

Abstract

The thesis focuses on the subject of group identities of Tajik Pamirs. The ethnonym “Pamir” describes inhabitants of the mountainous region of Pamir, who differ by their religious confession, language affiliation, together with some other aspects of material culture from other groups living in the area of contemporary Tajik Republic. The official policy of the Tajik republic does not recognise Pamirs as an ethnic minority, legally they are all considered as being part of Tajik majority. However, neither Tajiks, nor Pamirs themselves identify with this version of ascribed nationality as interpreted by the State. Members of both groups highlight mutual cultural differences (mainly drawing on religious confession), through which they delimit from each other.

The aim of this thesis is to analyze factors that influence forms and ways the identities of the mountain Pamirs manifest themselves. The text reflects the issue mainly on three basic levels: language affiliation, religious confession and kinship. Language affiliation and religious confession present basic aspects of Pamirs’ group identities. Through these aspects Pamirs define themselves against members of other (non-Pamirs) groups, specifically against majority Tajiks. The thesis also asks questions about the role of such concepts of Pamirs’ identity and their manifestations in day-to-day interactions. From the perspective of kinship systems the important question is, to what extent do forms and manifestation of their own group identities affect Tajik Pamirs in their choice of a partner, in other words, whether there are ethnic (or other) endogamy requirements or recommendations emerging in this context. Text of the thesis draws on empirical data gathered during an ethnographic field research in Tajik Pamir, which was conducted repeatedly between 2006 and 2015 for a total of 8 months.

Keywords: anthropology, group identity, ethnicity, isma^cilia,
Tajik Republic, Pamir