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Abstract

“Interaction of the languages and cultures of the Turkic peoples in Northern Kazakhstan and in the Tatar diaspora”

In this report, within the frame of our international project, we analyse the interaction of the history, languages and cultures of the Turkic peoples in Northern Kazakhstan. The northern and central areas of Kazakhstan are the home of several Turkic peoples: Tatar, Bashkir, Chuvash, Azerbaijanian, Turkish, Kumyk, Kirgiz, and others. We investigate the historical, cultural and linguistic situation of Northern Kazakhstan, which differs significantly from the South of Kazakhstan: In Southern Kazakhstan, Turkic peoples, like many others, occurred at the beginning of the 20th century as a result of political repression, due to forced relocations in the years of World War II, whereas in the North of the country, the migration of Turkic peoples was voluntary and started much earlier. Besides the indigenous Kazakhs, the Tatars are the largest Turkic ethnos in Northern Kazakhstan; they consider themselves indigenous, since their migration took place already in the XVI – XVIII century, and was due to the policy of the tsarist government and the development of trade-economic, cultural and educational relations (opening of madrasas, schools, theaters). The archival material reveals the widespread influence of Tatar mullahs, who played a major role in the development of the education and the culture of the Kazakh people, and in the expansion of Islam in the steppe from the middle of the XIX to the beginning of the XX century.

This report investigates the current ethno-cultural situation of the Tatar people in Kazakhstan. As a result of the processing of the questionnaire data, 632 of the 2155 respondents were Tatar. The analysis was carried out on the most important key issues: age, gender, ethnic identification, marriages and mixed marriages, religious affiliation, internal and external migration, education, proficiency in native, Kazakh and Russian language, availability of newspapers and magazines in Tatar language, interest in TV programs, knowledge of oral folklore of the Tatar people, etc.

This report presents the results of the investigation. As for the ethnic identification: The great majority of the respondents self-identify with their ethnos (93,3 %); 6,7 % self-identify with a different ethnos (42 people), 3,7 of which self-identify with the Russian (23 people), 1,8 % (11 people) with the Kazakh ethnos. The dominating marker for the definition of ethnicity, regardless of the ethnos, is the maternal line (Kazakh, Russian): The child of a family generally self-identifies with the ethnos of the mother. In this respect, in Kazakhstan, at the current time, as to the formation of consciousness, culture and language, among the Tatars, the

mothers have more influence than the fathers. Interestingly, the situation occurs that both parents are Tatar, but the children identify themselves as Russian (1,2% - 8 people).

The analysis of the mixed marriages by age and ethnic identification of the children reveals a peculiar picture: The men of the first generation preferred to marry with Russian women, whereas the men of the second generation rather married with Kazakh women. The number of mixed marriages with Kazakh and Russian women in the third and fourth age group are almost equal. **In Tatar-Russian families, the number of children who self-identify as Russians, first decreases, with 21 % in the first age group and 5 % in the second and third age group, however rises up to 40 % in the fourth age group.**

Tatar women prefer to marry with men of their own ethnos, thus preserving their ethnic culture, traditions and mentality.

The dominating religion among the Tatars in Kazakhstan is Islam.

The Tatars are sufficiently educated: 94 % have secondary or incomplete secondary education, 69 % have higher or incomplete higher education.

Important information on language proficiency could be revealed: 568 people consider Tatar to be their native language and are fluent speakers (92%); 440 people are fluent in Kazakh (69 %), 427 people are fluent in Russian (67 %). However, most of the Tatars prefer to speak and write in Russian.

30 % of the informants know Tatar myths, legends, fairy tales, and historical poems.

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