métisation (Krivonogova, 2007).

In addition to the materials of our expeditions, I could obtain information on the number and national composition of Tofalar mixed families for another date – 1966, by processing the household registers stored in local village Soviets. Thus, for over 50 years the dynamics of ethnic processes can be studied. The information on the number and sex-age composition is given in Table 1.

In the years indicated in the table, the total number of Tofalars on their ethnic territory varied: 522, 598, 681, 665 and 663 people. Until 1995, there was a steady increase, followed by a slight decline in number and stabilization. The share of children

Table 1. Age and sex composition of Tofalars (people)

age	1966		1985		1995		2005		2015	
	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f
80 and over	1	2	2	4	1	3	-	1	1	-
75-79	1	3	-	3	3	-	-	3	-	1
70-74	2	3	5	4	2	4	2	1	-	1
65-69	6	7	5	5	9	4	6	4	5	4
60-64	1	11	2	7	3	4	5	3	17	15
55-59	5	6	14	3	11	6	10	8	14	17
50-54	9	13	7	6	6	9	27	25	19	21
45-40	10	11	13	7	13	9	19	24	12	20
40-44	13	13	6	10	36	28	26	23	9	12
35-39	21	12	14	10	19	27	16	25	23	30
30-34	17	14	37	30	39	29	10	17	39	31
25-29	16	16	20	29	22	27	20	32	30	30
20-24	7	12	45	30	14	16	47	39	26	23
15-19	26	25	23	28	29	40	33	39	28	26
10-14	48	39	18	22	62	46	31	30	33	49
5-9	32	50	31	48	47	49	27	27	30	39
0-4	41	29	62	48	32	32	35	50	24	34
Total	256	266	304	294	348	333	314	351	310	353

under 10 in these years was 29.1%, 31.6%, 23.5%, 20.9% and 19.2%, respectively. These data indicate a gradual decline in fertility since the mid-1980s.

First of all, the dynamics of the number of Tofalars is affected by the ratio of fertility and mortality. Further, there is external (in relation to Tofalaria) migration – departure and return of the Tofalar population. And, finally, the fluctuations in the ethnic consciousness of the mestizo population (sometimes it happens that during their life, under the influence of one or another circumstance, people from mixed families change their previous ethnic self-determination.) In Apart from that, if the children got their ethnic self-identification as told by parents, decades later they can choose a nationality different from what was stated by parents earlier).

How did these three factors affect the number of Tofalars changing between our four studies?

During the first decade (1985–1995), 60 Tofalars died, 164 were born, 45 quit Tofalaria, 27 returned to Tofalaria, 5 people changed their ethnic self-identification from Tofalar to Russian, 2 people changed their ethnic self-identification from Russian to Tofalar. The total number of losses was 110 people, 193 new people appeared, so there was an increase of 83 people.

During the second decade (1995–2005), 99 Tofalars died, 139 were born, 56 left Tofalaria, 25 went back to Tofalaria, 28 people changed their ethnic self-identification from Tofalar to Russian, 3 people changed their ethnic self-identification from Russian to Tofalar. 183 previously counted people were not found, but 167 new ones appeared, so there was a decrease of 16 people.

In 2015, we recorded 115 deaths and 125 newly born, 62 people left Tofalaria, 21 people returned to Tofalaria, 4 people changed their ethnic self-identification from Tofalar to Russian, 33 people changed their ethnic self-identification from Russian to Tofalar. The population decrease in ten years was 2 people (-181, +179).

During all the studied period, the birth rate consistently decreased (164 – 139 – 125 people) with increased mortality (60 – 99 – 115 people). As a result, the natural increase fell down to a minimum (104 – 40 – 10 people), coming very close to zero (natural increase – only 1 person per year!).

Emigration outside the ethnic territory constantly increased (45 – 56 – 62 people) with the return flow gradually decreasing (27 – 25 – 21 people). The negative balance of migration reduced the number of Tofalars for each decade by 18, 31 and 41 people, respectively.

During the studied period the ethnic consciousness of the population was also changing: during the first decade the situation was stable, during the second decade there was a shift in indicators in favour of Russian self-identification, but in the third decade the pendulum was swinging, so the Tofalars self-identification strengthened. In the first decade, due to these fluctuations in self-identification, the Tofalars lost 3

Table 2. National composition of the Tofalar villages (1966, data of economic books)

	Alygdzher		Nerkha		Upper Gutara	
	people	%	people	%	people	%
Tofalars	227	44.7	117	63.9	178	50.1
Russians	269	52.9	59	32.3	170	47.9
Ukrainians					1	
Belorussians			1		1	
Tatars	8					
Buryats		2.4	1	3.8		2.0
Evenki			5		2	
Komi-Permyaks	1					
Koreans	1				3	
Tuvinians	1					
Estonians	1					
Total	508	100	183	100	355	100

Table 3. National composition of the Tofalar villages (1985)

	Alygdzher		Nerkha		Upper Gutara	
	people	%	people	%	people	%
Tofalars	231	42.4	143	74.5	224	65.9
Russians	300	55.0	44	22.9	106	31.2
Ukrainians	4		2		4	
Tatars	5		-		1	
Buryats	4		1		-	
Evenki	-		1		2	2.9
Germans	-	2.6	1	2.6	-	
Komi-Permyaks	1		-		-	
Aghuls						
Belorussians	-		-		1	
Koreans	-		-		1	
	-		-		1	
Total	545	100	192	100	340	100

Table 4. National composition of the Tofalar villages (1995)

	Alygdzher		Nerkha		Upper Gutara	
	people	%	people	%	people	%
Tofalars	250	47.0	168	70.9	263	65.6
Russians	273	51.3	62	26.2	128	31.9
Ukrainians	4		2		3	
Tatars	2		-		2	
Buryats	2		2		-	
Evenki	-		1		2	
Germans	-		1		-	
Aghuls	-	1.7	-	2.9	1	2.5
Chuvashes	1		-		-	
Khakasses	-		1		-	
Belorussians	-		1		1	
Mordvins	-		1		1	
Total	532	100	237		401	100

people, in the second – 25, but in the third decade for this reason the growth in the number of Tofalars was 29 people, so there is no loss by this indicator for the whole period of studies.

Changes in the number of Tofalars, as well as in the national composition of Tofalar villages, are shown in Tables 2–6.

In the largest settlement of Alygdzher, with all the fluctuations during 50 years, the share of the Tofalars remained the same, amounting to a little less than half the population of this village. In Nerkha, the share was stable – at about 70%, in Upper Gutara there was a continuous increase in the share of the Tofalars starting from half

Table 5. National composition of the Tofalar villages (2005)

	Alygdzher		Nerkha		Upper Gutara	
	people	%	people	%	people	%
Tofalars	228	43.8	149	69.0	288	65.2
Russians	282	54.1	62	28.7	145	32.8
Ukrainians	3		3		5	
Tatars	6		-		-	
Buryats	1		-		-	
Evenki	-		-		2	
Germans	-	2.1	2	2.3	-	2.0
Nenets	1		-		-	
Koryaks	-		-		1	
Aghuls	-		-		1	
Total	521	100	216	100	442	100

Table 6. National composition of the Tofalar villages (2015)

	Alygdzher		Nerkha		Upper Gutara	
	people	%	people	%	people	%
Tofalars	237	45.5	159	69.7	267	71.6
Russians	279	53.6	64	28.1	103	27.6
Ukrainians	1		3		1	
Tatars	2		-		-	
Buryats	1	0.9	2	2.2	-	0.8
Nenets	1		-		-	
Koryaks	-		-		1	
Aghuls	-		-		1	
Total	521	100	228	100	373	100

Table 7. Dynamics for the main nationalities of Tofalaria

	1966		1985		1995		2005		2015	
	people	%	people	%	people	%	people	%	people	%
Tofalars	522	49.9	598	55.5	681	58.2	665	56.4	663	59.1
Russians	498	47.6	450	41.8	463	39.6	489	41.5	446	39.7
Other	26	2.5	29	2.7	26	2.2	25	2.1	13	1.2
Total	1046	100	1077	100	1170	100	1179	100	1122	100

of the population, and exceeding 70% in the end. Previously, the majority of Tofalars in absolute terms had lived in Alygdzher, but later Upper Gutara outperformed this indicator (now 267 against 237 people). The highest proportion of Tofalars was always recorded in the smallest village – Nerkha, but more recently Upper Gutara has outperformed Nerkha, too (71.6% against 69.7%).

The number of Russians sometimes decreased, then increased, but in general, for half a century it somewhat declined, as well as the number of other newly-arrived nationalities (Table 7). The number of Tofalars also fluctuated, but nevertheless there is a noticeable tendency to increase, as over half a century their share grew from 50 to 60%.

Despite some predominance of the Tofalars in the population of the mountainous country, all three villages are mixed by national composition, so the language of interethnic communication is Russian. Four consecutive surveys showed a continuous decrease in all indicators of the Tofalar language (Table 8). Since the 1990s, the Tofalar language has been studied in the primary school, but this has not changed the situation. The Tofalar language is quickly disappearing and replaced by Russian. Less and less Tofalars name this language as their native and even less people use it in real life (Table 9). So far it has been called as native by 5.9% of the Tofalar families with only 0.5% using it in communication. When our expedition visited Tofalaria for the first time, in 1985, we often heard the Tofalar speech in the streets of settlements, in stores, etc., but during our last visit we never heard people speaking Tofalar. In Upper Gutara, the last two reindeer herders – the Kholiamoev brothers, Valery and Viacheslav, who know the language well, admitted that in the taiga, near their flock, they communicate with each other in Tofalar, but when they visit the village, both switch to Russian immediately.

Between the three villages there are small differences in the level of knowledge of the Tofalar language, but these differences are not fundamental, the constant language attrition has been fixed from the survey to the survey in all the villages.

The decrease in the language proficiency is revealed not only when we compare the indicators for different years, but also when we compare linguistic indicators in different age groups. We will show this by the example of the last study (Table 10).

Data on the native language are consistent with data on the level the Tofalar language knowledge (Table 11). As early as in 1985, only one of four respondents was fluent in Tofalar, by now only 3.3% people are able to speak this language. As for the Russian language, almost all Tofalars have learned it.

Data on the level of fluency in Tofalar, distributed by age group, indicate that not only children, but also middle-aged people are not able to speak the language very well (Table 12).

In absolute numbers, the number of people fluent in the Tofalar language fell to 22 people. All of them are elderly and their departure from life predetermines the fate of the language.

Table 8. Native language of the Tofalars (survey, %)

	Native language		
	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
1985	29.9	5.0	65.1
1995	16.1	5.3	78.6
2005	8.3	4.5	87.2
2015	3.3	2.6	94.1

Table 9. The main spoken language of the Tofalars (survey, %)

	Main spoken language		
	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
1985	6.9	6.8	86.3
1995	2.8	4.8	92.4
2005	0.3	1.2	98.5
2015	-	0.5	99.5

Table 10. The native language of the Tofalars in different age groups (survey, 2015, %)

Age	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
70 and over	66.7	-	33.3
60-69	26.8	17.1	56.1
50-59	7.0	11.3	81.7
40-49	3.8	-	96.2
30-39	0.8	0.8	98.4
20-29	0.9	-	99.1
10-19	-	0.7	99.3
under 10	-	-	100

Table 11. Level of the Tofalar language knowledge (survey, %)

	Speak the Tofalar language				
	Fluently	With some difficulties	With certain difficulties	Understand only	Do not speak
1985	25.1	8.7	7.9	18.7	39.6
1995	14.4	5.1	9.0	18.4	53.1
2005	9.2	3.3	7.1	15.5	64.9
2015	3.3	1.5	5.0	12.2	78.0

The Russian language prevails not only in communication with other nationalities, but also within the Tofalar families themselves. Younger generation more often uses the Tofalar language in communication with their parents, however, the relevant indicators fell below 10% (Table 13–18). For other age groups the use of the Tofalar language

Table 12. Level of the Tofalar language knowledge in different age groups (survey, 2015, %)

	Speak the Tofalar language				
	Fluently	With some difficulties	With certain difficulties.	Understand only	Do not speak
70 and over	66.7	33.3	-	-	-
60-69	29.3	12.2	14.6	24.4	19.5
50-59	9.9	4.2	22.5	33.8	29.6
40-49	1.9	-	13.2	32.1	52.8
30-39	-	0.8	2.4	16.3	80.5
20-29	-	-	0.9	7.3	91.8
10-19	-	-	-	1.5	98.5
under 10	-	-	-	-	100

Table 13. Main languages used by the Tofalars in communication with their parents (survey, %)

	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
1985	23.3	14.3	62.4
1995	12.2	14.5	73.3
2005	5.3	11.0	83.7
2015	1.8	6.8	91.4

Table 14. Main languages used by the Tofalars in communication with their brothers and sisters (survey, %)

	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
1985	11.3	11.9	76.8
1995	4.8	8.4	86.8
2005	2.1	5.0	92.9
2015	0.6	2.4	97.0

Table 15. Main languages used by the Tofalars in communication with their friends (survey, %)

	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
1985	6.1	22.8	71.1
1995	0.9	14.2	84.9
2005	0.3	10.1	89.6
2015	0.2	3.9	95.9

Table 16. Main languages used by the Tofalars in communication with their spouses (survey, %)

	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
1985	22.5	9.1	68.4
1995	10.4	9.6	80.0
2005	2.5	5.6	91.9
2015	0.3	1.8	97.9

Table 17. Main languages used by the Tofalars in communication with their children (survey, %)

	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
1985	7.2	15.0	77.8
1995	1.2	8.4	90.4
2005	1.4	3.1	95.5
2015	-	0.7	99.3

Table 18. Main languages used by the Tofalars in communication at work (survey, %)

	Tofalar	Tofalar and Russian	Russian
1985	3.9	23.8	72.3
1995	1.4	16.3	82.3
2005	0.8	5.3	93.9
2015	-	1.7	98.3

Table 19. National composition of Tofalar families

Families	1966	1985	1995	2005	2015
Marriage to a person of the same nationality	79	90	101	112	117
Mixed marriages	34	75	88	85	81
including					
- to Buryats	1	2	2	-	2
- to Evenki	1	3	3	1	-
- to Khakasses	-	-	1	-	-
- to Koryaks	-	-	-	1	1
- to Koreans	1	1	-	-	-
- to Russians	28	60	71	76	75
- to Ukrainians	-	5	6	5	2
- to Belorussians	1	1	1	-	-
- to Germans	-	1	1	1	-
- to Tatars	-	1	1	1	1
- to Mordvins	-	-	1	-	-
- to Chuvashes	-	-	1	-	-
- to Komi-Permyaks	1	1	-	-	-
- to Tuvinians	1	-	-	-	-
% of nationally mixed marriages	30.1	45.5	46.6	43.1	40.9

reduced to 1–2% of the respondents. In younger age groups this language is not spoken at all.

Nationally mixed marriages exert a significant influence on the ethnic processes, especially this concerns small-numbered peoples. From the 1960s to the 1980s, the number of such marriages increased rapidly, but then the growth stabilized and stopped, but at a very high level (Table 19). Stabilization occurred as a result of a small number of potential marriage partners of other nationalities. As there are not so many non-aboriginal people, the growth stopped, having reached the maximum theoretical probability.

Table 20. National composition of the Tofalar couples in 1966

	Tofalars	Buryats	Evenki	Tuvinians	Russians	Komi-Permyaks	Belorusians	Koreans	% mixed marriages
Male	49	1	1	1	19			1	31.9
Female	49				7	1	1		15.5

Table 21. National composition of the Tofalar couples in 1985

	Tofalars	Buryats	Evenki	Russians	Ukrainians	Komi-Permyaks	Germans	% mixed marriages
Male	47	1		25	2			37.3
Female	47		2	30	2	1	1	43.4

Table 22. National composition of the Tofalar couples in 1995

	Tofalars	Buryats	Evenki	Russians	Ukrainians	Belorusians	Tatars	Mordvins	Germans	Khakasses	Chuvashes	% mixed marriages
Male	60	1		22	1	1	1				1	31.0
Female	60		2	39	5			1	1	1		45.0

Table 23. National composition of the Tofalar couples in 2005

	Tofalars	Koryaks	Evenki	Russians	Ukrainians	Tatars	Germans	% mixed marriages
Male	73			22	1			24.0
Female	73	1	1	47	2	1	1	42.1

Table 24. National composition of the Tofalar couples in 2015

	Tofalars	Koryaks	Buryats	Russians	Ukrainians	Tatars	% mixed marriages
Male	68			19	1		22.7
Female	68	1	1	48	1	1	43.3

Data on the total number of mixed marriages are supplemented by figures describing the national composition of married couples (Tables 20–24).

As for men, the number of marriages to women of other nationalities had grown until 1985, but then this indicator began to decline. In the past, the number of mixed

Table 25. Dynamics of the Tofalar population métisation and mestizo types (survey data)

	Pureblood	Mestizo types		
		Mixed with Mongoloid	Mixed with Mongoloid and European	Mixed with European
1985, people	214	25	47	312
%	35.8	4.2	7.8	52.2
1995, people	202	26	79	374
%	29.7	3.8	11.6	54.9
2005, people	148	22	110	385
%	22.3	3.3	16.5	57.9
2015, people	83	22	144	414
%	12.5	3.3	21.7	62.5

Table 26. The share of mestizoes in different Tofalar age groups in 2015

	1*	2*	3*	4*
80 and over	100	-	-	-
70-79	-	50	-	50
60-69	29.3	-	4.9	65.8
50-59	29.6	8.4	11.3	50.7
40-49	24.5	9.5	9.4	56.6
30-39	7.3	3.3	19.5	69.9
20-29	15.6	-	23.8	60.6
10-19	7.3	1.5	34.6	56.6
under 10	-	3.1	25.2	71.7

*1 – Purebred Tofalars; 2 – Mixed with Mongoloid; 3 – Mixed with Mongoloid and European; 4 – Mixed with European.

marriages for men was double the number of mixed marriages for women, but this share for women rose faster, so women had overtaken men in this matter by 1985. And in the future, unlike the situation for men, the number of such marriages for women instead of decreasing stabilized at a point above 40%.

Although there was stable proportion of mixed marriages, the percentage of the mestizo population continued to grow further (Table 25), as people of mixed origin (they are considered to be of the same nationality though) married each other, therefore the mestizo children were born not so much in mixed families, but in such families where parents had the same national identity. The proportion of mestizoes among Tofalars approximated to 90%, and among children it reached 100%.

214 people declared themselves purebloods at the beginning of our studies, and they accounted for 35.8% of the people, but now the number of purebloods is 83 people only (12.5%).

Table 27. Dynamics of the Europeoids share among the Tofalars

	Europeoids share			
	no	less than ½	½	over ½
1985	40.0	15.9	28.4	15.7
1995	33.5	18.8	29.8	17.9
2005	25.6	19.5	34.1	20.8
2015	15.8	24.3	34.7	25.2

Table 28. Share of Europeoid mestizoes in different Tofalar age groups in 2015 (%)

Age	Europeoids share			
	no	less than ½	½	over ½
80 and over	100	-	-	-
70-79	50	-	50	-
60-69	29.3	21.9	41.5	7.3
50-59	38.0	18.3	39.5	4.2
40-49	34.0	17.0	41.5	7.5
30-39	10.6	27.6	33.3	28.5
20-29	15.6	25.7	37.6	21.1
10-19	8.8	26.5	29.4	35.3
0-9	3.1	25.2	31.5	40.2

Of the people of mixed origin, the overwhelming majority attribute themselves to the Tofalars. As for two-parent families with children, in 1985 96.0% of children were recorded as the Tofalars, in 1995 this number dropped slightly to 95.5%, in 2005 – to 79.6%, in 2015 it increased to 85.1%. Doing the survey, we included in the Tofalars only those mestizoes who attributed themselves to this nationality, and from children – those whom their parents named the Tofalars.

The predominance of the ethnic self-identification is associated with the stability of the national self-awareness of Tofalars, also supported by various state benefits for the indigenous minorities of the North. In 2005, our survey showed a certain weakening of ethnic self-awareness, mainly because of mestizoes who have a small number of the Tofalar ancestors, but next the hope for state benefits made Tofalar self-identification the preferred one once again.

Data on the composition of different age groups show the dynamic progress of the métisation process. Younger age groups have literally no purebred Tofalars.

Some mestizoes come from mixed families (when the Tofalars get married to neighbouring Siberian peoples (Tuvans, Evenks, Buryats)). Their appearance is practically no different from purebred Tofalars, but their number is a little more than 3% only, whereas the children in other mixed families (one parent is of the Russian or

other European nation origin) differ in appearance. It should be said that the Europeoid component is distributed unevenly among Tofalars, e.g., there are half Europeans (for example, from families where the father is Russian and the mother is Tofalar), three quarters Europeans (for example, from families where the father is Russian and the mother is a mestizo), or one-fourth Europeans (one of the spouses is a mestizo, the second is a purebred Tofalar). This is shown in Table 27.

From study to study, the number of Europeoid mestizoes with different proportions of the Europeoid ancestors is increasing, and now for every fourth Tofalar the Europeoid component in exceeds the aboriginal one (25.2% by 2015). Table 28 shows how the Europeoid genetic background grows from the older age groups to the younger ones.

Now most of the children look more like Russians.

Conclusion

Summarizing, I can say that the Tofalars undergo processes that are characterized by the following. Decrease in natural population growth and departure from their traditional ethnic territory could have significantly reduced the number of Tofalars, but this loss is compensated by the high level of Tofalar self-identification of the mestizo population. As a result, the growth in the number of Tofalars was driven out by stabilization. The share of the Tofalar population among the village inhabitants is the same, the Tofalars make up more than half of the population in Tofalaria. However, with regard to linguistic parameter, one can observe rapid language attrition, the processes here are irreversible: with every decade the language knowledge is increasingly approaching zero with the change of generations. Due to the limited number of non-aboriginal people, the number of mixed marriages has ceased to grow and even has begun to decline, still remaining at a relatively high level. As a result, the share of ethnically and anthropologically mixed population is booming among the Tofalars, in the younger age groups almost all Tofalars are mestizoes.

The Tofalars quickly and irrevocably turn into a group of Russian-speaking mestizoes, though retaining a stable specific national identity. Maintaining this special ethnic identity is facilitated by a relatively small number of newcomers, steady adherence of the indigenous population to traditional occupations in taiga, and state support for small-numbered peoples.

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**Оленные люди, живущие возле озера Байкал:
процессы этнокультурной идентичности
современных тофаларов
(Северная Азия, Восточная Сибирь)**

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В статье представлены результаты интегрального исследования процессов этнической и культурной идентификации тофаларов, коренного малочисленного народа Сибири, принадлежащего к тюркской группе и компактно проживающего на территории Иркутской области.

Основные методы анализа – это интервальные полевые исследования, сделанные с определенным временным промежутком, сравнительные исследования исторической динамики этнической трансформации тофаларов. Применялся критический анализ научных источников. Была сделана интерпретация полученных результатов и определенные прогнозы этнической, лингвистической и культурной трансформации тофаларов в XXI веке.

В качестве основного вывода следует отметить, что рост числа тофаларов сменился стабилизацией. Тофалары составляют более половины населения Тофаларии. Однако что касается языка, можно констатировать его стремительный уход из жизни народа; здесь процессы однолинейны – с каждым десятилетием языковой показатель быстро приближается к нулю, по мере смены поколений. В связи с ограниченным количеством инонационального населения количество смешанных браков перестало расти и даже начало сокращаться, однако оставалось на достаточно высоком уровне. В результате быстро нарастает доля этнически и антропологически смешанного населения в составе тофаларов, в младших возрастных группах практически все тофалары – метисы.

Ключевые слова: Восточная Сибирь, Евразия, коренные народы, тофалары, этническая идентичность, культурная идентичность, лингвистические процессы, интервальные исследования, полевые исследования, статистика.

Научная специальность: 24.00.00 – культурология.
