



## Religion, State and Society

Publication details, including instructions for authors and  
subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/crss20>

### Young Muslim-Tatar Girls of the Big City: Narrative Identities and Discourses on Islam in Postsoviet Russia

Guzel Sabirova

Available online: 22 Sep 2011

To cite this article: Guzel Sabirova (2011): Young Muslim-Tatar Girls of the Big City: Narrative Identities and Discourses on Islam in Postsoviet Russia, Religion, State and Society, 39:2-3, 327-345

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09637494.2011.584710>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

# Young Muslim-Tatar Girls of the Big City: Narrative Identities and Discourses on Islam in Postsoviet Russia<sup>1</sup>

GUZEL SABIROVA

## ABSTRACT

*This article deals with the growing interest towards the 'new Islam of practising Muslim women' among young Tatars in Moscow. I analyse this through their inclusion in the reproduced and reformatted Islamic discursive tradition, as well as through the creation of a unique biography and identity for the 'lady in the headscarf'. A definitive understanding of this phenomenon can be gained from an analysis of the changing environment of narrative expectations towards young people, expectations held by the government, parents, ethnic groups and adults in general, which I shall also consider in the context of the predominant trends in the structure and culture of young people in postsoviet Russia. The biographical narratives of ten women attending courses on the Quran at various mosques around Moscow will, therefore, form the focus of the present article.*

## Introduction

A young woman walked down the street. 'So young', thought passers-by, glancing in her direction, 'yet dressed like an elderly woman from the country'. Dressed in an ankle-length skirt, a long-sleeved blouse buttoned up to the collar, a scarf tied like the peasant villagers used to do around her head, she did indeed seem strange and out of place for an average city girl of the early 1990s, and her clothes bore no resemblance to young fashion or style. It was a time of cardinal shifts and changes, which were nevertheless gradually becoming a part of people's everyday lives. For some, the media's growing attention to religious symbols, worship and events, the construction of religious buildings and the emergence of religion into the public sphere was the realisation of an ambitious dream, while for others it was a new and unexpected addition to their lives. For some, the 'discovery of religion' after the end of official Soviet atheism meant hope, authenticity, a point to their lives; for others it was an abomination, a new threat and a 'return to the Middle Ages'. Twenty years after its collapse, the Soviet Union has been condemned to the annals of history and nostalgia; for some it has become the object of critical analysis and investigation. The presence of religion is no longer shocking, but has become the subject of assessments, symbols and discussions, as has the image of the young Muslim woman in the headscarf.

### Researching Young People and Women in Islam in Post-Atheist States

The existing publications on postsoviet young people are dominated by broad, quantitative approaches, focusing primarily on measuring the 'level of religiosity'. These works do not tend to consider young people as a separate category requiring special attention or interpretation; conversely, studies of youth culture give only cursory attention to religion. Works on the issue of young people and Islam remain uncommon and tend to focus on the pressure of radicalism on young people.<sup>2</sup> In terms of research on Muslim women, the situation is hardly any better.<sup>3</sup>

Attempts to conceptualise identities of young Muslims in the wider world, however, have emerged in international scholarship. The most popular approach considers the growing role of young Muslims' identification through the actualisation of ethnic belongings and boundaries (Musina, 2001). Within social movement theory, the Islamisation of young people can be seen as a search for new niches of social activity, or a protest against a consumerist and individualist society (Wiktorowicz, 2004). In terms of wider networks, the inclusion of young people into Islamic structures acts as a link with international youth groups. Theories of youth subcultures classify the growing popularity of Islam among young people as an element in the search for a unique style which incorporates the culture of their biological families and the culture of the surrounding majority (Gerlach, 2006). Recent research has conceptualised young Muslim styles as new attractive images of femininity or masculinity in European societies (Hopkins, 2009). Young converts to Islamic practices creatively adapt familiar images and produce their own versions (such as Muslim pop), in which preachers, musicians, politicians become the authorities, calling for integration in western society, as well as obedience to the laws of conservative Islam (Gerlach, 2006; Gauthier, 2004).

It is often Muslim women who become the subjects of research into the Muslim presence in European societies (Klein-Hessling *et al.*, 1999; Dwyer, 1999), or into new Muslim identities in countries traditionally associated with Islam (Göle and Amman, 2004; Mahmood, 2003). This is explained by a number of factors, including the fact that it is Muslim women's dress and the headscarf that have become symbols of the Islamic presence and have sparked debate on Islam in Europe (Amir-Moazami, 2007). The identities of Muslim girls are considered within a range of flexible, hybrid youth images and fundamentalist models (Hermansen and Khan, 2009). A parallel phenomenon, the appearance of a new generation of women in headscarves in states traditionally dominated by Islam in Central Asia and the Caucasus, is by contrast considered in the context of postsoviet transformations (Fathi, 2005; Harris, 2006; Krämer, 2002; Tokhtakhodzhaeva, 2001).

### The Discursive Tradition and Narrative Identity

Approaches to the growing tendency among young Russian 'ethnic Muslim' girls and women to conform to the Muslim image, interpreted by outsiders as a radical or conservative one (identifiable, first of all, by the headscarf), tend to focus on the 'why?' aspects. One can find the following responses in the mass media.

First, that for the Tatars, Islam has become a form of ethnic religion,<sup>4</sup> and that therefore the opportunity to preach Islam openly in the late 1980s led to a rise in those practising Islam.

Second, that for young women, 'covering' is an expression of their decision to retreat into familial life and a revival of patriarchy.

Third, that Muslim women who wear headscarves are following the fashion for religion, becoming consciously involved in the dissemination of new structures of religious power and authority, and using their status as a basis for asserting their moral authority.

It must be said from the outset that the women who attend mosques in Moscow are of various ethnicities; thus the pull factors of these religious spaces are not limited to the link between ethnicity and religious identity, and perhaps this factor has been overstressed. The majority of these women are students attending higher education establishments in Moscow, with the aim of achieving a professional self-awareness in some form – expectations which do not fit with the traditional model of the patriarchal family. The figure of the new Muslim woman in the headscarf could have become part of a fashionable youth image; however, the percentage of women who ascribe to it remains low – that is, it is not a mass practice.

Admittedly, these three aspects reflect the logic and specifics of the Russian situation, the involvement of women in ‘conservative’ Islamic practices. Therefore, my aim is to analyse how new images of ‘devout’ young Muslim women are incorporated into the overall picture of Islam in modern Russia, and how they are received and adapted by the young women themselves.

Talal Asad suggests a useful approach to analysing the current transformations in Islam, which focuses on what is known as the Islamic discursive tradition, which he defines as ‘the tradition of discourse among Muslims, aimed at concepts of Islam’s past and future, linked to a separate Islamic practice in the present’ (Asad, 1986, p. 14). This paper considers Muslim membership primarily as a way of participating in the narrative and discursive tradition of Islam. In this approach, it is not the level of religiosity as such that is seen as important but the forms and mechanisms of inclusion into the Islamic narrative tradition and its transformation. Viewing Islam as a discursive tradition opens up several channels for investigating the everyday structures of ‘Muslimness’, and avoids the stigmatising or apologetic discourse on Islam common in modern societies. ‘Muslimness’ is understood, in this case, as being the set of qualities through the articulation or daily reproduction of which participation in the Islamic discursive tradition is recreated.

The other important concept for this investigation is narrative identity, which is seen as biographical, constructed and rooted in social interaction. This is the way the character is constructed in the story itself, conveyed through the narration of its past, present and future, formulated at a specific point in time and in a specific situation of social interaction. Although such an approach is inherently constructivist, it is limited by the potential number of available interpretational models (narratives – ‘ready-made forms’), assumes a level of structural organisation (Ricoeur, 1995) and necessarily presupposes a position with regard to socially approved and disapproved moral discourses (Taylor, 1989).

Thus, there are two areas that will be the focus of the present analysis. First, the peculiarities of the inclusion of young Muslim women (as both subjects and objects) into the reproduction and reformatting of the Islamic discursive tradition through strategies of self-positioning with regard to widespread ethnic expectations, discussions of gender boundaries, and the development of alternative images of the youth-culture style of the ‘lady in the headscarf’. Second, the role of new images of the devout Muslim woman in the construction of biography and identity, in which the articulation of ethnicity, gender and youth from a new perspective is a significant factor in the self-presentation of the unique image of her Self.

## Muslim Women in Moscow

The empirical material cited in this article was collected by the author in the framework of a wider investigation into the interest of Tatar women of various generations in Muslim religious education within the context of a large city, namely Moscow. I collected the interviews between 2003 and 2006. This article will investigate on the basis of secondary analyses the life stories of ten young women between 17 and 22 years of age who identified themselves as Tatars and showed an interest in Islamic education.

Today Moscow is home to around 168,000 Tatars.<sup>5</sup> The first mention of their presence in Moscow dates from between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries (Khairtdinov, 2002); however, the present structure of the Tatar population of the city has its origins in the Soviet modernisation period: a result of migration from towns and Tatar villages. With the recognition of religious education in the postsoviet period, Moscow's mosques opened their doors to provide an education in the foundations of Islam (Asadullin, 2004). Although women are underrepresented in mosques and other religious organisations, they constitute a majority among the students and have very quickly become a 'visible' category in the mosques, even though this is not traditional among Tatars. In the various educational centres, the percentage of women varies between 50 and 90, and a significant proportion of these are women of Tatar nationality.<sup>6</sup> Among the general mass of mosque attenders, women dressed in a certain way and wearing headdress are certainly distinctive. The Tatars call them '*kizlar*' ('girls'), but they see themselves as followers of Islam and as practising Muslims.

Russian imperial and then Soviet atheist policies had a unique effect on the way in which public Islam was legalised in Russia 20 years ago, and how individual patterns in the practice of Islam were transformed.<sup>7</sup> In today's modern communities, one can find a wide variety of individual perceptions of what it means to be follower of Islam, and what the conditions and consequences are of defining oneself as a Muslim.

## Discourses on Young People, Islam and Young Women in Islam in Moscow

### *The State and Adults on Muslim Young People*

Having to a large extent abandoned the Soviet educational institutions, after 20 years postsoviet Russia still lacks an adequate system for caring for and working with the younger generations. Most adult discourses on postsoviet young people have about them a ring of moral panic (Omel'chenko, 2008). In the early 1990s these were discourses on the growing drug problem, criminalisation, moral laxity and sexual libertarianism. Today these are discourses on alcoholism, retreat into subcultures and political apathy. It is difficult for today's adults, having been brought up in different surroundings and on different principles, to accept the variety in youth cultural styles and their independence in young experimentation, as well as 'alien' patterns of social relationships, which include, it seems, more individualism, indifference and infantilism. For this reason, forbidding or moralising strategies of influence on young people predominate in adults' reactions.

As far as state policy towards young people is concerned it focuses on what are popularly seen as the problematic aspects of young people. In particular, it actively supports the creation of youth organisations loyal to the ruling political elite, sporting

events, projects to raise the patriotism of young people. The effect of this policy is complex, since the place of Soviet patriotism is gradually becoming occupied by nationalist ideas, at the centre of which one often finds Russian Orthodox values, which can have alienating effects on Muslim young people. Undoubtedly, common Islamophobic sentiments, including among young people, are also fuelled by continuing terrorist attacks. Young people considering themselves part of the Muslim tradition react most sensitively to discourses that concern a significant aspect of their identities.

In this 10–15 year period of anti-extremist and anti-terrorism campaigns, the rhetoric, objects and instruments in the battle have gone through a number of stages. In recent years, measures were taken to ban the use of such phrases as ‘Islamic terrorism’, ‘Islamic extremism’ or ‘Wahhabism’ in the media. Factors which influence how and why young people become involved in seditious practices, presented as Muslim, have been the subject of discussion at meetings involving high-level government officials. While pointing to the role played by the socio-economic circumstances in which young people are brought up, the official discourse points to young people as bearing the responsibility for their own ‘wrong’ decisions, or else this responsibility is attributed to religious activists who draw young people into extremist action. This only serves to strengthen the demonisation of Muslim young people or the marginalisation and humiliation of Muslim religious leaders in the public discourse. Also, increasingly, a different threat is being articulated, linked with young people and Islam: it is frequently mentioned that 80 per cent of male labour migrants are young Muslims.

It must be noted, however, that in state discourse a great deal of support is given to the inclusion of ‘traditional’ religions in the education of young people. A contradictory general atmosphere is thus created: on the one hand, familiarity with religious practices (including Islam) is being publicly supported; on the other, however, an Islamophobic attitude dramatises and problematises Muslim identity.

### *Parental Discourses*

The parents of the 1990s, having lived most of their lives under the Soviet system, found themselves unprepared to shoulder the responsibility for educating children who, as fate would have it, were to grow up in a climate of unstable market economics and in the absence of certain core referential values. Adults were certainly concerned about coping with their new situation: the disappearance of the socialist government, in some cases a significant drop in their social status and the destruction of key collectivist values. They relied on the schools, themselves experiencing multifaceted transformations and crises, including the problem of finding new educational schemes to replace the now obsolete ‘Pioneers’ and ‘Komsomol’. The mothers and fathers of today, however, having grown up under perestroika, are already seeing parenting in a different light. A child’s birth and education frequently turns into a biographical project, in which the child becomes the epicentre of the family, and its success virtually gives meaning to the parents’ lives. This is not a simple task, especially given the new society’s disorientation in terms of values, and the rapid development of digital technology, mobile communication and the internet. Young people are becoming less and less controllable, and more tightly connected with the cellular and virtual communication spaces. On the part of the parents, however, there is not always an ability to realise this project fully, as a result of insufficient financial or social resources. A consequence of this is the development of parental guilt, overbearing care of young people by adults and the infantilisation of youth, and the development of an attitude of long-term dependence (including financial) on parents. Frequently,



however, this is a two-sided agreement: parents are still demanding obedience and conformity to their models of behaviour, but are already prepared to accept a variety of other responses.

*Discourses on Young Muslim Women*

In terms of the current approach, an important role in deciding what Islam is becoming, and how it is received and followed by those who count themselves part of this tradition, is played by the following images of and discourses on Islam: (1) ‘external’ images in the media, or among resident Russians; (2) reception of women in the ‘Tatar environment’; (3) the rhetoric of categorising and judging women within religious spaces (for instance, mosques). (See Table 1). All this creates its own form of discursive space, which forms the atmosphere for the formulation of young Muslim women’s identities. It must be said, however, that on all these levels, this generalising image of young Muslim women is complex and controversial.

The most negative ‘external’ image is that of the ‘*shakhidka*’.<sup>8</sup> On the other side of the spectrum of ‘external’ images is the positive image of the devout religious woman. In some ways this image is one that is familiar and comprehensible in the context of discourses on conversion to Orthodoxy, since in some ways, in their appearance (possibly in the headdress), Muslim and Orthodox women have certain basic similarities.

Despite initial expectations, the image of young Muslim women in headscarves among so-called ‘ethnic Muslims’ is not invariably positive either. For instance, one of the central representative symbols of Russian Islam is Dinara Sadretdinova, a young female presenter on *Musul'mane*, a television programme on the *Rossiya* channel, dressed in the style of ‘practising’ Muslims. However, despite this, Tatar attitudes towards headscarves frequently remain reserved, occasionally negative. Apart from the fact that this new image has been singled out by the majority as ‘alien’, distinct from ‘Tatar Islam’, parents are afraid of fanaticism and the involvement of their daughters in ‘Wahhabist structures’.

For parents brought up under communism, the arrival of new external signs of religious observance (in this case, headscarves) seems ostentatious and an attempt to shock. Even among the religious there is a discourse on excessive maximalism, on inconsistency among women in headscarves.

**Table 1.** Images of young Muslim women

‘External’ images:	Images among Tatars:	Images within mosques (learning groups):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● shahids – terrorists</li><li>● fanatics</li><li>● involved in polygamy, obedient wife (patriarchal subordination)</li><li>● exotic</li><li>● cultural ‘other’</li><li>● pious women</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● fanatical</li><li>● deviation from the Islam of ancestors/resurgence of Islam</li><li>● ostentatious (not honest)</li><li>● nuns</li><li>● ‘proper’ ladies</li><li>● symbol of the Islamic presence in Russia</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● fundamentalist, maximalist</li><li>● non-consequent (that is, not putting Islamic teachings into everyday practice)</li><li>● hope for revival of Islam</li><li>● new future Muslim mothers</li></ul>

### The Narrative Community of Muslim Women

The discourses discussed above are important in order to understand how women taking on conservative Muslim identities formulate their own perceptions of themselves, and a strong narrative response to these issues is formed by young Muslim women. Discourses aside, a significant aspect, against which women must define themselves, is new knowledge of Islam. Moreover, all of this is layered upon the problems of the biographical construction of the twenty-first century young Muscovite woman. These problems create a forum of 'general questions', which are regularly discussed at numerous meetings between these women, forming their own type of narrative community.

These women meet fairly often at religious activities, at Friday prayers in mosques around the city, at group evening meals, organised after sunset during Ramadan, at picnics, or at meetings between various social groups, organised by the women themselves. The narrative society of young Muslim women is constructed around discussions of the following themes: (1) questions of Islamic doctrine and its application to their everyday lives; (2) the problems surrounding wearing the headscarf and 'going out' in headdress; (3) friendship, potential marriages, resolving arguments; (4) solving problems with parents (usually linked to their new appearance). I shall consider these in the above order.

#### *Islamic Knowledge and Practice*

There are two central themes in the Muslim women's biographical stories, namely the description of their experiences in following two instructions: praying five times a day and wearing the headscarf. Before performing the '*salah*' (prayer) one must first master the right technique and the Arabic text of the Quran; in addition, the practice also demands a specific organisation of one's time. The strictness with which these two prerequisites of Islam are followed is a distinctive indicator of 'practising' Muslim women, and in their discussions on what constitutes a 'true' Muslim, as opposed to the general mass of 'ethnic Muslims', they particularly insist on the importance of fulfilling these requirements.

One's experience of 'entry' into Islam may be presented as either successful or problematic. In explaining one's decision to study Islam, women have often said that they were moved by curiosity, or by a lack of available arguments in religious discussions or in formulating responses to anti-Islamic sentiment. At the same time, the education they receive is not simply aimed at providing an adequate foundational grasp of Islam, or just some pre-made recipes, it is a process of understanding, mastering and applying what they have learned.

The madrassah itself ... You can study there forever ... You can study there and still know nothing. Study and study ... Or you can pick up knowledge and grow with it, together. ... The aim is to understand the Quran. Not just doing what it says, but when doing it, understanding what you are doing and why. (Faniya, 21 years old)

Active involvement in obtaining knowledge about Islam is considered to be part of a project of individualisation and presentation of oneself as a competent Muslim, with no need to turn to spiritual leaders when fulfilling one's everyday ritual requirements. Among their badly informed Muslim relatives, the young devout Muslim women obtain their own expert status, in particular on questions concerning female religiosity



and the fulfilment of specific Islamic commandments aimed at women. Islam's regimentation of everyday life is seen as a code of rules, a 'rational human choice', the authoritative set of instructions on how to live, 'which a rational person will follow'.

In attending these courses, however, one's initial motives may be transformed in the process of education. Although one's original aim may have been simply to become an expert in a new field of knowledge, it then becomes necessary to change one's entire way of life. In the narratives in question, the realisation that the organisation of one's quotidian life is incompatible with one's newly acquired knowledge is presented as creating moral pressure, and this is likely to be one of the reasons for these courses' high drop-out rate.

Agreement among 'ethnic Muslims' on the perception of those symbols which may be identified as Muslim as unequivocally sacred plays its own role in the formation of radical views on what happens in the mosque: either complete rejection, or the opposite – uncritical acceptance. The latter can lead to increasing radicalisation of one's way of life. Another problem is choosing the right response from a variety of interpretations: 'what would be right in this or that situation?' A diverse Islamic literature suggests many approaches to the interpretation or to the adaptation of various instructions for everyday life. An important role in finding answers is played by the structure of authority. Muslim women support and strengthen the authority of young male teachers – young imams (as opposed to the mullahs of 'traditional' Islam).

### *The Semantics of the Muslim Headscarf*

The headscarf occupies a special place in women's narratives, among whom there is a popular way of tying the scarf, one which is unusual in the Tatar context. Tying the scarf 'forward' (covering the neck) is an important step in the religious biography of these women, either completing or beginning the process of Islamisation of the woman's body, and constitutes a seriously demonstrative act before both familiar and wider society. Thus, the biographical narrative tends to include a story about preparations for this event (or it is conspicuous by its absence). In the women's opinion, their parents' rejection of their religious activism begins with the tying of the headscarf and the change to a new 'covered' style of clothing. 'I have covered myself' means bringing one's clothing completely into line with the demands of Islam. According to Muslim women in Moscow, this means wearing a long skirt down to the ankles, a loose, long-sleeved top and a scarf covering the hair, ears and neck.

The young women insist on constantly wearing the headscarf. The scarf's narrative can be presented in their stories in different ways: a small personal victory, experience in dealing with pressure from other women, or an expression of one's doubts and uncertainties. The external issues are overcoming a psychological barrier and going outside onto the street or into the metro while wearing the headscarf, as well as dealing with parents.

This clothing style, though most of all the headscarf, becomes an instrument of internally affirming one's Muslim identity, as well an external symbol.

*First*, covering oneself completely means attaining and expressing a higher degree of 'iman' (faith). It is a fulfilment of the instructions and an expression of one's obedience and acceptance. Wearing a headscarf is always an independent decision, in that it does not happen automatically or naturally or because it is family custom. Nor is the headscarf always tied 'forward' at first. Gul'sum only recently decided to start wearing a headscarf in class at university. Elvira has already taken her headscarf off once, because her appearance has not yet been accepted in her home. In my collection of interviews there are two interviews with girls who do not always wear the headscarf

(only in mosques and at *salah*), and the question of whether or not to wear it regularly remains open for them.

*Second*, it is a protest against the sexual objectification of women:

Well, I think that clothing helps people understand what that person is about. To put it bluntly, if someone is wearing a headscarf, no one is really going to try anything, be that on the street or wherever. So I haven't had any problems. (Sanya, 22 years old)

*Third*, it is a manifestation of individuality and independence:

When I came to school, I was already wearing the headscarf. I'd put it on right before coming in ... the headmaster kept pestering me: 'What are you, in mourning or something? Take that thing off now!' In the end I just calmly and quietly explained that I could not, that I would arrive looking like this every day, and that, legally, I had the right to wear a headscarf. Of course, before putting it on, I acquainted myself with the Constitution of the Russian Federation. ... Everybody chooses their own path. (Liliya, 17 years old)

*Fourth*, tying the headscarf in a certain way marks membership of a certain group as well as being a sign for everyone else, as well as for the girl who does so, that certain actions are no longer appropriate (and no further explanation is required):

... Well, when I had only just reverted to Islam, we used to meet up with my girlfriends and they always, always asked this one question ... they asked me 'do you always wear that scarf around your head?' And to say that you don't always wear it was just so embarrassing. Really embarrassing. Even saying that sometimes you wore it backwards, or some other way, you just felt ashamed. (Elvira, 19 years old)

*Fifth*, undoubtedly the headscarf has a religious significance, and this Islamisation of one's external appearance acts as a permanent '*dawah*', preaching Islam; this theme was more than once raised in interview: the girl in the headscarf attracting the interest of those around her.

For a man to make a *dawah*, he needs to gather an audience, and the least he can do is somehow get their attention, which isn't easy. For a woman to make a *dawah*, she can just put a headscarf on. (Elvira, 19 years old)

*Finally*, tying the scarf around one's head in a different (untraditional) way is a symbol of female modernity (compared with elderly women).

When discussing the problems surrounding the headscarf, girls exchange psychological techniques for withstanding the looks they receive from people in the street, or resolving conflicts with parents.

### *Gender Roles*

Discussions about gender roles involve discussion of patriarchal regimes enforced by Islam as well as discussion of the possibilities for the liberalisation of the 'Islamised' woman, or of the woman in an Islamified society.<sup>9</sup>

Reversion to the intense practice of Islam is an extraordinary event. For women it means a transition, whether a quick or a gradual one, from one lifestyle – which, to a large extent, conforms to the secular outlook – to one which differs from the conventions of their surroundings in many ways. Choosing and defining one's 'other' image is done consciously, and is the result of a whole series of decisions, which require persistence and dedication. The question of what needs to be done to become a true Muslim woman is central and, of course, touches upon the matter of gender problematics, since the issues of marriage, family, maternity and the woman's external and internal image fall into the sphere of religious experience. Since the question of the role of women in Islam sparks the most external criticism, in Muslim women's narratives this theme is given special attention.

In attempting to create an overall ideal image for the modern practising Muslim woman, which is presented in female narratives, one is more likely to find a multivariate continuum, varying between two opposing poles: the idealised image of the arch-matriarchal Tatar-Muslim woman and the Muslim woman of an 'Islamic' nation, with an accepted adaptation to a modern city lifestyle.

In modelling the image of their future family, women use the creative potential of Islam to find a compromise between the two cultures that form the most significant influences: their parents' culture, itself linked to ethnic traditions, and modern big city culture. The former highlights the importance of the potential father's participation in raising the children; the latter focuses on familial stability and the adeptness of the husband as the provider for the family ('he must know how to earn some money, not like most men today'), as well as a considered and individual approach to raising children ('not like they do it in playschool or primary school'). In a sense, a strong and secure family – a faithful husband with a stable income and educated children – is the main factor in making the Muslim lifestyle appealing to women.

One issue, however, which places the success of a marriage based around Islamic principles in doubt is the question of the woman's potential extra-familial social interaction. Women's testimonies reveal that, despite the primary importance of family (the house must be clean, the husband and children must be happy), they would like to continue their education, then occupy some sort of professional position usually linked to religious enlightenment. The situation whereby a woman has achieved not one, but several higher qualifications tends to be the rule rather than the exception. However, undoubtedly, these women admit the possibility of an adjustment to these ideal speculations about their future, which may be the result of one's relationship with one's husband, as well as the general situation (for instance, the arrival of children and so on); therefore the resulting formation of the identity of Muslim women is closely linked to the establishment of a family.

Of course, I would like to find myself a job ... that would allow me to follow the traditions calmly and easily. Not just traditions, but also my faith and beliefs. We will see, if I don't get married, if my husband lets me study ... Really, I would, of course, choose study, because I understand that if a person wants to go somewhere in life, they need an education. I wouldn't want to stay at home all the time, not knowing anything. I want to move forward ... If a woman sits at home, is a housewife, it isn't considered to be such a bad thing. Quite the opposite, it is considered something to be proud of. She sits at home and looks after her children, raising them. You could say that raising children is a big responsibility, a big job. (Tanya, 21 years old)

In analysing the gender boundaries suggested by modern practising Muslim women, it is important to consider them in the context of the asymmetry in the inter-gender relationship that has already become established in Russian society (Pilkington, 1996). I am referring to the well-known postsoviet phenomenon whereby one can trace, against the backdrop of a critical view of 'feminism', the revival of interest in practices which may be described as patriarchal. Therefore the idealisation of the Muslim family, including among young women, is done in the general context of the rehabilitation of the significance of family and the role of women within that family as mothers and housewives. The images cultivated not only among contemporaries or in the media in the context of the big city, but among relations – within the family and Tatar societies – become important. The resulting structures of ethno-familial relations play a defining role in the formation of the concept of the Muslim woman's Self, both in the decision to adopt the Muslim identity at all as well as in choosing specific forms of realising one's 'Muslimness', including defining one's catalogue of gender roles.

### *Parents and Ethnicity*

Ethnic surroundings, in the form of parents, relatives and 'Tatars in general', are an important frame of reference for young Muslim women. The form Islam has taken today has been greatly affected by the image of Muslim Tatars formed in Soviet times. In Moscow, as well as elsewhere, the practice has remained of calling a '*majlis*'<sup>10</sup> with readings from the Quran on the occasion of a religious festival, commemorating the dead, milestone events in one's life and so on. In Soviet times unsanctioned collective prayers were conducted in people's houses (since the mosques were closed), at which some were chosen to read from the Quran. At a women's *majlis*, and sometimes at mixed ones as well, these readings were frequently conducted by women. As a result, in part, of the demographical disproportion of the postwar period and the proliferation of alcoholism among men in the villages, women '*ebilyar*' or '*abystalar*', able to read the Quran as proficiently as men, became authorities who were invited to the *majlis* or to oversee religious rituals (funerals, for instance). In Soviet times the private nature of Islam was strengthened. Gradually, as the members of the generation educated in the madrassahs before and after the Revolution disappeared, they were replaced by others who had studied the text of the Quran and the foundations of Islam themselves. This process has been labelled by researchers as the de-intellectualisation of Islam (see Mukhametshin, 2003). Frequently, they did not read Arabic or even recognise the letters, and leading discussions at the *majlis* was limited to reading the Quran to a (predominantly elderly) public which could not follow the content either. In this process the aesthetics of reading the Quran gained a symbolic significance, conserving and imbuing religious respect. It can be claimed that the context of political pressure in Soviet times was, in some ways, conducive to the preservation of the Muslim identity. A more common interpretation is that, for Tatars, Islam is first and foremost an instrument of ethnic identity, and therefore the interest shown towards Islam in the postsoviet period is, in itself, a form of religious nationalism (Musina, 2001).

Thus conventional models of maintaining one's attachment to Islamic traditions among Tatars assume the fulfilling (or a faithful approach to the necessity of fulfilling in the future) of: following the life-cycle rituals (name-giving, marital and funeral); organising a *majlis* (and involvement, in the case of the elders) at important festivals or family occasions; donating alms for the mosque or 'readers' (given for reading

prayers for the dead, at a religious festival or important event or at any other time); praying five times a day and fasting in the case of those near retirement age.<sup>11</sup> The overwhelming majority of ethnic Muslims do not know Arabic, and knowledge of the Quran surahs is transmitted orally, or through independent study of a vast amount of published literature. The responsibility for running religious rituals and reading prayers is delegated to the authorities – to ‘readers’. From generation to generation a special emotional sacralising approach to Islam is transmitted, more specifically to its symbolic aspects, such as the Quran, Arabic (writing and pronunciation), the mosque, dress code (headscarf, tube dress) and the *shamail* (a plate with a prayer installed above the entrance to the house), as well as the ethical-moral codex.

Daughters’ decisions to Islamise their biography are considered to be contradictory, in the manner of the above discourses.

All my other relatives, most of them, call me and my brother zombified fanatics. We go to the mosque. Apparently, they zombify us there and we are already fanatics. There you go. And tomorrow, we are going to strap bombs to ourselves and go blow up McDonalds. (Liliya, 17 years old)

The women’s ethnic legacy is overcome in a similarly indefinite way, as can be seen from the following three examples:

First, the exemplary Tatar daughter: Fatima (18 years old). Fatima used to be an ordinary teenager, but after a chance visit to a lesson at the mosque, she completely accepted the Muslim image. She wears the Muslim headscarf and married according to ‘Muslim’ marriage rules. Her parents are proud of her and her mother often happily tells her that she ‘looks like [her] grandmother’. Gradually, she has brought her mother into practising Islam and now she also prays five times a day.

Second, becoming a Tatar: Anna (20 years old). Anna’s mother is a Tatar and her father is Russian. For her, attending lessons at the mosque is part of a wider attempt to become part of the Tatar culture. She is learning Tatar at the same time. She has even convinced her mother to attend courses at the mosque and now they do their homework together. She has been wearing the headscarf for six months.

Third, becoming ‘not a Tatar’: Gul’sum (21 years old). She herself teaches in a Muslim school, and has been wearing the headscarf for a year and a half. She finished school with an advanced level of English. She distances herself from her relatives, who do not understand her. Her ideal images (of marriage, religiosity and so on) are distinct from those of her ethnic surroundings and, occasionally, even contradict them.

In some families, the daughter’s reversion/Islamisation is seen as the continuation of the Islamic traditions of their Tatar ancestors. With ethnicisation, aestheticisation and simplification, their significance was transmitted from generation to generation, and the new unfamiliar image of the ‘faithful’ and ‘practising’ Muslim woman, whose life is built entirely around Islamic principles, is seen as a step towards maintaining the tradition. This manifested itself most clearly in the early 1990s, against the backdrop of an actualisation of ethnic identities and the rise of various nationalisms.

In other families, the parents are not pleased with the daughter’s new image, since they believe that, in adopting it, she is moving away from ‘Tatar’ Islam, according to which young women are not obliged to wear the headscarf and look like ‘nuns’. However, it is this that forms the young woman’s critical stance, which, with her new image, postulates a triumph over fragmentation and ‘automatism’ and claims for itself a new approach to Islam: one that is reflexive, based on knowledge of the literature and everyday practice.



One argument, in opposition to which women construct their own positive narrative image, concerns the view of Tatars as unintellectual, limited, envious, materially orientated and dependent on popular opinion ('What would the others say?'). This approach is probably based to a large extent on the fact that Tatar society in Moscow is partly fed by migration, in particular by population movement from rural settlements in the Nizhni Novgorod region.

They [the Tatars] are afraid of popular opinion. It is as if it is normal to think 'what will the others say?' I think that it is this that reveals their weakness . . . . They 'cannot go against the grain' . . . . They find they are not strong enough to, they cannot do it. (Gul'sum, 21 years old)

In contrast to the image of the majority of Tatars, faithful Muslim women present their own image as intellectually developed with wide intellectual horizons and interests, building their relationships with others on principles of love, compassion and support, inspired and not bound by popular opinion. Russian Muslim women (or converts to Islam) are seen as setting the standard for religiosity among women, because they have to overcome so many obstacles. By contrast, Arab Muslims are seen as weaker, automatons, who never needed to put any effort into being Muslim. The new lifestyle, and new appearance, are presented in narrative as a way of offering a different image for Islam and women of non-Russian nationality. However, in the real world of big city society, the stereotyped view of these last two images is, according to these women, negative: 'people do not like Tatars and Muslims'.

### *Self-Positioning with Regard to the Narrative Community*

The four aspects I have discussed in this section reflect the main set of significant problems, the discussion of which, and the search for solutions to which, leads to the formation of a distinct kind of narrative community of sisters, of young Muslim women. If an external marker for recognising one's 'own people' in public places or mosques is the headscarf, a feeling of closeness and association is based on achieving a certain level of competence and the ability to maintain a discourse within that narrative community. The important principles of this narrative community are moralisation and moral judgment.

This said, however, this sisterhood becomes an overarching framework for several relatively differing national identities. Many remain aloof from this community, and build close relationships only with their closest friends, of which there are not many. In almost every case, this highlights some sort of individuality, which does not presume or does not allow a close relationship with other young Muslim women. Thus, Liliya highlights her creative approach to life (she spends a lot of time drawing and enjoys roller-skating), her uniqueness compared with the main mass of girls. Elvira is relatively reserved in describing her sisters' community: when she was going through a difficult stage in her life, when she was forced by her parents to take off the headscarf, she felt she was being judged harshly by her friends. Gul'sum does not socialise with this group at all: although these girls are her students, she considers social interaction in this community to be a complete waste of time and prefers to socialise with older women. Of course, an important factor in creating distance between oneself and this community is marriage and, even more so, the birth of children.



**'Being Young and Muslim'**

The narrative identity of young Muslim women involved in reinterpreting 'Muslimness' is also constructed with reference to the discursive sphere of young people (Pilkington, 1994). The sphere of youth action is characterised as a whole by the proliferation of ideas of spiritual discovery and the search for a 'different' alternative sociality. This can occur within the framework of traditional religion, as well as within alternative spaces.

One of the most significant of these ideas is the advancement of anti-capitalist, anti-consumerist and anti-western ideals. Although the material attributes of these young searches swiftly become objects of commercial interest and it is difficult to find spaces entirely free of market relationships, material goods have a different significance among different groups of young people. Young Muslim narratives construct an attractive representation of Islam, which stress the priority of 'rational spirituality'. Practising Islam, however, does not require asceticism or other limitations, but, quite the opposite, it assumes the arrangement of one's material life: building a house, creating and providing for a family, and producing children.

An important constituent of the new narrative identity is the idea of biographical uniqueness, based around contrasting oneself with 'yobbish' or 'glamorous' surroundings. This discourse is also not something exclusive, but is common in circles of very different young people – including those that are 'sub-culturally' unique and underground. Contrasting oneself with this general mass, which is emotionally and ideologically marked as 'alien' or 'different', is one of the strongest bases for solidarity within various young social circles, in which an opinion is cultivated of themselves as introspective, idea-based, not indifferent and culturally educated.

The acceptance of a radical identity among young people, however, does not necessarily imply the existence of an ideological constituent. Important pull and motivational factors may be style elements, the desire to form one's 'own' interactional group, or, contrary to this, to assert one's individuality and uniqueness. Therefore, inclusion into the new space may be accompanied by various circumstances.

*Experimentation and Creativity*

Experimentation and creativity are an important characteristic of young circles in large postsoviet cities, with their wide spectrum of cultural opportunity. Young circles in particular are most receptive to new creative projects. In theory, one might say that it is an attribute of being young in general, and in every society there is a portion of young people for whom risk becomes a way of life. However, the semantics of this risk or experimentation may be different. In postsoviet society, the risks are more multifaceted.

One might say that women in headscarves, having accepted and advancing a new identity, are also becoming a part of this atmosphere of risk, with the possibility of physical pressure, moral misunderstanding among both strangers and familiar people and social discrimination. These risks, however, from their point of view, are justifiable, since their new identity promises its own kind of new physical, social and moral safety: namely, a family built on religious principles, a different narrative space, which puts emphasis on ideas of sisterhood and brotherhood. Even without these aspects, it is possible to find appealing the very idea of confronting one's

surroundings, both one's family circle as well as people on the street, as well as the idea of cultural individuality.

### *Young People's Search for Authenticity*

The challenge young Muslim women accept carries with it a claim to a new status of moral authority and the aim of creating and advancing one's 'authenticity'. The search for various forms of authenticity is a trait characteristic of postsoviet societies, young communities included. Debates on which identity could be referred to as 'genuine, true, real', may be very significant in the context of the self-affirmation of various new cultural formations with regard to existing analogous ones, or with regard to each other. In this sense, choosing a 'genuine image' assumes contrasting oneself with others, identifying 'alien' images and the readiness to defend one's position also against expressions of misunderstanding and estrangement among others. The 'genuine' Islam of young women includes the following elements: continuity; totality (submission of all aspects of life to certain rules and regulations); and introspection.

Young 'new' Muslims have their own input into the actualisation of the discourse and discussion of 'what is true, genuine Islam?' through the formulation of a new, radical external image and an 'alien' concept of Islam. The specific character of formulating an Islamic authenticity (as with any religion) is that discussion of the uniqueness and unity of any position should be supported in doctrinal directives which stress the unity (rather than the plurality) of Islam, and be accompanied by assertions of the constancy of authority of specific texts and people. The exposure of what is true and false, genuine and hypocritical remain an important element in maintaining the discussion on authenticity and as a source of moral self-assurance.

### *New Moral Subtexts*

In the last ten years, moralisation has become one of the most powerful instruments in the discursive structuring of Russian society. Partly this can be traced back to traditions emanating from the country's Soviet past, in which the socially preserved moral image of citizenship was a central element of the social order and structure. Loss of faith in the norms of communist morals in the perestroika period was accompanied by divisions in opinions and reactions, from the complete rejection of morals as such on the one hand to reinforcing new moralising discourses on the other. Therefore the arrival of the religious morals of 'traditional religions' in public spaces, replacing Soviet atheist policy, may have been interpreted as law by a significant part of the population. The void left by the departure of a social moral regulator was filled by 'authentic' religious norms. Some time later, the old religious 'experts', keepers of the tradition under communism, were replaced by others, who began to claim a new moral authority for themselves. But the unconditional, uncritical and romanticised acceptance of the first postsoviet 'mullahs' was replaced by scepticism and suspicion. This was, in part, linked with the fact that the new authorities appealed first of all to the texts, rather than to the living traditions of Islam, or with the fact that the former 'Soviet' narrative conflicted with the new image, or that the new authorities were young and did not conform to the image of grandfathers and grandmothers, wizened by life experience.

In this way, among other things, the moral authority of young women is based on the conservative image of the pious woman, which is very well received in close familial as well as wider circles. The powerful wave of liberalisation of the perestroika

period opened up new possibilities for a young lifestyle. The image of the unhinged, sexually orientated young woman was one of the more shocking ones; the West, meanwhile, embodied the source of the moral disintegration of young people. It is against these images and ideas that young Muslim women have defined themselves.

## Conclusion

This article has tried to show how young women who nurture 'conservative' identities are included in the process of creating an Islamic discursive tradition, and how what is ultimately presented as the 'new Islam of practicing Muslim women' becomes linked in discourse with the expectations and stereotypes of adults, parents, the state and contemporaries. The women's individual and collective interpretations are creating a new, seemingly closed and isolated space, one defined by its Muslim character (Muslim marriage, Muslim parenthood and so on); however, in reality, it is a clear reflection and reproduction of the structural problems of Russian society, the contextualisation of Islam, understanding of cultural diversity and the creation of new moral authorities.

In defining what constitutes membership of Islam today, young women turn to those images which are portrayed as belonging to the Muslim tradition in their narrative communities or their closest family. These images may contain a concrete knowledge of the normative complex, essential for Muslim self-identification; knowledge of individual techniques and procedures for performing various rituals; or simply an emotional attachment. One of the main factors in maintaining interest towards this tradition is the reconstruction of the past and the construction of the memory of the significance of the Muslim tradition for Tatars. This reconstructed memory is reproduced as part of the personal and collective 'ethnic' history, and is transmitted to the younger generations in this way.

While the elder generation is predominantly concerned with maintaining conventional images (those generally accepted among the majority of people), among young people one may detect a process whereby impressions of the role of Islam are changing towards a broader sphere of influence, affecting the entire duration of one's life. On the basis of Islam's adaptive potential, women are trying to find a new image for the young Muslim woman: one that is modern, fashionable, socially active, highly intellectual. In this sense, 'young people's' Islam differs from the Islam of their parents. In order to stress this fact, women wear headscarves in ways which are uncharacteristic of Tatars, or introduce new labels for themselves (for instance, '*muslimy*', as opposed to '*musul'mankī*').

Mastering the practice of adhering to Islam requires appealing to religious knowledge. The value of education and mastering knowledge becomes central. It changes one's approach to the text, to the language, to the principles of gaining knowledge. In the absence of universally recognised authorities, with the loss of the authority of ancestral traditions (Islam in the form it was preached within the family), the process of acquiring an identity becomes more autonomous. In part, this autonomy and the special attitude to knowledge can be explained by the influence of the enlightenment-orientation of Soviet education, and the proliferation of the desire for education among young people today. Young women offer a new conception of Islam, asserting new structures of authority, strengthening the positions of so-called young imams (as opposed to elderly mullahs), young men educated in the postsoviet period in Russia or abroad. In their sermons and lessons, the young imams call for moderation, service to the community and overcoming extremes.

This, in itself, is a kind of challenge to their parents' 'secular Islam', and a statement of religious service in accordance with public discourses encouraging reversion to religion. However, having gone through various post-reversion stages, women arrive at their own approach to interpreting and adopting Islam.

The main force in mobilising interest towards religion is the opportunity to strengthen one's moral authority. This authority is based on the mastery and fulfilment of certain practices, and may be formed as an attempt to alter one's image and practise moral self-education, in which the headscarf plays an exceptional role. The idea of forming a moral image based on religious ethics lies at the heart of a new, postsoviet type of biographical project.

The sphere of Muslim activity in the postsoviet period is turning into a new youth scene (including virtual spaces), which plays host to the search for new identities, contriving new biographical scenarios, which are also attractive in allowing one to preserve the continuity of family traditions. Promoting their new vision and new biographical interpretation of the Islamic tradition, women participate in redefining everyday Islam, changing perceptions of the significance of Islam for Tatars. At the same time, they are moving the Islamic tradition beyond the confines of ethnic membership, offering their interpretation of Islam as a phenomenon beyond ethnicity.

It would be wrong to consider those young people, women included, who Islamicise their biography as a phenomenon separate and independent from reversion to Islam in the postsoviet period. There are partial similarities between the rhetoric and practice of older and young women. Similarly, the interest shown among young women towards modern Islam must be considered in the context of general tendencies in the transformation of spaces of young activity in the postsoviet period.

## Notes

- 1 I wrote this paper as part of the project 'Novyye sotsial'nyye dvizheniya molodezhi' ('New Youth Social Movements'), carried out in 2010 by the Centre for Youth Studies (*Tsentr molodezhnykh issledovaniy*) under the direction of Professor Yelena Omel'chenko within the framework of the Basic Research Programme of the *Natsional'nyy Issledovatel'skiy Universitet: Vysshaya Shkola Ekonomiki*.
- 2 Among the few works available, it is worth mentioning those of Enver Kisriyev, Vladimir Bobrovnikov and Akhmet Yarlykapov. See for example Yarlykapov, 2006.
- 3 On the identities of Muslim women, see Gureyeva, 2009; Kuznetsova-Morenko and Salakhutdinova, 2005.
- 4 For the six million Tatars with several centuries' experience of living in Orthodox Russia a close link has developed between their religious and ethnic identities (although a small number of Tatars were christened under Tsarist rule).
- 5 These figures are taken from the 2002 census; however, according to some experts, the number of Tatars is as high as 900,000 (see for example the newspaper *Argumenty i fakty*, 39 (377), 27 September 2000).
- 6 The vast majority of course attenders are women of retirement age. Some of them are elderly women from the country, brought by their children to the city for the 'winter' months. Generally, these women have a poor command of Russian and prefer to be taught in Tatar.
- 7 Attempts to define the new forms of Islam in the Soviet and postsoviet periods have led scholars to coin new terms like 'secular Islam' (see Khalid, 2003).
- 8 The black hijab became a threatening symbol after the terrorist attacks and the publication in the media of photographs of the young women in headscarves who were killed at the theatre siege in Moscow in 2002, during operations to free the hostages held at the 'Nord-Ost' show. Since then, this image surfaces from time to time in connection with other terrorist attacks. The last attack was in spring 2010 in the Moscow metro, which once again

conjured the image and the media's interest in attempting to identify the roots of 'female terrorism'. In addition, it also sparked renewed suspicions of Muslim women in the streets and on the metro in Moscow.

- 9 Asma Barlas, for instance, in the tradition of Islamic feminism, suggests a nonpatriarchal reading of the Quran (see Barlas, 2002).
- 10 A feast without alcohol, beginning with a compulsory reading from the Quran before the guests are invited to eat.
- 11 According to the results of research carried out in Tatarstan between 1998 and 2000. See Omel'chenko and Sabirova, 2001.

## References

- Amir-Moazami, S. (2007) *Politisierte Religion: der Kopftuchstreit in Deutschland und Frankreich* (Bielefeld, Transcript).
- Asad, T. (1986) *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (occasional paper) (Washington DC, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies), pp. 1–22.
- Asadullin, F. (2004) *Moskva musul'manskaya: istoriya i sovremennost': ocherki* (Moscow, UMMA).
- Barlas, A. (2002) *'Believing Women' in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (Austin, University of Texas Press).
- Dwyer, C. (1999) 'Veiled meanings: young British Muslim women and the negotiation of difference', *Gender, Place and Culture*, 6, pp. 5–26.
- Fathi, H. (2005) *Everyday Islam in the Post Soviet Central Asia: Women's Religious Practices* (paper presented at the conference 'Post-soviet Islam', Halle).
- Gauthier, F. (2004) 'Rave and religion? A contemporary youth phenomenon as seen through the lens of religious studies', *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, 33, 3–4, pp. 397–413.
- Gerlach, J. (2006) *Zwischen Pop und Dschihad: Muslimische Jugend in Deutschland* (Berlin, Christoph Links Verlag).
- Göle, N. and Amman L. (2004) *Islam in Sicht: der Auftritt von Muslimen im öffentlichen Raum* (Bielefeld, Transcript).
- Gureyeva, Yu. (2009) 'Zhenshiny v khidzhabakh v Azerbaidzhane: islam, gender, povsednevnost'', in M. Rabazhayeva (ed.), *Gendernyye raznochteniya* (St Petersburg, Aletaya), pp. 245–49.
- Harris, C. (2006) *Muslim Youth: Tensions and Transitions in Tajikistan* (Boulder, CO, Westview Press).
- Hermansen, M. and Khan, M.F. (2009) 'South Asian Muslim American girl power: structures and symbols of control and self-expression', *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 11, 1 (November).
- Hopkins, P.E. (2009) 'Responding to the "crisis of masculinity": the perspectives of young Muslim men from Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scotland', *Gender, Place & Culture*, 16, 3, pp. 299–312.
- Khairtdinov, D. (2002) *Musul'manskaya obshchina Moskvyy v XIV-nachale XX vv* (Nizhni Novgorod).
- Khalid, A. (2003) 'A secular Islam: nation, state and religion in Uzbekistan', *Journal of Middle East Studies*, 35, pp. 573–98.
- Klein-Hessling, R., Noekel, S. and Werner, K. (eds) (1999) *Der neue Islam der Frauen: weibliche Lebenspraxis in der globalisierten Moderne Fallstudien aus Afrika, Asien und Europa* (Bielefeld, Transcript).
- Krämer, A. (2002) *Geistliche Autorität und islamische Gesellschaft im Wandel: Studien über Frauenälteste (otin und xalfa) im unabhängigen Usbekistan* (Berlin, Gerd Winkelhane).
- Kuznetsova-Morenko, I. and Salakhutdinova, L. (2005) 'Novyye musul'manki Tatarstana: k voprosu o stanovlenii sotsial'noi gruppy', in S. Kasymova (ed.), *Gender: traditsii i sovremennost': sbornik statei po gendernym issledovaniyam* (Dushanbe), pp. 154–55.

- Mahmood, S. (2003) 'Ethical formation and politics of individual autonomy in contemporary Egypt', *Social Research*, 70, 3, pp. 1501–30.
- Mukhametshin, R. (2003) *Tatary i islam v XX veke (Islam v obshchestvennoi i politicheskoi zhizni tatar i Tatarstana)* (Kazan', Fen).
- Musina, R. (2001) 'Musul'manskaya identichnost' kak forma "religioznogo natsionalizma" tatar v kontekste etnosotsial'nykh protsessov i etnopoliticheskoi situatsii v Tatarstane', in M. Iordan, R. Kuzeyev and S. Chervonnaya (eds), *Islam v Yevrazii: sovremennyye etnicheskiye i esteticheskiye kontseptsii sunnitskogo Islama, ikh transformatsiya v massovom soznanii i vyrazheniye v iskusstve musul'manskikh narodov Rossii* (Moscow, Progress-Traditsiya), pp. 291–303.
- Omel'chenko, Ye. (2008) 'Ot pofigistov do pragmatikov: pokoleniya molodezhnoi solidarnosti postperestroyechnoi', *Neprikosnovenny zapas*, 5, 61.
- Omel'chenko, Ye. and Sabirova, G. (2001) 'Islam and search for identity', in H. Pilkington and G. Yemelianova (eds), *Islam in Post-Soviet Russia: Public and Private Faces* (London, Routledge), pp. 156–79.
- Pilkington, H. (ed.) (1994) *Russia's Youth and its Culture: a Nation's Constructors and Constructed* (London, Routledge).
- Pilkington, H. (ed.) (1996) *Gender, Generation and Identity in Contemporary Russia* (London, Routledge).
- Ricoeur, P. (1995) *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination* (Minneapolis, MN, Augsburg Fortress).
- Taylor, C. (1989) *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).
- Tokhtakhodzhayeva, M. (2001) *Utomlennyye proshlym: reislamizatsiya obshchestva i polozheniye zhenshchin v Uzbekistane* (Tashkent).
- Yarlykapov, A. (2006) "'Narodny islam" i musul'manskaya molodezh' Tsentral'nogo i Severo-Zapadnogo Kavkaza', *Etnograficheskoye obozreniye*, 2, pp. 59–74.
- Wiktorowicz, Q. (ed.) (2004) *Islamic Activism: a Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press).

(Translated from the Russian by Alex Sobolev)