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**THE IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT OF BASHKORTOSTAN YOUTH ON THEIR
ATTITUDE TOWARDS REPRESENTATIVES OF DIFFERENT CONFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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Abstract

The article discusses the theoretical foundations of studies in linguistics, ethnopsychology, intercultural communication, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics, and also addresses the problem of 'religion-man-ethnos-language' in modern society. The subject of the study is represented by the sociological surveys, conducted by the authors and other specialists, and by the data of socio-psycholinguistic experiments. The object of scientific study was the characterization of the influence of the certain degree of religious commitment manifested by the youth of the Republic of Bashkortostan in their attitude to representatives of other confessional affiliations. The presented study employed the methods of descriptions, observation, questionnaire, comparison, and analysis of the survey results. Under the denomination, the authors understood the totality of religious communities that are united by the identity of creed and spiritual practices. The religion was comprehended as the spiritual and practical connection between people that arise based on a common belief in higher values. Religiosity was considered as the social quality of an individual or group of people, the degree of which is determined by the quantity and quality of existing ideas about religion and the constant need for their expansion, as well as the thoroughness and frequency of fulfilling religious orders. Religiosity was studied by the main parameter - religious consciousness, with particular attention to certain issues related to the religious behavior of the younger generation. The scientific novelty of the study refers to the consideration of the peculiarities of the manifestation of Bashkortostan youth ethnoreligious identity in a synchronous aspect. Empirical data are given; a conclusion is made on the ambiguity of the analyzed representations. Based on the theoretical analysis of literature and survey data, the authors recognized that, depending on the degree of religious commitment, questions of the attitude of modern youth of the Republic of Bashkortostan to representatives of different religious affiliations are currently open and require careful study.

Keywords

Identity – Religion – Youth – Attitude – Confessional affiliation – Ethno-religious identity

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Introduction

Bashkortostan, along with the whole Russian Federation, in the last two or three decades has recorded a resumption of religiosity and an increase of its role in both the personal sphere and at the social level; ethnologists and sociologists speak of a 'religious revival'¹, 'religious renaissance', 'desecularization' of religion and even of its 'deprivatization'². Due to the obvious significant discrepancies between the rapidly changing social reality and the scientifically accepted interpretations of the concept of 'religiosity', a need for a multidisciplinary study of this phenomenon is now ripened. Legislative documents of quite many countries contain anti-discrimination provisions based on religious grounds and religious freedom. Speaking of Russia, our Federal Law 'On Freedom of Conscience and on Religious Associations' (as amended on July 1, 2011) is still in effect, reflecting the right of every Russian to choose and disseminate religious and/or atheistic beliefs or not to espouse any views. The same law also regulates the legal status of religious associations. According to the data of the All-Russian population census of various years, about two dozen confessions were represented in the Russian Federation at the end of the 20th century, while by now there are three times more. The Volga-Ural region is traditionally called the 'Muslim-Christian borderland' (A.B. Yunusova), but in addition to these world religions, about thirty other religious movements also have been recorded in the region.

The confessional situation in the Republic of Bashkortostan (as of 2016³) is characterized by the representation of 1499 religious communities and organizations, incl. 5 educational: 1046 of them are Islamic, 349 – Orthodox, also Evangelical Christians – 40 (incl. 12 Baptists communities), Seventh-day Adventists - 10, Roman Catholics - 2, Lutherans - 5, Judaic - 4, Armenian Apostolic Churches - 2, The New Apostolic Church - 1, Jehovah's Witnesses - 1, Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) - 17, Christians of the Evangelical Faith - 2, Russian Orthodox Old-Rite Churches - 8, Unification Church (Moonies) - 1, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - 1, Buddhists - 2, The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (Vaishnava) - 1, Pagan believers community - 1 (according to Office of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation for the Republic of Bashkortostan).

This rich tapestry naturally raises the question of recognizing the legitimacy of these confessions; the need to solve is dictated by the changing social conditions. It should be also noted that the sought solution is not limited to measures of a political or legal nature. We believe that the success of its resolution largely depends on socio-psychological and mental factors. The mass tolerance for religious commitment, for religious people and their traditions, rooted in the culture of the people, is the ideal model, the implementation of which could neutralize the destructive tendencies of polyconfessionalism. It should be recognized as well that the impact on the sphere of mentality, in turn, will also represent a problem, and the most intractable one.

Followers of newly emerging religious teachings (Protestant, Ecumenical, Eastern, etc.), as a rule, distinguish between nationality and religious affiliation. Among them are

¹ A. I. Khaliulina & F. G. Safin, Mobilization of religiosity in modern Bashkortostan. Ideals and values of Islam in the educational space of the XXI century (Ufa: Mir pechati).

² G. Guzelbayeva "Religious identities and practices of Orthodox and Muslims in a modernizing community". Ethnicity, religiosity and migration in modern Tatarstan (2013): 55–74.

³ Education and culture in the Republic of Bashkortostan: a statistical collection (Ufa, Bashkortostan State Statistics Service Publ, 2017).

representatives of the Bashkir, Tatar, Russian, Chuvash, Jewish, Ukrainian, and other ethnic groups. Objective factors such as socio-cultural and economic changes cannot but have a deforming effect on the mass consciousness, which results in the emergence of religious sects and trendy houses of worship, predominantly among the youth. Taking into account such realities associated with the change of reference points in the system of youth socialization, the phenomenon of religiosity of the younger generation seems to be quite relevant since it is the religious attitudes and stereotypes of the youth that most determine the direction of interfaith interaction.

Within the framework of the presented article, the confession is understood as a set of religious communities united by the identity of doctrine and spiritual practices⁴. By religion, we mean the spiritual and practical connection between people, which arises based on the common belief in the highest values. The main religious value is faith, which gives a person absolute confidence in achieving the desired goal. According to ethnosociologists⁵, the most conflict-prone today are ethnic and confessional destructive processes that usually resolved with the help of extremist and terrorist methods.

On the role of secular religious studies

The current stage of the development of society is featured by an increase in interest in such religious confessions that resuscitate archaic worldview schemes and behavioral models (such as Rodnoverie - Slavic Native Faith, also referred as Neopaganism) that satisfy the needs of certain groups of our contemporaries in a situation of sociocultural globalization. This causes the emergence of a whole 'palette of alternative constructions, claiming to achieve and maintain the traditional spiritual and moral balance of human and social life'⁶. As noted by M.N. Guboglo, N.B. Mechkovskaya, and G. Ya. Guzelbaeva, the foreign researches⁷ often employ the term 'contemporary paganism', which denotes the emergence of new polytheistic religious movements.

Such a transformation of the consciousness of a modern young person is now being comprehended through the analysis of the essence of religious education; at present, it is a translator of the corresponding views, as well as condition for their viability. We believe that the future of religion itself depends on the development of both religious education and its interaction with the secular one. The system of teaching the knowledge about religion in the modern Russian secular school is still in its nascent stage; therefore, the achievement of positive results will be of great importance.

⁴ Great Encyclopedic Dictionary: Linguistics (Moscow: Great Russian Encyclopedia, 1998).

⁵ A. I. Khaliulina & F. G. Safin, Mobilization of religiosity in modern Bashkortostan. Ideals and values of Islam in the educational space of the XXI century (Ufa: Mir pechati); A. I. Khaliulina & E. A. Mukhtasarova, "Preservation of ethnicity and transformation of ethnolinguistic identity in multinational region (on the example of Tatars in Bashkortostan)", *Politics and Society*, num 2: 47–56; A. B. Yunusova, *Islam in Bashkortostan* (Moscow: Logos, 2007) y E. A. Salikhova & Yu.R. Mursalimova "Special aspects of personal linguistic identity", *Pedagogical Journal of Bashkortostan*, num 1 (56): 173–179.

⁶ N. B. Mechkovskaya, *Language and religion. Lectures on philology and history of religions* (Moscow: 'FAIR' agency, 1998).

⁷ M. N. Guboglo, *Identification of identity: ethnosociological essays* (Moscow: Science, 2003); G. Guzelbayeva, "Islamic Identity of Young Tatars in the Republic of Tatarstan (based on 2008-2012 opinion polls)", *Scientific notes of Kazan University*, vol: 154 Issue 6 (2012): 176–186 y N. B. Mechkovskaya, *Language and religion. Lectures on philology and history of religions* (Moscow: 'FAIR' agency, 1998).

The Federal Law 'On Education in the Russian Federation' contains a section on the role of religion in modern society. Within the framework of this Law, the study course 'Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics' is being introduced in educational institutions. At the same time, the same Law prohibits teachers from promoting the superiority, inferiority or exclusivity of citizens based on national, religious or linguistic, social or racial affiliation, or citizens' attitude to religion, including by providing through inaccurate information on the national, religious, historical and cultural traditions of peoples. In absolute terms, these provisions are relevant and timely from the point of view of socialization of modern youth and the formation of their idea of religion in general, and on the specific confessions in particular. We are convinced that the task of a secular school is to provide students with religious knowledge as an integral component of general humanitarian knowledge. 'Introducing the religiously oriented classes in schools will denote the clericalization of the state education system in Russia. At the same time, students should receive knowledge of religion as an important component of history and culture; they need to develop religious tolerance. An important role in the implementation of this function belongs to modern secular religious studies'⁸. It is also essential to distinguish between the official position of the educational institution and the state in general concerning religion, on the one hand, and the personal conviction of the teacher, on the other. Both the believers and the atheistic teachers are required to take a neutral position with regard to religion. We also consider it important to pay attention to the fact that education, first of all, should fulfill its main social function: passing on the experience and traditions of social interaction to subsequent generations.

In ensuring interfaith harmony, many researchers point to the resources of society, and not just state regulatory mechanisms. As is well known, nowadays, the church in the Russian Federation is separated from the state. Also, as noted above, according to Articles 13, 14 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, no ideology is obligatory on its territory. In other words, ideological diversity in Russia is well recognized by law. These provisions of the basic law⁹ emphasize 'the guarantee of the observance of secular state principles'. However, ethnosociological studies show the population's concern about the state's attention to increasing religiosity among the citizens. Thus, 2000 respondents were interviewed in the Bashkir cities of Ufa, Beloretsk, Oktyabrsky, Davlekanovo and in the town of Mindyak of the Uchalinsky district, as well as rural residents of the Ufa, Tuymazinsky, Beloretsky, Uchalinsky and Davlekanovsky districts; the survey was conducted within the framework of the research project 'Interethnic Tolerance and Intra-National Solidarity'¹⁰. As it turned out, 70.8% of the interviewed Bashkirs, more than 1/3 of Tatars and Russians, and almost half of representatives of other nationalities expressed the opinion that the state should not only support the religious commitments of its citizens but create certain conditions for this, as with the support of the preservation of national culture and languages (Table 1)¹¹.

⁸ D. V. Pogontseva & Yu. V. Nasedkina, "The Influence of religious beliefs of young people on the formation of attitudes towards representatives of various religious faiths", Humanitarian Research, num 5 (2013). Retrieved 02.12.2019 from: <http://human.snauka.ru/2013/053055>

⁹ A sociological answer to the 'national question': an example of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Moscow: RAS Institute of Sociology, 2012).

¹⁰ A. I. Khaliulina & F. G. Safin, Mobilization of religiosity in modern Bashkortostan. Ideals and values of Islam in the educational space of the XXI century (Ufa: Mir pechati).

¹¹ A. I. Khaliulina & F. G. Safin, Mobilization of religiosity in modern Bashkortostan. Ideals and values of Islam in the educational space of the XXI century (Ufa: Mir pechati).

Criteria	Russians	Bashkirs	Tatars	Others
Support	62.7	70.8	68.7	48.5
Remain neutral	26.9	19.1	23.0	34.3
Counter	0.4	2.1	0.8	0.7
Undecided	10.0	8.1	7.5	16.4

Table 1

How, in your opinion, should the state treat the religiosity of its citizens?
(% of all respondents)¹²

In our opinion, the obtained results clearly describe the intra-national and inter-confessional situation in Bashkortostan, as well as in Russia, whose population is characterized by a deep interest in religion. The researchers note that the latter allows, in particular, the Orthodox Church to define its social position in civil society, adapt to modern worldview pluralism and freedom of conscience, as well as continue contributing to the spiritual health of society. This is especially important for young people, as these strata are most susceptible to influence and manipulation. Although religious scholars alert of the 'downside' in working with young people, such as a violation of the 'boundaries of permissible influence' from various religious associations. The danger lies in the fact that the 'battle for youth' between such organizations may lead to a split in the society, which itself is still far from integration. The integration here is understood as a process of convergence of socio-cultural values of representatives of different nationalities and confessions living in the same territory – with respect to their civilizational characteristics. The authors tend to share the well-known in sociology and cultural studies view of civilization as the most universal socio-cultural meta-ethnic and meta-religious community, which is based on culture, religion, language, customs, mores, and primary symbols, forming complex spiritual systems in close interconnection. In these conditions, the development of Orthodox-Muslim relations in the Ural-Volga region presents a valuable socio-cultural experience that can serve as a model of interfaith relationships for all God-conscious Russia. Thus, historical practice testifies to the formation of the Slavic-Turkic ethno-social synthesis, which became a basis for modern Russian civilization.

Religious commitment as an indicator of the preservation of personal ethnic identity. Resources of ethno-tolerance and liberal attitude towards religion

Recently (and not without a reason), scientific interest has arisen in the reconstruction of religion in conjunction with the personal meanings of the individual, who has adopted it in the form of religious commitment. Attention is drawn to the mechanisms of the emergence of the religiosity in young people, its character, psycho-emotional consequences, and its role in the development of a young personality. The low efficiency of intercultural religious communication has been well ascertained by today; its increase requires the implementation of the linguo-culturological (N.F. Alefirenko, V.A. Maslova, N.B. Mechkovskaya, etc.), and socio-psycholinguistic (V.D. Bondaletov, N.I. Mironova, E.A. Salikhova, F.G. Safin, A.I. Khaliulina, A.T. Khrolenko) approaches, according to which the concepts of 'culture' and 'consciousness', 'language' and 'ethnos' are considered as elements of a single quartette, each of components of which is due to its relatively independent integrity (V.S. Ageev, E.M. Vereshchagin, V.G. Kostomarov, Ch. Glock, S.G. Vorkachev, M.N. Guboglo, L.P. Krysin, and many others).

¹² A. I. Khaliulina & F. G. Safin, Mobilization of religiosity in modern Bashkortostan. Ideals and values of Islam in the educational space of the XXI century (Ufa: Mir pechati).

From this point of view, interfaith communication is the intersection of 'conceptual systems' (V.A. Pishchalnikova, A. B. Yunusova), the interaction of the 'talking minds' of communicants (D. B. Gudkov); mutual understanding in the field of speech contact requires going beyond the framework of a purely verbal text into a wider area of ideas, values, and stereotypes of everyday consciousness inherent in a person of a given faith and culture (V.F. Petrenko, L.A. Alieva).

The formation of religious tolerance and corresponding interfaith relations in the Bashkortostan society collides with social stereotypes. Usually, they mean 'a simplified, emotionally colored, and stable image of any social group ... extended to all its representatives'¹³. The briefly described confessional image of modern Bashkortostan is determined by the activities of Islam and Orthodoxy peculiar to this republic. Stereotypical, for example, is the fact that they are perceived not only as religious/confessional systems, but as a natural cultural environment for these ethnic groups, a national way of life: 'He is Tatar or Bashkir, and therefore Muslim', 'Russian, therefore Orthodox', and so on. In other words, traditional religions perform the most explicit identificational function in the considered social environment: these religious formations contribute to the preservation and strengthening of the sense of belonging to 'own' ethnic group. It would be fair to admit that today the binomial components 'ours' and 'strangers' are compressed in global information flows and latently indicate the problems of mutual perception at the mental level. Studies show that a high degree of intracommunal consolidation of co-religionists is mostly peculiar for the adherents of Islam. The determining constituent for such a conclusion is the factor of a close connection between the religious and ethnic components in their consciousness and behavior. According to sociological monitoring data, religious communities in Orthodoxy are amorphous and have a changing composition¹⁴.

The level and context of their religious culture testify to the preservation of Christian and Islamic identities among the Orthodox and Muslims of the Republic of Bashkortostan. The asymmetry in the representation of the latter in relation to non-religious culture is expressed in the predominance of the secular culture, which is present in the consciousness of the individual as the primary expression of social knowledge.

Under the conditions of polyethnicity, polyconfessionalism, and cultural diversity, the problem of tolerance acquires special significance, as the implementation of the principle 'not all are the same but all are equal', and the ability to perceive and adequately assess the distinctive features of another culture (including religious) creates the necessary conditions for penetration of new values into society.

Religious culture, in contrast to secular culture, acts as the very 'sociocultural variable' that is formed as a result of a conscious 'volitional personal choice'¹⁵. Unfortunately, there is no data on the religiosity of the population in the latest censuses of 2002 and 2010, so the exact number of Muslims and Orthodox Christians in modern Bashkortostan is unknown. Nevertheless, sociologists are confident that the reflection of the ethnic composition of the Republic of Bashkortostan in census documents theoretically 'sets an

¹³ R. A. Nabiev, Power and religious revival: Monograph (Kazan: Kazan University, 2014).

¹⁴ A sociological answer to the 'national question': an example of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Moscow: RAS Institute of Sociology, 2012).

¹⁵ N. B. Mechkovskaya, Language and religion. Lectures on philology and history of religions (Moscow: 'FAIR' agency, 1998) y Regional identity in the context of Russian nation-building: ethnic, language, and administrative aspects (on the example of Republic of Bashkortostan). F.G. Safin (ed) (St. Petersburg, Ufa, 2018).

upper threshold' for the number of adherents of the Islamic and Christian faiths¹⁶. The religious choice of the Bashkirs and Tatars of Bashkortostan is Islam, for the majority of Russians, it is Orthodoxy. The formation of a religious identity as an ethno-confessional is primarily because at the end of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st-century ethnic self-identification for local residents became a kind of acquisition of a stable sense of 'we' for maintaining productive social ties. As shown by statistics, the processes of legitimizing ethnicity in this period were mainly characteristic of non-Russian nationalities; later they covered the Russian population as well.

In 2011, the Institute of Social and Political Research in affiliation with the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences researched to determine the picture of Bashkortostan's confessional composition. Here are some particular (relevant to our topic) results: 52.2% of the respondents identified themselves as Muslims, 39.5% as Orthodox, and the remaining 8.3% did not decide on their religious identity. The figures for Muslims and Orthodox Christians in the city of Ufa are approximately equal (44.5% and 43.4%), as well as in other cities of the republic (45.7% and 46.8%); however, there are 2 times more Muslims among rural residents - 63.4%, Orthodox - 30.1%¹⁷.

Religion, as the sacred basis of the cultural tradition, acts not only as an element of ethnic identity but also as a powerful resource of tolerance in the ethno-confessional space of the republic. It seems that this resource is also reinforced by the tradition of friendly relations between representatives of different ethnic groups, which was preserved by the Republic of Bashkortostan since the Soviet era. Thus, to the question 'What unites you the most with people of your nationality?' the most frequent answers of Russians, Bashkirs, and Tatars of Bashkortostan were: 'language' (65.5%, 72.2%, and 66.4%, respectively), 'native land, territory, nature' (56.5%, 65.3%, and 60%), and 'culture' (43.5%, 55.9%, and 51.6%) (see Table 2). 'Religion' as a characteristic of ethnicity was named by a third of the respondents, and almost the same number of respondents named 'rituals and customs' (37.1%, 55.9%, and 46.45) and 'common historical past' (37.4%, 42.4 %, and 34%).

Criteria	Russians	Bashkirs	Tatars
Language	65.5	72.2	66.4
Culture	43.5	55.9	51.6
Customs and rituals	37.1	55.9	46.4
Native land, territory, nature	56.5	65.3	60.0
Personality traits	18.0	18.1	25.2
Religion	32.2	37.8	35.6
Historical past	37.4	42.4	34.0

¹⁶ Y. R. Mursalimova, *The Specifics of the Religious Component of the World Meaning*: PhD thesis (Perm National Research Polytechnic University publishers, 2018); E. A. Salikhova, *Modeling the processes of mastering and using the psychological structure of the meaning of a word in bilingualism* (Moscow: Nauka-Flinta, 2015); E. A. Salikhova & Yu. R. Mursalimova, "Religious Knowledge in Terms of the Categories of "Meaning" and "Knowledge", "Cognition", *VEGU Bulletin, Series Philology*, num 2 (64) (2013): 125–130 y E. A. Salikhova, "Religious and linguistic consciousness of the Orthodox and Muslims of Bashkortostan: sociopsycholinguistic aspect of the study of the problem", *Political Education: Information and Analytical Journal*. Retrieved 02.12.2019 from: <http://lawinrussia.ru/content/religioznoe-yazykovoe-soznanie-pravoslavnyh-i-musulman-bashkortostana>

¹⁷ E. A. Salikhova & Yu. R. Mursalimova, "Special aspects of personal linguistic identity", *Pedagogical Journal of Bashkortostan*, num 1 (56): 173–179.

Common statehood history	36.2	36.8	35.2
Visage	15.7	16.7	14.4

Table 2

Ethnicity criteria for Russians, Bashkirs, and Tatars of Bashkortostan (% of respondents)¹⁸

Another source of religious tolerance is a fairly high (about 38%) percentage of interethnic marriages, while in Russia, the mixed marriages are averaged at 17% (according to the latest data from the local Vremya website [<http://www.sobkor02.ru/news/region/5450/>]). During the Soviet era in the middle of the last century, every tenth marriage was interethnic; in the second third of the 20th century it was already every seventh, and in some republics - every fifth. According to the All-Russian population census data, Bashkortostan was becoming the second in the Volga-Ural region by the number of interethnic marriages; every third child is now born in a mixed marriage (there were 262.4 thousand interethnic families for the total of 1050.3 thousand families, calculated by the census). Noteworthy is that the members of the Russian community were oriented (when choosing a marriage partner) towards people of their nationality more than the Bashkirs and Tatars. However, the biggest contribution to the figures of interethnic marriages is introduced not by rural, but by urban residents, since, as noted above, cities are quite diverse and multilingual. The language of communication between family members in mixed marriages is a mixed self-made language with the favor towards Russian¹⁹.

Sociolinguistic and ethnological studies conducted at the end of the 20th century²⁰, Census-2010 data, along with socio-psycholinguistic experiments organized by Yu.R. Mursalimova in 2012-2013 with subsequent questioning among students of secular and religious educational institutions in Ufa revealed quite some changes in the religious situation²¹. If, according to M.N. Guboglo, in the capital cities of 16 republics of the Russian Federation 58% of young people of the native population and 57% of Russian youth recognized themselves as believers, while for some of them, religion has become the norm of behavior, then according to the Census-2010 data not all Bashkirs and Tatars of the

¹⁸ A sociological answer to the 'national question': an example of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Moscow: RAS Institute of Sociology, 2012).

¹⁹ E. A. Salikhova, "Religious and linguistic consciousness of the Orthodox and Muslims of Bashkortostan: sociopsycholinguistic aspect of the study of the problem", Political Education: Information and Analytical Journal. Retrieved 02.12.2019 from: <http://lawinrussia.ru/content/religioznoe-yazykovoe-soznanie-pravoslavnyh-i-musulman-bashkortostana> y A sociological answer to the 'national question': an example of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Moscow: RAS Institute of Sociology, 2012)

²⁰ M. N. Guboglo, Identification of identity: ethnosociological essays (Moscow: Science, 2003) Education and culture in the Republic of Bashkortostan: a statistical collection (Ufa, Bashkortostan State Statistics Service Publ, 2017);

²¹ Y. R. Mursalimova, "Associative field of the word God in the Russian language consciousness", Theoretical and applied science and education in the XXI century, (2012): 97–103; Y. R. Mursalimova, The Specifics of the Religious Component of the World Meaning: PhD thesis (Perm National Research Polytechnic University publishers, 2018); National composition of the population of the Republic of Bashkortostan according to the data of the All-Russian population census 2010: statistical bulletin (Ufa: Bashkortostan, 2012); E. A. Salikhova, Modeling the processes of mastering and using the psychological structure of the meaning of a word in bilingualism (Moscow: Nauka-Flinta, 2015); E. A. Salikhova & Yu.R. Mursalimova, "Religious Knowledge in Terms of the Categories of "Meaning" and "Knowledge", "Cognition", VEGU Bulletin, Series Philology, num 2 (64) (2013): 125–130 y E. A. Salikhova, "Religious and linguistic consciousness of the Orthodox and Muslims of Bashkortostan: sociopsycholinguistic aspect of the study of the problem", Political Education: Information and Analytical Journal. Retrieved 02.12.2019 from: <http://lawinrussia.ru/content/religioznoe-yazykovoe-soznanie-pravoslavnyh-i-musulman-bashkortostana>

republic considered themselves Muslims: 92.4% of surveyed Bashkirs and 86.7% of Tatars considered Islam to be their religion. Within this sample of the people considering themselves Muslims, rural residents make up 46.8%, residents of the city of Ufa - 21.9%, and residents of the other cities of the Republic of Bashkortostan - 31.3 %. 51% of men and 53% of women identified themselves as Islam-oriented; of them, 16.2% had degree-level education, and 9.7% - incomplete higher education. The overwhelming majority was represented by respondents with paraprofessional education - 52.2%. Also, a significant number of surveyed participants turned out to have just secondary education - 21.9%²².

During the crisis of ethnic identity, religion becomes a compensating mechanism that ensures the transition of everyday religious commitment from the spheres of generally accepted traditions to the area of spiritual search.

The general resources of tolerance of intercultural and interethnic communication are the integrating role of the Russian language²³ and national-cultural associations - members of the Assembly of the Peoples of the Republic of Bashkortostan. Briefly describing the activities of the latter, it should be noted that currently about seventy national-cultural civil society associations and organizations are officially functioning in the Republic of Bashkortostan: Bashkir People's Center 'Ak tirmе' ('White Yurt'), Jewish public organization 'Kohav' (1988), Turkic national educational center 'Ramazan' (1989), the Executive Committee of the International Union of Public Organizations 'World Kurultai (Congress) of Bashkirs' (1995), the Convocation of Russians of Bashkortostan, National Cultural Center of the Kryashens of Bashkortostan, 'Sevan' of the Armenians (1998); Republican national-cultural centers of Ukrainians in Bashkortostan - 'Kobzar' (1990), Kanash (Congress) of the Chuvash of Bashkortostan (1999), Belarusian 'Spadchyna' (1996), Udmurts of Bashkortostan (1996), Latvian, Udmurt, and 'Ervel Mari' of Mari people Centers (1989), Cultural and Educational Union of Germans of Bashkortostan 'Wiedergeburt' (1989), Center for Polish Culture and Education 'Renaissance' (1997), Ismail Samani Center for Tajik National Culture (2000), 'Ak Bata' of Kazakhs, Azerbaijani National Cultural Center (2001), Kyrgyz 'Ala-Too' (2006), Moldovan 'Codru' (2007), Russian regional public organization 'Friendship of peoples of Bashkortostan-Bulgaria' (2009), Regional public organization Shota Rustaveli Georgian National Cultural Center (2010), as well as the Society of Bashkir Women, the Society of Tatar Women of the Republic of Bashkortostan 'Sahibzhamal', and some others²⁴.

The ethnosociological approach to the study of religiosity characterizes this concept as an integral system assessed through the selection of a set of certain parameters. Thus, Ch. Glock identifies and describes such its features as personal religious experiences, ritual component, manifestations of faith in everyday life, acceptance and content of religious

²² E. A. Salikhova & Yu. R. Mursalimova, "Religious Knowledge in Terms of the Categories of "Meaning" and "Knowledge", "Cognition", VEGU Bulletin, Series Philology, num 2 (64) (2013): 125–130.

²³ E. A. Salikhova, "Representation of the worldview religious component in the linguistic consciousness of orthodox Christians and Muslims in Bashkortostan", Cherepovets State University Bulletin, num 5 (66) (2015): 65–72.

²⁴ E. A. Salikhova, "Religious and linguistic consciousness of the Orthodox and Muslims of Bashkortostan: sociopsycholinguistic aspect of the study of the problem", Political Education: Information and Analytical Journal. Retrieved 02.12.2019 from: <http://lawinrussia.ru/content/religioznoe-yazykovoe-soznanie-pravoslavnyh-i-musulman-bashkortostana>

beliefs, knowledge of faith and doctrine, etc²⁵. Religion also appears to be a feature of ethnic identity; common faith, according to experts, may well become a symbol of group solidarity. While answering the question 'Whom you can describe as 'this is us?' a sense of religious group involvement was shared by more than 45.5% of Russians, 42.4% of Tatars, and 52.3% of local Bashkirs²⁶. Also noteworthy is that 36.8% of Bashkirs and 44.3% of Tatars positively assess the role of Orthodoxy. Among the negative answers especially distinctive are those expressing a negative attitude towards paganism: 13.8% of Tatars and 15.6% of Bashkirs spoke negatively about this type of religious consciousness. Overall, the survey data show a fairly high level of tolerance of Bashkortostan Muslims towards people of other religious cultures. It is also important to take into account that a significant number of young people (not only believers, but also representing other worldview groups, incl. indifferent and irreligious) consider themselves to be supporters of traditional religions. The latter fact reveals the connection between religious and national identities. This position is confirmed by the data obtained by R.K. Urazmetova and I.R. Khismatullin²⁷: the majority of respondents (86.25%) expressed solidarity with the proposition 'A man should never forget own ethnical background' suggested in the questionnaire. There is a slight discrepancy in the opinions of individual ethnic groups: if among the Russians, Bashkirs, and Ukrainians this judgment was supported by 75% of the respondents, then among the Tatars and Chuvash people, almost everyone gave a positive answer (93.7 and 100%, respectively).

Depending on the strength of faith, modern society is conventionally divided: 1) into deeply religious people with high adherence to traditions; 2) people brought up in religious customs, visiting religious institutions and trying to follow all God's commandments; 3) shallow believers who refer themselves to a particular confession as a tribute to family traditions; 4) people who admit the existence of God, but have freed themselves from obligations and substantiate religious positions; and 5) atheists. Based on the above classification, we conclude that the concept of 'religious personality' is multifaceted in content and may include individual communities and even ethnic groups. Following Yu.R. Mursalimova, the authors comprehend 'Religiosity' as a social quality of an individual or a group, the degree of which is determined by the number and quality of existing ideas on religion and the constant call to expand them, as well as the thoroughness and frequency of implementation of religious precepts²⁸.

Describing the respondents or participants in the experiments as 'religious', we mean a group of respondents who consciously learned the basics of religion in order to develop ideas on it through the prism of specific teaching by interacting with its subjects (mullah, priest) and objects (theological literature, confessional attributes, etc.)²⁹.

²⁵ Charles Y. Glock, *Religion in Sociological Perspective: The Individual and his religion. Religion and Society: Reader in the Sociology of Religion* (Moscow: Aspekt Press, 1996)

²⁶ A sociological answer to the 'national question': an example of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Moscow: RAS Institute of Sociology, 2012)

²⁷ R. K. Urazmetova & I. R. Hismatullin, "Ethnic affiliation among young people in a multi-ethnic society (on the example of the Republic of Bashkortostan)", *Bulletin of the Krasnoyarsk Agrarian University*, num 4 (2015): 224-227.

²⁸ Y. R. Mursalimova, "Associative field of the word God in the Russian language consciousness", *Theoretical and applied science and education in the XXI century*, (2012): 97–103 y Y. R. Mursalimova, *The Specifics of the Religious Component of the World Meaning: PhD thesis* (Perm National Research Polytechnic University publishers, 2018).

²⁹ Y. R. Mursalimova, "Associative field of the word God in the Russian language consciousness", *Theoretical and applied science and education in the XXI century*, (2012): 97–103; Y.R. Mursalimova, *The Specifics of the Religious Component of the World Meaning: PhD thesis* (Perm National

Certainly, the mind of every religious/confessional personality contains a unique set of beliefs and ideas, the quantity and quality of which depends on the individual religious experience³⁰. Worldview religious identity presupposes the belief in God's existence, which may not be formed among all those with ethno-confessional identity and covers less than half of the latter - 42% on a national scale, and from 42.4 to 48.3% - on a republican scale³¹ (see Table 3). Noteworthy that various ethno-confessional groups have practically the same proportion of people with a formed worldview identity.

Answer options	Among Bashkir Muslims, Rep. Of Bashk., 2011 (N=265)	Among Muslim Tatars, Rep. Of Bashk., 2011 (N=207)	Among Orthodox-Russians, Rep. Of Bashk., 2011 (N=290)	Overall among Orthodox Russian Fed., 2009 (N=1600)
I know that God exists and I don't doubt his existence	48.3	40.1	42.4	42
I believe in the existence of God, although sometimes I have doubts in that	20.6	26.1	21.7	25
Sometimes I believe in God's existence and sometimes I don't	10.9	11.1	12.4	13
I don't believe in God, but I believe in some higher power	11.3	13.0	13.4	8
I don't believe in God's existence	1.5	2.4	2.4	1
I do not know if God exists, and I doubt that you can be sure of his existence	3.4	3.9	6.2	6
Undecided	3.5	3.3	1.7	4

Table 3

Distribution of the answers to the question: 'Which of the following statements best reflects your idea on the existence of God?' (comparative data from Bashkortostan studies and an all-Russian survey, % of the number of those defined themselves (N) as Orthodox and Muslim)³²

Research Polytechnic University publishers, 2018); E. A. Salikhova & Yu. R. Mursalimova "Religious Knowledge in Terms of the Categories of "Meaning" and "Knowledge", "Cognition". VEGU Bulletin, Series Philology, num 2 (64) (2013): 125–130 y E. A. Salikhova & Yu. R. Mursalimova, "Special aspects of personal linguistic identity", Pedagogical Journal of Bashkortostan, num 1 (56): 173–179.

³⁰ Y. R. Mursalimova, The Specifics of the Religious Component of the World Meaning: PhD thesis (Perm National Research Polytechnic University publishers, 2018).

³¹ A sociological answer to the 'national question': an example of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Moscow: RAS Institute of Sociology, 2012).

³² Russia Public Opinion 2009 (Moscow: Levada Center, 2009) y A sociological answer to the 'national question': an example of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Moscow: RAS Institute of Sociology, 2012)

Driven by a spiritual search, modern students are actively looking for their own religious identity. To compare the religiosity of students declared in conversations and students' actual behavior, we turned to an analysis of their attitude to the so-called 'institutionalized religion': how often do they communicate with God through prayer, whether they actually read religious-educational literature, etc. Thus, the interest of modern youth in religion is quite pronounced, as it is considered as a 'life-meaning need' (term offered by V.R. Legoida). For many young people, faith in God represents a meaningful value; to the question 'Do you believe in God?' positively answered 64% (61 out of 95) I-II year students of technical specialties of Ufa State Aviation Technical University (USATU) surveyed in 2012, as well as IV-year students of the Russian and Bashkir-Russian philological departments of the Bashkir State University surveyed same year. Also, only 1 (0.01%) gave a negative response, 13 (14 %) admitted the possibility of God's existence, 16 (17%) - rather believed than not, 2 (0.02%) - on the contrary, rather did not believe, and 2 marked 'undecided'. Despite such religious attitudes of young people as referring to a religious confession or atheism, almost all respondents were still keeping some attributes of faith in their homes: icons or amulets, crosses or crescents, which represented both a reflection of the respondents' religious beliefs and symbols of the 'parents' faith'³³.

On the religious commitment of Bashkortostan youth

The authors considered it necessary not only to name the distinctive signs of the religious consciousness of young people but also to consider the features of their religious commitment. As a rule, the degree of students' involvement in religious activities was significantly lower than in other age groups (in comparison with the data of other researchers³⁴). The passive character of the religiosity of modern college youth is its common feature. In this regard, the respondents were asked about their possible visits to a mosque or church, about religious literature and rituals, observance of Lent, etc. The survey data cited in our early publications were considered to describe the religious linguistic consciousness of respondents. In the aspect of the research topic, the same data can be qualified as indicators of the religious behavior of the younger generation. The survey conducted by Yu.R. Mursalimova showed that out of 156 participants (of which 75 identified themselves as Muslims and 81 as Orthodox), 6 respondents had never attended a church or a mosque; 27 – visited quite rarely; 13 - only once; 2 - have never been and are not going to; 5 - go there every religious holiday; 1 refused to answer and only 2 participants visited some religious establishments at least once a month on the regular basis. By maintaining faith in God, students, however, still lose other essential elements of religious faith. Young people were likely to believe in the possibility of personal communication with God but

³³ E. A. Salikhova "Religious and linguistic consciousness of the Orthodox and Muslims of Bashkortostan: sociopsycholinguistic aspect of the study of the problem". Political Education: Information and Analytical Journal. Retrieved 02.12.2019 from: <http://lawinrussia.ru/content/religioznoe-yazykovoe-soznanie-pravoslavnyh-i-musulman-bashkortostana>

³⁴ G. Guzelbayeva, "Religious identities and practices of Orthodox and Muslims in a modernizing community". Ethnicity, religiosity and migration in modern Tatarstan (2013): 55–74; R. A. Nabiev, Power and religious revival: Monograph (Kazan: Kazan University, 2014); D. V. Pogontseva & Yu. V. Nasedkina, "The Influence of religious beliefs of young people on the formation of attitudes towards representatives of various religious faiths", Humanitarian Research, num 5 (2013). Retrieved 02.12.2019 from: <http://human.snauka.ru/2013/053055>; R. K. Urazmetova & I. R. Hismatullin, "Ethnic affiliation among young people in a multi-ethnic society (on the example of the Republic of Bashkortostan)", Bulletin of the Krasnoyarsk Agrarian University, num 4 (2015): 224-227 y A. B. Yunusova, Islam in Bashkortostan (Moscow: Logos, 2007).

without intermediaries and witnesses. Ethno-religious identity in the student environment was presented as follows: 64 students (67%) considered themselves to be Islamic, 26 (27%) – belong to Christianity, 2 - turned out to be pagans and 3 - atheists; 43 out of 95 students identified themselves as Tatars, 20 as Bashkirs, 21 as Russians, and by ones of Mari, Cheremisa, Estonians, and Udmurts, one student did not define himself clearly and identified himself with both Bashkirs and Russians; 6 participants refused to attribute themselves with any nationality³⁵.

The religious consciousness of students, as we have seen, is distinguished by its complex structure, blurredness, and heterogeneity. From a psycholinguistic standpoint, this is quite explainable, firstly, by the emotional sensitivity of young people, clearly manifested in the products of speech activity; secondly, the desire for everything new. Even with an obvious inclination to search for truth in non-traditional religions, the number of adherents among the young people in traditional religions is much higher³⁶. The ratio of the respondents' answers to their personal data revealed by us allows indicating the relative correlation between belonging to one or another religious group and the national identification of the believer. The survey results also demonstrated some advance in the formation of ethno-confessional identity over the genesis of the worldview of confessional type. There were much fewer practicing believers than believers identifying themselves with the religious tradition³⁷. Also noteworthy is the conventionality in comparing the religiosity of the considered confessions due to their different requirements for religious commitment.

Another ethnosociological survey that should be mentioned is 'Manifestation of ethnicity and adaptation of young people to new socio-economic realities in a polyethnic region', conducted on October 2017 under the project № 16-01-00303 'Features of the manifestation of ethnic mobilization in the context of new socio-economic and geopolitical realities (on the regional level)'. The study involved 585 people aged 17 to 20, including 195 Russians, 157 Bashkirs, 193 Tatars, and 42 representatives of other nationalities. One of the tasks of the authorial sociological research was to identify the level of students' confidence in representatives of other confessions. At the first stage, the research participants were asked to respond to filtering questions, which revealed the trust of young people in Orthodoxy, Islam, and Buddhism and their correlation with a particular confession. The survey participants professing other than Christianity (Orthodoxy) and Islam (Muslims) (the most represented in the Republic of Bashkortostan) were excluded from the analysis of the questionnaire and accounted with the rest in the 'Others' group (see Tables 4-6). The interrelation between all the specified confessions was revealed, which may indicate the general attitude of young people to religion, on the one hand, and also denote an opportunity of showing socially acceptable behavior on the other. At the same time, this relationship indicates that a general tendency towards trust/distrust but does not characterize its modality.

³⁵ Y. R. Mursalimova, *The Specifics of the Religious Component of the World Meaning*: PhD thesis (Perm National Research Polytechnic University publishers, 2018).

³⁶ Y. R. Mursalimova, *The Specifics of the Religious Component of the World Meaning*: PhD thesis (Perm National Research Polytechnic University publishers, 2018).

³⁷ E. A. Salikhova & Yu. R. Mursalimova, "Special aspects of personal linguistic identity". *Pedagogical Journal of Bashkortostan*, num 1 (56): 173–179.

Answer options	Russians	Bashkirs	Tatars	Others
Implicitly trust	19.0	5.1	12.0	14.3
Rather trust than don't	36.4	31.8	38.0	28.6
Rather don't trust	17.9	21.0	20.8	19.0
Definitely don't trust	20.0	28.7	23.4	21.4
Undecided	6.7	13.4	5.7	16.7

Table 4
What is your level of confidence in Orthodoxy?

Analysis of the average results (for the entire sample) showed that respondents have a positive attitude towards Islam and Orthodoxy (more than 30–35% - see Tables 4 and 5), while towards representatives of other religious confessions - in particular, towards Buddhism - the average score is close to the categories 'Rather don't trust' / 'Definitely don't trust' and demonstrates the polarity of the trust relationship (see Table 6). As the study has shown, the current Bashkortostan youth is less inherent in xenophobia than representatives of other regions (compare with the data³⁸). This is probably due to the initial stage of youth entering the social division of labor and distributional relations. The youth is biologically and psychologically more 'flexible', and therefore, is less likely to find itself in a situation of interfaith and interethnic conflicts (except for all kinds of fringes of society). Thus, as an object of trust, Islam (Mohammedanism) tops the list, followed by Orthodoxy; about 5-15% turned out religiously 'indifferent'. The latter may be fairly treated as undecided.

Answer options	Russians	Bashkirs	Tatars	Others
Implicitly trust	7.2	28.7	27.5	11.9
Rather trust than don't	26.7	36.9	39.4	28.6
Rather don't trust	26.7	9.6	13.0	14.3
Definitely don't trust	30,8.	15.3	15.5	28.6
Undecided	8.7	9.6	4.7	16.7

Table 5
What is your level of confidence in Islam?

Based on Table 4 data analysis, it could be clearly stated that the Tatars and Bashkirs (embodied in young representatives of the Muslim sample of participants) show the most trusting attitude towards representatives of other religious confessions, while Russian Orthodox Christians and representatives of other confessions show a more pronounced distrust in 'strangers' religious groups. Also, there are significant differences in the confidential/distrustful attitude towards Buddhists among young people professing Islam and Orthodoxy. Measurement on the scale of 'Rather don't trust' and 'Definitely don't trust' revealed religious antipathies of 20-28%, that is, every fifth representative of other nationalities who took part in the survey. The attitude of representatives of different confessions is determined by the religious affiliation of the subject, and not by age or gender. We can also say that Orthodox Christians have a more pronounced negative attitude towards representatives of other religious confessions; the most positive attitude towards

³⁸ M. N. Guboglo, *Identification of identity: ethnosociological essays* (Moscow: Science, 2003); G. Guzelbayeva, "Islamic Identity of Young Tatars in the Republic of Tatarstan (based on 2008-2012 opinion polls)", *Scientific notes of Kazan University*, Vol: 154 Issue 6 (2012): 176–186; G. Guzelbayeva, "Religious identities and practices of Orthodox and Muslims in a modernizing community", *Ethnicity, religiosity and migration in modern Tatarstan* (2013): 55–74 y *Regional identity in the context of Russian nation-building: ethnic, language, and administrative aspects* (on the example of Republic of Bashkortostan). F.G. Safin (ed) (St. Petersburg, Ufa, 2018).

representatives of all religious confessions was demonstrated by Muslim youth. The latter observation made in the course of the study could be referred to as a resource of tolerance, taken as the population groups carrying a tolerant mindset and corresponding attitudes.

Answer options	Russians	Bashkirs	Tatars	Others
Implicitly trust	7.7	3.2	10.9	11.9
Rather trust than don't	26.7	27.4	33.2	23.8
Rather don't trust	29.2	22.9	24.9	21.4
Definitely don't trust	27.2	31.2	24.4	28.6
Undecided	9.2	14.6	6.7	14.3

Table 6

What is your level of confidence in Buddhism?

First to catch the attention is the fact that 20% of Orthodox Russians 'do not trust' the Orthodox religion. Also, we believe that when interpreting such statistical data, it is impossible to exclude the disorienting influence of the media on many spheres of life, including the spiritual. For example, frequent news events and online publications – yet another terrorist attack, screening a historical movie exposing the cruelty of a religious society or photo and video images of church/mosque personnel in front of expensive yachts and airplanes, etc. - leads to a distorted representation of religion, causing a negative attitude. As recognized by the representative of the 'Religion and Mass Media' portal A.I. Kyrlezhev, the topic on religion 'is doomed to be marginally and incompletely covered by the media'³⁹, since, as he believes, 'the religious space in secular media sources are often presented in a negative light by citing phrases or situations taken out of context, which allows not only to reflect reality but to create it'. With such a one-sidedly constructed negative image of the religion in the media and the 'tabloid' way of shaping the worldview of modern youth, the image of a priest/imam can be presented in a negative way, which increases the likelihood of consolidating negative stereotypes associated with the religious sphere in general in the minds of recipients. This, in turn, cannot but affect their involvement in the observance of cult traditions and rituals.

Conclusion

Under the modern Bashkortostan conditions, the religious identity of Orthodox Christians and Muslims in the youth environment develops mainly as traditional-cultural by content and ethno-confessional by origin. Under a scientifically grounded policy, the polyethnicity of the younger generation should act as a resource for ethnic and religious tolerance. A republic that has the opportunity to realize its cultural potential (which contains the phenomenon of multinationalism) has an inexhaustible source of development. Rather high indicators of mutual trust are starkly illustrating that tolerant relationships of the main contacting ethno-confessional groups have taken root in the Republic of Bashkortostan. These interactions characterize Bashkiria as 'a region of a single Eurasian confessional field, based on close spiritual traditions of the Volga Muslims and Orthodox Christians'⁴⁰. Nevertheless, Islam in modern Bashkortostan remains a minority, 'since it cannot ignore the

³⁹ Y. R. Mursalimova, *The Specifics of the Religious Component of the World Meaning*: PhD thesis (Perm National Research Polytechnic University publishers, 2018).

⁴⁰ E. A. Salikhova, "Representation of the worldview religious component in the linguistic consciousness of orthodox Christians and Muslims in Bashkortostan", *Cherepovets State University Bulletin*, num 5 (66) (2015): 65–72.

federal context⁴¹. Indeed, being ethnic Muslims, Tatars and Bashkirs are fully integrated into the behavioral, sociocultural, socio-linguistic, and communicative structures of Russian society. The traditions of interethnic and interfaith tolerance developed in the Ural-Volga region also played a huge role in this process. In the sphere of religion and interfaith relations, Islam and Orthodoxy as the traditional religions of the republic act as ‘the main subjects of sustainable development of society’ and practice tolerance in regard to other confessions⁴².

It is already a truism that the existence of a multipolar world of values (incl. religion) is one of the foundations for the enhancement of society. Liberal attitude towards religion, along with overall tolerance, occupies a special place in this axiological system. The interim results of our research have shown that tolerance – taken in the broad sense of this term as a system of knowledge and values – appears a specific socio-cultural phenomenon and has peculiar features both at the personal level and the entire society. The features manifested at the social level include the adoption and practical application of legislation that creates equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of religion, nationality, language, and social status, as well as the development and implementation of a set of measures that are aimed at preventing any form of manifestation of hostility and fanaticism. On the whole, the results of the conducted study allow concluding that the basic values of modern youth are identical to the traditional values of Russian society. Our study, as well as researches by other authors, have shown a high degree of ethnic and confessional affiliativeness (inclination to follow the goals, rule, and norms of own ethnic and/or religious group) among young people. This proves the pronounced need for ethnic and confessional affiliation, aspirations for the psychological community with the group, and acceptance of its attitudes and values. It is also quite possible that the active formation of religious ideas among college youth will further be expressed in the emergence of a new moral and ethical system.

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⁴¹ A sociological answer to the ‘national question’: an example of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Moscow: RAS Institute of Sociology, 2012).

⁴² R.A. Nabiev, Power and religious revival: Monograph (Kazan: Kazan University, 2014)

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The impact of religious commitment of Bashkortostan youth on their attitude towards representatives of different... Pág. 177

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