

A trip to the Novosibirsk regional Tatar cultural center.



October 22, 2013 we visited Tatar cultural center. The trip was very informative, but before I describe our experience, here is some statistics about the Tatar community in the Novosibirsk region.

The Tatar community in the Novosibirsk region is one of the largest communities in Russia. Its population, according to various estimates, is between 15 and 24 thousand. Also, there are representatives of the community of Siberian Tatars, which include Tomsk, Barabinsk and Tobol-Irtysh ethnic group. Most of the Tatars are Muslims.

The official year of the foundation of "The Novosibirsk Regional Center of Tatar Culture" is 1990, although the initiative group of Tatars



in Novosibirsk had began their work long before this event.

Today, "The Novosibirsk Regional Tatar Cultural Center" is a dynamic organization with well-functioning systematic work. All year round the

cultural center organizes more than a hundred events, actively participates in regional activities, regularly sends its delegates to the national competitions and festivals.

The Director of the Tatar Center in Novosibirsk is Tikhomirova Ravza Shamilyevna - Honored Worker of Culture of Tatarstan, with many different awards at regional, national and international levels.



The main objective of the Novosibirsk Tatar Cultural Center is to maintain Tatar culture and to propoganda it among the Tatar population, not only in the Novosibirsk region, but also in other regions of the Russian Federation.

The artistic director of the center is very talented Daniya Rustamova. The center includes a

set of many different societies. For children from 4 to 14 years old there is a children's art studio “Tatar”, for young people there is an actively functioning Tatar youth club "Altyn Yoldyz” and family-friendly “Duslyk”. Also, there are courses in the Tatar language, Tatar dance courses, and courses in singing. The main purpose of these societies is the creative development of Tatar culture for future generations, maintenance of national traditions, propoganda of healthy way of life.



Unfortunately there are some problems the centre is facing nowadays. The center of Novosibirsk Tatars does not have any premises at its disposal. Basically, all events take place in the basement, which is often has to be repaired due to the banking-up. Another problem deals with the loss of national self-consciousness among the Tatars. Many of them do not want to lean their native language, do not recognize their nationality, trying to assimilate with Russian people. Creative teams are not very big, because few people are interested in their roots and their history irrespective of the fact that the Tatars are the second largest nationality residing in the territory of the Russian Federation. (3.87% of the population). Also, there are problems with the Tatar language. The speakers of this language have reduced in number because of the decrease in the number of academic hours provided for the learners of the Tatar language in the Republic of Tatarstan resulting in the inability to translate many of the old books.

It is only fair to notice the benefits. The Republic of Tatarstan provides financial support. For example, they have recently presented a new bus. Famous Tatar artists take an active part in various events organized by the Centre. The authorities of Tatarstan also contribute a lot to the Novosibirsk region. In general, we can say that there is a positive tendency for the development of the



center.

Also, our group has learned some new facts about the outstanding Tatar people. The walls of



the center are decorated with wonderful paintings by Shamil Rohimov. We have also learned a little about the great Tatar poet Gabdula Tukay.

Finally, I cannot but mention another great event organized by the Center, which is a Regional review of the competition between Tatar villages of the Novosibirsk region named "My Tatar Village." This competition displayed rich culture of different villages and the villagers had a unique opportunity to show everyone their ancient traditions.

Heads of the center told us about their plans and dreams. They wish



to have their own building, lots of spectators and participants of the events, to convey cultural values to young people and to organize a congress of all the Tartars. We hope that all their dreams

will come true soon.

Some words from students:

I think, that it was really useful to know, how Tatar people in Russia live. It's sad, that company in Novosibirsk not enough money has. I am glad, that I could get involved this trip.

---*Tadeas Kolar* (Czech Republic)

The trip was very meaningful. Have long wanted to know something about the Tatars in Russia, and of course in Novosibirsk. Director of the Tatar cultural center told us about the size, custom, clothing and much more. The trip was very interesting as a Russian children and the Czechs and Germans.

---*Anna Klyusa* (Russia)

I enjoyed the trip very much because we not only learned a lot about the Tartars but also talked about the sights and other things you can do in Novosibirsk.

We listened to Tartar music and saw some photos of Tartar festivals nowadays.

I think that the company does a good job in keeping the tradition and hence the Tartars alive.

---*Yanna Zhu* (Germany)

The trip was very informative, it was possible to learn a lot about the Tatar community in Novosibirsk, about their concerns and plans. I was delighted with enthusiasm center managers and their desire to develop further, in spite of all the difficulties. Thank you for your efforts in preserving the diversity of national cultures!

---*Julian Balandin* (Russia)

