

Classification of the Hill Mari meteorological folk omens

Clasificación de las predicciones meteorológicas populares de Hill Mari

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ABSTRACT:

The article is devoted to analysis and description of the Hill Mari meteorological folk omens, which were divided into 5 groups by the type of phenomenon, which is predicted: 1) precipitation omens, 2) cold weather omens, 3) warm weather omens, 4) flood omens, 5) common weather omens. Omens of precipitation form the largest group in number, which consists of several subgroups, distinguished by the type of precipitation: rain omens, snow omens, hail omens, wet weather omens. The division into subgroups is carried out on the basis of content of conditions in omens: 1) the characteristics of atmospheric phenomena, 2) the behavior of representatives of the animal world and plants, 3) the weather conditions during religious holidays, 4) the physical condition of a human, 5) the phenomena associated with household objects and technical devices. Percentage diagrams represent the ratio of different groups and subgroups of omens. Conclusions about the time, origin, and other features of the omens, and the lifestyle of the Hill Mari people are made on the basis of the phenomena and objects mentioned in the omens.

Keywords: Hill Mari, meteorological folk

RESUMEN:

El artículo está dedicado al análisis y la descripción de las predicciones meteorológicas populares de Hill Mari, que se dividieron en 5 grupos por el tipo de fenómeno que se predice: 1) predicciones de precipitación, 2) predicciones de clima frío, 3) predicciones de clima cálido, 4) augurios de inundaciones, 5) predicciones meteorológicas comunes. Predicciones de precipitación forman el grupo más grande en número, que consiste en varios subgrupos, que se distinguen por el tipo de precipitación: predicciones de lluvia, predicciones de nieve, predicciones, predicciones del clima húmedo. La división en subgrupos se lleva a cabo sobre la base del contenido de las condiciones en los augurios: 1) las características de los fenómenos atmosféricos, 2) el comportamiento de los representantes del mundo animal y las plantas, 3) las condiciones climáticas durante las festividades religiosas, 4) el condición física de un humano, 5) los fenómenos asociados con objetos domésticos y dispositivos técnicos. Los diagramas de porcentajes representan la proporción de diferentes grupos y subgrupos de predicciones. Las conclusiones sobre el tiempo, el origen y otras características de las predicciones y el estilo de vida de los habitantes de Hill Mari se basan en los fenómenos y objetos mencionados en las predicciones.

1. Introduction

Until the beginning of the century of modern technologies, people anticipated the upcoming events on the grounds of the phenomena surrounding them. Repeated signs were established, preserved and passed from generation to generation in the form of folk omens. In the Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian language, an omen is understood as a phenomenon or a case that is popularly considered to be foreknowledge of anything (Ozhegov, Shvedova, 1999, p. 594).

Mari omens have long attracted the attention of connoisseurs of the Mari literature. They were published in the first periodicals in the Mari language, in particular, in the "Mari Calendar". They were the subject of linguists' research. A.E. Kitikov made a great effort by collecting and systematizing the Meadow Mari and the Hill Mari omens (Kitikov, 1989). The Hill Mari omens are given in the works of F.T. Gracheva (Gracheva, 2001). Superstitious component in the Mari language in comparison with the Russian and English languages is analyzed by Y.Y. Fliginskikh, S. L. Yakovleva, R. A. Kudryavtseva, K. Yu. Badina and S. S. Akeldina (Fliginskikh, 2017, pp. 50-58; Fliginskikh, Yakovleva, Kudryavtseva, Badina and Akeldina, 2016, pp. 1634-1640.).

Omens for the research were collected from different sources. These are interviews with native speakers of the Hill Mari Language from different settlements of the Gornomariyskiy district: V.Z. Vorontsova and L.A. Vorontsova from the village of Tsyganovo, G.P. Petrova from the village of Sarapayevo, L. I. Kapitonova and M.G. Kapitonova from the village of Vilovatovo, S.Kh. Opleva from the village of Pyatilipovka, E.Z.Opleva and I.V. Trubyanova from the village of Pernyangashi; omens collections compiled by A.E. Kitikov (Kitikov, 1989) and F.T. Gracheva (Gracheva, 2001).

The Hill Mai meteorological omens make a large group. Since the main activity of the Hill Mari people was agriculture, cattle and poultry breeding, beekeeping, gathering, and fishing, it becomes obvious that the weather conditions had a great impact on the yield and, as a consequence, on the prosperity of the family, therefore meteorological omens were very important.

Currently, people use the weather forecast in order to learn about the upcoming weather. However, even the forecasts of meteorological services are not always true, and people still appeal to folk omens.

2. Method and Results

The analysis of meteorological omens demanded traditional methods and techniques of collecting and systematizing folklore material. The classification of omens was conducted by using the descriptive, semantic, typological and counting methods.

During the analysis of weather phenomena, which are predicted, the following groups of omens were distinguished: 1) precipitation omens, 2) cold weather omens, 3) warm weather omens, 4) flood omens, 5) common weather omens. The percentage of different groups of meteorological omens indicates the primary importance of particular natural phenomena mainly for the agricultural activities of the Hill Mari people (Diagram 1).

Omens about the upcoming precipitation make up more than half of all meteorological omens (51%), most of which predict rain (Diagram 2). Rain is almost the main natural factor affecting yields at relatively constant seasonal favorable climatic temperature regimes in the territory of living of the Hill Mari people.

Diagram 1. Percentage ratio of the Hill Mari meteorological folk omens

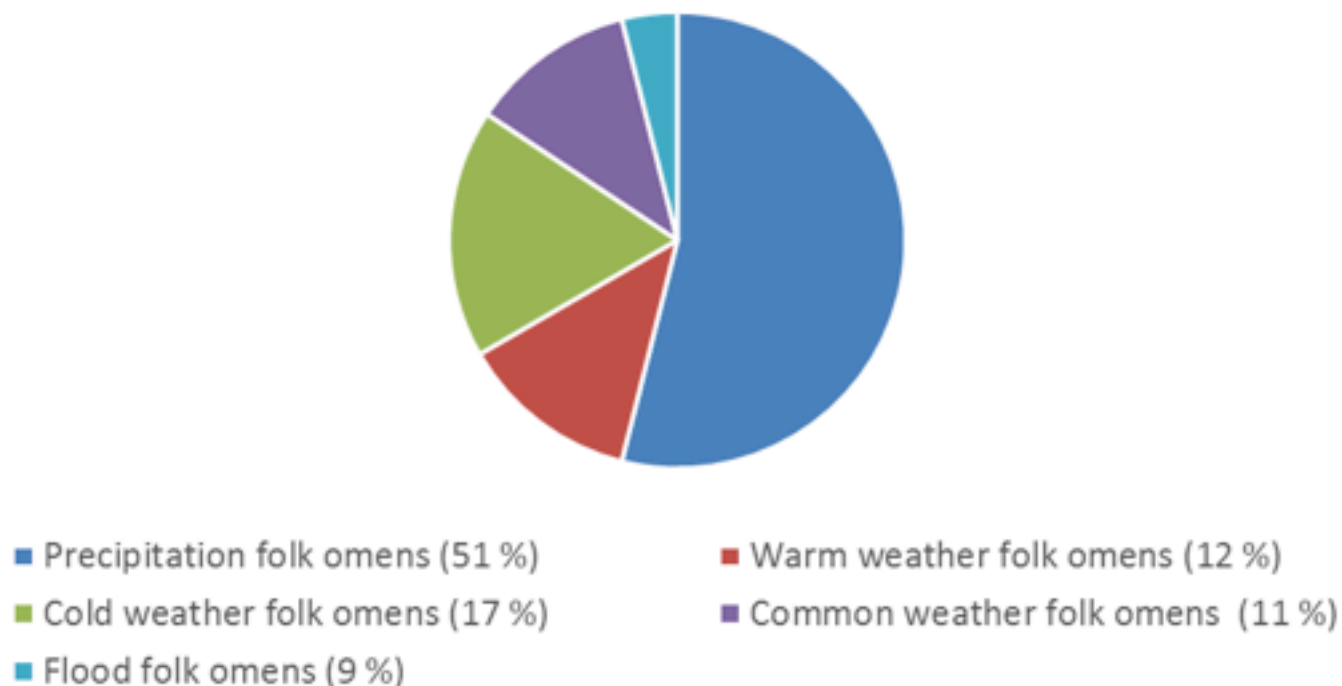
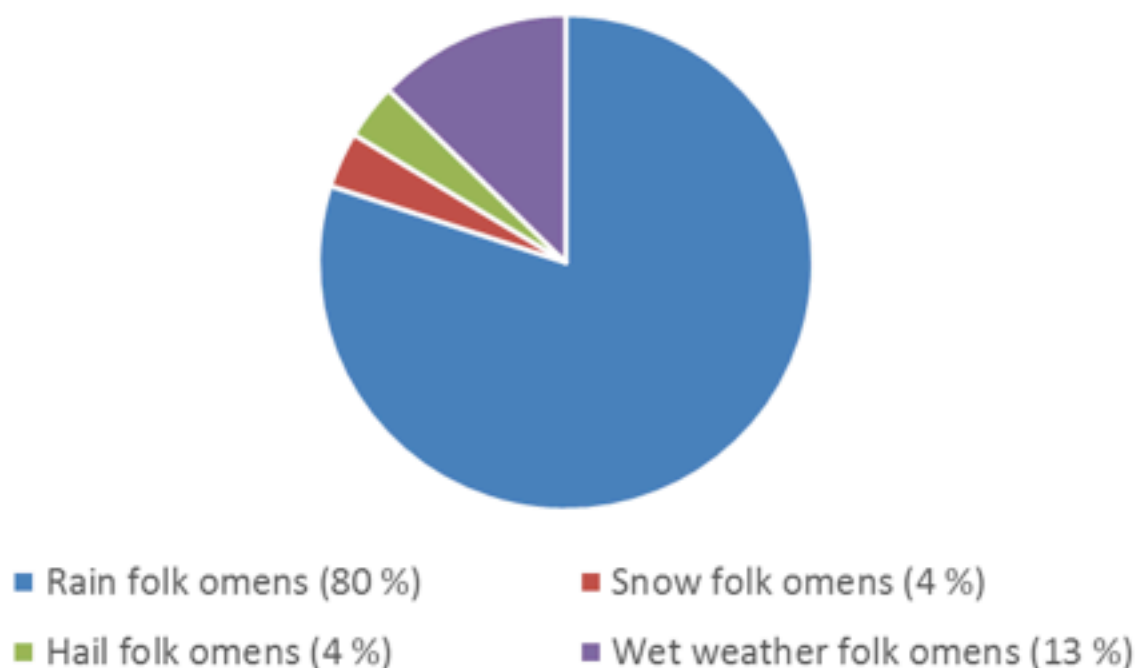


Diagram 2. Percentage ratio of the Hill Mari folk omens predicting different types of precipitation



The signs of the coming rain are changes in the sky itself. They include observations of the shape and color of the clouds, the rays of the sun: «Вадеш кечы шынцмы годым, явләм колта гынь, вес кечеш юр толеш». 'If the sun radiates rays during the sunset, it will rain next day' (Orleva, S.Kh.). «Кечы пиш когон пыц розовый гынь, юр лин кердеш». 'If the sun is bright, dark pink - it can rain' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 101). «Пыл шымәләнә - юр лиэш». 'If the clouds are rosy, it may rain' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 106). «Кечы пичангын гынь, лывыргы лиэш». 'If the sun is circled, the weather will be wet' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 226).

Within the group of rain omens there is a subdivision by the signs based on observations of the behavior of animals, birds, insects, plants, which indicate the occupation of the Hill Mari people by agriculture, poultry farming, cattle breeding, forestry, in general, close connection with nature.

There was a plot of land or a vegetable garden at any Hill Mari household, and the observations of its vegetation were also transformed into omens: «Кавштавичшты сар пеледыш пызыргә гынь, юр толеш». 'If the yellow flowers are closed in the vegetable garden, it will rain' (Kitikov,

1989, p. 112). «Тыл пеледышшыты лыпывлә шуку ылыт гынь, юр лишашлык». 'If there are a lot of butterflies on the cuckooflower, it will rain' (Kitikov, 2001, p. 113). «Ош табак юран игечылан пеледыш цашкавләжым пачын шында». 'Before the rain fragrant tobacco buds are open' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 113).

Deductions of the approaching weather phenomena are based on the behavior of domestic animals, small rodents and insects: «Цама онгырешнен кыдалыштеш гынь, юр толеш». 'If the colt runs neighing, it will rain soon' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 115). «Аяр выр-выр күш чонгештә гынь, аяран лиэш, үлыкы - юр толеш». 'If the ladybird flies upwards – the weather will be bright, if it flies down – it will rain' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 225). «Йылвлә земләм ражтен шында гынь, юр толеш». 'If earthworms make holes in the earth, it will rain' (Opleva, E.Z.) The omens, in which a haystack is mentioned, confirm that the Hill Mari were engaged in the preparation of hay and kept cattle: «Каля пыжашым капна покшалан опта гынь, шыжы юран лиэш». 'If the mouse makes a nest in the middle of the haystack, the autumn will be rainy' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 216). Mentioning of a shard beetle also proves that the Hill Mari kept cattle: 'If shard beetles do not fly In the evening, it will rain soon' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 130).

The Hill Mari always kept a cat and a dog in the house. The behavior of these domestic animals also predicted the upcoming events, in particular, rain: «Пи пәрдалеш гынь, телым - поран, кәнгыжым юр лиэш». 'If the dog is wallowing on the ground, there will be snowstorm in winter, and rain - in summer' (Trubyanova, I.V.). «Коти әли пи шудым качкыт гынь, юр толеш». 'If a cat or a dog eats grass, it will rain' (Vorontsova V.Z.).

Besides agriculture, the Hill Mari were engaged in fishing, which is proved by a number of careful observations of ponds' and rivers' surface, inhabitants and plants, recorded in the form of omens: «Пигол тыр веремән вьд пындашеш йымырген вазеш». 'If the loach hides in the mud, the weather will be clear' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 167). «Пренәвлә йәршыты вуйым лыктын шында – юр лиэш». 'If the twigs put out their ends in the lake, it will rain' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 130). «Юр толмы анзыц шүнгәвлә тәрванәт, ик сир гыц вес сирыш каштыт». 'Before the rain, the hummocks float from one side to the other' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 127).

Due to keenness of observation of the Hill Mari fishermen, there were omens about different behavior of leeches before certain types of precipitation or other weather phenomena: «Юр анзыц вьдпыйивлә вьлны киәт әль, йыгыре-йыгыре пеле якте вьд гыц лактын, изи ямдарла кечәлтят». 'Before the rain, leeches lie on the surface of the water or are exposed half as flasks' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 134). «Хыдыртыш лимешкы луаткок-луатныл цаш анзыц вьдпыйивлә тыргыжланаш тынгәлыт, какляргылыт, вьд гыц ләктыт». 'Half a day before the storm, leeches begin to worry, trying to wriggle out of the water' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 144).

Omens make it possible to judge how and in what way the food was cooked in the old days, while people's thoughts were again focused on the rain: «Пад пындаш юр анзыц ынгеш». 'The bottom of the boiler will light up while cooking before the rain' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 128). «Камака олтымы годым трубаштышы сыцеш тыл инжеш гынь, начка лиэш». 'If the fire of the furnace burns in a pipe on soot, the weather will be wet' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 216).

Omens containing signs of trees and plants, which predict rain, tell us that the Hill Mari owned some knowledge of the forest: «Кукшы лымегож аяран виәнә, юрлан лывырга». 'A dry juniper straightens to a bright weather, and becomes more flexible to a rainy weather'. (Kitikov, 1989, p. 161). «Кукшы лымегож ваштыр юр толмы анзыц лывырга». 'A branch of dry juniper becomes flexible before the rain' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 111).

The beginning of rain is predicted by the physical condition of a human: «Кечывәлын монгарлан нелы - юр толеш». 'If the man's bones ache in the afternoon, it will rain' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 126). «Пылыш легештә – юрлан». 'If an ear scratches, it will rain' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 126). «Сотыгечын ом шоэш – юр толеш». 'If a person feels sleepy, it will rain' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 225).

Folk omens about natural phenomena can be based on the peculiarities of passage of the very natural phenomena, as in the example with rain: «Ирокшы юр кечывәлеш цәрнә; кечывәлын

пыра гынь, суткаш шокта; вадеш толеш – амалаш кодеш». 'The morning rain will finish for dinner, the midday rain will last for 24 hours, the evening rain will pour until the morning (will stay for the night)' (Vorontsova, V.Z.). «Обед годым пырышы юр кужын юреш». 'The rain, which has begun at around lunch, will last a long time'. (Gracheva, 2001, p. 219). «Ирокок шокшы шалга гынь, хыдыртышан юрым вычы». 'If it has been hot since morning, wait for a thunderstorm rain' (Petrova G.P.).

The next group with fewer number of folk omens is compiled of cold weather omens. They may be divided into two groups, one of which is based on observations of natural phenomena, animals and plants, the other on the behavior of technical devices when the cold approaches. Accordingly, it can be argued that the omens from the first group have deeper roots, came from the antiquity, the second group is the most modern, based on the innovations of the 20th century.

The folk omens, predicting cold weather by the character of natural phenomena and animals' behavior, include the following examples: «Шыжым пызылмы шуку гынь, тел ұшты лиэш». 'If there is a lot of rowan berries in autumn, the winter will be cold' (Opleva, S.Kh.). «Кеккомбы кужы стрелка дон чонгештат гынь, ұшты лиэш». 'If the wild geese fly in a long wedge, the weather will be cold' (Vorontsova V. Z.). «Шынгыртшы игым айырымешкы ұшты ак тол, айырымыкы, ик ұшты толеш». 'Untill the starling does not separate the chick, there will be no frost, as soon as it separates, it will be frosty once' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 227). «Коти амалым годым нержым лапа дон мүдә гынь, ұшты лиэш». 'If a cat covers the nose with its paw while sleeping, it will be cold' (Vorontsova V.Z.) «Комбы пельяла шалга, ұшты толеш». 'If the goose stands on one leg, it will be cold' (Trubyanova I.V.). «Пи мындырала пйтйрналт вазын гынь, үкшыктә». 'If a dog curled up, it would be cold' (Petrova G.P.). «Коти камакаш куза гынь - ұшты лиэш». 'If a cat has climbed onto the stove, it will be cold' (Kapitonova, L.I.). «Тум эхель шуку шачеш гынь, тел ұшты лиэш». 'If there are a lot of acorns this year, the winter will be cold' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 227). «Кужынер сотышкы ләктеш гынь – үкшыктә». 'If the mosquito flies out into the light, it will be cold' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 56). «Ангыр пачылтмы (Йыл кемй) годым үкшыктә». 'When the ice in the rivers breaks up (the Volga starts moving), it gets colder' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 225). «Телым труба гыц шыкш төр куза гынь, ұшты лиэш». 'If the smoke rises straight from the pipe in winter, it will be cold' (Opleva S.Kh.)

The group of folk omens, based on the descriptions of changes associated with technical devices, consists of the following examples: «Свет провадашты шуку кек шыңзә гынь, ұшты толеш». 'If there are a lot of birds sitting on the electric line, it will be cold' (Vorontsova V.Z.). «Телефон мәнги мыра – ұштеш». 'If the telephone pole buzzes, there will be frost' (Kapitonova M. G.) «Пароход юк мындыркы шакта гынь, үкшыктә». 'If the horns of steamers are heard far away, it will be cold' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 145).

As for the ratio of omens, bases on changes in natural phenomena and technical devices, the first group is larger than the second.

All the folk omens, which predict warming, being collected during the research, are based on descriptions of natural phenomena: «Тыгыды шыңгә сынзәш мушным шыра – вес кечеш шокшы лиэш». 'If the midge flies into eyes, it will get warmer next day' (Opleva, S. KH.). «Шыжым ангыр иры кылмә гынь, шошым иры толеш». 'If the river is covered with ice early in autumn, spring will come early' (Petrova, G. P.). «Шошым мўкш иры чонгештыләш тынгәлеш гынь, шошым шокшы лиэш». 'If the bees begin to fly early, spring will come early' (Petrova G. P.). «Комбы лымышты нўштылеш гынь, шокшемдә». 'If a goose bathes in the snow, it will get warmer' (Petrova G. P.).

The group of omens that predict flooding is not numerous – there are 4 omens (9%). Signs that foreshadow the upcoming of flood are the characteristic behavior of birds, the features of natural phenomena, and the weather on religious holidays: «Кек комбы кўшыц чонгештә - шошым вйд кого лиэш». 'If wild geese fly high, there will be a big flood in spring' (Kapitonova M.G.). Вйрләнги Йылышты им луаткок гәнә пачшы дон лыпшалеш гынь, Йыл тәрвәнә». 'If the wagtail strikes the ice on the Volga twelve times, it will soon break down' (Kitikov, 1989, p.

82). «Шошым Йылышты и ара кыдын кўкшыцашлиэш, тўдўн кўкшыц полой вўд лиэш». 'The level at which there is an ice crust on the Volga, the flood will be at the same level' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 82). «Кўшкў пырым кечўн юр юреш – полой вўд кого лиэш». 'If it rains on the Holy Cross day, there will be a heavy flood in spring' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 82).

General weather forecasting omen group includes omens, predicting a clear, quiet weather, peculiar for a separate day, weather changes or natural phenomena that are met in omens in single cases. Signs of this group of omens are the features of atmospheric phenomena (color and form of clouds), the behavior of animals (fish, leeches) and plants, the weather according to the lunar calendar, superstitions, and weather conditions on religious holidays: «Кечў шыцмў доны намашангеш гўнь, аяра». 'If the clouds are fleecy at sunset, the weather will be bright' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 156). «Яжо кечўлўн колвлў сир тўрўшкў толыт». 'If the fish comes to the bank, the weather will be clear' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 167). «Яжо игечў анзыц вўдпыйивлў киўт аль ладнан мадыт». 'Before clear days, leeches lie at the bottom or calmly play' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 168). There is only one omen predicting wind, which was also referred to the common weather omens group: «Кого мардеж анзыц вўдпыйивлў пиш пўсын сўрнўлыт». 'If the wind will be strong, leeches swim swiftly' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 155).

The Hill Mari people also predict rain and common weather conditions according to the lunar calendar: «У тўлзў юреш шачеш гўнь, тўлзў пўтўмешкў юран игечў лиэш». 'If the rain falls on the new moon, it will rain until the end of the month' (Gracheva, 2001, p. 222). «Тўлзў махань игечўн шачеш, техень игечў тўлзў пўтўмеш лиэш». 'The weather on the new moon will last the whole month' (Vorontsova V. Z.).

Omens of precipitations and common weather conditions are characterized by descriptions of religious holidays. The peculiarity of these omens is a long-term prediction: «Когечы анзыц вўргечўн тыр - кўнгўж тыр лиэш». 'If the weather is calm on Wednesday before the Easter, the summer will be calm' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 100). «Кўшкў пырым кечўн юр юреш – полой вўд кого лиэш». 'If it rains on the Holy Cross day (the Day of snake's entrance), the flood will be heavy' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 82). «Ўўрня кечўн лым лиэш гўнь, шуды годым начкы лиэш». 'If it snows on the Shrovetide, it will be wet in the period of making hay' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 100). «Ильин кечўн юр лиэш гўнь, кўнгўж гач начкы лиэш». 'If it rains on the Ilia the Prophet's Day, all the remaining summer will be wet' (Kitikov, p. 98). «Похро гўц перви мазар ўрня лым кайын, тўнўр ўрня вара вазеш». 'For how many days before the Protection of the Holy Virgin Day snow appears, in as many weeks it falls' (Kitikov, 1989, p. 44).

3. Conclusions

In the classification of the Hill Mari meteorological folk omens, the conditions and results of the predicted phenomena were taken into account. According to the results of the phenomena, five groups of omens were distinguished, which predict precipitation, cold weather, warming, flood, and common weather cases. On the grounds of analysis of the forthcoming phenomena, there were formed subgroups of omens. Among the most common omens are: 1) the characteristics of atmospheric phenomena, 2) the behavior of representatives of the animal world and plants, 3) weather conditions during religious holidays, 4) the physical condition of a man, 5) phenomena associated with household objects and technical devices. By the objects and phenomena mentioned in the omens, it is possible to establish the habitual way of life of people, since the omens reflect the most constant events in the life of people. The study confirms that the main activities of the Hill Mari people were and still are agriculture, cattle and poultry breeding, fishing, beekeeping, forestry. The Hill Mari people also use technical progress to predict meteorological phenomena.

The percentage ratio of all groups of meteorological omens allows us to consider the most numerous weather phenomena mentioned in the omens to be the most important for the life and agricultural activity of the Hill Mari people. These are rain and cold weather.

At present, the way of life of the Hill Mari people has undoubtedly changed, it has become more

developed, integrated with the world community due to technological progress, the Internet, multimedia technologies and modern methods of farming. However, for the most part, especially among the rural population, interest and references to meteorological omens are still demanded.

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