

MARSHANS' SHARE OF GOD AS AN ANCESTRAL CULT IN THE TRADITIONAL BELIEFS OF ABKHAZIANS

The article examines one of the numerous ancestral cults representing Ants-vakhatsara (antsaakhatara / anc°axaçara) — a crucial institution of the folk religion of the Abkhazians. The cult's longevity is not only due to the historical memory of the Abkhaz people, but, above all, to the centuries-old coexistence of the Abkhazian "faith in God" and the official religion, Orthodox Christianity. Despite the tragic periods in the life of a once powerful family organization, which, by the will of historical fate, came to the verge of physical disappearance, it preserved the living traces of its cult within the spiritual life of one large family / patronymy. The work also gives a historical overview of the family, the origins of its cult and the interpretation of the ritual performed by a group of relatives.

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