



The Question of Russian Islam: A Cultural Sociological Analysis

► Araştırma makalesi / Research article

Vildane ÖZKAN

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi, Gümüşhane Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler MYO, Sosyal Hizmet ve Danışmanlık Bölümü / *Asst. Prof. Dr., Gümüşhane University, Vocational School of Social Sciences, Department of Social Work and Counselling* | ROR ID: [00r9t7n55](https://orcid.org/00r9t7n55) | Gümüşhane, Türkiye

ORCID: [0000-0002-1534-9948](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1534-9948) | vildaneozkan@gmail.com

Artum DİNÇ

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi, Gümüşhane Üniversitesi, Sağlık Bilimleri Fakültesi, Sosyal Hizmetler Bölümü / *Asst. Prof. Dr., Gümüşhane University, Faculty of Literature, Department of Sociology* | ROR ID: [00r9t7n55](https://orcid.org/00r9t7n55) | Gümüşhane, Türkiye

ORCID: [0000-0001-9942-4847](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9942-4847) | artumdinc@hotmail.com

Cite as: Özkan, Vildane & Dinç, Artum. "The Question of Russian Islam: A Cultural Sociological Analysis". *Milel ve Nihal* 22/2 (2025), 295-311.

Abstract

This article examines how the Russian state attempts to reshape Muslim identities and practices through language policy, state-controlled religious institutions, and managed discourse. These efforts form part of a broader project to integrate Russia's Muslim population into a unified national identity. Using a cultural-sociological lens that draws on Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power, cultural constructivism, and Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony, the study investigates how official narratives and practices shape Islamic identity to align with Russian national culture. The study employs a qualitative content analysis of sources from 2006–2025, including Friday sermons, public speeches by muftis, Russian Qur'an translations, and political addresses on Islamic holidays. The findings reveal a concerted effort to recast Islam as an integral part of Russian heritage and patriotic values by promoting a "traditional Islam" loyal to the state. State-aligned Muslim authorities adapt Islamic terminology and practices to Russian linguistic and cultural norms in order to cultivate this loyalist narrative. As a result, an official Islamic discourse has emerged that emphasizes civic loyalty, interfaith harmony, and conservative values, while portraying non-Russified Muslim identity as foreign or extremist.

Keywords: Russia, Muslim identity, State discourse, Symbolic power, Cultural hegemony.

Rus İslamı Sorunu: Kültürel Sosyolojik Bir Analiz

Atf: Özkan, Vildane & Dinç, Artum. "Rus İslamı Sorunu: Kültürel Sosyolojik Bir Analiz". *Milel ve Nihal* 22/2 (2025), 295-311.

Öz

Bu makale, Rus devletinin dil politikası, devlet denetimindeki dini kurumlar ve yönetilen söylem aracılığıyla Müslüman kimliğini ve dini pratikleri nasıl yeniden biçimlendirilmeye çalıştığını incelemektedir. Bu çabalar, Rusya'nın Müslüman nüfusunu birleşik bir ulusal kimliğe entegre etmeye yönelik daha geniş bir projenin parçasıdır. Çalışma, Bourdieu'nün simgesel güç kavramı, kültürel yapılandırıcılık ve Gramsci'nin kültürel hegemonya kuramından yararlanan kültürel sosyolojik bir yaklaşım kullanarak, resmi anlatıların ve uygulamaların İslami kimliği Rus ulusal kültürüyle nasıl uyumlu hale getirdiğini araştırmaktadır. Çalışma, Cuma vaazları, müftülerin halka açık konuşmaları, Rusça Kur'an tercüme ve İslami bayramlardaki siyasi konuşmalar dahil olmak üzere 2006–2025 yılları arasındaki kaynakların nitel bir içerik analizini yapmaktadır. Bulgular, devlete sadık bir "geleneksel İslam"ı teşvik ederek İslam'ı Rus mirasının ve vatanseverlik değerlerinin ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak yeniden biçimlendirme yönünde bilinçli bir çabayı ortaya koymaktadır. Devlete uyumlu Müslüman otoriteler, bu sadık anlatıyı beslemek için İslami terminolojiyi ve uygulamaları Rus dil ve kültür normlarına uyarlamaktadır. Sonuç olarak, sivil sadakati, dinler arası uyumu ve muhafazakar değerleri vurgulayan, Ruslaştırılmamış Müslüman kimliğini yabancı veya aşırılıklı olarak tasvir eden resmi bir İslam söylemi ortaya çıkmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rusya, Müslüman kimliği, Devlet söylemi, Simgesel güç, Kültürel hegemonya.

Introduction

Islam is a historic and growing part of Russia's complex religious landscape, and in recent decades the Russian political authorities have actively sought to integrate the country's Muslim population into a unified national identity. This process, can be described as the Russification of Muslim identity, involves reshaping Muslim religious identity to fit the idioms and interests of the Russian state. Unlike coercive Soviet-era policies, today's Russification is subtler – operating through cultural and symbolic means rather than outright suppression. The state emphasizes that Islam is an “integral, organic part of Russia's history,” as President Vladimir Putin declared, celebrating the many Muslims who have contributed to the “glory of our Fatherland”. Such rhetoric serves to validate a “good” Islam that is indigenized and loyal, in contrast to a “foreign and radicalized Islam” deemed a threat to stability.¹ By rhetorically elevating Islam as part of Russia's cultural code, the authorities aim to foster a Muslim identity that is compatible with – and indeed supportive of – Russian patriotism and the state's conservative values. At the same time, the government remains wary of manifestations of Islam that resist this cultural alignment.

The impetus for Russifying of Muslims stems from multiple factors. First, the Russian Federation is home to some 20 million indigenous Muslims (Tatars, Bashkirs, Chechens, Avars, and others) as well as millions of migrant Muslim workers, making Islam the nation's second-largest faith. Ensuring these diverse communities identify with the Russian state is seen as crucial for national unity. Second, although Islam has long been present in Russia – established as the second-largest traditional faith after Orthodoxy since the 18th century – the post-Soviet Islamic revival brought an influx of transnational influences – from Gulf-funded Salafi movements to Turkish and Iranian religious networks – which the authorities feared could import extremist ideas or loyalties beyond Moscow's control. As a result, the state has pursued a dual approach of securitization and integration: cracking down on what it labels extremism, while also co-opting Islamic institutions and narratives to incorporate Islam into the official notion of “Russianness.” This has meant defining “traditional Islam” in Russia in ways that emphasize cultural compatibility and political loyalty. Indeed, in the Russian official discourse, traditional Islam is explicitly framed as Islam that is loyal to the state, rooted in local customs, and distant from foreign influence.² Such a construct allows the government to endorse a version of Islam that supports its interests, while delegitimizing alternative expressions of the faith.

This article explores the Russification of Muslims as a form of cultural engineering of religious identity. It investigates how language, state-sanctioned religious bodies, and controlled discourse act as mechanisms for reconstructing Muslim identity within a Russian cultural paradigm. By analyzing contemporary speeches, sermons, and texts, we can observe how Islamic faith is being narratively repackaged – invoking Russian history, using the Russian language, and aligning with Orthodox Christian vocabulary – to present it as an inseparable element of the Russian national fabric. The study is situated within a theoretical framework that views religion not just as a spiritual domain but also as a cultural field subject to power dynamics. In what follows, the theoretical approach is outlined, after which the

¹ Marlene Laruelle, “Russia's Islam: Balancing Securitization and Integration”, *Russia/NIS Center*, (December 2021).

² Laruelle, “Russia's Islam: Balancing Securitization and Integration”.

methodology and sources are explained. The focus of the article is organized into three analytical sections focusing on empirical arenas where Russification is pronounced: (1) Islamic holidays and state rhetoric, (2) mosque sermons and mufti discourse, and (3) Qur'an translations and the symbolic shift in language. A discussion then considers the broader implications of this state-driven cultural reconstruction of Muslim identity – especially the phenomenon of un-Russified Muslims who resist or fall outside the state's narrative – and what this means for religious identity and social cohesion in Russia. The conclusion summarizes the findings and reflects on the balance between cultural integration and religious diversity in the Russianness context.

Theoretical Framework

Understanding the Russification of Muslim identity requires a sociological lens that captures how identities are shaped by power and culture. Three theoretical perspectives guide this analysis: Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and symbolic power, the notion of cultural constructivism, and Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony. Together, these frameworks illuminate how the Russian state's actions function at both the overt and subtle levels of cultural influence.

Bourdieu conceptualizes *habitus* as a set of durable dispositions instilled through one's social and cultural environment – a “feel for the game” that guides how individuals perceive and act without conscious deliberation.³ In the context of Russian Muslim communities, the state's efforts at Russification can be seen as attempts to inculcate a particular religious habitus that aligns with being both devout Muslim and loyal Russian citizen. Through repeated exposure to certain narratives and practices (for example, sermons that link Quranic teachings to love of the motherland, or Islamic classes that teach pride in Russia's multi-religious history), a habitus of patriotic piety may be fostered. Bourdieu also emphasizes symbolic power – the power to name, classify, and create acceptance for certain meanings as legitimate. The Russian state wields *symbolic power* in the religious field by defining what “traditional Islam” entails and labeling other forms as deviant. By anointing certain clerics as official spokesmen and promoting Russian-language Islamic literature, the authorities symbolically consecrate a legitimate Islam. This is a form of what Bourdieu calls *symbolic violence* – a soft imposition of a worldview that the dominated come to accept as natural.⁴ For instance, when state-linked muftis insist that true Islam in Russia has always respected secular law and coexisted with Orthodox Christianity, they exercise symbolic power to reshape the collective memory and identity of Russia's Muslims in line with state interests.

Cultural constructivism posits that identities are not fixed essences but are constructed through discourse, practice, and interaction.⁵ From this viewpoint, Muslim identity in Russia today is being actively reconstructed – not only by global religious currents and grassroots developments, but significantly by deliberate state intervention. The idea of a homogenous Russian Muslim identity itself is a construct that has gained prominence in the

³ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. *Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 72-95.

⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John B. Thompson, trans. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Polity Press, 1991).

⁵ Charles B. Hutchison, “Cultural Constructivism: The Confluence of Cognition, Knowledge Creation, Multiculturalism, and Teaching”, *Intercultural Education* 17/3 (2006), 301-310.

post-Soviet era. The authorities propagate certain narratives (e.g. “Islam has always been part of Russia’s destiny” or “Russia’s Islam is unique and different from Middle Eastern Islam”) which over time shape how Muslims in Russia come to see themselves. By privileging the Russian language in Islamic settings and celebrating Muslim figures in Russian history, the state imbues the identity of Russia’s Muslims with specific cultural content. Cultural constructivism draws attention to these processes of narrative-building and how they solidify into taken-for-granted truths. In our case, the construct of “traditional Islam in Russia” – meaning an Islam harmonized with local culture and loyal to the state – is a prime example of identity construction from above.⁶ This construct did not emerge organically; it was debated and refined by religious elites and later amplified by state policy, illustrating how cultural identities can be engineered through discourse.

Gramsci’s theory of cultural hegemony is particularly relevant to analyzing the Russian state’s strategy. *Hegemony* refers to the dominance of one worldview or ideology such that it becomes commonplace and uncontested, securing the consent of the governed.⁷ The Russification of Muslim identity can be seen as a hegemonic project: the state (in tandem with allied religious authorities) seeks to create an overarching narrative in which being a faithful Muslim is not only compatible with, but conditional upon, being a loyal Russian patriot. The goal is to establish a consensus – among both Muslim and non-Muslim citizens – that the only acceptable Islam fits within Russia’s “multiconfessional unity” and subscribes to the state’s core values. One can observe an attempt to create a kind of civil religion in Russia’s public life, with “traditional Islam” as an integral component alongside Russian Orthodoxy. This resembles what Gramsci described as forging intellectual and moral leadership: Muslim spiritual boards are encouraged to function like an Islamic arm of the state’s ideological apparatus, producing statements that echo the Kremlin’s positions, whether on family values or national security. Through its control of religious education, censorship of undesirable interpretations, and co-optation of Islamic symbols into national celebrations, the state aspires to a form of cultural hegemony where its own traditionally defined interpretation of Islam prevails as common sense. However, as Gramsci notes, hegemony is never absolute and is always contested. The analysis will show that while the official, state-endorsed interpretation of Islam (essentially the Russification of Muslim identity) dominates the public sphere, it faces pushback from alternative interpretations that lie outside this state-sanctioned framework, creating an ongoing negotiation over meaning and identity.

Method

This study employs a qualitative content analysis of public discourse by official Islamic institutions in Russia, in order to examine the Russification of Muslim identity in the country. Specifically, we focus on sermons, speeches, and statements delivered in the Russian language by high-ranking Muslim clerics (muftis) and spiritual boards. By concentrating on discourses produced by these institutional Muslim leaders – a powerful yet narrow segment

⁶ Laruelle, “Russia’s Islam: Balancing Securitization and Integration”, *Russia/NIS Center*.

⁷ Thomas R. Bates, “Gramsci and the Theory of Hegemony”, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36/2 (1975), 351-66.

of voices shaping Islam in Russia – we can observe how Islamic messaging is adapted to fit the state’s cultural and ideological framework.⁸

Our data set consists of textual materials (transcripts of Friday khutbah sermons, official addresses, and published statements) from 2018–2023 that are openly available on Islamic institutional websites and state-affiliated media. For example, we collected Friday sermon texts issued by the Spiritual Administration of Muslims (DUM) and the Council of Muftis of Russia, such as the Victory Day commemorative sermon delivered at the Moscow Cathedral Mosque in May 2025.⁹ We also included public holiday messages and pronouncements by prominent muftis as reported in Russian media – for instance, the joint Victory Day greetings of Russia’s senior Muslim leaders in 2024.¹⁰ These sources provide concrete instances of Islamic discourse intertwining with Russian national narratives and enable a consistent sample for analysis across the defined timeframe.

Using coding and thematic analysis, we examined how these texts incorporate Russian cultural references, state-centric loyalty themes, and language choices. Key analytical categories included appeals to patriotism or national unity, invocations of historical events (e.g. World War II victory), and usage of the official concept of “Traditional Islam.” We traced, for instance, explicit calls by muftis for patriotism and loyalty to the fatherland in religious sermons.¹¹ We also identified references to “Traditional Islam,” understood here as a state-endorsed interpretation of Islam that emphasizes moderation and loyalty to the Russian state. These categories were derived both inductively from the material and deductively from prior scholarship on Russia’s official Islamic discourse, ensuring that our content analysis captures the core dimensions of the Russification phenomenon in religious messaging.

Given the scope of our study, we limited our analysis to Russian-language sources and official narratives. This approach highlights how Islam is presented in the public sphere to a broad audience, but it necessarily excludes community discourse in vernacular languages or informal settings. We acknowledge that in some Muslim communities (for example, in Tatarstan) there has been resistance to conducting sermons in Russian, with local Muslim leaders insisting on using Tatar Turkish to preserve their traditions.¹² Additionally, our focus on state-aligned Islamic institutions means that the findings reflect narratives encouraged by the authorities – indeed, the Russian government actively promotes “traditional Islam” as a loyal, nationally oriented form of the faith.¹³ These delimitations, however, allow us to critically assess the intended public image of Islam in Russia and the mechanisms by which religious leaders conform to and reinforce the state’s ideological expectations.

⁸ Gulnaz R. Sibgatullina, “The Muftis and the Myths: Constructing the Russian ‘Church for Islam’”, *Problems of Post-Communism* 72/2 (2023); Gulnaz Sibgatullina, “Translating Islam into the language of the Russian state and the Orthodox Church”, *Religion, State & Society* 47/2 (2019), 234–247.

⁹ DUMRF. “Bog daruyet pobedu komu pozhelayet. Pyatnichnaya propoved' v den' prazdnovaniya Velikoy Pobedy muftiya Damira Mukhetdina v Moskovskoy Sobornoj mecheti” (9 May 2025).

¹⁰ DUMRF. “Pozdravlenie muftija šejxa Ravilja Gajnutdina s Dnem Pobedy” (9 May 2024).

¹¹ TASS. “Verkhovnyy muftiy RF v Kurban-bayram prizval berech' rodinu i udelyat' vnimaniye detyam” (21 August 2018).

¹² Lyudmila Jukova, “Il'dar-khazrat Alyautdinov o «starykh» i «novykh» moskovskikh musul'manakh, stroitel'stve mechetey i publichnykh zhertvoprinosheniyakh” (6 May 2013).

¹³ Elmira Muratova, “‘Traditional Islam’ in Crimean Tatar Discourse and Politics,” *Context: Časopis za interdisciplinarnе studije* 6/1 (2019), 117–136.

Islamic Holidays and State Rhetoric

After the Soviet era, Islamic festivals in Russia, such as Ramadan and Eid al-Adha (known locally by their Turkic-derived names, Uraza-Bayram or Ramazan Bayramı, and Kurban-Bayram), have reemerged as important public events. In Muslim-majority republics like Tatarstan and Bashkortostan (home to predominantly Turkic Tatar and Bashkir populations), these holidays are officially recognized non-working days, and local authorities actively participate in celebrations. At the federal level, while they are not national holidays, the Russian state now makes a point of acknowledging them. For example, President Vladimir Putin and other top officials issue annual greetings to Russia's Muslims on Eid, praising the Muslim community's contribution to Russia's cultural heritage and national unity.¹⁴ Such messages emphasize that Russia's Muslims "*carefully preserve the rich cultural and religious traditions of their ancestors*" and actively participate in charitable, educational, and patriotic initiatives that benefit the country.¹⁵ This framing presents Islam as an integral part of Russia's historical mosaic rather than a foreign element. It reinforces the official narrative of "traditional Islam" – a notion of Islam that is indigenized to Russia and aligned with state values. Through this rhetoric, the state signals that Muslim citizens are respected contributors to Russia's multiethnic society, so long as their religious practice is rooted in heritage and loyalty to the nation.

Public celebrations of Islamic holidays have become carefully choreographed events blending religious and national symbols. Major Eid prayers in cities like Moscow and St. Petersburg gather tens of thousands of worshippers, occasionally stirring public debate in the media due to their scale. Nonetheless, authorities generally accommodate these gatherings, even involving official representatives in the festivities. In Moscow, Eid prayers at the Grand Mosque often see attendance by government envoys or receive supportive messages from officials. The religious leaders conducting the ceremonies – typically the Chief Mufti or imams – deliver parts of the service in Arabic (the traditional takbirs and prayers) but address the crowd largely in Russian, the lingua franca among the diverse Muslim communities (Tatars, Caucasians, Central Asians, etc.). Their sermons on these occasions frequently invoke themes of patriotism and interethnic harmony. For instance, the Mufti of Moscow, Ildar Alyautdinov, and the Council of Muftis chairman, Ravil Gaynutdin, routinely stress ideas of national unity, peace, and loyalty to the homeland in their Eid messages. In a 2023 Eid al-Adha sermon in Moscow, Mufti Gaynutdin urged the congregation to "*pray for the well-being of Russia, for the prosperity of our motherland*" and highlighted the duty of Russia's Muslims to lead in social solidarity and charity. By infusing the religious ritual with patriotic content, these leaders extend the meaning of the holiday beyond piety, reinforcing the image of the "good Muslim citizen" who is both devout and devoted to country.

The incorporation of Russian cultural elements into Islamic holiday celebrations is another notable aspect of this state-aligned rhetoric. In some regions, Eid events feature not only Islamic rites but also folk performances representing Russia's ethnic diversity. For example, during Eid al-Adha festivities in Tatarstan in 2022, traditional Tatar music and dress were on display alongside Russian-language speeches explaining the significance of the

¹⁴ Prezident Rossii. "Pozdravleniye musul'manam Rossii s prazdnikom Uraza-bayram", (30 Mart 2025).

¹⁵ Prezident Rossii. "Pozdravleniye musul'manam Rossii s prazdnikom Uraza-bayram".

holiday. In other areas, local governments have supported “friendship of peoples” festivals on Eid, where Muslim and non-Muslim groups alike participate. Such initiatives portray Muslim holidays as part of the shared public culture. They increase the visibility of Islamic practices while framing them as inclusive and non-threatening – celebrations that all of Russia can appreciate. Secular authorities even sponsor communal activities like open-air feasts, free food distribution, and fairs on Eid, integrating these observances into the civic calendar. This careful balance allows Islamic rituals to flourish in public (undoing decades of Soviet suppression) but within bounds that emphasize interethnic unity and loyalty to the state.

Linguistic Russification is evident in how the holidays themselves are described. The common Russian names for the festivals – “*Uraza-Bayram*” for Eid al-Fitr and “*Kurban-Bayram*” for Eid al-Adha – are borrowed from the Tatar Turkish language and have become standard across Russian media and official usage. These terms are so embedded that they are generally preferred over the Arabic names (*Id al-Fitr*, *Id al-Adha*), which occasionally appear in parentheses in formal texts. The consistent use of Russified or locally rooted terminology is more than a matter of style; it symbolically “localizes” the religion. By referring to Eid with familiar words, the state and society signal that this Islamic celebration is *not* an imported alien event but part of Russia’s own cultural landscape. Indeed, official statements almost always use the Russian/Turkic-derived names; even the Kremlin’s greetings mention *Uraza-Bayram* and *Kurban-Bayram* in Russian contexts.¹⁶ This linguistic choice reflects what Pierre Bourdieu would call the distribution of *linguistic capital* – here, Russian carries prestige and authority even in the religious domain. The ability to discuss Islamic concepts in the Russian language (rather than exclusively in Arabic or Turkic tongues) grants them broader legitimacy in the eyes of the state and the general public. For Russia’s Muslims, employing Russian in communal religious life has become a pragmatic norm and even a marker of being “inside” the accepted tradition. As one analyst notes, the very act of using Russian to label and perform Islamic holidays helps render Islam a *domestic* phenomenon in Russia rather than an import.¹⁷

The state’s handling of Islamic holidays exemplifies a strategy of cultural incorporation that aligns with theories of symbolic power and hegemony. By actively participating in Eid celebrations and shaping their narrative, the Russian government exercises what Bourdieu terms *symbolic power* – the power to define social reality and legitimate certain meanings. Official Eid greetings reframe Islamic observance as part of Russia’s national heritage, thereby validating a version of Islam compatible with Russian patriotism. Simultaneously, this reflects Gramsci’s notion of *cultural hegemony*: the state (in tandem with loyal Muslim elites) promotes a discourse in which Islamic piety and Russian civic loyalty appear naturally unified. This discourages any perception of conflict between religious and national identities. The habitus of Muslim believers is subtly steered to embrace a dual identity – to celebrate Ramadan and Eid as good Muslims *and* good Russian citizens. Islamic symbols and rituals are thus harnessed in service of social cohesion, constructing a version of Islam that buttresses the state’s multicultural narrative. The outcome, when successful, is a scene of harmony: public Muslim festivals that showcase patriotic fervor and religious devotion as complementary, not competing, values. This case demonstrates how cultural practices

¹⁶ Vedomosti. “Putin pozdravil musul'man Rossii s Uraza-bajramom” (10 April 2024).

¹⁷ Vedomosti. “Putin pozdravil musul'man Rossii s Uraza-bajramom”.

(holiday celebrations) become a field wherein the state's symbolic power naturalizes the idea of a "Russian Islam," shaping communal habits and expectations in line with a broader national identity.

Mosque Sermons and Mufti Discourse

The content and language of mosque sermons in Russia offer a window into how Islam is being subtly Russified and aligned with state-sanctioned narratives in day-to-day religious practice. Friday sermons (*khutbas*) and public addresses by muftis (Muslim clerical leaders) are especially influential, as they convey religious guidance to the faithful on a regular basis. In the post-Soviet period, there has been a clear trend toward delivering these sermons in Russian rather than exclusively in ethnic minority languages. This is most evident in urban centers: for instance, in Moscow's central mosques, the congregation is, although the vast majority are of Turkish origin, dialectically mixed (including Turkic Tatars, peoples from the Caucasus, Central Asian Turkic immigrants, etc.), so Russian serves as the common tongue. It is now typical for the *khutba* in such settings to be given primarily in Russian, with perhaps a few Arabic prayers or Quranic recitations included. Even in traditionally Muslim regions, the use of Russian has expanded. In Tatarstan – where Tatars (a Turkic Muslim people) have a strong local language – debates erupted over sermon language. In 2016 the mufti of Tatarstan, Kamil Samigullin, decreed that Friday sermons should be delivered only in Tatar Turkish. This prompted criticism from Moscow's Mufti, Ildar Alyautdinov, who argued that many young Tatars no longer understand Tatar well and that Russian would be more inclusive for conveying religious messages to all worshippers. Tatarstani authorities and clergy, however, viewed the language of the mosque as an identity issue, with one official insisting that "*the language of the sermon is a sign of a congregation's orientation and allegiance.*" They feared that if sermons shifted entirely to Russian, the unique local Islamic tradition (honed over centuries in the Tatar language) could be lost. The eventual compromise in many Tatarstan mosques has been to adopt bilingual sermons: the imam preaches in Tatar, then provides a summary or key points in Russian for wider understanding. This case reveals an underlying tension in the Russification process – between the drive for a unified Russian-language discourse that integrates Muslims nationally, and the desire to preserve the cultural-linguistic heritage of Russia's diverse Muslim communities.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Russian has effectively become the dominant "religious language" in the public sphere of Islam in the Russian Federation. Borrowing Bourdieu's terminology, one could say that the *linguistic market* of religious communication values Russian highly, as it grants broader reach and political legitimacy. Mastery of Russian in Islamic contexts allows religious leaders to appeal to a pan-ethnic Muslim audience and to signal alignment with the state. Mufti Ravil Gaynutdin – one of the country's most prominent Muslim leaders, of Tatar background – frequently extols the unifying role of the Russian tongue. In a 2023 address, Gaynutdin observed that Russian has "in recent times also become the language of Islam in our country...a significant part of Islamic scholarly works is now published in Russian, which has in many of our mosques become the language

of the sermon”, declaring “*Russian language is our common wealth*”.¹⁸ This explicit endorsement of Russian in the religious domain is a form of symbolic alignment with state integration policies. By elevating Russian to a sacred medium, Muslim authorities reinforce a linguistic hierarchy where Russian enjoys prestige and neutrality, while minority languages are gently sidelined in official religious contexts. Importantly, this shift also makes Islamic discourse more legible to the non-Muslim majority and to state power brokers – a point not lost on the muftis themselves.

Content-wise, the sermons disseminated by official Muslim institutions increasingly mirror themes prioritized by the government, blending spiritual guidance with civic messaging. A content analysis of Friday khutbas in recent years reveals recurring topics: patriotism and national unity, the importance of family and traditional values, warnings against extremism, and respect for Russia’s multiethnic harmony. These topics closely dovetail with the Russian state’s current ideological emphases. For example, around 2020–2021, many sermons across the country stressed *family values* and the moral education of youth, condemning social ills like alcoholism and drug use. This coincided with the federal government’s push for “traditional family values,” enshrined in the 2020 constitutional amendments defining marriage in traditional terms and extolling filial piety. It is telling that Muslim clerics publicly voiced support for those constitutional changes, seeing them as compatible with Islamic ethics. The head of the Central Muslim Spiritual Directorate, Talgat Tadzhtudin (often called the “Supreme Mufti”), even urged Muslims to back the amendments, emphasizing the need to protect spiritual and moral security.¹⁹ In effect, mosque sermons functioned as amplifiers for the state’s conservative turn, promoting obedience to authorities and social solidarity. This dynamic illustrates how religion can be co-opted as a tool of governance: Islamic teachings on morality, charity, and community are emphasized in ways that bolster state-defined social order. As one study of official discourse on Islam in Russia put it, official Muslim rhetoric is “*full of conceptual metaphors indicating loyalty to the ruling elite*,” and often aligns seamlessly with government discourse on issues beyond religion.²⁰

The theme of patriotism is especially pronounced. In regions like the North Caucasus, it has become customary for imams to include prayers for the Russian state and its leaders during Friday services. During periods of security concern – for instance, the mid-2010s when Russia was engaged in Syria and combating ISIS influence – sermons frequently included appeals to young Muslims to beware of “false jihad” and terrorist propaganda. Imams would remind worshippers of their duty to defend the Motherland and not be swayed by militant ideologies. In Dagestan, Chechnya, and other Muslim-majority republics of the Caucasus, where insurgencies had flared in earlier years, official khutbas often intermix Russian and local languages and unequivocally condemn “non-traditional” Islamic currents. Phrases like “we never saw this from our ancestors” or “imported pseudo-Islamic ideas” are used to delegitimize Salafi-jihadist teachings without necessarily naming them. Over the past two decades, terms such as “*Wahhabi*” have entered public vocabulary as synonyms for

¹⁸ DUMRF. “Privetstviye Muftiya Sheykha Ravilya Gaynutdina uchastnikam XV Assamblei Russkogo mira” (3 November 2023).

¹⁹ TSDUM. “Verkhovnyy muftiy dal interv'yu TASS” (16 June 2020).

²⁰ Sofya Ragoza, “Official Discourse on Islam and Islamic Discourse in Contemporary Russia,” *Context: Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 6/1 (2021), 47–64.

extremist, and clerical speeches have reinforced that association. By repeatedly contrasting the native Islamic heritage (portrayed as peaceful, patriotic, Sufi-influenced, and loyal) with the specter of foreign-backed extremism, official Muslim leaders perform an act of boundary-making. They delineate a “good Islam” – essentially the Islam that is culturally Russian and obedient to state authority – versus deviant forms branded as alien and dangerous. This dichotomy has been internalized by much of the community. The average observant Muslim in Russia is implicitly taught that to be a true Muslim one must also be a loyal Russian citizen following “traditional Islam”. Through such sermons, the *symbolic power* to define orthodoxy is exercised: the state-backed clergy impose criteria for religious legitimacy, labeling dissenting interpretations as misguidance or even treason. As a result, the faithful are socialized into an understanding that Islamic piety goes hand in hand with patriotism and respect for Russian law.

A striking feature of the Russification of Islamic discourse is the deliberate use of Russian Orthodox Christian phraseology and cultural references by Muslim leaders, particularly Mufti Gaynutdin. According to Gulnaz Sibgatullina’s discourse analysis, Gaynutdin’s speeches often mimic the style and terminology of the Orthodox Church hierarchy. He frequently translates Arabic religious terms into Russian equivalents that carry Slavic or Christian connotations. For instance, instead of the Arabic “*Allab*” exclusively, he interchanges it with “Bog” or “Gospod” (Russian words for God/Lord) and has even used “Vsevyshniy” (The Almighty), a word with strong associations to Orthodox liturgy.²¹ He might describe Islamic prayer not as “*namaz*” (the common Turkic/Arabic term) but as “*molitva*” (Russian for prayer, used in a Christian context), or refer to the Hajj pilgrimage as “*palomnichestvo*” (a term for Christian pilgrimage).²² In one notable instance, Mufti Gaynutdin spoke of the Quran as “*Zakon Vsevyshnego*” – literally “the Law of the Almighty” – echoing the Biblical notion of Divine Law or Covenant, instead of simply saying “Quran”.²³ This linguistic strategy is a form of *domestication* (to borrow a term from translation studies): it adapts and translates Islamic concepts into the idiom of Russian culture. By couching Islamic theology in words familiar to non-Muslim Russians, Gaynutdin and others make their message more palatable and “home-grown.” It reassures the Orthodox majority that Islam shares core values and even a vocabulary of reverence with Russian Christianity. As a result, Muslim leaders can project themselves as part of a united moral front with the Orthodox Church in upholding faith and patriotism in Russia. From the perspective of cultural hegemony, it narrows the rhetorical gap between the minority religion and the majority culture, portraying them as allies in a common civilizational space. It also implicitly elevates the status of the Russian language and concepts as the arbiters of religious legitimacy. The *symbolic capital* at play is clear – by demonstrating fluency in the dominant culture’s language of the sacred, Muslim clergy gain acceptance and influence within the corridors of power.

Furthermore, official sermons consistently propagate the concept of “traditional Islam” without always using the term explicitly. The content of their talks – stories of Muslim war heroes loyal to Russia, parables of wise local saints preaching peace, invocations of historical

²¹ Ragozina, “Official Discourse on Islam and Islamic Discourse in Contemporary Russia”.

²² Ragozina, “Official Discourse on Islam and Islamic Discourse in Contemporary Russia”.

²³ Ragozina, “Official Discourse on Islam and Islamic Discourse in Contemporary Russia”.

customs – all serve to construct traditional Islam as the approved form of the faith. Scholars note that this concept, as used in Russia, implies an Islam that is Sunni (often specifically Hanafi in jurisprudence), influenced by centuries of coexistence with Russian culture, infused with indigenous customs and Sufi spirituality, and unequivocally loyal to the state.²⁴ The late Valiulla Yakupov, a Tatar theologian, described “*traditional Islam*” as an Islam molded by local culture and loyal to government authority.²⁵ In sermons, imams may illustrate this by recounting, for example, how a legendary Tatar imam once prayed fervently for the Tsar’s armies, or how mountain village sheikhs in the Caucasus guided youth away from rebellion, emphasizing peace. Such anecdotes reinforce the idea that true Islam in Russia has always meant patriotism, obedience, and cultural integration. Conversely, any form of Islam that rejects local customs, or that encourages political dissent, is cast as *heterodox* or extremist. Notably, clerics rarely mention specific groups like “Hizb ut-Tahrir” or the “Muslim Brotherhood” by name from the pulpit; instead they warn against “*new sects*” or “*foreign teachings our forefathers did not know.*” This veiled language nevertheless clearly points to Salafi and radical influences, which audiences have learned to associate with upheaval. Over decades, the state and loyal clerics have successfully implanted the notion that “*non-traditional Islam*” – often a euphemism for Wahhabism or any politicized Islam – is a threat imported from abroad, not a product of native Muslim society.²⁶

The pattern observed in Russia’s mosques aligns strongly with Bourdieu’s theory of religious field and symbolic power, as well as Gramsci’s concept of cultural hegemony. The officially approved clergy function as mediators between the state and the Muslim masses, consciously shaping religious narratives to maintain the sociopolitical status quo. They use their symbolic capital – their authority as bearers of “orthodox” knowledge – to define what Islam should mean in the Russian context. In Bourdieu’s terms, they are imposing a *nomos*, a normative vision of Islam that privileges loyalty and cultural conformity. By controlling the pulpit, these muftis and imams exercise *symbolic violence* in a mild form: they secure the consent of the governed (the Muslim believers) to a definition of Islam that serves the state’s interests. Gramsci would recognize them as organic intellectuals of the state, incorporating Islamic vocabulary into the hegemonic ideology of Russian patriotism. The result is a hegemonic narrative of “traditional Islam” that most Russia’s Muslims internalize, partly because deviating from it carries social and political risks (being stigmatized as an extremist or sectarian). This does not mean all Muslim clerics in Russia toe the line – there are independent voices and critics – but they operate on the margins. The dominant discourse, backed by institutional power, renders alternative interpretations suspect or illegitimate. In summary, the mosque sermons illustrate how cultural constructs (like “traditional Islam”) are employed to guide the habitus of Muslim citizens. The fusion of religious duty with civic loyalty in sermon after sermon reproduces a compliant form of religiosity. Through these practices, the state’s cultural hegemony extends into the spiritual domain: Islam is co-opted to buttress national unity, and the faithful are conditioned to see piety and patriotism as two sides of the same coin.

²⁴ Renat Irikovich Bekkin vd., *Islam, imeyushchiy mirnuyu i dobruyu sushchnost'. Diskurs o traditsionnom islame v srede tyurok-musul'man, datel'stvo* (Studia Religiosa, Novoye literaturnoye obozreniye, 2021)

²⁵ Bekkin vd., *Islam, imeyushchiy mirnuyu i dobruyu sushchnost'.*

²⁶ Bekkin vd., *Islam, imeyushchiy mirnuyu i dobruyu sushchnost'.*

Qur'an Translations and the Symbolic Language Shift

One of the most concrete arenas where the Russification of Muslim identity is playing out is in the realm of religious texts – especially Russian translations of the Qur'an and other Islamic literature. Language is a pivotal tool here: by translating sacred texts into Russian (and shaping how they are translated), religious authorities and the state can influence the very way Islam is understood by believers. Russia's Muslim population, mostly Turkic by ethnicity (Tatars, Bashkirs, and others), has historically learned Arabic for liturgical purposes. Yet for centuries, there have also been efforts to render the meanings of the Qur'an into the languages of the Russian Empire. The first full Russian translation of the Qur'an dates back to 1776 (undertaken by M. I. Verevkin and S. Sablukov under the auspices of Empress Catherine the Great). During the Soviet period, overt religious publishing was suppressed, but a few academic Russian translations by Orientalists appeared for scholarly use. It was after 1991, with religious freedom restored, that Russian Qur'an translations proliferated. Notably, these translations have come from a mix of ethnic backgrounds – highlighting Islam's diversity in Russia. For instance, Elmir Kuliyeu, an Azerbaijani scholar, produced a popular Russian interpretation (tafsir) of the Qur'an in the early 2000s, while Valeria Porokhova, a Russian convert to Islam (who adopted the name Fatima), published a renowned Russian poetic translation in the 1990s. Tatar and Bashkir scholars, such as Rafik Mukhametshin, have also contributed translations and commentaries. By the 2010s, Russian-speaking Muslims could choose from numerous Qur'anic translations and tafsirs, each with its own linguistic style and ideological slant.

The differences among these translations are illustrative of broader ideological currents – essentially, varying degrees of “domesticating” Islam into Russian culture. Porokhova's translation (first published in 1991 and reprinted multiple times) is often noted for its flowery, high-register Russian prose, which at times borrows heavily from Biblical and Orthodox Christian phraseology. Porokhova, coming from an Orthodox Christian background, consciously tried to build bridges between Islamic and Christian understanding. She chose words that would resonate with a Russian reader's religious lexicon – for example, she did not shy from using “Господь” (Lord) for Allah in certain verses, or other terms familiar from the Church Slavonic tradition, to convey concepts of divinity and morality. Her Qur'an translation reads almost like a work of Russian spiritual literature, replete with rhyme and rhythm, aiming to evoke the grandeur of scripture in a way a Russian might find culturally familiar. By contrast, Elmir Kuliyeu's translation (first published in 2002, with subsequent editions) takes a more straightforward approach. Kuliyeu aimed for clarity and accuracy, even at the expense of stylistic elegance. He retained many original Islamic terms transliterated rather than replaced – for instance, he kept the word “Allah” rather than substituting a Russian equivalent, and left terms like *salat* (prayer) or *zakat* (alms) with minimal Russian analogs. His language is modern standard Russian, but he tried to stay as close to the Arabic meaning as possible without overlaying it with Russian cultural connotations. In essence, Porokhova's method represents maximal integration – fully adapting Qur'anic language to Russian cultural idioms – whereas Kuliyeu's method is partial integration – bringing the text into Russian while preserving a distinct Islamic vocabulary. Both approaches have their audiences, but they reflect different philosophies: one sees Russification of religious language as a way to make Islam “at home” in Russia, the other is

cautious about diluting the original terminology and prefers a pan-Islamic consistency even in translation.

Crucially, the Russian state and official Muslim bodies have not remained neutral arbiters in this field. They have shown increasing interest in guiding which interpretations gain prominence. A dramatic illustration came in 2019, when a local court in Samara province banned Elmir Kuliyeв’s Russian Qur’an commentary as “extremist.” This ruling – eventually issued in late 2020 after lengthy proceedings – sent shockwaves through Russia’s Muslim community. Kuliyeв’s work was one of the most widely used Russian translations, available in mosques and Islamic colleges for over a decade, with millions of copies in circulation. The Samara court, however, ruled that certain interpretations and footnotes in this work (as well as in a Saudi-based commentary by Ibn Kathir that Kuliyeв had translated parts of) contained statements that could incite hatred towards non-Muslims²⁷. Earlier, in 2013, leading Muslim clerics had already warned that such bans on Qur’anic translations could provoke social unrest and alienate faithful believers.²⁸ Officials pointed to lines in the commentary that described Jews, Christians, and polytheists in a negative light, arguing that disseminating such material threatened interreligious harmony and public order²⁹. Although Kuliyeв and Russia’s Council of Muftis appealed the decision, the ban highlighted the state’s willingness to police intra-Islamic theological content in the name of combating extremism. Islamic experts protested that Kuliyeв’s tafsir was a mainstream Sunni interpretation, arguing that classical texts of Islam should not be judged by secular courts³⁰. Nonetheless, the episode demonstrated that any religious literature not aligning with the officially sanctioned narrative could come under scrutiny. The logic expressed by authorities was consistent with the “traditional vs. non-traditional Islam” framework: any text deemed influenced by foreign or radical ideologies (in this case, possibly the more austere Salafi interpretations) was suspect. Indeed, security services in Russia have long maintained that imported extremist literature is a key factor in radicalizing youth. Under expansive anti-extremism laws, numerous Islamic books have been banned in the past two decades – even innocuous ones; for example, a simple collection of the Prophet’s 40 Hadiths was infamously banned by a regional court before the ruling was overturned amid public outcries. The cumulative effect is a chilling environment for Islamic publishing: publishers now often seek an imprimatur from the official clergy or censorship authorities to ensure their books won’t be blacklisted.

In Russia, the state-backed Muslim establishment – notably the national muftiate under Mufti Damir Mukhethdinov – has pursued an official Russian Qur’an translation to forge a unified Islamic discourse after authorities banned certain unsanctioned interpretations as “extremist”. This project extends to translating Islamic terms into culturally resonant Russian vocabulary (for example, rendering the Arabic prayer *namaz* as the Orthodox-inflected *molitva* for “prayer,” and the pilgrimage *hajj* as *palomnichestvo*)³¹. Even core concepts are reframed with familiar Russian Christian notions – for instance, referring to

²⁷ Lenta.ru. “V Rossii snova popytalis’ zapretit’ knigu s tolkovaniyem Korana” (22 January 2019).

²⁸ Alissa De Carbonnel, “Russian Muslim clerics warn of unrest over ban of translation of Koran”, *Reuters* (21 September 2013).

²⁹ Lenta.ru. “V Rossii snova popytalis’ zapretit’ knigu s tolkovaniyem Korana”.

³⁰ Volga News. “SamarSKIY sud priznal ekstremistskimi nekotoryye tolkovaniya Korana” (16 November 2020).

³¹ Sibgatullina, “Translating Islam into the language of the Russian state and the Orthodox Church”.

divine law in Islam as “Zakon Vsevyshnego” (the Almighty’s Law) instead of Arabic terminology.³² Such linguistic domestication not only makes Islam appear as an intimate, “traditional” part of Russian culture, but also reinforces the state’s ideological oversight. By promoting sanctioned Russian-language Islamic publications and filtering out unapproved texts, the authorities and official Islamic scholars shape the religious habitus of young Russia’s Muslims, who increasingly receive Islamic instruction through the Russian language and within approved interpretive frameworks.

The case of Qur’an translations and Islamic literature encapsulates the role of *language* in the politics of religion – a theme well explicated by cultural theorists. Here we see Bourdieu’s concept of *symbolic power* operating through linguistic means: by controlling the language of scripture and doctrine, the Russian state and its allied Muslim elites seek to control the narrative of Islam itself. The “power to name” (in this case, whether to call a practice *namaz* or *molitva*, or which commentary to deem acceptable) is a profound form of symbolic domination. It shapes the mental frameworks within which Russia’s Muslims interpret their faith. Gramsci’s cultural hegemony is also at play: the production of a state-sanctioned Qur’an translation and the suppression of alternative texts represent an attempt to establish hegemony over religious knowledge. It’s about winning consent by defining the authoritative sources of Islam in Russia. This process can also be seen through the lens of *cultural constructivism*: Russian Islam is being consciously constructed (or reconstructed) by blending it with the Russian language and cultural references. Over time, these linguistic choices and censored libraries could lead to a distinctly “Russian Islam” in practice – not just as a slogan, but as the lived reality of believers whose exposure to their religion is channeled through state-approved Russian idioms. This endeavor carries both promise and peril. On one hand, it indigenizes Islam, potentially strengthening Muslims’ sense of belonging in Russia (Islam is not a foreign Arabic legacy, but something that speaks in Russian voices). On the other hand, it risks isolating Russia’s Muslims from the broader Muslim world or from the scriptural originals, possibly diluting aspects of the faith. From the viewpoint of the Russian authorities, however, the priority is clear: a Russian-speaking, culturally integrated Muslim populace is seen as a guarantor of social stability and loyalty. By securitizing language, the state turns the act of translation into a mechanism of integration and control. In sum, the reshaping of Islamic language in Russia demonstrates the intimate link between linguistic policy and symbolic power. It is an ongoing project of constructing a national religious identity – one Quran verse, one sermon, one book at a time – to ensure that the future of Islam in the Russian Federation speaks with a Russian accent and remains within the “acceptable” ideological boundaries set by the custodians of tradition.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Russification of Muslim identity in Russia today is a multifaceted, top-down process of cultural engineering that reshapes religious identity to fit state-defined norms. Through symbolic gestures of inclusion, control over religious narratives, and the linguistic tailoring of Islamic practice, Russian authorities and loyal Muslim leaders have effectively cultivated a localized form of Islam that upholds the political status quo. This

³² Sibgatullina, “Translating Islam into the language of the Russian state and the Orthodox Church”.

approach echoes earlier Russian imperial strategies – from Catherine the Great’s establishment of a state-supervised Muslim clergy in 1788³³ to Soviet-era attempts to regiment religious life – underscoring a historical continuum in the state’s efforts to integrate Muslim identity into a unified Russian national identity.

The current paradigm of “traditional Islam,” as demonstrated, has transformed how many of Russia’s Muslims relate to their faith: it validates folk customs, patriotism, and inter-ethnic concord as religious virtues, while casting suspicion on transnational Islamic ties or purist theologies. Such transformation brings a measure of stability and interfaith harmony, buttressing the idea of a diverse but unified “Russian Ummah.” Yet it also raises critical questions about authenticity and pluralism, as voices that diverge from the sanctioned narrative risk marginalization.

Going forward, scholars and policymakers must consider how Russia’s experiment in defining a national Islam will adapt to social change and global Islamic currents. Ultimately, this study highlights that religious identity can be deftly reconstituted by cultural power; in Russia’s case, Islam’s “traditional” brand is not simply inherited from the past but actively constructed to serve the present – a conclusion that invites deeper reflection on the balance between integration, autonomy, and authority in the Muslim world of Russia.

Değerlendirme / Review	:	Bu makalenin ön incelemesi bir iç hakem (editör), içerik incelemesi ise iki dış hakem tarafından çift taraflı kör hakemlik modeliyle incelenmiştir. / <i>This article was pre-reviewed by one internal referee (editor) and its content reviewed by two external referees using a double blind review model.</i>
Etik Beyan / Ethical Declaration	:	Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde etik ilkelere uyulmuştur. / <i>Ethical principles were followed during the preparation of this study.</i>
Etik Bildirim / Complaints	:	dergi@milelvenihal.org
Benzerlik Taraması / Similarity Check	:	Ithenticate
Çıkar Çatışması / Conflict of Interest	:	Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir. / <i>The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.</i>
Yazarlık Katkısı / Authorship Contribution	:	1. Yazar/ 1st Author%50 - 2. Yazar / 2nd Author%50
Finansman / Grant Support	:	Herhangi bir fon, hibe veya başka bir destek alınmamıştır. / <i>No funds, grants, or other support was received.</i>
Telif Hakkı & Lisans / License	:	Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan çalışmalarının telif hakkına sahiptirler ve çalışmalarını CC BY-NC 4.0 lisansı altında yayımlanmaktadır. / <i>The authors own the copyright of their work published in the journal and their work is published under the CC BY-NC 4.0 license.</i>

³³ Crews, Robert D. *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

Kaynakça

- Bates, Thomas R. "Gramsci and the Theory of Hegemony." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36/2 (1975), 351-366. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2708933>
- Bekkin, Renat Irikovich; Almazova, Leyla Il'dusovna & Akhunov, Azat Marsovich. *Islam, imeyushchiy mirnyuyu i dobruyu sushchnost'*. Diskurs o traditsionnom islame v srede tyurok-musul'man, datel'stvo (Studia Religiosa, Novoye literaturnoye obozreniye, 2021).
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Ed. John B. Thompson. Trans. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson. Polity Press, 1991.
- _____. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Trans. Richard Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511812507.004>
- Crews, Robert D. *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia*. Harvard University Press, 2006.
- De Carbonnel, Alissa. "Russian Muslim clerics warn of unrest over ban of translation of Koran." *Reuters* (21 September 2013). <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/russian-muslim-clerics-warn-of-unrest-over-ban-of-translation-of-koran>
- DUMRF. "Bog daruyet pobedu komu pozhelayet. Pyatnichnaya propoved' v den' prazdnovaniya Velikoy Pobedy muftiyya Damira Mukhetdina v Moskovskoy Sobornoy mecheti" (9 May 2025). <https://muslim.ru/articles/298/43616/>
- _____. "Pozdravlenie muftiyya šejxa Ravilja Gajnutdina s Dnem Pobedy" (9 May 2024). <https://dumrf.ru/upravlenie/documents/23533>
- _____. "Privetstviye Muftiyya Sheykha Ravilya Gaynutdina uchastnikam XV Assamblei Russkogo mira" (3 November 2023). <https://www.muslim.ru/articles/280/38471>
- Hutchison, Charles B. "Cultural constructivism: the confluence of cognition, knowledge creation, multiculturalism, and teaching", *Intercultural Education* (2006), 17(3), 301-310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14675980600841694>
- Jukova, Lyudmila. "Il'dar-khazrat Alyautdinov o «starykh» i «novykh» moskovskikh musul'manakh, stroitel'stve mechetey i publichnykh zhertvoprinosheniyakh" (6 May 2023). <https://www.muslim.ru/articles/282/8616>
- Laruelle, Marlene. "Russia's Islam: Balancing Securitization and Integration", *Russia/NIS Center* (December 2021). https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/migrated_files/documents/atoms/files/laruelle_russia_islam_2021.pdf
- Lenta.ru. "V Rossii snova popytalis' zapretit' knigu s tolkovaniyem Korana" (22 January 2019). <https://lenta.ru/news/2019/01/22/koran>
- Muratova, Elmira. "'Traditional Islam' in Crimean Tatar Discourse and Politics". *Context: Časopis za interdisciplinarnu studiju* 6/1 (2019), 117-136.
- Prezident Rossii. "Pozdravleniye musul'manam Rossii s prazdnikom Uraza-bayram" (30 Mart 2025). <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/76571>
- Ragozina, Sofya. "Official Discourse on Islam and Islamic Discourse in Contemporary Russia," *Context: Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 6/1 (2021), 47-64.
- Sibgatullina, Gulnaz R. (2023). "The Muftis and the Myths: Constructing the Russian 'Church for Islam'". *Problems of Post-Communism* 72/2 (2023), 119-130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2023.2185899>
- _____. "Translating Islam into the language of the Russian State and the Orthodox Church". *Religion, State & Society* 47/2 (2019), 234-247. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09637494.2018.1562775>
- TASS. "Verkhovnyy muftiy RF v Kurban-bayram prizval berech' rodinu i udelyat' vnimaniye detyam" (21 August 2018). <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/5474293>

- TSDUM. “Verkhovnyy muftiy dal interv'yu TASS” (16 June 2020). <https://cdum.ru/news/44/10928/>
- Vedomosti. “Putin pozdravil musul'man Rossii s Uraza-bajramom” (10 April 2024). <https://www.vedomosti.ru/society/news/2024/04/10/1030888-putin-pozdravil-musulman>
- Volga News. “Samarskiy sud priznal ekstremistskimi nekotoryye tolkovaniya Korana” (16 November 2020). <https://volga.news/article/563954.html>

§