

TATAR VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES: IDENTITY REPRESENTATION, FUNCTIONS AND CONFLICT RISKS

This article is devoted to the study of Tatar virtual communities in the cyberspace. The primary objective of the study was to evaluate their role in the contemporary ethno-cultural processes among the Tatars. We examined the history and functions of Tatar online communities and the demand for them. We also studied how ethnicity is manifested in cyberspace using the methods of online observation and discourse analysis. The study demonstrated that virtual communities play an important role in the current ethnocultural processes among the Tatars. They create a sense of social cohesion and cultural integration, unite dispersed communities, actualize the cognitive component of ethnic identity, serve as an archive of collective memory, a platform for the use and study of the national language, and a place for political discussions and manifestations of ethnic solidarity. Discourse analysis of the content created by virtual communities allowed us to identify important components of the Tatar ethnic identity and ethno-cultural symbols broadcast by the group in the virtual space. The study of cyber-ethnicity opens new opportunities in the study of ethnic processes among different peoples.

Keywords: cyberethnicity, virtual communities, Internet communities, online communities, online communities, Tatars

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