

БЕЗОПАСНОСТЬ И ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ В СТРАНАХ АЗИАТСКОГО РЕГИОНА

SECURITY AND INTEGRATION IN ASIAN REGION

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THE ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION OF RUSSIANS IN MONO- AND POLYETHNIC REGIONS: REPERTORY GRID ANALYSIS



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The identity of ethnic Russians has been shaped in co-habitation with various ethnic groups and implementation of nation-building projects, where they always had special status and mission. Its peculiarities are important for understanding the actual inter-ethnic relations in Russia and perspectives of their development. A study based on the of repertory grid approach was conducted in two border regions with different ethnic composition — the Altai territory (mono-ethnic region, n = 543, 16 to 75 years) and the Republic of Altai (poly-ethnic region, n = 354, 16 to 75 years). It was found, that the most important characteristics for identification

and evaluation of ethnic groups are related to security, social and economic position, mental similarity. In mono-ethnic region the image of Russians is constructed on the base of positive stereotypes and opposed to ethnic groups, perceived as different. In poly-ethnic region the self-perception is more differentiated, the ethnic identity acquires additional traits, bringing Russians and cohabitating groups closer. Our study has implications for theories of social identity and interethnic cooperation, as well as for the literature on national policy under cultural and ethnic diversity. It could be used for replication in the repertory grid analysis aimed at ethnic identity issues.

Keywords: *ethnic identification; social perception; national mentality; mono- and polyethnic regions of Russia; repertory grid analysis*

ЭТНИЧЕСКАЯ ИДЕНТИФИКАЦИЯ РУССКИХ В МОНО- И ПОЛИЭТНИЧЕСКИХ РЕГИОНАХ: АНАЛИЗ РЕПЕРТУАРНЫХ РЕШЕТОК



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Идентичность этнических русских формировалась и оттачивалась в процессе длительного совместного проживания с другими народами и реализации разнообразных нацестроительных проектов, где они всегда имели особый статус и миссию. Изучение содержания и особенностей проявления этнической идентичности русского населения важно для оценки состояния актуальных межнациональных отношений в современной России и перспектив их дальнейшего развития. Исследование, результаты которого представлены в статье, проведено среди населения 16–75 лет в двух приграничных регионах России с различным этническим составом: в Алтайском крае (моноэтнический регион, $n = 543$) и в Республике Алтай (полиэтнический регион, $n = 354$) с помощью методов анализа репертуарных решеток, позволяющих комплексно исследовать этническую идентификацию как процесс сопоставления «своей» и «чужой» национальности. Было выявлено, что наиболее важные характеристики идентичности и оценки этнических групп связаны с физической и ментальной схожестью, безопасностью взаимодействия, социально-экономическими характеристиками. В моноэтническом ре-

гионе образ русских конструируется на основе позитивных автостереотипов и противопоставляется этническим группам, воспринимаемым как «другие». В полиэтническом регионе самовосприятие русских более дифференцировано, а этнический образ приобретает дополнительные черты, сближающие русских с другими проживающими в регионе этносами. Полученные выводы способствуют развитию исследовательского направления, предметом которого выступают этническая идентичность и межэтническая кооперация, реализация государственной национальной политики в условиях этнического и культурного разнообразия, а методика и процедуры обработки данных являются малоизвестными для российских ученых и могут быть полезны для исследователей, занимающихся этнической проблематикой.

Ключевые слова: этническая идентификация, национальный менталитет, моно- и полиэтнические регионы России, анализ репертуарных решеток

1. Introduction

Regardless of increasing globalization and universalization of culture, ethnicity remains very important, becoming in a crisis “an emergency team” for every person (Verkuyten, 2004). International conflicts, ethnically motivated violence and social inequality reinforced the significance of ethnic factor in social relations, while commodification of ethnicity had turned elements of national (ethnic) culture into objects of marketing and corporate management (Holton, 2011).

Studied in a multitude of disciplines, ethnic identity appears from the perspective of social psychology as a double result of cognitive-emotional process: on the one hand it supposes awareness of being a part of an ethnos, sense of similarity with some ethnic entity, on the other hand — a cultural distinction, separation from “others” (Soldatova, 1998; Stefanenko, 2009). It is generally acknowledged that the formation and affirmation of ethnic “Self” is based on categorization, differentiation and comparison of “own” and “alien” ethnic groups (Tajfel and Turner, 2004; Tajfel, 2010) and affected by differences in mentality and world outlook (Kagan and Dillon, 2001; Rohn, 2011). The content of ethnic identity includes mutually shared representations about common origin, culture, history, religious beliefs, customs and traditions, language and statehood of peoples (De Vos and Romanucci-Ross, 1995; Evans et al., 2010; Eriksen, 2012).

These assumptions don't exhaust all facets of ethnic identity, which is supposed to be complicated and multidimensional phenomenon. In ethnic psychology there is a tradition to highlight its three basic components: cognitive, responsible for ethno-differentiation, content of ethnic stereotypes and representations about ethnic groups; affective — reflecting emotions and sense of belonging to given ethnic group, and behavioral, displaying in ethno-cultural practices and community events (Cohen, 2004; Phinney and Ong, 2007; Stefanenko, 2009). Most scholars agree that these components are closely interrelated, and their weight depends on time and context (Phinney, 2003). Nevertheless, over last decades there has been a depart from this classic threefold structure. The reasoning about “fluidity” and “flexibility”, interdependence of local/ethnic and global/universal has become inte-

gral part of scientific discourse about ethnic identity, which has been described as having “double bottom”, external and internal, constant and situational components (Lurye, 1994; Paredes, 2007; Hakenbeck, 2007; Matute-Bianchi, 2008; Verkuyten, 2009).

Given the cultural, race and language diversity of most contemporary societies, recent research on ethnic identity is largely focused on mechanisms of preservation and transformation of ethnicity, ethnic borders and landscapes, efficient integration of minority groups into one civic nation, achievement of ethnic equality and equity. It explores dual (hyphenated) and multiple identities and allegiances, tries to establish links between sense of ethnic identity and different social contexts (Xu, Farver & Pauker, 2015; Van de Vijver, Blommaert, Gkoumasi & Stogianni, 2015). Thus, ethnic identity is treated as factor increasing self-worth, resilience to discrimination and prejudice (Romero et al., 2014; Brittian et al., 2015; Leen et al., 2015; Ikram et al., 2016; Gummadam, Pittman, & Ioffe, 2016), is positively associated with life satisfaction, support for political rights and collective action (Stronge et al. 2016), predicts health and lifestyle behaviors (Moise et al. 2018). Besides, it was found that the salience of ethnic identity is determined by characteristics of socio-cultural environment: it is reduced under cultural conformity and intensified under cultural distinction (Bisin et al. 2016).

The studies on the identity of ethnic Russians have undergone considerable development in the late 1990s, when many efforts were undertaken to reflect changes that had occurred in the minds of people after the collapse of the USSR and subsequent ethno-social transformations. Seminal works by K. Kasyanova (1994), Z. Sikevich (1996); P. Valynkin (1997), P. Pochebut (1997), O. Chernova (1997), N. Lebedeva (1997), E. Shestopal, G. Britskiy, M. Denisenko (1999) have shown the growth of national consciousness of Russians, depicted traits of their national character, explored the ethnic identity along with basic values, life goals and orientations.

It was revealed that Russian ethnic conscience, mass and individual, is very contradictory, highly susceptible to “sharp bends” of national history (Sykevich, 1996). Typical portrait of Russians (without considering age, gender, settlement and other differences) includes such positive characteristics as kindness, simplicity, straightforwardness, resignation, stamina and industry; the traditional negative traits are carelessness, laziness, lack of initiative, impertinence, bad manners. The self-representation is often guided by the need to ward off external treats (real or imagined), hence, the importance of such qualities as peacefulness, courage and fearlessness (Chernova, 1997). The mentality of Russians has collectivist value-based orientations, manifested in hospitality, mutual aid, credulity, empathy and altruism, fatalism and belief in the best future, that generates unfounded optimism, irresponsibility and laxness, mobilization of all life forces to achieve meaningful goals (Pochebut, 1997).

It was highlighted that Russians are tolerant towards “others”, their individuality is socially complemented (Sykevich, 1996). Slav peoples, — Ukrainian, Belarussian, Slovak, Serbian, Bulgar, Czech, — are ethnic groups, usually perceived as culturally, linguistically and spiritually similar, whereas negative hetero-stereotypes are centered on Muslim and Caucasian peoples (Shestopal, Britskiy, & Denisenko 1999). Special attention was paid to the analysis of differences in manifestation of ethnic identity of Russians in national republics in comparison with so called “Russian core” regions, showing that in minority posi-

tion it becomes more emphasized but less oriented towards ethnic solidarity than identity of people from titular ethnic groups (Drobizheva, 2010).

More recent findings on Russian identity have revealed its sustainability and strong relationship with other kinds of macro-social identities — national-civic, state or civilizational (Pantin, 2008; Kondakov, Sokolov, & Khrenov 2011; Zhade, 2014; Drobizheva and Ryzhova 2015). It was shown that self-perception of Russians is determined by many factors, reflecting national policy and nation-building projects: historically rooted poly-ethnic and poly-confessional character of population structure; numerical superiority of the Russian ethnos over other ethnic groups; great influence and spread of the Russian language and the Russian culture (Sikevich, 2014, Ryzhova, 2016).

Despite significant volume of research, the Russian identity is usually studied separately (who Russians are and how they perceive themselves), or in minority position (Russians in Buryatia, Russians in the Caucasus) (see, for example, Shestopal, Britskiy, & Denisenko 1999; Denisova and Ulanov 2003; Volkogonova and Titarenko, 2010), auto-stereotypes of Russians are compared with hetero-stereotypes of concrete ethnic group (Ukrainians, Armenians, Ossetians etc., see, for example, Allik, Alyamkina, & Meshcheryakov 2015; Gritsenko, Brazhnik, & Orlova 2016; Novikova, Ogannisyan, & Shlyakhta 2017). Meanwhile, it seems appropriate to combine the analysis of self-identification of Russians along with perception of multiple ethnic “others”, neighboring or distant, and thereby to promote a better understanding of their self-positioning on the Russian and global stage. There is a parallel need to compare identities of Russian at regional level, justified by considerable differences in ethnic composition, caused inter alia by growth of international and internal migration, to provide empirical evidence about changes in ethnic self-consciousness of Russians and its current state.

Using the foregoing as a starting point, this article discusses opportunities of psychosemantic methodology and repertory grid techniques for the analysis of ethnic identity. On the basis of the results of psychosemantic experiments in two regions of Russia with different ethnic composition and administrative-territorial status it presents an analysis of stable and changed features of the Russian identity.

2. Materials and Methods

Ethnic identity is a multidisciplinary and a multidimensional concept, measured by means of explicit, focused on recognized feelings and thoughts, and implicit methods, permitting to disclose its unconscious components. The most authoritative measures of ethnic identity include the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) (Phinney, 1992; Yoon, 2011), the Ethnic Identity Scale, EIS (Santos and Umaña-Taylor, 2015), original methods of acculturation by J. Berry and separate questionnaires for single nationalities created on its base (see detailed description and psychometric analysis of such questionnaires in Cokley, 2007; Taras, 2008). Russian scholars not only adapted these methods but also elaborated original instruments, for instance, the scale of express-assessment of feelings, related to ethnic identity (by N.M. Lebedeva), the method of assessment of positivity and indeterminacy of ethnic identity (by A.N. Tatarko and N.M. Lebedeva), the scale-based questionnaire of ethnic identity for children and youngsters (by O.L. Romanova).

Most of above-mentioned methods, despite evident advantages, seem unable to explore attitudinal components of ethnic identity, responsible for self-positioning in the space of possible identifications. Thus, our idea to study the Russian identity interactively, along with other ethnic groups, required referral to theories and methods, allowing to study public conscience in formalized and visually interpretable manner. Thus, experimental psychosemantics was chosen as the general methodological approach (Petrenko, 1988, 2015; Petrenko, Mitina, & Betnikov 2003; Shmelev, 1982), and a modified version of repertory grid analysis — as a practical instrument for its implementation (Fransella, Bell, & Bannister 2004; Jankowicz, 2005). The modification consisted in using supplied constructs instead of elicited, as prescribed in original “idiographic” approach (Kelly, 1955, 2003; Adams-Webber, 1970; Caputi, Viney, Walker, & Crittenden, 2011). These changes make repertory grid analysis close to semantical differential, commonly used in ethnical studies (see examples Morland and Williams, 1969; Grossman, Wirt, & Davids 1985; Berberyan and Berberyan, 2016) for opportunities to receive standardized results, make groups comparisons and generalizations, convenient for large-scale surveys.

The list of evaluated elements, selected on the bases of focus groups with experts and target population, included seven meta-ethnic groups, describing ethnic compositions of Russia, — “Russians”, “European peoples”, “Asian peoples”, “Slav peoples”, “Caucasian peoples”, “Central Asian peoples”, “Small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East”, the group of “Migrants” representing abstract transnational entity with strong ethnic connotations and two reference groups — “Friendly people” and “Hostile people”. The list of constructs consisted of 22 bipolar seven-point scales: Own / alien; Similar / different; Distant/close; Lazy, goes with the flow/hard-working, purposeful; Friendly / hostile; Cunning, quick-witted / naïve, credulous; Practical, rational / emotional, impulsive; Indifferent, disinterested / compassionate, empathic; Aggressive, warrior / peaceable; Unpleasant / inspiring sympathy and respect; Conservator, traditionalist/supporting progress and innovations; Individualist, puts personal interests before public interests / Collectivist, puts public interests before personal goals; Intolerant / tolerant towards other opinions and ways of life; Aspires to superiority, exceptionality/equality, justice; Uncivilized, ignorant / Well-educated, intelligent, culturally developed; Responsible, disciplined / easygoing, hopes for the best; Honest, decent / insincere, deceitful; Brave/ cowardly; Free, independent / dependent; (Not) arousing envy; Poor / rich; Take high / low position on the social ladder. The choice of elements and descriptors was justified by the need to link our data with previous research, described above, and specific goals and tasks of the scientific project. All questionnaires were administered during face-to-face interviews at respondent’s home.

The study was conducted in 2017-2018 in the Altai territory — a region with dominant Russian population — about 94% according to the all-Russian Census 2010 (a mono-ethnic region) and in the Republic of Altai, where significant number of population was represented by Turkic peoples, including Altaians (among them Telengits, Tubalars, Chelkans), Kazakhs, Kumandins and other ethnic groups, proportion of Russians was about 56% (a poly-ethnic region). The quota sampling and random walking procedures were used to recruit respondents. In the Altai territory the sample consisted of 543 respondents,

living in Barnaul, Kytmanovsky, Soloneshensky and Ust-Pristansky districts. In the Republic of Altai, the sample contained 354 people, interviewed in Gorno-Altaysk, Mayminsky, Chemalsky, Choysky and Shebalinsky districts. Gender and age structure of sample was similar in two regions (χ^2 test, $p > 0.05$) (table 1). All respondents have identified themselves as ethnic Russians, based on the classic question “What nationality do you belong to?”

Table 1.

Gender and age distribution of respondents in two regions

Sex/Age	16–29 years	30–49 years	50–75 years	Total
Altai territory				
Male	72	93	72	237
Female	84	90	132	306
Total	156	183	204	543
Republic of Altai				
Male	60	69	51	180
Female	42	63	69	174
Total	102	132	120	354

Preliminary analysis of relative frequencies, conducted on three-dimensional data (respondents, elements and descriptors) was followed by MANOVA and pairwise comparisons to depict general features of ethnic identity of Russians in two regions and important socio-demographic factors, determining differences in evaluations.

On the next step, hierarchical cluster and factor analysis were performed on aggregated matrices to find out similarities/dissimilarities in evaluated positions and latent factors, governing the ethnic categorization and differentiation. The “Pvclust” algorithm and multiscale bootstrap resampling were used to reveal significant clusters (Suzuki and Shimodaira, 2006). The factorial congruence was measured by the Tucker’s congruence coefficient (φ). Then, based on singular-value-decomposition method a semantic space was built for each region to visualize interrelations among “Russians” and other groups in the light of the meaning of the two first factors and significant descriptors. All calculations and visualization were made using IBM SPSS 23.0 and R environment, especially the package “OpenRepGrid” (Heckmann, 2014).

3. Results

3.1. Auto-stereotypes of Russians in two regions

Relative frequency analysis has shown that most important characteristics attributed to Russians — “similar” (82% of high values), “close” (80%) and “own” (70%) constituted the identification triad and indicated that almost all respondents felt themselves not only as formal representatives of their ethnic group, but also had very strong sense

of belonging, their ethnic identity was personally significant. Only few percent possessed negative identity, conflicting with their representations and feelings (table 2).

Auto-stereotypes of Russians included such evaluative characteristics and moral qualities as “inspiring sympathy and respect” (77%), “brave” (67%), “friendly (65%), “compassionate, empathic” (63%), “peaceable” (61%), “free, independent” (58%), “hard-working, purposeful” (54%), “well-educated, intelligent, culturally developed” (51%), “honest, decent” (51%), that was mostly in line with findings of previous studies. Although remaining scales hadn’t more than 50% of high values, it was worth noting, that about 40% of respondents described Russians as tolerant, defending public interests and social justice, supporting progress and innovations, that reflected recent public discourse and sharp debates on the development of civil society and political modernization in Russia (Dorozhkin, 2016).

Several indicators were assessed ambiguously, positive and negative poles were chosen by relatively comparable number of participants, that was indicative of contradictions and ambivalent qualities, co-existing in the self-image of Russians, including gullibility and wiliness, responsibility and carelessness, impulsivity and rationality. Meanwhile, it had no connection with either economic (poverty/ richness) or social (low/high social position) characteristics (less than 10% of high and low values), that reflected substantial changes in the conscience of the Russian population.

Table 2.

Auto-stereotypes of Russians in two regions, merged data, %

Left pole (negative)	Low values (1–2 points)	Middle values (3–5 points)	High values (6–7 points)	Right pole (positive)
Different	1	17	82	Similar
Distant	1	19	80	Close
Unpleasant	0	23	77	Inspiring sympathy and respect
Alien	3	28	70	Own
Cowardly	1	32	67	Brave
Hostile	6	29	65	Friendly
Indifferent, disinterested	0	37	63	Compassionate, empathic
Aggressive, warrior	1	38	61	Peaceable
Dependent	3	39	58	Free, independent
Lazy, goes with the flow	2	45	54	Hard-working, purposeful
Uncivilized, ignorant	1	48	51	Well-educated, intelligent, culturally developed

Left pole (negative)	Low values (1-2 points)	Middle values (3-5 points)	High values (6-7 points)	Right pole (positive)
Insincere, deceitful	3	46	51	Honest, decent
Aspires to superiority, exceptionality	4	50	46	Aspires to equality, justice
Conservator, traditionalist	6	53	41	Supporting progress and innovations
Individualist, puts personal interests before public interests	4	55	41	Collectivist, puts public interests before personal interests
Intolerant	6	58	36	Tolerant
Cunning, quick-witted	11	58	31	Naïve, credulous
Easygoing, hopes for the best	14	60	26	Responsible, disciplined
Practical, rational	17	61	22	Emotional, impulsive
Not arousing envy	39	49	11	Arousing envy
Poor	10	79	11	Rich
Take low social position	9	87	5	Take high social position

A MANOVA analysis, performed on the entirety of scales, revealed statistically significant effects of age, treated as a fixed factor with three levels — “16-29 years”, “30-49 years” and “50 years and more” ($F(22, 241) = 1.77, p = 0.032$ partial $\eta^2 = 0.14$), place of residence — urban or rural ($F(22, 241) = 4.46, p < 0.0005$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.29$) and region ($F(22, 241) = 3.17, p < 0.0005$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.22$).

Follow-up univariate testing and pairwise comparisons have shown that differences in evaluations by age groups were focused on relational descriptors, highlighting nuances of cooperation/confrontation between Russians and other ethnic groups. They included such characteristics as “Peaceable/aggressive, warrior”, “Indifferent/compassionate”, “Inspiring sympathy and respect/unpleasant”, “(Not) arousing envy”. In all cases the oldest group (50+) has given significantly higher assessments than the youngest group (16-29 years), and on the descriptor “(Not) arousing envy” — than the middle age group (30-49 years) (Figures 1 and 2). Thus, while older generations have preserved steadier and more optimistic image of their ethnic “Self”, inherited from soviet identity, where Russian ethnos played a role of “Big brother” and had indisputable authority, representations of youth have become expressively more negative (only in this group Russians were described as “aggressive, warrior” or “unpleasant”), that witnessed about its disorientation in new social and political conditions, the lack of important senses and symbolic vacuum, great influence of contradictory mass-media discourse, shown in works on contemporary identities of the Russian youth (Evgenieva, Selezneva, 2007; Samygin, Vereshchagin, & Belov 2015).

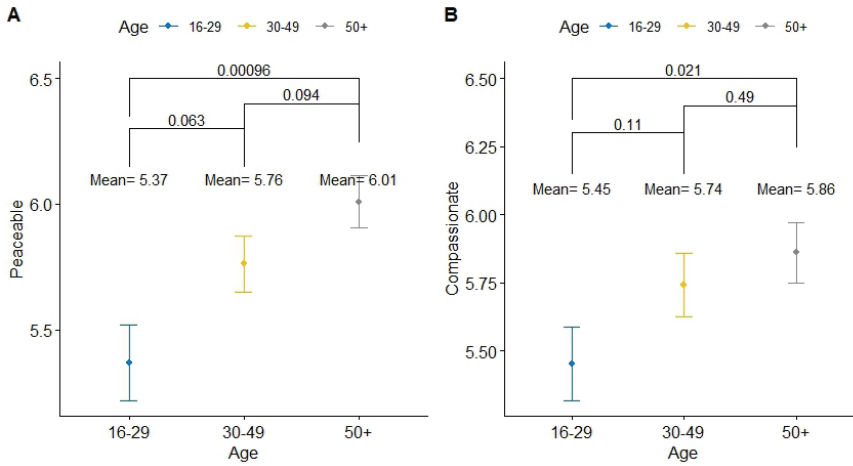


Figure 1 — Pairwise comparisons of means among three age groups for the descriptors “Peaceable” (A) and “Compassionate, empathic” (B), means and p-values of Kruskal-Wallis tests.

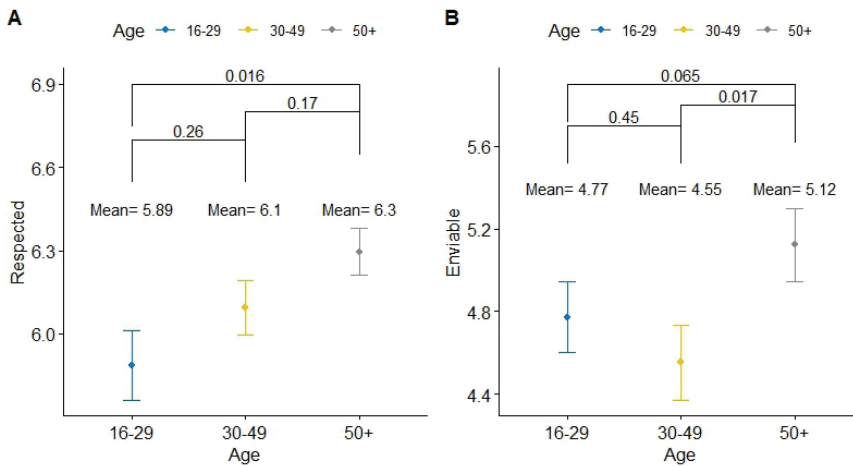


Figure 2 — Pairwise comparisons of means among three age groups for the descriptors “Respected” (A) and “Envious” (B), means and p-values of Kruskal-Wallis tests.

Further analysis by place of residence has revealed that Russians living in rural area had more positive self-image than people from towns: in the group of rural residents assessments were higher on identification criteria (“Own”, “Similar”, “Distant”), evaluative and moral characteristics (“Hard-working”, “Friendly”, “Inspiring sympathy and respect”, “Well-educated, intelligent, culturally developed”, “Cunning, quick-witted”, “Practical, rational”, “Responsible, disciplined”, “Brave”, “Independent”, “Rich”), collectivist orientations, inspiration for progress and innovations. At the same time rural inhabitants were more likely to note that Russians were not envious by other peoples, while for city-dwellers being Russian has meant to be in more favorable position than other ethnic groups (table

3). Hence, the persistent gap between “village” and “town”, inherent for Russia throughout time and even enhancing with active urban modernization, difference in standards of living and life styles have led to differences in contents of ethnic identity, which preserved idealized and more traditional traits in rural area and became more differentiated in urban environment, where social dynamic and inter-ethnic relations are more intense.

Table 3.

Pairwise comparisons of means and confidence intervals for urban and rural areas

Dependent variable (DV)	Mean difference (I-J)	SE	Sig.b	95% CI	
				Lower bound	Upper bound
Own	-0.562	0.145	0.000	-0.847	-0.277
Similar	-0.745	0.155	0.000	-1.050	-0.441
Close	-0.663	0.147	0.000	-0.952	-0.375
Hard-working	-0.524	0.186	0.005	-0.890	-0.159
Friendly	-0.532	0.213	0.013	-0.112	-0.952
Cunning, quick-witted	-0.730	0.223	0.001	-0.292	-1.169
Practical, rational	-0.927	0.229	0.000	-0.476	-1.379
Inspiring sympathy and respect	-0.484	0.139	0.001	-0.757	-0.210
Supporting progress and innovations	-1.015	0.215	0.000	-1.439	-0.591
Collectivist, puts public interests before individual	-0.647	0.215	0.003	-1.070	-0.224
Well-educated, intelligent, culturally developed	-0.666	0.160	0.000	-0.981	-0.352
Responsible, disciplined	-0.710	0.234	0.003	-0.249	-1.170
Brave	-0.561	0.171	0.001	-0.225	-0.896
Independent	-0.979	0.208	0.000	-0.570	-1.387
Not arousing envy	-0.966	0.248	0.000	-1.455	-0.477
Rich	-0.624	0.175	0.000	-0.969	-0.279

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

Ultimately, the results show that, keeping all other things equal, in the Altai territory mono-ethnic region identification was stronger (MD=0.47-0.53 for identification descriptors, $p < 0.01$) and auto-stereotypes were more positive than in the Republic of Altai (poly-ethnic region). In the Altai territory Russians were more frequently described as “well-educated, intelligent, culturally developed” (53.3% of high values against 46.2%, χ^2 ,

$p < 0.05$), “inspiring sympathy and respect” (79.2% and 73.7%, χ^2 , $p < 0.05$), whereas in the Republic of Altai— as more “credulous and naïve” (46.1% of high values vs 22.0% in the Altai territory, χ^2 , $p < 0.05$), “emotional and impulsive” (26.5% and 19.1%, χ^2 , $p < 0.05$) (table 4).

Table 4.

Significant differences between descriptors in two regions

Dependent variable (DV)	Mean difference (MD) (the Altai territory– the Republic of Altai)	SE	Sig. ^b	95% CI ^b	
				Lower bound	Upper bound
Own	0,525	0,145	0,000	0,239	0,811
Similar	0,512	0,155	0,001	0,206	0,817
Close	0,469	0,147	0,002	0,179	0,759
Credulous, naïve	-1,16*	0,223	0,000	-1,606	-0,729
Emotional, impulsive	-0,794	0,229	0,001	-1,245	-0,344
Well-educated, intelligent, culturally developed	0,508	0,160	0,002	0,193	0,823
Inspiring sympathy and respect	0,444	0,139	0,002	0,171	0,717

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

3.2. Russians and “others”: peculiarities of self-categorization and differentiation in the space of meta-ethnic groups

The next step consisted in the analysis of self-evaluations of Russians along with other meta-ethnic entities, permitted to reveal factors, determining commonality in evaluations and depict interrelations among significant characteristics of the Russian identity.

The hierarchical cluster analysis, conducted on the aggregated data from the Altai territory has revealed two clusters, dividing all positions into two major groups — conditional “owns” and “aliens”. The first has united “Russians”, “Slavic peoples”, a reference group of “Friendly people”, and “Small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East”. All others constituted opposite cluster embracing two distinct groups — the first has united Caucasian peoples and the reference category of Hostile people, and the second included “Asians”, “Central Asian peoples” and “Migrants”. European peoples occupied rather remote position and were added to this group at the last steps of agglomeration (Figure 3).

Clusters in the Republic of Altai were significant only at marginal level ($\alpha = 0.9$, Figure 4, marked in blue). The complex Russians — Friendly people — Slavic people remained relevant, but the position of Indigenous peoples has moved into the second cluster where it joined three other groups — Europeans, Asians and Caucasians. Central Asian peoples were identified with Migrants as well, whereas Hostile people took isolated position, hence, none of studied groups was perceived negatively as a real or potential enemy.

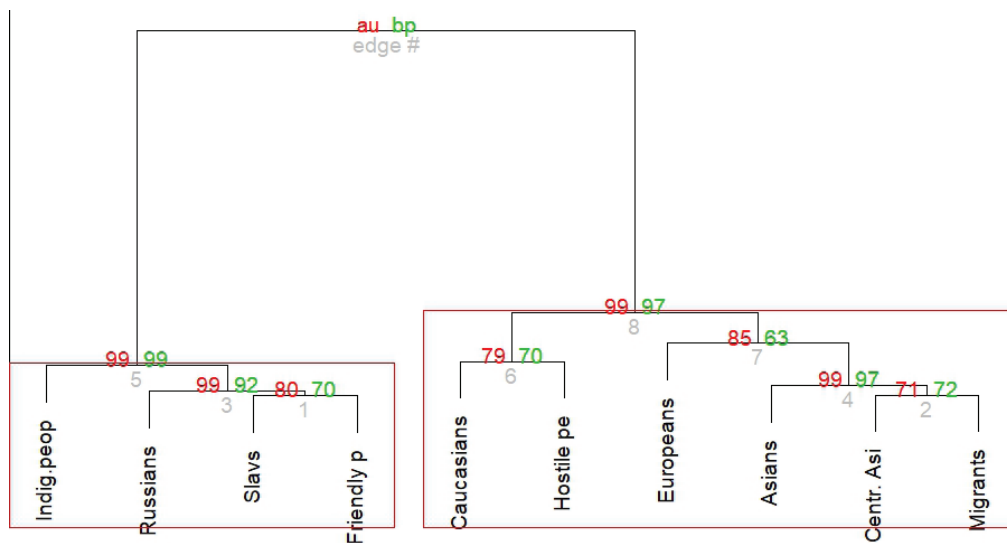


Figure 3 — Results of the hierarchical cluster analysis in the Altai territory (bootstrap probabilities (BP) are shown in green and approximately unbiased (AU) probabilities — in red).

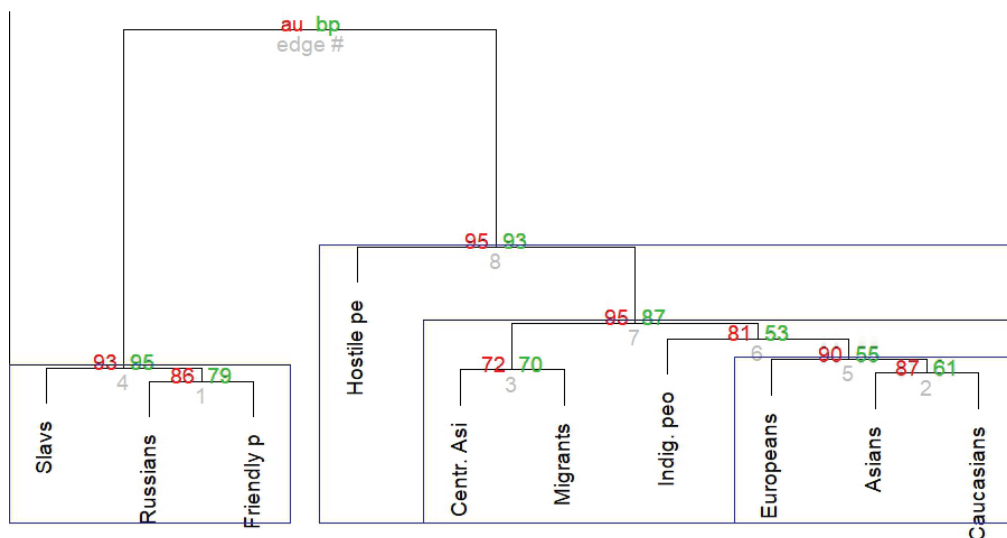


Figure 4 — Results of the hierarchical cluster analysis in the Republic of Altai (bootstrap probabilities (BP) are shown in green and approximately unbiased (AU) probabilities — in red).

The factor analysis conducted in each region (Principal components method with varimax rotation was used) has uncovered three important grounds determining categorization of ethnic groups (in the Altai territory these factors explained 56.6%, 27.7%, and 10.4% of total variance, in the Republic of Altai — 62.7%, 14.0% and 9.9% respectively) (table 5).

The first factor was at 98% congruent in both regions. It included scales (loadings > 0.8), describing moral qualities and aspects of relations (“friendly”, “credulous”, “empathic”, “honest”, “supporting equality and equity”, “tolerant”, “hard-working”), evaluative (“inspiring sympathy and respect”) and identification (“own”, “similar”, “close”) characteristics. It was the factor of the general assessment, determining positive or negative perception of ethnic groups.

The second factor in the Altai territory corresponded mostly to the third factor in the Republic of Altai (Tucker’s $\varphi = 0.75$). Its meaning was based on the descriptors of socio-economic position (“rich”, “high social position”), cultural level (“well-educated”, “intelligent, culturally developed”), mentality and behavior (“support for innovations”, “independence”, “discipline”). The negative pole was defined by the variable “Not arousing envy”.

The third factor (Tucker’s φ 0.68 with the second factor in the Republic of Altai) incorporated oppositions rational/emotional; innovative/traditional; tolerant, liberal/rigorous; responsible, disciplined/easy-going, that largely reflected differences between the Western (rational, practically oriented, tolerant) and the Oriental (intuitive, emotional) cultures and civilizations.

Table 5.

Factor loadings after varimax rotation

Descriptors (Positive poles)	The Altai territory			The Republic of Altai		
	F1	F2	F3	F1	F2	F3
Own	0.91	0.35	-0.13	0.93	0.06	0.07
Similar	0.86	0.40	-0.09	0.92	0.11	0.15
Close	0.90	0.33	-0.14	0.92	0.06	0.14
Hard-working	0.85	0.49	0.03	0.81	0.49	-0.06
Friendly	0.90	0.20	0.31	0.96	0.12	-0.25
Credulous, naive	0.95	-0.20	0.07	0.91	-0.21	-0.12
Emotional, impulsive	-0.03	-0.33	-0.91	0.25	-0.84	-0.14
Empathic	0.96	0.23	-0.05	0.96	0.06	-0.05
Peaceable	0.93	0.13	0.32	0.89	0.31	-0.22
Inspiring sympathy and respect	0.91	0.39	0.12	0.91	0.36	0.00
Supporting innovations	0.46	0.68	0.46	0.46	0.77	0.12
Collectivist	0.95	0.11	-0.04	0.93	-0.11	-0.13
Tolerant	0.85	0.19	0.49	0.88	0.31	-0.20
Aspiring to equality	0.97	0.07	0.21	0.96	-0.02	-0.22
Well-educated	0.60	0.75	0.25	0.85	0.35	0.35

Responsible	0.14	0.68	0.53	0.23	0.90	0.20
Honest	0.88	0.37	0.23	0.96	0.10	-0.08
Courageous	0.76	0.41	-0.45	0.97	0.12	0.05
Independent	0.56	0.78	-0.16	0.90	0.25	0.15
Not arousing envy	-0.47	-0.84	-0.09	-0.07	-0.16	-0.15
Rich	-0.02	0.99	0.06	-0.17	0.08	0.97
High social status	0.02	0.96	0.23	-0.01	0.29	0.84

Joint spatial representation of elements in each region (Figures 5 and 6) permitted to match results from cluster and factor analysis, confirm, that categorization and differentiation, underpinning identification of Russians, differ considerably depending on socio-cultural conditions, and describe significant clusters of meta-ethnic groups in the light of their relationships and content of neighboring descriptors.

The semantic space relevant for the Altai territory, disclosed again the proximity of “Russians”, “Slavs”, and “Friendly people”, situated on the right extremity of the first factor axis near the identification descriptors and evaluative characteristics “hard-working”, “brave”, “sympathetic”, “sincere”.

“Indigenous peoples”, situating in the left haft-plane, corresponding to positive identification and evaluation, took relatively distant position from Russians and were described as “collectivist”, “credulous, naïve”, “friendly”, “tolerant”, “peaceable” and “compassionate”. The image of “Hostile people” occupied the extreme position on the opposite side of this axis and was depicted as “aggressive”, “aspiring to superiority”, “indifferent”, “intolerant”, “cunning” and “individualist”. The location of “Caucasian peoples”, situating near “Hostile people” was identified negatively as “unpleasant”, “insincere”, “cowardly”.

“Central Asian peoples” and “Migrants” were located near each other and in proximity to “Asians”. Their common features were: “poor”, “conservative”, “ignorant”, “dependent”, “low social status”, “impulsive”, “not arousing envy”, “easy-going”. The “Europeans” took opposite position and were associated with richness, innovations, high social status, intelligence, independence, rationality, responsibility and envy.

In the semantic space of the Republic of Altai “Russians” occupied more distant position from “Friendly people” and “Slavs”, than in the Altai territory, situating however in the same quadrant near coordinates of identification descriptors. “Indigenous peoples”, being titular nationalities in the Republic, were evaluated as more “own”, but, at the same time, “naïve” and having low social status. “Central Asian peoples”, “Caucasians”, “Europeans” were located near the center of coordinate system, that was indicative for their neutral position on both factors, they were not opposed to Russians as it was in mono-ethnic region, their stereotypes were similar but smoothed and less negative. Thus, “Caucasians” were perceived as more “responsible” and less “emotional and impulsive”, “Europeans” — as “arousing envy”, and “Central Asian peoples” — as “cunning”, “conservative” and “poor”.

The reference category of the “Hostile people” was associated with characteristics “hostile”, “lazy”, “dependent” (but at the same time “aspiring to superiority”), “cowardly”, “aggressive”, “intolerant”, individualist”, “ignorant”, so as a whole it was similar to the image of the

ethnic enemy in the Altai territory. It took isolated position, far away from other groups, that was consistent with results of cluster analysis, and illustrated once again that Russians' attitudes towards other nationalities in this region were to a large extent friendly and tolerant.

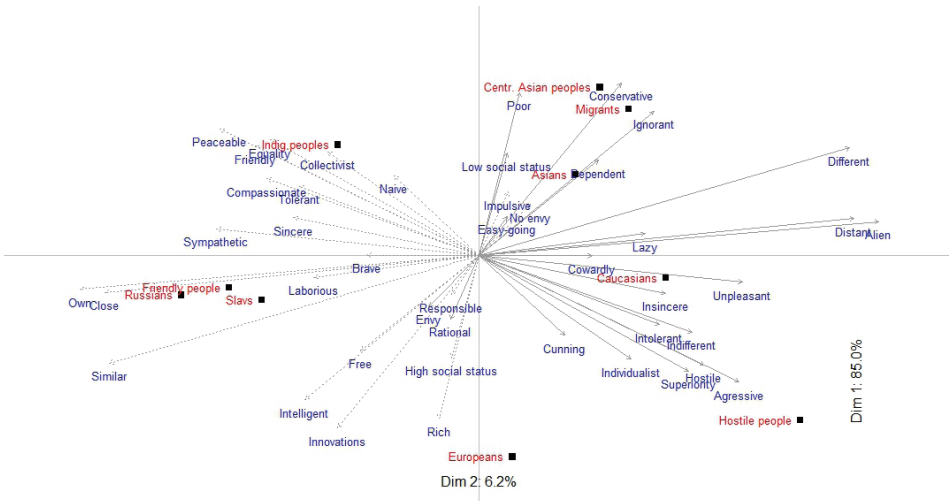


Figure 5 — The semantic space (the Altai territory).

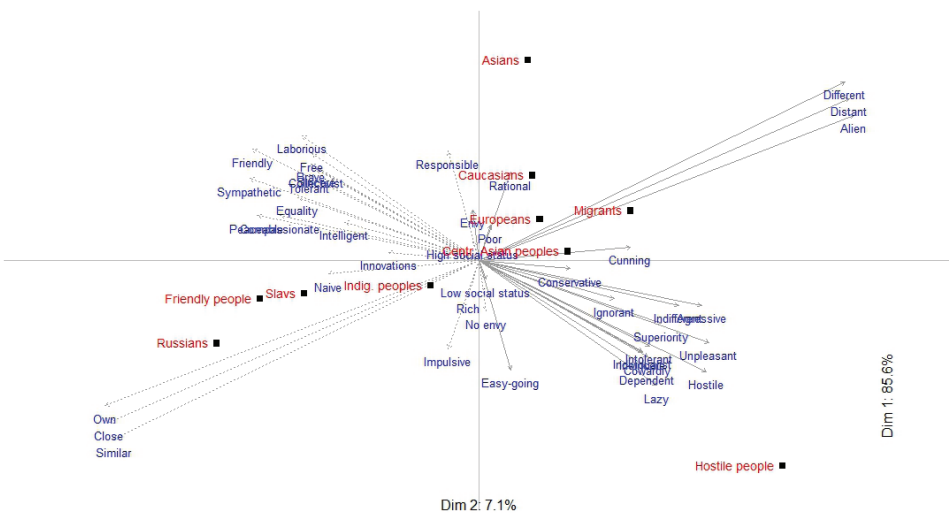


Figure 6 — The semantic space (the Republic of Altai).

The position of the Asian peoples was significantly different compared to other meta-ethnic entities and reference groups, associated in minds of population with high

culture and technological progress. According to the supplementary comparison of evaluations, in the Republic of Altai the category of Asians were perceived as more “own” (7.6 % of high values against 2.7% in the Altai territory, χ^2 , $p<0.05$), “empathic” (25.4% against 14.4%, χ^2 , $p<0.001$), “sympathetic” (38.1% against 16.6%, χ^2 , $p<0.001$), “supporting progress and innovations” (30.2% against 18.2%, χ^2 , $p<0.01$), “well-educated, culturally developed” (37.6% against 18.8%, χ^2 , $p<0.001$), “independent” (45.3% against 20.6%, χ^2 , $p<0.001$), and less “lazy” (4.3% against 17.1%, χ^2 , $p<0.01$), “aggressive and warrior” (3.5% against 14.4%, χ^2 , $p<0.01$), “individualist” (6.0% against 17.1%, χ^2 , $p<0.01$), “dominating, aspiring to superiority” (6.8% against 22.1%, χ^2 , $p<0.001$).

4. Discussion and conclusions

Over the past decades, it has been widely acknowledged that ethnic identity is a social construct, resulting from both social structures and actions undertaken by individuals and social groups in preserving and developing their cultural Self. It is neither immutable nor fixed, the great impact on its evolution has “the perception of its meaning to different audiences, its salience in different social contexts, and its utility in different setting” (Nagel 1994: 155). In contemporary Russia, the ethnic identity of the majority (ethnic Russians) represents a complex of attitudes, images, representations and stereotypes, polished by history, targeted policy, global international and local inter-ethnic relations. We have attempted to describe its resilient and temporary components by means of repertory grid analysis, applied on the actual survey data.

Psychosemantic experiments conducted in mono- and poly-ethnic regions have revealed that ethnic grounds keep important role in formation of coherent self-image of Russians, irrespectively of age, gender or territorial location. The ethnic identity of most respondents was strong and positive, relying on stable national character stereotypes, representing the Russian nation as peaceable and friendly, and its members — as compassionate, hard-working, courageous, honest, well-educated. The research has partially confirmed (only 40% of responses) findings of a decade ago that Russians have collectivist orientations, are focused on justice and equity, and, in general, reproduced conclusions about contradictory character of the Russian identity, combining opposite traits — gullibility and ruse, responsibility, perseverance and carelessness, pragmatism and emotionality.

Being Russian doesn't mean to be poor or rich, take low or high position at the social ladder. Significant differences in evaluations between young people and older generations designate that the Russian identity is under constant transformation, directed, unfortunately, towards the loss of self-esteem and the distortion of traditional Russian national image, centered on justice and peaceful intentions. The ethnic identity faces more challenges in cities, where people become more skeptical, while in rural area Russians preserve more positive auto-stereotypes despite worse economic conditions.

The ethnic identity is stronger and linked to representations about the civic nation in mono-ethnic region, where Russians are semantically included in a broad polyethnic framework with small indigenous and other “friendly” peoples. In poly-ethnic region the self-perception of Russians is more leniently, they describe themselves more frequently as naïve and impulsive. At the same time, Russians inhabiting poly-ethnic region have more

positive attitudes towards ethnic groups usually evaluated negatively (Caucasians), and feel closer to indigenous groups, residing on its territory. The perception of migration also differs, although semantically it has clear reference to Central Asian and more broadly to Asians peoples: if in mono-ethnic region with higher international migration growth migrants possess explicit characteristics, in the Republic of Altai they are perceived as rather abstract social category.

The research has revealed that the comparison of own and other meta-ethnic entities, forming grounds for symbolic boundaries and identification, is based on three principal factors, comprising the factor of general evaluation, determining overall positive or negative attitudes, distinction between friend and foe; the factor of socio-economic, technological and cultural development, reflecting global hierarchy of peoples and their fight for the “place under the sun” and possibility to manage the world; and the factor of binary opposition between the Western and Oriental cultures and civilizations.

Our research had objective restrictions, related to the coverage of regions, represented by only two of them, hence, the results obtained can't be generalized to all Russia and are relevant at least partially for regions with dominant Russian population and a specific national republic. Nevertheless, the methodology based on the repertory grids has proved to be heuristic for the ethnic identity analysis, and future research will be directed towards further development of the original method, elaboration of models, linking ethnic and civic, global and local components of the Russian identity.

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