TATAR ENOUGH: CULTURAL IDENTITY COMPENSATION STRATEGIES AMONGST TATARS IN TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN

Mizuki SAKURAMA-NAKAMURA [1]

[1] The University of Osaka, 560-0043, Japan

tatamullin@gmail.com
ORCID: 0009-0007-9843-8308

ABSTRACT

This ethnographic study examines how Tatar diaspora communities in Tashkent, Uzbekistan maintain distinctive ethnic identity despite significant heritage language decline. Based on intermittent ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2013-2024, the research reveals that rather than experiencing straightforward assimilation, Tashkent Tatars engage in processes of cultural identity compensation: strategically investing heightened symbolic significance in culinary practices, personal naming traditions, and adapted festivals as language use diminishes. The study introduces the concept of polycentric authenticity, demonstrating how diaspora communities function as independent centres of cultural authority rather than merely reproducing homeland norms. Through analysis of intergenerational negotiations of authenticity, the research challenges binary frameworks of cultural preservation versus loss, revealing instead dynamic processes of creative adaptation. These findings contest official narratives of 'voluntary assimilation' and highlight the agency exercised by minority communities in reconfiguring ethnic identity within post-Soviet Central Asia.

Keywords: Diaspora, Ethnicity, Authenticity, Central Asia, Cultural identity, Language shift, Tatars, Uzbekistan.

INTRODUCTION

Tashkent Tatars form a longstanding yet often overlooked diaspora within Uzbekistan. Their ancestors arrived in Central Asia as merchants, religious reformers and intermediaries, contributing to Islamic education and modern schooling in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the Soviet and post-Soviet eras these Tatars have seen their language and many customs wane, even as a distinct 'Tatar identity' persists.

This study asks how Tashkent Tatars themselves negotiate authenticity and identity in daily life, and how their self-understandings differ from the official model of 'Tatar identity' propagated from Kazan, Tatarstan. In particular, we consider how markers such as language, religion, personal names, cuisine and festivals figure in this negotiation. We draw on extensive participant observation and interviews (2013–2024) within the community and build on the author's earlier work on compensation identitaire culturelle (cultural identity compensation) and polycentric authenticity.

The case of the Tashkent Tatars highlights broader theoretical issues in ethnicity and sociolinguistics. How is 'authentic' identity constructed when the ethnic language is barely spoken? What tensions arise between centralised ideas of 'Tatarness' (often tied to Kazan's heritage) and the lived realities of a multi-generational diaspora? And in line with recent theory, to what extent are such identity shifts dynamic, creative processes rather than simple 'loss'? We argue that Tashkent Tatars exhibit cultural identity compensation; when the language fades, other cultural practices (food, names, festivals) take on extra significance. We show that this is neither mere window-dressing nor voluntary assimilation, but a negotiated, flexible reconfiguration of identity. In the conclusion we contend that intergenerational language shift should be viewed as adaptive creation, not just decline, whilst showing against official narratives of 'voluntary assimilation' that obscure the diasporic community's own agency.

This research emerges at the intersection of several scholarly conversations about diaspora identity, language shift, and authenticity. Whilst the phenomenon of non-linguistic cultural markers gaining salience following language shift has been documented in various contexts (cf. Alba, 1990; Waters, 1990), our contribution lies in theorising the specific mechanisms through which this compensation operates and how it generates new forms of authenticity.

Our study builds upon and extends recent scholarship on Tatar communities in Central Asia, particularly the work of Gabdraxmanova and Sagdieva (2018) on contemporary 'Tatar identity' in Tashkent. Whilst this work documented the institutional aspects of Tatar cultural maintenance, our ethnographic approach focuses on the everyday mechanisms through which identity is negotiated at the household and community level.

The paper is organised as follows: after outlining our theoretical framework, we describe our methodological approach and provide ethnographic case studies focusing on language practices, personal naming, culinary traditions, and festivals. The analysis section then unpacks these findings, examining how cultural identity compensation functions, how authenticity is negotiated across multiple centres, and how identity is segmented within the community itself. We conclude by reflecting on the theoretical implications of our findings for

understanding ethnic identity in diaspora contexts and caution against simplistic narratives of assimilation that fail to recognise the creative adaptations of minority communities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Our analysis draws on constructivist approaches to ethnicity and language ideology. We follow Barth (1969) and Brubaker (2004) in seeing ethnic identity as the product of social practices and boundaries, not a fixed essence. In this view, Tashkent Tatars can continuously redefine 'Tatarness' through interaction. Brubaker's (2004) critique of 'groupism', the tendency to treat ethnic groups as substantive entities with clear boundaries and unitary interests, is particularly relevant for understanding how 'Tatar identity' in Tashkent operates not as a monolithic category but as a malleable set of practices and identifications. As Jenkins (2008: 13) argues, ethnicity is best understood as 'a matter of cultural stuff and the social organisation of social relationships and patterned interaction'. This perspective helps us move beyond viewing diaspora communities as either preserving or losing a predetermined ethnic essence.

Classical theories of identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983) remind us that symbols are flexible core values which communities actively maintain. When one marker like the native language erodes, groups often invest other markers with heightened meaning. Smolicz's (1981) concept of 'core values' highlights how certain cultural elements become particularly salient as emblems of group identity. Building on this, our earlier work Sakurama-Nakamura (2024a) on Tashkent Tatars dubbed this compensation identitaire culturelle: the community's post-linguistic identity invests cuisine, personal names and reinvented celebrations with symbolic weight. This concept aligns with research on heritage language loss (e.g. Fishman, 1991) and shows that identity can be revitalised through other cultural channels.

Problematising collective identity

It is crucial to acknowledge the conceptual challenges inherent in employing collective identity as an analytical framework. The notion of 'Tatar identity' risks reifying what is, in practice, a fluid, contested, and heterogeneous set of experiences. As Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 1) have argued, identity has become an overly elastic concept that simultaneously signifies sameness and difference, persistence and change, choice and ascription.

The limitations of identity-based frameworks are particularly evident in diaspora contexts. When we speak of 'Tatar identity', we risk implying a coherent, bounded entity that exists independently of the practices, discourses, and power relations through which it is constituted. As our ethnographic observations reveal, what it means to be 'Tatar' in Tashkent varies significantly according to generation, social context, and individual life history.

Nevertheless, we maintain that 'Tatar identity' remains a valuable analytical lens for three primary reasons. First, it reflects the emic categories through which our informants understand and articulate their experiences. As Ilshat (b. 1973, interviewed on 18 March 2023) expressed during a community gathering:

> When we talk about being Tatar here in Tashkent, we know it's complicated, not the same for everyone. But still, there is something we all recognise when we say our Tatar ways. It's real in our everyday lives, even if scholars might say it's too messy a concept.

Also, identity provides a framework for understanding the political dimensions of cultural practice in post-Soviet Uzbekistan. Claims to a distinct 'Tatar identity' have real consequences for resource allocation, educational opportunities, and transnational connections. As Dilyara (b. 1958, interviewed on 10 March 2024) explained: 'When the Tatarstan government sends financial support for our culture centre, they are supporting 'Tatar identity', so even if this is a complicated idea, it matters in practical ways'.

Moreover, by employing identity as an analytical category whilst simultaneously problematising it, we can illuminate the processes through which cultural distinctiveness is maintained without resorting to essentialist explanations. As Hall (1996: 4) argues, identities are 'points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us'.

Throughout this paper, we use ''Tatar identity'' not to signify a stable, homogeneous entity, but as shorthand for the complex processes through which Tashkent Tatars position themselves and are positioned by others in relation to notions of Tatarness.

Operationalising 'Tatarness' in diaspora contexts

Whilst we have acknowledged the conceptual challenges inherent in employing collective identity as an analytical framework, it remains necessary to clarify how we operationalise 'Tatarness' in the Tashkent context. Rather than defining Tatarness as a fixed set of cultural attributes, we understand it as a historically situated repertoire of practices, symbols, and narratives that community members can selectively mobilise to assert ethnic distinctiveness.

Crucially, 'being Tatar' in Tashkent does not require engagement with all these elements simultaneously or consistently. Instead, individuals strategically deploy different combinations of these cultural resources according to social context, personal preference, and life circumstances. A person might maintain Tatar naming practices whilst speaking primarily Uzbek, or prepare traditional foods whilst having minimal knowledge of Tatar history. The boundaries of Tatarness are thus maintained not through adherence to a comprehensive cultural programme but through selective participation in this broader repertoire of identification practices.

Acculturation

Our framework also engages with acculturation theory, particularly Berry's (1997) model of acculturation strategies, which identifies four distinct approaches minorities adopt toward cultural change: assimilation (adopting the dominant culture whilst abandoning heritage culture), separation (maintaining heritage culture whilst rejecting dominant culture), integration (maintaining heritage culture whilst also adopting aspects of dominant culture), and marginalisation (rejecting both heritage and dominant cultures).

However, Berry's model, whilst influential, may be too rigid for understanding the dynamic processes we observe among Tashkent Tatars. Rather than adopting a single acculturation strategy, our informants demonstrate what we term 'strategic selectivity': they simultaneously integrate certain aspects of Uzbek culture (particularly language) whilst intensifying other markers of Tatar distinctiveness. This pattern cannot be captured adequately by any single category in Berry's typology.

Moreover, Berry's framework assumes relatively stable cultural boundaries between 'heritage' and 'dominant' cultures. Our concept of polycentric authenticity challenges this assumption by demonstrating how diaspora communities actively participate in defining what constitutes 'authentic' heritage culture rather than simply preserving or abandoning predetermined cultural forms. The Tashkent Tatar case suggests that acculturation may be better understood as a creative process of cultural reconfiguration rather than strategic positioning relative to fixed cultural options.

Authenticity

The issue of authenticity is central to our analysis. Traditional conceptions often link authenticity to unbroken tradition, but anthropologists have problematised this view. Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) and Handler (1986) argued that many traditions are consciously invented or reinvented. As Coupland (2003: 417) notes, authenticity is not an objective quality but 'a moral-aesthetic valorising concept, linked to valued dimensions of identity and identification'. This resonates with Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) understanding of authenticity as the outcome of authentication, which they define as 'the social processes by which speakers come to be recognised, or to recognise themselves, as 'genuine' members of a social group'.

Similarly, Bhabha's notion of vernacular cosmopolitanism suggests individuals habitually navigate multiple cultural identities. For Bhabha (1996), vernacular cosmopolitanism offers an alternative to both parochial nationalism and abstract universalism, pointing to how individuals can maintain attachments to traditions whilst engaging with wider cultural forces.

We adopt this dynamic perspective; the Tatars in Tashkent do not live in a cultural vacuum, nor do they simply imitate homeland models. Instead, they engage in ongoing negotiation of authenticity amid multiple centres of culture. Sakurama-Nakamura (2025) introduces the idea of 'polycentric authenticity' for diasporas: diaspora communities themselves become new centres that generate distinctive linguistic and cultural norms, rather than simply receiving them from the homeland. This concept builds on Blommaert's (2010) notion of polycentricity in sociolinguistics, which recognises multiple centres of normative authority influencing language practices.

Sociolinguistically, language ideology plays a key role. The 'native-speaker' ideology often holds that true identity requires fluency in the heritage language. But in many diaspora contexts people negotiate 'situational ethnicity' (Okamura, 1981) or adopt strategic bilingualism (Silverstein, 1998; Gal & Irvine, 1995). Older Tashkent Tatars may retain pride in Russian or Tatar bilingualism, whereas younger people often see identity in cultural terms whilst speaking Uzbek or Russian. We therefore examine not only what languages are spoken, but how

speakers interpret this in terms of authenticity and identity. Woolard's (2016) exploration of 'linguistic authority' in Catalonia offers a useful parallel, demonstrating how language ideologies of authenticity and anonymity intertwine with questions of identity.

Our framework also engages with theories of diaspora and transnationalism. Since Clifford's (1994) seminal work, scholars have increasingly recognised diaspora communities not as anomalous fragments detached from homelands but as complex social formations with their own logics and creative potentials. Vertovec's (1999: 447) conceptualisation of transnationalism as encompassing 'multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states' provides a crucial framework for understanding how Tashkent Tatars maintain connections to multiple cultural centres whilst developing locally-specific practices. His emphasis on transnationalism as a 'social morphology', a particular configuration of social relations that spans borders, helps explain how diaspora communities like the Tashkent Tatars can simultaneously orient toward homelands, integrate into local societies, and create new cultural forms.

Vertovec's (1999) distinction between transnationalism 'from above' (involving institutions and capital) and transnationalism 'from below' (involving grassroots actors and informal networks) is particularly relevant to our analysis. The cultural assistance from Tatarstan (teachers, materials, funding) represents transnationalism from above, whilst the everyday practices through which Tashkent Tatars maintain cultural connections, sharing recipes through family networks, participating in informal community gatherings, maintaining kinship ties across borders, exemplify transnationalism from below. Our ethnographic findings reveal how these two forms of transnationalism can sometimes conflict, as when community members resist external attempts to define 'authentic' Tatarness whilst simultaneously benefiting from institutional support.

As Werbner (2002: 2) notes, diasporas are 'formed through multiple journeys, by the organic growth of communities and by a shared orientation to specific places of origin and settlement' and possess 'both negative and positive moments, of loss and hope, destruction and creativity'. This perspective aligns with Vertovec's (1999) observation that transnational practices are characterised by "ongoing exchanges of information, money, goods and ideas" that create new forms of social organisation transcending traditional territorial boundaries.

In the Central Asian context specifically, our approach builds on Finke's (2014) work on ethnic boundaries in post-Soviet Central Asia, which emphasises how ethnic categories have been both reinforced and reconfigured during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. Edgar's (2004) historical analysis of Soviet nationality policy in Central Asia demonstrates how state categorisations have shaped but never fully determined local understandings of ethnicity.

Overall, our framework combines constructivist ethnicity, language ideology, and postcolonial (or post-Soviet) diaspora theory, to understand how markers of 'Tatarness' are selectively mobilised and reinterpreted. This allows us to move beyond simplistic narratives of cultural loss or preservation to examine the creative processes through which 'Tatar identity' is continually renegotiated in the Tashkent context.

METHODOLOGY

This research is based on intermittent ethnographic fieldwork in Tashkent spanning 2013–2024. It combined participant observation at community events and family gatherings with numerous informal interviews. The author has a unique insider–outsider status, of Tatar descent with a paternal grandmother and fluent in Tatar, as well as Russian and Japanese. This multilingual background helped build rapport within the community, whilst training in cultural anthropology provided analytical distance. Nonetheless, constant reflexivity was needed to avoid bias. The researcher participated in Tatar community life, joining Sabantuy festivals, weddings, mahalla events, and kept detailed field notes. Informants are given pseudonyms, with birth-year and interview-date noted.

The ethnographic approach followed principles outlined by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), emphasising immersion in the community, attention to everyday practices, and the collection of rich, contextualised data. This permitted an understanding of how identity is constructed through mundane activities rather than merely expressed in explicit statements.

The research employed varied data collection techniques. Participant observation occurred at community festivals, religious gatherings, family events, and meetings of Tatar cultural organisations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with more than 100 individuals spanning different age cohorts, genders, and levels of Tatar language proficiency.

Data analysis followed a grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006), allowing themes to emerge from the interviews and observations without imposing predetermined categories. Analysis proceeded through multiple phases of coding, moving from initial open coding to more focused coding and finally theoretical coding. Throughout the analysis process, we employed constant comparative methods, comparing data from different participants, contexts, and time periods to identify patterns and variations.

In writing up case studies we rely on interview quotes embedded in the narrative. All informants consented to this anonymised reporting. We also build on two of the author's prior publications: Sakurama-Nakamura (2024a) and Sakurama-Nakamura (2025). These earlier studies first formulated ideas of 'cultural identity compensation' and 'polycentric authenticity' for the same community; here we further test and expand those insights.

Our methodological approach has certain limitations that must be acknowledged. As Tatar diaspora communities exist across Central Asia, our focus on Tashkent provides only a partial perspective. Additionally, our sample necessarily emphasised individuals who maintain some connection to 'Tatar identity', potentially underrepresenting those who have fully assimilated into Uzbek society, what might be termed 'survivorship bias' in our data collection.

This limitation is particularly significant given the demographic trends affecting the Tatar population in Uzbekistan. In 1989 some 470,000 Tatars were counted in the Uzbek SSR, but by 2021 this figure had fallen to around 190,000. This dramatic demographic decline of nearly 60% over three decades reflects multiple interconnected factors. Primary among these is large-scale emigration to Russia and Tatarstan, driven by economic opportunities and cultural connec-

tions to the homeland (Omelicheva, 2011). Post-Soviet economic instability and the strengthening of Uzbek national identity following independence created both push and pull factors encouraging outmigration.

However, emigration alone cannot account for the full extent of population decline. Statistical evidence suggests that intermarriage with Uzbeks and subsequent identity shifts among offspring also contribute to apparent demographic reduction. When children of mixed Tatar-Uzbek marriages identify primarily as Uzbek in statistics, they effectively disappear from official Tatar population counts whilst potentially maintaining some connection to Tatar cultural practices. This pattern highlights the limitation of statistics for capturing the complex, fluid nature of ethnic identification that our ethnographic research reveals.

ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDIES

Language practices

In Tashkent Tatars, everyday spoken Tatar is rare, especially amongst young people. Most community members speak Uzbek and Russian in daily life. Nuriya (b. 2004, interviewed on 14 March 2018) explained that her family speaks Uzbek at home, but she and her mother sometimes use Tatar words when talking about family recipes or songs. Older generations often lament this shift. Gulnara (b. 1950, interviewed on 10 August 2013) told us: 'In my childhood we spoke Tatar in the mahalla, with grandparents. Now my grandchildren don't speak it. But at home I still address them with nicknames in Tatar, and we say the evening prayer in Arabic anyway'. Such accounts indicate a 'post-linguistic identity' where language competence is low, but cultural memory remains. One informant quipped (recorded on 8 February 2014), 'We speak our fingers', meaning that talking about cooking (moving one's hands) stands in for speaking Tatar.

Despite loss of fluency, many Tatars maintain that knowledge of Tatar heritage is important. At a family dinner on 9 October 2013, grandmother Mariam (b. 1950) showed her granddaughter how to make chak-chak (a honey pastry). She explained patiently in Russian and Uzbek: 'You see, chak-chak and gubadiya are our raisons d'être as Tatars. Even if we don't speak the language, when I cook and narrate the tale of our people, it's like speaking with my hands'. This metaphor of a 'language of the hands' closely matched our theory; by performing culinary techniques, identity is transmitted non-verbally. In her narrative, Mariam cited stories of their ancestors from Kazan, instilling pride in their heritage.

This pattern echoes findings from research on other diaspora contexts where heritage language maintenance has faltered. Meek (2010), for instance, documented how amongst indigenous Kaska communities in Canada, language socialisation practices persisted even as fluency declined.

Interview data confirm that attitudes vary by generation. As our earlier participant-observation noted, Tashkent Tatars of Soviet-era age often remember daily use of Russian and Uzbek, with only elders speaking Tatar. Younger people born after 1990 were mostly raised speaking Russian and Uzbek. In group interviews we found four identity types, corresponding to age cohorts. The oldest group (born before 1960) were socialised under the USSR and often identify strongly with the Soviet state. Middle cohorts (1960–80) felt more neutral or mixed; they

may recall a Tatar schoolteacher or mosque but equally pride in independence of Uzbekistan. Young adults (born 1980–2000) often say they 'feel Uzbek first' and speak Uzbek with peers, yet keep some Tatar food and heritage. The post-2000 generation is split; some marry into Uzbek families and drift toward Uzbekness, whilst others romantically revive Tatar cultural forms (e.g. rap songs in Tatar, online Sabantuy videos).

This generational pattern reflects broader socio-political transformations. The oldest generation was socialised during a period when Soviet nationality policy simultaneously recognised ethnic distinctiveness whilst emphasising Soviet citizenship (Martin, 2001). Middle generations experienced both late Soviet multiculturalism and the transition to independent Uzbekistan. Younger generations have grown up in an independent Uzbekistan where the Uzbek language has gained prominence and new transnational connections to Tatarstan have emerged.

Across these groups, the salient 'Other' has shifted; older Tatars often contrasted themselves with Russians during the Soviet era, whereas younger families tend to see Uzbeks as the majority they interact with. Still, a core of all ages continues to firmly adhere to 'Tatar identity' in some form. This resonates with Barth's (1969) emphasis on ethnic boundaries; 'Tatar identity' persists not because of cultural content that remains unchanged over time, but because the boundary between Tatars and others continues to be maintained, albeit through changing cultural markers.

Personal names and symbolic capital

One striking case is the use of first names and surnames as identity markers. During the Soviet period, many Tatars carried Russified surnames (e.g. Akhmetov, Karimov) and gave children Russian names or neutral ones. After Uzbekistan's independence, however, there was a noticeable shift back to Tatar names. At a family gathering we recorded Nail (b. 1992, interviewed on 15 January 2014) reminisce: 'My grandfather had the Tatar name Karimullin. But in the 1960s he changed it to Karimov to get closer to Uzbek life. It was one way to integrate whilst keeping a Tatar root'. That practice continues selectively. Robert (b. 1980, interviewed on 10 March 2024) put it plainly: 'My family name, Akhmetov, could be Uzbek or Tatar. But I chose clearly Tatar first names for my children: Ilgiz and Lyaysan. It's our way of marking difference whilst remaining integrated'. Almira (b. 1970, 10 March 2023), commented similarly on another occasion: 'I want my daughters' names to always remember our roots, even if we live amongst Uzbeks'. This strategy of using symbolic names has become widespread; parents recited lists of recently popular Tatar names (Ildar, Lyaysan, Rishat, Guzel, etc.) when interviewed. By selecting a Tatar name, families subtly assert an ethnic distinction without resorting to Uzbek names (which might invite assimilation) or rare medieval names (which might appear ostentatious).

Blommaert and Varis (2013: 147) define 'enoughness' as the question of 'how much (or how little) of a particular attribute or practice is needed or required to be recognised as an 'authentic' member of a social category'. In the Tashkent Tatar context, names provide an example of 'enoughness'; possessing a recognisably Tatar name constitutes 'enough' Tatarness to claim membership in the community, even without Tatar language fluency.

The strategic use of names illustrates Bourdieu's (1991) conception of the linguistic market, in which certain linguistic practices carry symbolic value. Personal names constitute a particularly durable form of linguistic capital, one that remains fixed throughout an individual's life and serves as a continual marker of identity.

Not every family follows this. Parents in mixed marriages often compromise. Dina (b. 1984, interviewed on 15 March 2024), married to an Uzbek, explained: 'We chose Kamila for our daughter. It works fine in Uzbek, Tatar and Russian. We want her to easily move amongst all identities'. Some parents use names like Anvar or Feruza that are neutral across cultures. These choices show negotiation: 'authentic' name versus social pragmatics. In sum, naming practices illustrate how Tatars maintain identity through a 'marker capital' built into personal identity. Even with weak language use, having Tatar names (or surname suffixes like – dinov/-zhanov) signals membership and continuity.

Cuisine as cultural core

Culinary tradition emerged repeatedly as a key marker in interviews. Several Tatars called traditional dishes their core values of identity. Anis (b. 1965, 5 June 2013) joked, 'In a sense, "we speak stomach"—as long as we cook osh (pilaf) and chak-chak on Sabantuy, we're Tatar'. Another informant, Nadiya (b. 1975, 16 March 2018), described how preparing food was a collective act: 'On holidays we all gather to knead and fry chak-chak. The recipes themselves are full of history. I tell the kids, "When your great-grandmother learned this in the kolkhoz, it was a sign of our identity"'. These comments echo the earlier concept of cultural identity compensation: with declining language, the Tashkent Tatars increasingly invest ethnic meaning in food preparation. As one elderly woman put it, 'I might not speak with you in Tatar, but when you taste our chak-chak, you understand who we are'.

The centrality of food to ethnic identity has been well-documented in anthropological literature. Mintz and Du Bois (2002: 109) observe that 'food serves both to solidify group membership and to set groups apart'. More specifically, Lockwood and Lockwood's (2000) study of Arab-American foodways demonstrates how the preservation of culinary traditions can become especially important for maintaining ethnic identity when other cultural markers are threatened.

This embodied remembering matches anthropological ideas of 'embodied memory' (Sutton, 2001). As we saw during a June 2023 observation of Sabantuy preparations, even youths articulate identity through food. A group of high-school students (all non-Tatars) teased yet respected their Tatar classmates by helping roll dough for chak-chak. Their fluent use of Uzbek and Russian did not undermine the festive atmosphere: the entire park had drawn the line—that table is for Tatar food, that music is Tatar music. In conversation, Liliya (b. 2000, 4 March 2024) said, 'We learned the Tatar recipes on YouTube, but when we cook together here, we feel a connection to home. It's not Kazan Sabantuy, but it's ours'. These practices also create a shared memory. Families recall how 'grandmother moved here fleeing famine' or 'built the mosque'. In sum, food, an ostensibly simple marker, plays a profound role in maintaining a communal narrative and thus an 'authentic' Tatarness in Tashkent.

Sutton's (2001) concept of 'gustemology', the study of how taste and other sensory experiences of food connect to memory and identity, is particularly relevant here. Sutton demonstrates how cooking and eating constitute forms of 'embodied knowledge' that can persist even when explicit cultural knowledge fades. The Tatar case illustrates how food preparation becomes a site not only for the transmission of cultural knowledge but for the active recreation of 'Tatar identity' through sensory experience.

Festivals and traditions

Reinvented traditions like the Sabantuy illustrate how Tashkent Tatars actively negotiate authenticity. Whilst often characterised as ancient, Sabantuy in its contemporary form is largely a modern celebration that evolved from earlier cıyın ('gathering') and was formalised during the Soviet period as a secular alternative to Islamic holidays (Urazmanova, 2001). In Kazan it is now a major state-sponsored event. In Tashkent it has become a smaller, community-organised occasion.

At these gatherings we observed a blending of influences: men wrestled (kurash), children did traditional games, and older women wore colourfully embroidered Tatar dresses. However, the music included both Tatar folk songs and popular Uzbek songs. In interviews, many participants noted this hybridity. For example, Azat (b. 1995, 16 March 2018), a young entrepreneur attending Sabantuy every year, reflected: 'We sing the Tatar songs we know, but also the big hits from the Uzbek media. For us it doesn't feel unnatural to mix. It shows we're from here. We're proud to be Tatars, yes, but we're also Uzbek by culture'.

This kind of identity performance exemplifies the 'cultural creolisation' common in diasporas. The festival itself was described by informants as an event of adaptation rather than a rigid return to 'the original' Sabantuy. As one veteran organiser put it, 'We reinvented Sabantuy to fit Tashkent. We serve plov and samsa along with chak-chak. After all, our community's palate has Uzbek flavours. Does that make it less Tatar? I think it makes it stronger, because it survives here'. These sentiments mirror the argument that tradition reinvention in Tashkent is a 'creative adaptation' not an 'artificial forgery'. Indeed, informants frequently distinguished between 'authentic' adaptation and 'inauthentic' imitation. For example, Musa (b. 1970, 19 March 2024) recounted that when a Tatar cultural centre tried to organise a Kazan-style folk dance troupe, some locals resisted: 'We said, "Let's do our own dance, with Uzbek steps mixed in, that's us". They eventually agreed'.

The reinvention of tradition exemplifies what Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) identified as 'invented traditions', cultural practices that claim continuity with the past but are actually recent innovations. However, unlike Hobsbawm and Ranger's emphasis on the invention of tradition as a tool of state power, in the Tatar case tradition is reinvented from below, by community members themselves.

The hybridity evident in Tashkent Sabantuy reflects what Shaw and Stewart (1994: 7) term 'creolisation': a process of cultural mixing that results not in the loss of authenticity but in the emergence of new 'authentic' forms. As they argue, 'the processes of cultural mixing are not formless or structureless but ordered', producing new cultural configurations that cannot be reduced to simply adding Uzbek elements to Tatar ones.

Faith and ritual also appear in these festivals. Tatars in Uzbekistan largely share Islam (Sunni) with the Uzbeks. However, mosque attendance and religious schooling became markers of piety and heritage. Some Tatars attribute reverence for Islamic scholarship to their ancestors, citing the 19th-century Tatar clerics who built madrasas here. Today few young Tatars can read Qur'anic Arabic, but in family Eid celebrations they will still invoke Tatar prayers taught by grandfathers. Several older interviewees told of collecting wada' (charitable donations) for madrasa projects in Kazan, seeing it as linking them back to the homeland. Here too authenticity is negotiated: as Nadyr (b. 1962, 19 December 2013) put it, 'Yes, I am Uzbek citizen, but I feel Tatar when I pray in Tatar-style manner or recite the fatihah. It's part of what's Tatar about me'.

The role of religion in 'Tatar identity' reflects broader patterns identified in research on Islam in post-Soviet Central Asia. As Khalid (2007) demonstrates, Islamic practice in Central Asia has been shaped by both Soviet secularisation policies and post-Soviet religious revival, resulting in complex negotiations of religious identity.

ANALYSIS

The dynamics of cultural identity compensation

Our ethnographic research reveals compelling evidence of cultural identity compensation amongst the Tashkent Tatars. This process constitutes an active reorganisation of identity markers. As language proficiency has declined across generations, we observe a corresponding intensification in the symbolic significance attached to other cultural domains, most notably food preparation, naming practices, and festival participation.

The culinary domain provides particularly rich evidence of this compensatory dynamic. When Mariam describes cooking chak-chak as 'speaking with my hands' or when Anis jokes about speaking 'stomach', they are articulating how embodied practices have become repositories of ethnic identity. The metaphor of 'language of the hands' directly parallels Sutton's (2001) concept of 'embodied knowledge', forms of cultural memory that reside in bodily practices rather than verbal expression. What is particularly significant is how this embodied knowledge is deliberately transmitted across generations, as witnessed in our ethnographic observation of Mariam instructing her granddaughter in dough preparation. The physical process of making traditional foods becomes a site of intergenerational identity transmission even when verbal communication occurs primarily in Uzbek or Russian.

Similarly, personal naming practices offer a clear example of cultural identity compensation. As Robert's choice of distinctly Tatar names for his children demonstrates, personal names have taken on heightened significance as markers of ethnic identity precisely because language use has declined. The strategic selection of names that are recognisably Tatar yet socially acceptable within Uzbek society represents what Bourdieu (1991) would term an investment in symbolic capital, a durable marker of identity that requires no ongoing linguistic competence to maintain.

The reinvention of traditions like Sabantuy further exemplifies cultural compensation. The festival has been transformed to one focused on visual and embodied

aspects of culture that require minimal Tatar language competence. Yet far from representing a dilution of 'Tatar identity', this transformation demonstrates the community's creative agency in reconfiguring what constitutes 'authentic' Tatarness.

This pattern of cultural identity compensation challenges simplistic narratives of assimilation. What we observe is not the gradual abandonment of 'Tatar identity', but its strategic reconfiguration. Community members actively invest certain practices with heightened symbolic significance, creating what we might term a post-linguistic ethnic identity, one in which embodied cultural practices rather than language provide the primary means of expressing ethnicity.

Polycentric authenticity and contested legitimacy

Our ethnographic findings strongly support the concept of polycentric authenticity introduced by Sakurama-Nakamura (2025). The Tashkent Tatar community does not simply orient itself toward Kazan as the sole arbiter of 'authentic' Tatarness but actively participates in defining what counts as 'authentic' in their specific context.

This polycentricity becomes evident in the tensions that emerge between homeland-defined authenticity and locally-negotiated forms. The young teacher who began writing her own primers about local Tatar history rather than using Tatarstan textbooks exemplifies this contestation of cultural authority. Her critique that the official materials contain references to Kazan life unfamiliar to Uzbekistani Tatars reveals how diaspora communities can resist homeland-defined notions of authenticity when these fail to resonate with local experiences. Similarly, the dance troupe organiser who incorporated Uzbek elements into traditional Tatar dances demonstrates how Tashkent Tatars assert their own cultural authority rather than simply reproducing Kazan norms.

This polycentric understanding of authenticity is further evident in festival practices. Our observation of Sabantuy revealed significant differences from the Kazan version, with the inclusion of both Tatar folk songs and Uzbek popular songs, and the serving of local dishes alongside traditional Tatar foods. As one informant, Azat, articulated: 'We're proud to be Tatars, yes, but we're also Uzbek by culture'. This statement encapsulates the creation of a distinct, locally-grounded authenticity that incorporates elements from both Tatar tradition and Uzbek society.

The ambivalent responses to cultural assistance from Tatarstan further illustrate this polycentric dynamic. Whilst many community members expressed gratitude for resources such as teachers, costumes, and subsidies, they simultaneously voiced frustration with external attempts to define 'authentic' Tatarness. As one elder put it, there was both appreciation for cultural aid and annoyance that 'outsiders tell us what being Tatar should be'. This tension reflects the community's assertion of its own locus of cultural legitimacy, functioning not merely as a recipient of homeland-defined authenticity but as a co-producer of what constitutes 'authentic Tatar identity'.

However, it is crucial to contextualise these dynamics within the broader political constraints facing Tatarstan itself. As a federal subject within the Russian Federation, Tatarstan has limited sovereignty and has faced increasing pressure

from Moscow. In this context, Kazan's role as a 'centre' imposing normative models should be understood as severely circumscribed rather than representing the actions of a fully autonomous cultural authority. The cultural assistance provided to Tashkent Tatars (teachers, costumes, subsidies) may represent the maximum feasible support given these political constraints rather than a deliberate attempt to impose homeland-defined authenticity.

This context adds complexity to our concept of polycentric authenticity. Rather than representing resistance to an overbearing cultural centre, Tashkent Tatars' assertion of local cultural authority may partly compensate for the weakened capacity of Tatarstan to serve as an effective cultural hub. The creative adaptations we observe may thus reflect both positive innovations and pragmatic responses to the limited support available from traditional institutional sources.

Generational variations in authenticity ideologies

Our ethnographic data reveals significant generational variations in how authenticity is conceptualised and enacted within the Tashkent Tatar community. These differences constitute fundamentally different approaches to authenticity itself.

The four-generational pattern identified in our interviews reveals distinct authenticity ideologies. For the oldest generation, socialised under Soviet nationality policy, 'authentic' Tatarness is often linked to language proficiency and traditional cultural practices. Their conception of authenticity aligns with what Woolard (2016) terms an 'ideology of authenticity, ' which prioritises rootedness in specific linguistic and cultural traditions. In contrast, younger generations who have grown up in independent Uzbekistan often construct authenticity through what Woolard would call an 'ideology of anonymity', privileging cultural features that facilitate social mobility and integration whilst maintaining selective markers of distinction.

This generational division is vividly illustrated in the exchange between Munira (b. 1942, recorded on 19 March 2018) and her grandson about what constitutes 'authentic' Tatarness. Whilst Munira scolded her grandson for not knowing Tatar words, the grandson countered that wearing traditional tubetey (skullcap) coats made them 'authentic' enough. ' This exchange demonstrates how different generations negotiate competing authenticity criteria: language proficiency versus visual markers of cultural distinctiveness.

The post-2000 generation's approach to authenticity is particularly complex. Our ethnographic observations revealed a bifurcation within this cohort: some drifting toward Uzbek identification through intermarriage, others engaging in romantic revitalisations of Tatarness through contemporary cultural forms like popular music or social media. As Nadiya (b. 2000, interviewed on 17 March 2023) explained regarding learning Tatar recipes from YouTube, 'It's not Kazan Sabantuy, but it's ours'. This statement encapsulates a distinctively contemporary approach to authenticity, one that acknowledges difference from homeland norms whilst asserting the legitimacy of local adaptations.

These generational variations reflect the impact of broader socio-political transformations on authenticity ideologies. The oldest generation's emphasis on language reflects its socialisation during Soviet nationality policy. Middle generations experienced both late Soviet multiculturalism and the transition to Uz-

bek independence, resulting in more hybrid authenticity conceptions. Younger generations have matured in an era of strengthened Uzbek national identity and globalised media, producing authenticity ideologies that strategically combine traditional elements with contemporary cultural forms.

Importantly, these varying authenticity ideologies do not simply coexist, they actively engage with and challenge one another. When the grandson responds to his grandmother's language-based critique with an assertion of visual authenticity, he is not merely defending his own practice but proposing an alternative framework for evaluating 'authentic' Tatarness. These intergenerational negotiations demonstrate that authenticity is not a fixed quality but an ongoing dialogical process, continuously reconstructed through interaction.

Challenging narratives of voluntary assimilation

Our ethnographic findings directly challenge simplistic narratives of 'voluntary assimilation' that often characterise official and scholarly accounts of Tatar communities in Uzbekistan. Rather than observing a straightforward process of willing integration into Uzbek society, we document complex negotiated practices through which Tashkent Tatars maintain distinctive ethnic identities whilst adapting to local contexts.

The limitations of the voluntary assimilation narrative become evident when examining the structural factors influencing apparent language shift. As our interviews revealed, economic incentives, educational policies favouring Uzbek, and practical considerations in mixed marriages all shape language choices in ways that cannot be reduced to unconstrained personal preference. Iskander's (b. 1995, interviewed on 15 March 2024) description of speaking Uzbek at work whilst maintaining Tatar cultural practices at home exemplifies this complexity: 'In the office I speak Uzbek with clients, but at home I prepare and eat gubadiya, and remember my Tatarness. I think this mixing is not assimilation. It's versatility'. His characterisation of these practices as 'versatility' rather than assimilation highlights his perception of agency in navigating multiple cultural contexts.

This perspective aligns with Gal's (1979) critique of seemingly 'voluntary' language shift as deeply shaped by structural constraints and power relations. In the Tashkent context, the predominance of Uzbek in education, government, and media creates powerful incentives for language shift that cannot be reduced to individual choice alone. Yet even as many Tatars adopt Uzbek as their primary language, they simultaneously maintain or even intensify other markers of ethnic distinctiveness, giving children Tatar names, preparing traditional foods, participating in adapted cultural celebrations.

The situational nature of ethnic identification further complicates assimilation narratives. Our informants frequently described 'playing with' identities according to context, identifying as Uzbek in some situations and emphasising Tatarness in others. This contextual shifting does not indicate a lack of 'authentic' identity but rather demonstrates sophisticated navigation of complex social environments. As Okamura (1981) argues in his concept of 'situational ethnicity,' such contextual identity performance represents a form of agency rather than assimilation, allowing individuals to maintain ethnic distinctiveness whilst functioning effectively in majority contexts.

Moreover, the creative adaptation of traditions directly contradicts simplistic assimilation narratives. When Tashkent Tatars incorporate Uzbek elements into Sabantuy or modify traditional recipes with local ingredients, they are not abandoning 'authentic Tatar identity' but reconstructing it in ways that ensure its continued relevance. The veteran festival organiser's assertion that these adaptations make Tatar culture 'stronger, because it survives here' directly challenges the notion that cultural change necessarily equates to assimilation.

This complex picture suggests that what is often labelled 'voluntary assimilation' might more accurately be described as strategic integration: a process through which Tatars selectively adopt certain aspects of Uzbek culture whilst consciously maintaining or even strengthening other markers of 'Tatar identity'. This perspective recognises both the structural constraints shaping individual choices and the creative agency exercised by community members in negotiating their cultural positioning.

Comparative perspectives on Tatar diaspora identity

Whilst this study focuses specifically on Tashkent, preliminary comparative research suggests both similarities and differences in identity maintenance strategies across Central Asian Tatar communities. In Almaty, Kazakhstan, where Tatars constitute an even smaller proportion of the population, similar patterns of cultural identity compensation are evident, though with greater emphasis on maintaining Russian-language competence as a marker of distinctiveness from the Kazakh majority (Sakurama-Nakamura, 2024b).

These preliminary observations suggest that whilst cultural identity compensation may be a widespread strategy amongst Central Asian Tatar communities, its specific manifestations vary according to local political contexts, demographic compositions, and the particular relationships between minority and majority cultures. The Tashkent case may thus represent one variant within a broader pattern of creative adaptation rather than a unique local phenomenon.

Identity as analytical category: limitations and possibilities

Building on our earlier discussion of the conceptual challenges in using collective identity as an analytical framework, our ethnographic findings offer important insights into both the limitations and continuing relevance of identity-based approaches. Throughout our research, we encountered numerous instances where the concept of 'Tatar identity' simultaneously illuminated and obscured the complexity of lived experience.

The limitations of identity talk became particularly evident in our conversations with individuals from mixed marriages or those who had spent significant portions of their lives outside Tashkent. Kamil (b. 1989, interviewed on 20 March 2018), whose father is Tatar and mother Uzbek, expressed frustration with being asked to define his identity:

> Sometimes I feel like I'm supposed to choose.. am I Tatar or Uzbek? But my life doesn't work that way. With my father's family, I participate in all the Tatar traditions. With my mother's family, I'm equally at home in Uzbek ways. Why should I have to pick one identity?

His experience highlights how identity frameworks can impose artificial boundaries on complex, fluid identifications.

Similarly, Elvira (b. 1978, interviewed on 13 March 2023), who spent a decade working in Moscow before returning to Tashkent, noted the contextual nature of her self-identification:

> In Moscow, I was definitely the Tatar from Uzbekistan, doubly foreign. Back here, sometimes I'm too Russian in my mannerisms. These labels shift depending on where I am and who I'm with. Is that really "identity" in the way scholars talk about it?

Her question points to the inadequacy of static identity categories for capturing the dynamic, relational nature of identification processes.

Despite these limitations, our research also revealed the enduring significance of 'Tatar identity' as a framework through which community members make sense of their experiences and practices. When Anis describes Tatar cooking practices as *'speaking stomach',* he is explicitly connecting these embodied practices to a collective sense of who Tatars are. Similarly, when parents choose distinctly Tatar names for their children, they are making deliberate investments in what they understand as 'Tatar identity', even as they may simultaneously question or reconfigure what such identity entails.

What emerges from our ethnographic data is a more nuanced approach to identity: one that recognises its constructed, contested nature whilst acknowledging its continued significance as a framework for social action and self-understanding. This approach aligns with what Hall (1996: 4) describes as understanding identities as 'the points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us'. The key insight is that such attachments are indeed temporary and contingent rather than fixed or essential, yet they nevertheless constitute important sites of meaning-making and collective identification.

Our focus on authenticity negotiation further illuminates this dynamic understanding of identity. When Tashkent Tatars debate what counts as authentically Tatar, whether it requires language proficiency, adherence to traditional practices, or can accommodate strategic adaptations, they are actively participating in the construction of 'Tatar identity' rather than simply expressing or abandoning a predetermined identity. These negotiations demonstrate how identity operates not as a fixed property that individuals possess but as an ongoing process of identification in which they participate.

This processual understanding of identity helps explain why, despite its analytical limitations, the concept of 'Tatar identity' remains valuable for understanding the experiences of the Tashkent Tatar community. By focusing on identity as something that people do rather than something they have, we can avoid the reification of ethnic categories whilst still recognising the significant role that identification processes play in shaping social life and cultural practice.

Theoretical implications

The ethnographic insights from the Tashkent Tatar community offer significant theoretical contributions to our understanding of diaspora identity, language

shift, and authenticity. By examining how identity markers are reconfigured rather than simply abandoned, we move beyond binary frameworks that position ethnic minorities as either preserving traditional culture or assimilating into majority society.

The concept of cultural identity compensation extends existing theoretical approaches to language shift by highlighting the specific mechanisms through which ethnic identity persists despite declining language use. Whilst previous scholarship has recognised that ethnic identity can survive language loss (Fishman, 1991; Smolicz, 1981), our research demonstrates the active processes through which identity markers are reorganised rather than simply eroded. This perspective challenges linear models of language shift that assume the inevitable progression from bilingualism to monolingualism and eventual assimilation. Instead, we observe what might be termed selective integration: the strategic adoption of certain aspects of majority culture (particularly language) whilst consciously maintaining or even intensifying other markers of ethnic distinctiveness.

Our findings on polycentric authenticity contribute to ongoing theoretical discussions about the nature of authenticity itself. By demonstrating how diaspora communities function as distinct centres of cultural authority rather than merely reproducing homeland norms, we challenge centralised models of diaspora identity that position the homeland as the sole arbiter of authenticity. This perspective aligns with theoretical work questioning essentialist notions of authenticity (Coupland, 2003; Woolard, 2016) but extends this critique by specifically examining how authenticity is negotiated across multiple centres in diaspora contexts. The concept of polycentric authenticity provides a framework for understanding how diaspora communities actively participate in defining what counts as 'authentic' rather than simply preserving or abandoning predetermined cultural forms.

The generational variations in authenticity ideologies we observed contribute to theories of cultural transmission in diaspora contexts. Rather than viewing younger generations as simply less 'authentic' versions of their elders, our research demonstrates how different cohorts develop distinct approaches to authenticity itself. This perspective resonates with Mannheim's (1952) concept of generational consciousness but extends it by examining how different generations not only experience cultural change differently but actively construct competing frameworks for evaluating cultural authenticity. This approach helps explain the persistence of ethnic identity across generations despite significant changes in its substantive content.

Finally, our critique of voluntary assimilation narratives has implications for how we theorise ethnic identity in contexts of unequal power relations. By highlighting both the structural constraints shaping apparent choices and the creative agency exercised by minority communities, we move beyond simplistic voluntaristic frameworks that obscure power dynamics. This perspective aligns with Brubaker's (2004) critique of 'groupism' by recognising ethnicity not as a static property of bounded groups but as a dynamic process of identification that operates differently across contexts and over time.

These theoretical contributions collectively suggest the need for more nuanced approaches to diaspora identity, approaches that recognise the creative processes through which ethnic distinctiveness is maintained even as its substantive content is transformed. By focusing on how authenticity is negotiated rather than simply preserved or abandoned, we gain insight into the complex ways diaspora communities sustain meaningful ethnic identities amid changing socio-political circumstances.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Tashkent Tatars maintain distinct ethnic identity through sophisticated processes of cultural identity compensation rather than simple assimilation. When heritage language use declines, the community strategically invests heightened significance in culinary practices, personal naming traditions, and adapted festivals. This represents creative reconfiguration rather than cultural erosion.

The concept of polycentric authenticity emerges from our ethnographic findings. Tashkent Tatars function as an independent centre of cultural authority, actively defining what constitutes 'authentic' Tatarness in their local context rather than merely reproducing Kazan norms. When community members incorporate Uzbek elements into traditional celebrations or modify recipes with local ingredients, they are not abandoning 'Tatar identity' but reconstructing it to ensure continued relevance.

Our research reveals multiple, coexisting authenticities within the community itself. Different generations employ fundamentally different frameworks for evaluating genuine Tatarness; older speakers emphasising language proficiency whilst younger members privilege visual markers of cultural distinctiveness. This multiplicity demonstrates the dynamic, negotiated nature of ethnic identity, continuously reconstructed through interaction rather than inherited as fixed traits.

These findings challenge conventional narratives of voluntary assimilation. What appears superficially as cultural loss reveals itself through careful ethnographic observation to be creative adaptation. The mother who prepares traditional foods whilst narrating family history in Uzbek, parents who choose distinctly Tatar names despite speaking primarily Uzbek, and youth who blend Tatar and Uzbek elements in festivals all demonstrate the creative agency through which diaspora communities simultaneously preserve and transform collective distinctiveness.

These insights suggest moving beyond binary frameworks of preservation versus loss to examine the creative dimensions of cultural change. The study highlights how authenticity is negotiated across multiple sites rather than emanating from a single centre of cultural authority. Most importantly, it demonstrates the need to acknowledge the creative agency exercised by diaspora communities themselves as they navigate between maintaining distinctive identity and adapting to changing circumstances.

In this light, the Tashkent Tatars emerge not as a fading remnant of a homeland population, but as vibrant custodians of a living, breathing culture that continues to evolve and flourish. Their story reminds us that identity is not a museum piece

to be preserved unchanged, but rather a dynamic tapestry woven from threads of memory, adaptation, and hope. As grandmother Mariam kneads dough whilst sharing stories with her granddaughter, or as young Liliya discovers her heritage through YouTube tutorials, we witness the profound human capacity to create meaning and belonging across generations and borders. These experiences show us that home is not merely a place on a map, but something we carry within ourselves and recreate wherever we find ourselves, a testament to the enduring power of human resilience and creativity.

Ethical Commission Approval

This study involving human participants has completed and fulfilled the ethical guidelines requirements. The participants provided written informed consent before taking part in the study and were informed about its objectives.

Conflict of Interest Statement

There is no conflict of interest with any institution or person within the scope of this study.

REFERENCES

Alba, R. (1990). *Ethnic identity: The transformation of White America*. Yale University Press.

Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference*. Little, Brown.

Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology*, *46*(1), 5–34.

Bhabha, H. K. (1996). Unsatisfied: Notes on vernacular cosmopolitanism. In L. Garcia-Moreno & P. C. Pfeiffer (Eds.), *Text and nation: Cross-disciplinary essays on cultural and national identities* (191–207). Camden House.

Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, J., & Varis, P. (2013). Enough is enough: The heuristics of authenticity in superdiversity. In J. Duarte & I. Gogolin (Eds.), *Linguistic superdiversity in urban areas: Research approaches* (143–159). John Benjamins.

Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Polity Press.

Brubaker, R. (2004). *Ethnicity without groups*. Harvard University Press.

Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond "identity". *Theory and Society*, *29*(1), 1–47.

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, *7*(4–5), 585–614.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, *9*(3), 302–338.

Coupland, N. (2003). Sociolinguistic authenticities. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *7*(3), 417–431.

Edgar, A. (2004). *Tribal nation: The making of Soviet Turkmenistan*. Princeton University Press.

Finke, P. (2014). *Variations on Uzbek identity: Strategic choices, cognitive schemas and political constraints in identification processes*. Berghahn Books.

Fishman, J. A. (1991). *Reversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages*. Multilingual Matters.

Gabdraxmanova, G., & Sagdieva, E. (2019). Tatary sovremennogo Taškenta: ètničeskaja identičnostʹ v kontekste socialʹnyx transformacij. *Ètnografičeskoe obozrenie*, *1*, 79–96.

Gal, S. (1979). *Language shift: Social determinants of linguistic change in bilingual Austria*. Academic Press.

Gal, S., & Irvine, J. (1995). The boundaries of languages and disciplines: How ideologies construct difference. *Social Research*, *62*(4), 967–1001.

Hall, S. (1996). Introduction: Who needs identity? In S. Hall & P. du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of cultural identity* (1–17). Sage.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Handler, R. (1986). Authenticity. *Anthropology Today*, *2*(1), 2–4.

Hobsbawm, E., & Ranger, T. (Eds.). (1983). *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge University Press.

Jenkins, R. (2008). *Rethinking ethnicity* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Khalid, A. (2007). *Islam after communism: Religion and politics in Central Asia*. University of California Press.

Lockwood, W., & Lockwood, Y. (2000). Continuity and adaptation in Arab American foodways. In N. Abraham & A. Shryock (Eds.), *Arab Detroit: From margin to mainstream* (515–549). Wayne State University Press.

Mannheim, K. (1952). The problem of generations. In P. Kecskemeti (Ed.), *Essays on the sociology of knowledge* (276–322). Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Martin, T. (2001). *The affirmative action empire: Nations and nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939*. Cornell University Press.

Meek, B. A. (2010). *We are our language: An ethnography of language revitalization in a Northern Athabaskan community*. University of Arizona Press.

Mintz, S. W., & Du Bois, C. M. (2002). The anthropology of food and eating. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *31*, 99–119.

Okamura, J. (1981). Situational ethnicity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *4*(4), 452–465.

Omelicheva, M. (2011). Islam in Kazakhstan: A survey of contemporary trends and sources of securitization. *Central Asian Survey*, *30*(2), 243–256.

Sakurama-Nakamura, M. (2024a). La compensation identitaire culturelle: Le cas des Tatars de Tachkent dans l'Ouzbékistan post-soviétique. *Melius: Journal of Narrative and Language Studies*, *3*(1), 1–9.

Sakurama-Nakamura, M. (2024b). Redefining home: Adaptive transnationalism in the migration of Tatar women from Russia to Kazakhstan. *Journal of Migration and Political Studies*, *2*(2), 97–122.

Sakurama-Nakamura, M. (2025). Negotiating polycentric authenticity: Dynamics of language and cultural inheritance in the Tatar community in Uzbekistan. *Gengo Seisaku [Language Policy]*, *21*(1), 1–20. [Originally written in Japanese: 櫻間瑞希. (2025). 多中心的真正性の交渉ーウズベキスタンのタタール人コミュニテにおける言語・文化継承の動態. 『言語政策』, *21*(1), 1–20.]

Shaw, R., & Stewart, C. (1994). Introduction: problematizing syncretism. *Syncretism/ anti-syncretism: The politics of religious synthesis*, 1-26.

Silverstein, M. (1998). Contemporary transformations of local linguistic communities. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *27*, 401–426.

Smolicz, J. (1981). Core values and cultural identity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *4*(1), 75–90.

Sutton, D. (2001). *Remembrance of repasts: An anthropology of food and memory*. Berg.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (33–47). Brooks/Cole.

Urazmanova, R. (2001). *Sovremennye obriady tatarskogo naroda: Istoriko-ėtnograficheskoe issledovanie*. Tatarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo.

Vertovec, S. (1999). Conceiving and researching transnationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *22*(2), 447–462.

Waters, M. (1990). *Ethnic options: Choosing identities in America*. University of California Press.

Werbner, P. (2002). The place which is diaspora: Citizenship, religion and gender in the making of chaordic transnationalism. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *28*(1), 119–133.

Woolard, K. A. (2016). *Singular and plural: Ideologies of linguistic authority in 21st century Catalonia*. Oxford University Press.