

known architect and artist in Izhevsk, the capital of Udmurt Republic, where he has also been active in matters of revitalisation of Udmurt traditions. As a member of the Izhevsk association of the Eastern Udmurt, he and the head of that organisation, Flyura Chibysheva, organised the rebirth of the *Elen vös'* ceremony in 2008 (FWM 2018<sup>10</sup>).

This important ceremony, which is indeed attended by Udmurts from most Bashkortostan districts and other regions inhabited by Eastern Udmurt<sup>11</sup>, has been very illuminating in revealing the differences today in living traditions (FWM 2019<sup>12</sup>), proving that no standardisation of the ceremonies is going on (we shall comment on this later).

Although this is not the main topic of this book, it is important to notice that collective ceremonies are not the only ritual practice alive in this region. Indeed, in all of the Udmurt territories, private rituals have been much better preserved than collective ones. They were submitted to less publicity and could be performed without state control (see Toulouze & Vallikivi 2021). Commemorations of the dead, seasonal prayers<sup>13</sup>, weddings, rituals around childbirth, etc., are performed according to traditional rules, often also in Udmurtia in areas in which the Russian Orthodox Church is strong, in syncretism with Christian practices. But we shall not develop this theme here.

## The collective ceremonies in Tatyshly district

As we already mentioned, Tatyshly district is overwhelmingly agrarian, with a majority Turkic Muslim population and a cluster of Udmurt villages. Here, Udmurt religious practice has been widely preserved. It is certainly not the only place: in Yanaul district there are some villages, such as Kaymashabash, where there has been no interruption of religious practice (FWM 2019<sup>14</sup>). In Tatyshly district, active practice encompasses more than one village, or even more than one village level. Here the 19 villages are connected into a ceremonious system at three, or even four levels. This system functions most fully for the spring ceremonies, whose cycle is supposed to finish around the summer solstice.

<sup>10</sup> Conversations with Kasim Galikhanov 2018/07 and Flyura Chibysheva 2018/07.

<sup>11</sup> The Eastern Udmurt inhabit not only Bashkortostan but also the Kuyeda district of Perm kray. There are also many Eastern Udmurt living in Udmurtia.

<sup>12</sup> *Elen vös'* 2019, Staryy Varyash, Yanaul district, Bashkortostan.

<sup>13</sup> See Toulouze 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Kaymashabash, Yshtiyak vös', July 2019.

