

ENTERTAINMENT PRACTICES AND EVERYDAY INTERACTION

UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-1/162-177

Original article

© Ksenia Gurevich

**WOMEN'S GROUP PRACTICES ILLUSTRATED BY
"WOMEN'S CIRCLES": HISTORY, STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS,
LEADERS AND PARTICIPANTS**

This article explores the concept of women's circles — groups created by women to communicate, support each other, and inspire self-development in various aspects of life. The study is based on the analysis of the results of surveys, digital research and interviews with the participants of women's circles. One of the main conclusions of the article is that women in general join women's circles hoping to improve their emotional and spiritual well-being. Participation in women's circles allows them to share their emotions, receive support and guidance from other participants, and develop their personal qualities and skills. In addition, some women join women's circles in an attempt to advance in their careers or to improve their personal lives. Within women's circles, they can receive not only practical help and advice, but also support and advice of other women who are in a similar situation. Thus, women's circles can serve not only to improve emotional and spiritual well-being, but also to achieve specific goals in various areas of life.

Keywords: *women's circle, feminism, woman practices, woman cooperation, New Age*

Author Info: Gurevich, Ksenia V. — Ph.D. student, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: k.v.gurevich@gmail.com ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7303-9270>

For citation: Gurevich, K. V. 2024. Women's Group Practices Illustrated by "Women's Circles": History, Structure, Functions, Leaders and Participants. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 1: 162–177.

References

- Andreeva, L. Yu. 2007. Stanovlenie professional'noi identichnosti lichnosti v protsesse obrazovaniya [Formation of Professional Identity of a Person in the Process of Education] In *Vospitanie dukhovnosti: tsennostnye osnovy identichnosti lichnosti. Materialy Vserossiiskoi nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii (19–20 dekabria 2007)* [The Wealth of the Spirituality: Value Bases of Personal Identity. Proceedings of the All-Russian scientific-practical Conference (December 19–20, 2007)], ed. by L. Yu. Andreeva. Ekaterinburg: Izdatel'stvo RGPPU. 354–357.
- Castro, M. 2020. Introducing the Red Tent: A Discursive and Critically Hopeful Exploration of Women's Circles in a Neoliberal Postfeminist Context. *Sociological Research Online* 25 (3): 386–404.
- Chomat, A. M., A. I. Menchú, N. Andersson, et al. 2019. Women's Circles as a Culturally Safe Psychosocial Intervention in Guatemalan Indigenous Communities: a Community-Led Pilot Randomised Trial. *BMC Women's Health* 19(53). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-019-0744-z>

- Del la Terre, R. 2018. The Feminization of Red Path: A Neo-pagan Network of Female Sacralization. *International Journal of Latin American Religions* 2: 234–247.
- Ivanova, E. V. 2018. Novaya zhenskaya religioznost': poiski obraza bogini v «religiyakh zhizni» [New Female Religiosity: The Search for the Image of the Goddess in the "Religions of life"] In *90 let Viktorovu Vladimiru Petrovichu: materialy kruglogo stola «Religiya i religiovedenie na Urale»* [90 years of Viktorov Vladimir Petrovich: Proceedings of the Round Table "Religion and Religious Studies in the Urals"], ed. by A. V. Osintsev, E. V. Melnikova. Moscow: Delovaya kniga. 20–23.
- Ivanova, E. V. and E. V. Melnikova, 2022. Obshcherossiiskaya grazhdanskaya identichnost' i vektory novoi dukhovnosti [All-Russian Civic Identity and Vectors of New Spirituality] *Evrasiiskii yuridicheskii zhurnal* 7(170): 490–495.
- Kalugina, I. V. 2021. Bytovanie leksemy «dukhovnost'» v russkom yazyke [The Existence of the Lexeme "Spirituality" in Russian] *Filologicheskie nauki. Voprosy teorii i praktiki* 6: 1732–1736. <https://doi.org/10.30853/phil210274>
- Kuznetsova, O. V. 2022. *Fenomen dukhovnykh praktik v sovremennoi Rossii: organizatsionnye formy i osnovnye uchastniki* [The Phenomenon of Spiritual Practices in Modern Russia: Organizational Forms and Main Participants]. Ph.D. diss. Ural Institute of Humanities of Ural Federal University. Ekaterinburg. 254 p.
- Kuznetsova, O. V. 2020. Predstavleniya o zhenshchine, zhenstvennosti rossiiskikh uchastnits "zhenskikh praktik" [Ideas about a Woman, Femininity of Russian Participants of "Women's Practices"] *Religiovedcheskie issledovaniya* 1: 7–21.
- Kuznetsova, O. V. and N. S. Smolina, 2020. Religiya i sverkh'estestvennoe v predstavleniyakh uchastnits zhenskikh praktik [Religion and the Supernatural in the Views of the Participants of Women's Practices] *Izvestiya Irkutskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Seriya: Politologiya. Religiovedenie* 31: 80–90.
- Lewis, R., E. Sharp, J. Remnant, et al. 2015. 'Safe Spaces': Experiences of Feminist Women-only Space. *Sociological Research Online* 20(4): 1–14.
- Longman, C. 2018. Women's Circles and the Rise of the New Feminine: Reclaiming Sisterhood, Spirituality, and Wellbeing. *Religions* 9 (1). <https://doi.org/10.3390/re19010009>
- Morales, M. 2019. Feminine Spiritualities: The Case of Women's Circles. *Realidades socioculturales* 2(3): 144–162.
- Nelson, M. 1990. *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives*. New York: State University of New York Press. 336 p.
- Orekhanov, G. and K. A. Kolkunova. 2017. "Dukhovnost'". *Diskurs i real'nost'* [Spirituality. Discourse and Reality] Moscow: Izdatel'stvo PSTGU. 152 p.
- Rottenberg, C. 2014. The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism. *Cultural Studies* 28(3): 418–437.
- Stepanova, E. A. 2011. Novaya dukhovnost' i starye religii [New Spirituality and Old Religions] *Religiovedenie* 1: 127–134.
- Williams, R. 2014. Eat, Pray, Love: Producing the Female Neoliberal Spiritual Subject. *The Journal of Popular Culture* 47(3): 613–633.