

How Kids Learn about Islam in Post-Soviet Tatarstan?

«No babe is born but upon Fitra»
Al-Bukhari «Sahih»

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Method

- Research is based on fieldwork in seven rural districts and six cities carried out in 2017-2019, as well as on the analysis of curricula, textbooks, and publications on religious educational reforms.

Islam in Tatarstan in Numbers

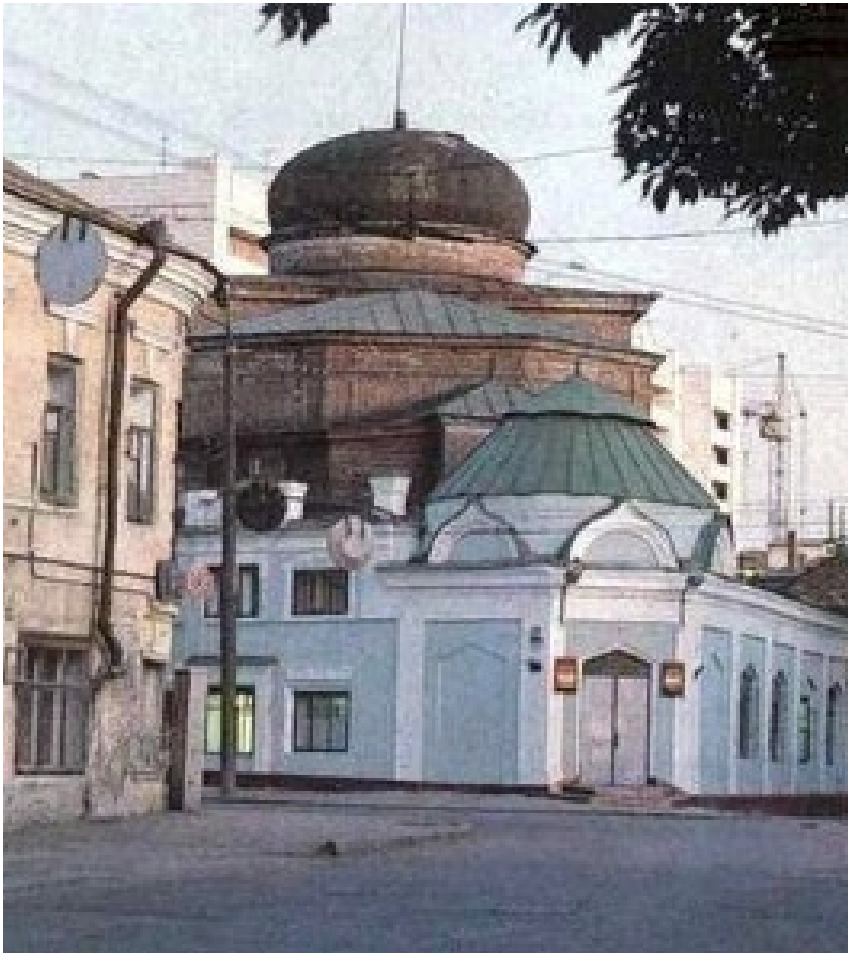
Adoption of Islam	922 AC
Total Population (Russians, Tatars, Bashkorts etc)	3 822 859
Ethnically Muslims population (Tatars)	54% (2 mln)
Economic development among 83 Russian Regions	9
Religiosity level of Tatars	80% of Tatars consider themselves Muslims 4-7% are practicing all religious rites
Number of Mosques	1531
Number of professional Islamic Educational Institutions	12 (9 Madrasa, Islamic Institute, Islamic University, Bolgar Islamic Academy)

Millennial Tradition of Religious Scholarship

*Tatar Theologians, Religious Scholars and Educators
(at the eve of the 20th century)*



Soviet Period



- “The main goal [is] . . . to make the school a true tool of communist upbringing and enlightenment, a conductor of the ideological, organizational, educational influence of the proletariat on the semi-proletarian and non-proletarian strata of the working masses” (Prokof’ev 1967).

Nurulla Mosque in our day



Post-Soviet Orientation (Russian Law of Education)

- “the humanistic nature of education, the priority of human life and health, the rights and freedoms of the individual, the free development of the individual, the education of mutual respect, diligence, patriotism, responsibility, legal culture, careful attitude to nature and the environment, management of natural resources,” as well as “an individual learning principle Now the main task of the teacher is to identify and develop the specific abilities of each student” (“Zakon” 2017).

Search for new Post-Soviet Identity

- In practice, the development of national concepts has often been combined with religious and ethnic identity. In the context of the worldwide trend of religious revival, the appeal to the church as the guardian of national and cultural identity becomes a necessary component of the process of self-identification of the people. (Orlov 2012)

Basics of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics (BRCSE, 2012) has 6 modules

Academic year of 2013-2014

Russian Federation:

- 46% - “Basics of Secular Ethics,”
- 20% “Basics of Orthodox Culture”
- 19% “The Basics of World Religious Cultures,”
- 4% “The Basics of Islamic Culture,”
- less than 1% “Fundamentals of Jewish Culture”
and “Fundamentals of Buddhist Culture.”

Table of BRCSE module choices by region with a Muslim majority

National Republic / % of Muslims	Basics of Secular Ethics	Basics of World <u>Rel</u> Cult	Basics of Orthodox Culture	Basics of Islamic Culture	Basics of Buddhist Culture	Basics of Judaic Culture
Bashkortostan / 55 ²	73.5	23.7	0.79	4.2	0	0
Dagestan / 95	21.4	39	0.008 (<u>or</u> 3 kids)	39.5	0	0
Ingushetia / 98.7	0	0	0	100	0	0
Kabardino-Balkaria / 67	38.6	61.4	0	0	0	0
<u>Karachaevo-Cherkessia</u> / 66	28	38.3	4.3	29.4	0	0
<u>Tatarstan</u> / 54	62.2	37.8	0	0	0	0
Chechnya / 99	0	0	0.36	99.64	0	0

Tatarstan Ministry of Education official about choices on studying Religion

- There are so many mixed marriages, so everything is intertwined here, that when they gather a parent meeting, parents themselves come to such a decision consciously. No one forces anyone to choose, parents make their own decision about choosing a module.
- (Gulzada Akhmerova)

ISLAM FOR MUSLIM KIDS IN MODERN TATARSTAN

Demands on Education from Muslim Parents

- 1. High quality secular education
- 2. No pressure from teachers to Muslims kids because of their religious identity
- 3. Possibilities to fulfill basic religious rules
- 4. Ethical approach to education (ban on profanity, early sexual relations)

Muslim Kindergarten in Kazan



- *"By law, we do not have the right to teach children Akyda and Fiqh, but we try to tell the children, in a language they understand, that everything is created by the Almighty ..."*
- *"When we read prayers with children, we make two rak'aats, without detailed elaboration, i.e. there is a certain standard, and we try to keep to the middle, because parents bring up children on different Madhabs. "*
- *"We tell stories about the Prophets in the form of tales, then we perform a creative task with the main characters. For example, according to the life story of the Prophet Salih (peace be upon him), we know that in his history a camel and mountain, and accordingly we make their creative models. "*

Near Mosque School for pre-school children (Madrasa “Shamil”).
Reading th Quran according to the method by the Indian
scientist Nur Muhammali Haqqani (1856–1925)
Qa’ida al-Nooraniya



Several Possible Approaches to Schooling for Muslim Kids

- Muslim school where priority is religious and spiritual education of kids – non existent in Tatarstan at the moment.
- Secular private school where religious demands are taken into consideration – priority is high level of education – school Uthmaniya established by Muslim Religious Board of Tatarstan.
- Secular public school + evening and Sunday Religious courses at Mosques + Muslim Summer camps – majority of cases
- Family form of education

Private School “Uthmaniya”



Private School “Uthmaniya” (Contest on Islamic knowledge)



Program of 3 year course in near Mosques (implemented since 2014)

- Islamic ethics (*Akhlaq*),
- The doctrine of Islam (*'Aqida*),
- Recitation of the Qur'an (*Tajweed* — only for the first year),
- Islamic law (*Fiqh*),
- The Qur'an,
- The biography of the Prophet Muhammad (*Sirah*),
- Arabic language (two years—the second and third year of study).

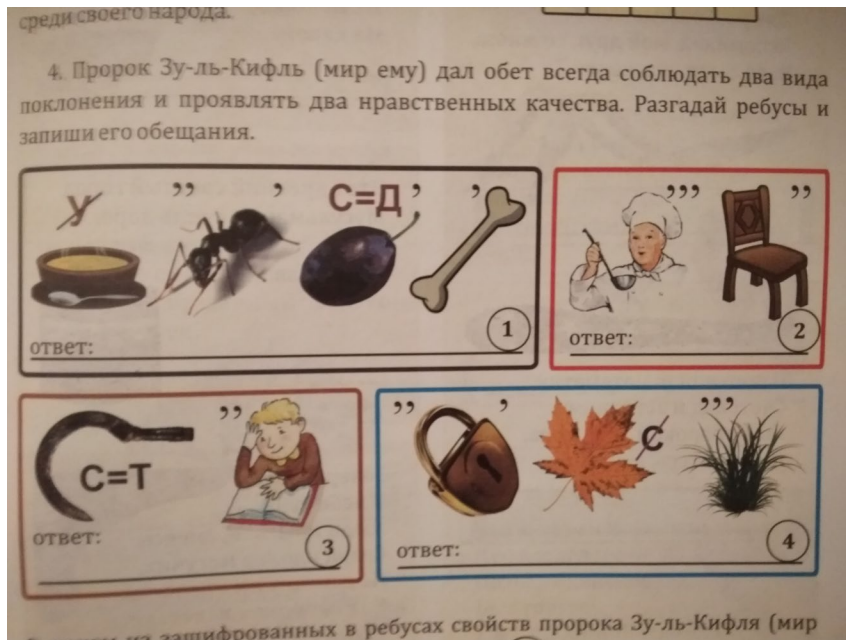
Textbooks for Islamic Education at the Near Mosque Courses

- 1. Textbooks written by modern Tatarstanian authors (Ramil Adygamov, Gabdelhak Samatov, Valiulla Yakupov, Rishat Kalimullin, etc.), 37 books or 57%.
- 2. Textbooks by authors who taught in Jadid madrassas (Rizaetdin Fakhretdin, Ahmad-Hadi Maksudi, Salihjan Barudi, etc.), 9 titles or 14%.
- Modern secular textbooks, mainly in Arabic, on the history of theological thought (Alexander Kovalev and Grigory Sharbatov, Rafik Mukhametshin, Taufik Ibrahim), 7 editions or 10%.
- 4. Medieval books (Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, Abdurrahman Karabash and others), 6 titles or 9%.
- 5. Foreign textbooks written in the 19th to 21st centuries that are now used in some countries of the Muslim East (Muhammad Ashik, Muhammad Kifayatullah, Mustafa Chagirdzhi/Turkey), 5 titles or 8%

Islamic Ethics (*Akhlaq*)

Virtues	Bad qualities
Fidelity, diligence, generosity, mercy, friendliness, courtesy, patience, gratitude, respect for elders, prudence and justice, fidelity to this word, honesty, sincerity, forgiveness	lying, gossip, slander, theft, homicide, drunkenness, arrogance, extravagance, envy

Textbooks used in Tatarstan (on the left) which as opposed to unusual for Tatarstan textbooks where face images are strictly prohibited



Quran Courses Near Mosque




Muslim Summer Camps

- Laysan Ganieva, summer camps organizer:
- "I do this in order to live in a society where people and our children are safe, and this is such a society where morality should be in a highest level. Religion is able to provide the most moral upbringing"
- Schedule:
- 8.00 Breakfast
- 9.00-10.00 – Yard games
- 10.00-11.45 – 3 Lessons 30 minutes each
- 12.00-12.30 – Namaz
- 12.30-13.30 – Lunch
- 13.30-15.00 – Indoor and outdoor games
- 15.00 – returning home


Leysan Ganieva, mother of four, Muslim camps Activist

- “I do this in order to live in a society where people and our children are safe, and this is such a society where morality should be in a highest level. Religion is able to provide the most moral upbringing.”

News Letter from Summer Camp in Baltasi



**“БӘХЕТ УТРАВЫ”НЫҢ
ӘДӘП КӨЗГЕСЕ**

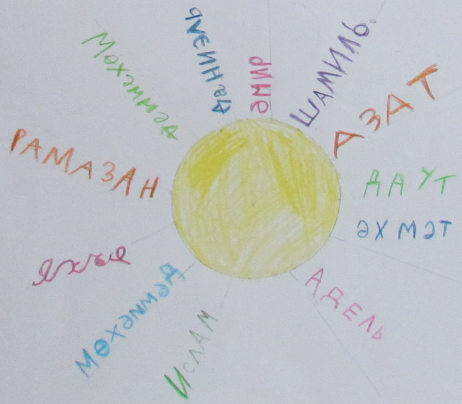
көн	+10 ИЗГЕЛЕК 	+5 ИЗГЕЛЕК 	-3 ХАТА 	нәтижәләр
1	70	5	0	75
2	60	10	0	70
3	50	5	-6	49
4	60	10	0	70
5	60	10	0	70
6	80	0	0	80
7	60	10	-3	67
8				
9				
10				

ИЗГЕЛЕКЛӘР ТҮБӘНДӨГЕ ЧАРАЛАРГА БИРЕЛӘ:

1. Ирәнжә ямьлу, физтаравка
 2. Ирәнжә аш
 3. Дәрәс
 4. Юлда бару

5. Уенда дәһлә буу
 6. Тәһарәт
 7. Намаз уку
 8. Тошкә аш

Барчагызга да Алланың Сәләме,
Рәхмәте һәм Бәрәкәте булсын!!!





Label for Good Student



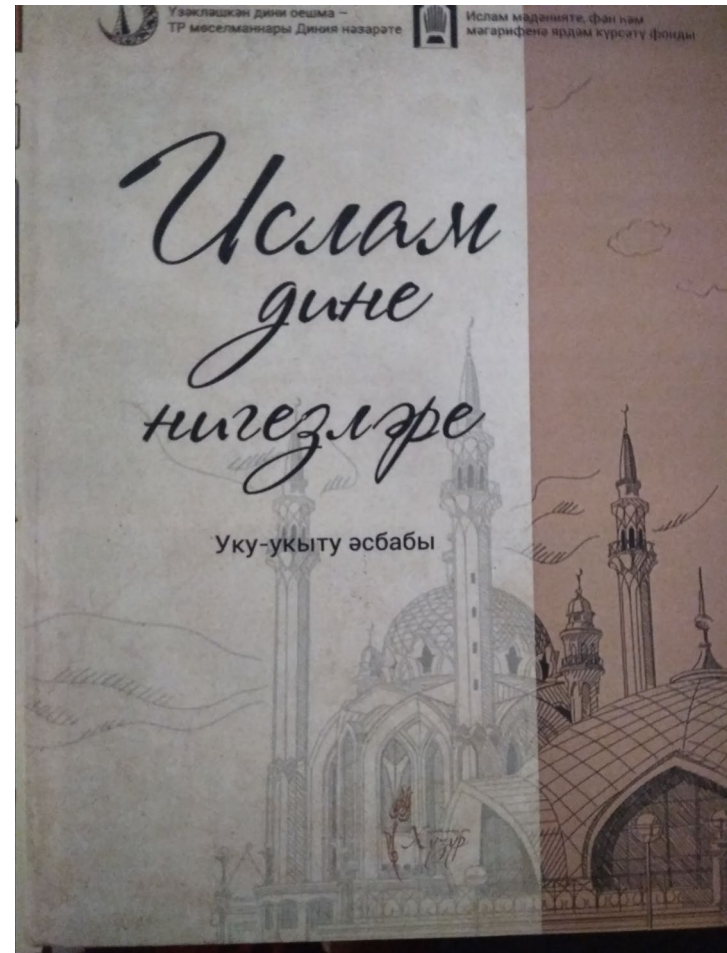
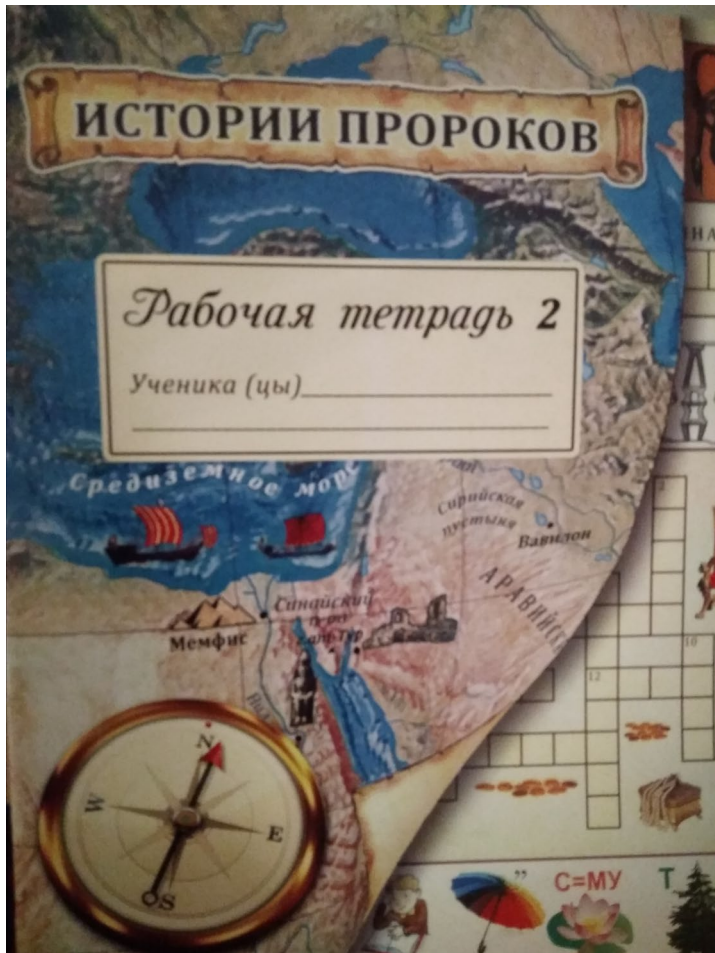
Language Issue

“In August 2016, the Muftiate of the Republic of Tatarstan introduced a rule according to which all Friday services in the Republic should be conducted in the Tatar language”

Teaching in Mosques for kids and adults:

- Tatar in most rural areas
- Russian in cities (Kazan, Almet'yevsk, Naberejnie Chelny)

TEXTBOOKS IN RUSSIAN AND IN TATAR



Family form of education

- The threat of the formation of a second generation of adherents of Salafism was announced by the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tatarstan Artem Khokhorin. He was are talking about children brought up in families of followers of Salafi Islam.
- According to the minister, a particular danger is the transition of children to a family form of education and their education in an environment that is closed to society. Khokhorin instructed the republic's internal affairs departments to identify such children and religious organizations and interact with educational authorities in the districts.
- He ordered the police to conduct inspections together with the inspectors of Rosobrnadzor and Rospotrebnadzor.
- Source: <https://realnoevremya.ru/news/127436-glava-mvd-rt-v-tatarstane-formiruetsya-vtoroe-pokolenie-salafitov>

Subjects of the 1st year of Study at the Center of Supplementary Education (Project)

	School Subject	Number of hours
1	<u>Russian Language</u>	165
2	<u>Reading and Physical World</u>	163
3	<u>Arihmetic</u>	206
4	<u>Tatar Language</u>	42
5	<u>English Language</u>	42
6	<u>Arabic Language</u>	66
7	<u>Handicrafts (Technology)</u>	33
	<u>Total</u>	693

Visitations of public schools by Imams

- 1) More spread in mono-confessional districts of Tatarstan (Baltachi, Mamadysh etc.)
- 2) Usually happens on such memorable dates as beginning of the school year, end of study, religious celebrations (Ramadan Bayram, Qurban Bayram)
- 3) Sometimes on weekly basis (only if Imam has secular pedagogical education)
- 4) On certain tragic or important events.

CONCLUSION

Modern Islamic education for kids in Tatarstan is developing as a classical Post-Secularist product (J.Habermas). It is a mixture of

1. Secular Soviet past (wall news letters, badges for good students, the very idea of Summer camps/pioneers, co-education of boys and girls, combination with secular education,),
2. Historical Islamic background (using textbooks of Jadid mu'allims and modern local Imams),
3. Ethnic culture (Tatar language of instruction in rural areas, Tatar traditions in clothing, Tatar celebrations/Sabantuy)
4. Russian state regulations (ban on foreign educational initiatives, ban of the list of extremist Islamic literature, restriction on Tatar language in public schools)

This Post-Secular Islamic education is in constant process of elaboration of new orthodoxy, when different actors (Muftiat, Imams, State officials, Muslim activists) are working on a concept of collective memory. They form the corpus of what they will remember and what they think is best forgotten. As Talal Asad wrote: Orthodoxy is not a mere body of opinion but a distinctive relationship - a relationship of power"