

Integrative Strategy of Constructing Positive Images of Ethnic Identity in Modern Electronic and Information Discourse

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ABSTRACT

The tendency to globalisation of world space is observed in the modern world. In this regard, the ethnic factor in political processes and the management of Compound States are significantly updated. The going deep politicisation of ethnicity is accompanied by new manifestations in different processes that dictate the need of a search for theoretical and methodological means of research. Ethnicity represents a social construct whose intrinsic basis is self-attribution of the individual to the social community existing in subjective perception ('We') and the symbolic marking of cultural distinctions from other communities. Their formation/gain is influenced by ideas about objectivity and vernacularity of the existence of 'we-groups' and the significance of intergroup distinctions. Ethnic identity can be defined as a social construct that is a product of the subjective relation/perception of individuals of intergroup entities and contradictions filled by ethnic sense. In the modern world the permission of some questions is of great importance not only in the scientific, but

also in the ideological and political sphere. These are questions such as forms whose distribution and information processing society can accept; why information takes the central place in modern social systems and how it influences social, economic and social relationships.

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INTRODUCTION

The globalisation of the world, development of the information society, appearance of new network technologies and the enhancement of innovative capacity in production predetermine the use by political extremists of the new complicated and sophisticated methods and means in activities (Robertson, 1992; Yarskaya-Smirnov, 1998, pp. 4-12). It is necessary to fight this negative political phenomenon. The question of the technologies used in the course of the fight against negative ethnic identity has not been considered fully in local and foreign scientific research as nationalism is a difficult phenomenon to grasp and understand. On the one hand, nationalism appears as an invariable 'satellite' of modern society; on the other hand, it is a subject of permanent debate in the political and academic environment. It is necessary to mark the fact that nationalism is usually perceived as a negative phenomenon.

The unconditional relevance of nationalism made it a subject of much research especially on the radical manifestations of nationalism. After the appearance in the social and political arena of groups positioning themselves as Russian nationalists, such as the movements Memory and the Russian National Unity, there have been numerous studies of this phenomenon in our country. However, as rightly pointed out Sokolov, "the question of the nature and the reasons of distribution of Russian radical nationalism was auxiliary in relation to other question in the discussions that have taken place; it is a question of the possibility of

supporters of radical nationalism in any way to come to power, or, using a widespread metaphor, whether "The Weimar scenario" can be realized in the modern Russia?". The majority of research into Russian nationalism was based on the structural functional approach and it considered Russian nationalism as the objective historical phenomenon. Another aspect that made the subject relevant was the need for scientific and objective study of Russian nationalism. In recent years the mass media has distributed materials concerning Russian nationalism. The Owl Center, for example, researches 'hostility language' in the mass media and periodically publishes analytical materials on this subject (Verkhovsky, 2005, p. 256; Verkhovsky, 2007, p. 260; Yasaveev, 2004, p. 200). It is necessary to add that a certain subjectivity in representation of a situation in the country is observed, in our opinion, in the printing materials published by nationalist groups and also in the self-presentations of members of nationalist movements and groups. Therefore, certainly, research of an image of nationalism through the analysis of the rhetoric of the mass media and the self-presentation of the persons representing themselves as Russian nationalists is interesting.

This paper reviews features of nationalism in materials from the Republic of Tatarstan, a poly-ethnic/multiethnic and poly-confessional region of Russia.

METHODS

The subject of constructing an image of Russian nationalism is complex. There is

some scientific literature that explores this problem. The first group of sources include scientific works of social construction in general. Of particular note among these are the works of the founders of phenomenological sociology, Alfred Schütz, Peter Ludwig Berger and Thomas Luckmann (as cited in Anderson, 2001, p. 30; Berger, 1995, p. 303), while Pierre Bourdieu made significant contributions to the theory of the social construction of reality, highlighting the theory of habitus, offering heuristic ability to integrate constructionist and structuralist theories (Bourdieu, 2001).

Specificity constructionist activity in the media was the object of the analysis of scholars such as Behr, Bosk, Iyengar, McCombs, Hilgartner, Shaw etc. (Behr, 1985; Held, 1991, pp. 197-235; McCombs, 1972). Consideration of constructionist activity through the prism of the construction of social problems was justified in papers written by Burr, Best, Blumer, Kitsuse, Spector, Schneider etc. Among domestic theorists of the construction of social problems it is necessary to mention Dyakova, Zdravomyslova, Meylakhs, Saveliev, Temkin, Trachtenberg, Iarskaia-Smirnova, Yasaveeva etc. (Dyakova, 1999, p. 130; Saveleva, 2007, p. 264; Yarskaya-Smirnov, 1998, pp. 4-12; Yasaveev, 2004, p. 200).

The construction of social reality through relationships between individuals is a subject of symbolic interactionism. The main theorists of this idea are Blumer and Mead (Blumer, 1984, pp. 173-179; Mead, 1994). The important role in research of the

self-presentation of members of nationalist groups and movements is explained by the socio-dramaturgic approach offered by Erving Goffman (Goffman, 2000).

The second group of sources explored research devoted to nationalism. The main papers offered by this group considered the modern concepts of nationalism and researched nationalism from the perspective of historical and political science. Prominent members of this group include Brubaker, Deutsch, Gellner, Cohn, Mosse, Rokkan, Suny, Seton-Watson, Smith, Tilly, Hroch etc. (Gans, 1979; Hroch, 2000).

Constructionists' approach to nationalism was reflected in papers written by Billing, Anderson, Breuilly, Hastings, Greenfeld, Hobsbawm etc. The important contribution to the analysis of the construction of nationalism in media space was made by Gagnon, Gans, McLeod, MacLuhan, Meyrowitz, Foster, Held, Edelman and Schlesinger (Edelman, 1972; Foster, 1999; Gagnon, 1997; Gans, 1979; McCombs, 1972; McLeod, 1991, pp. 235-266; Meyrowitz, 1985; Schlesinger, 1991).

The third group of sources looked at Russian nationalism. The most significant of these were Zdravomyslov, Mnatsakanyan, Muhametshina, Koksharov, Ponarin, Sidorina, Sikevich etc. (Kohn, 1961; Rokkan, 1975; Seton-Watson, 1977; Smith, 1986; Suny, 2001). These authors not only looked at sociological but also political and sociopsychological theories of nationalism. The papers of this group that were of the greatest value were those by Koroteeva and Tishkov. (Koroteeva, 1993; Tishkov, 1998).

These papers attempted a constructionist analysis of nations and nationalism.

Other important works in the field looked at, among others, the:

- a) theoretical models within phenomenology (Schütz, Berger and Luckmann) and symbolic interactionism (George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer);
- b) theories of construction of social problems in the mass media (Robert Behr, McCombs, Hilgartner, Shaw, Spector, Kitsuse, Spector, Schneider and Bosk);
- c) social and dramaturgic approach (Hofmann);
- d) theoretical concepts considering nationalism as a social construct (Anderson, Hastings, Billing, Greenfeld, Gellner, Hobsbawm and Breuilly);
- e) concepts of construction of nationalism in mass media (Gagnon, Gans, McLeod, MacLuhan, Meyrowitz, Foster, Held, Edelman and Schlesinger);
- f) typologies of nationalisms (Cohn, Smith, Greenfeld, Hechter, Breuilly, Koshkarov, Koroteeva, Ponarin and Mukhametshina);
- g) theory of habitus (Bourdieu).

This paper used the general scientific principles of objectivity and historicism as well as the comparative-historical, complex,

logical and typological analysis methods. Empirical data were obtained based on the following empirical methods: qualitative content analysis of materials of mass media at the federal and regional level (“Russian newspaper”, “News”, “The Independent Newspaper”, “Evening Kazan”, “East Express”, “Star of the Volga Region”, “The Republic of Tatarstan”) during the period 2000-2008.

RESULTS

It is necessary to consider that the construction of social reality happens at different levels. In particular, in speaking about the construction of an image of Russian nationalism at the macro level we need to deal with such public institutions as mass media, science and state governing bodies. On construction of an image of Russian nationalism at the micro level, we look at the construction of reality by individuals.

The process of globalisation that happens at the levels of system and social integration have various intensities in different countries; therefore, modern nationalism gets coloured by local reaction of political systems and collective identity in its various supranational processes (Held, 1991, pp. 197-235; Robertson, 1992; Robins, 1991, pp. 21-24). Mass media are not the only factors in constructing nationalism today; many researchers point to the important role of mass media in “the distanced association” citizens, for example, through television broadcasts. For example, according to Meyrovits,

television translations turn local situations into objects of general interest at the national and international levels (Meyrowitz, 1985).

The constructing of nationalism through mass media has two pronounced features. On the one hand, the variety of information, a peculiar logic of supply of materials and commercialisation of the mass media, as well as the existence of mutually exclusive discourses make identification of the individual with a national community indistinct, sporadic and ambivalent (Demertzis, 1999). According to Schlesinger, the relationship between mass media and national identity in modern society is caused by wider and constantly changing processes in the political, economic and cultural spheres. In other words, national identity has turned into “media consciousness” today, and mass media codes have considerably changed the perception and “experience” of national individuals (Schlesinger, 1991).

Another feature is that, despite the impact of globalisation on the mass media and limited cultural variations in content, the audience forms representations about nationalism through internalisation of selected messages available in mass media. Ethnocentric orientation is present even in international news, despite globalisation, which supposedly works to unify media context (Demertzis, 1999; MacLuhan, 1987).

The special effect on construction of nationalism is imposed by representation in mass media of questions connected with international policy. The audience

which has very limited understanding of all the complexities of international relations, perceiving this information through a prism of national stereotypes, especially in the period of the international aggravations (Gagnon, 1997). For this reason, for example, military papers are perceived absolutely differently; at one time, NATO’s military operations in Bosnia caused newspapers and television to portray Bosnia as the “new Vietnam”, while the Kuwait invasion, Desert Storm, in the early 1990s gave rise to talk of a “new Hitler” in mass media. Naturally, each definition of a situation activates various interpretations and a decodification of information by the audience, thereby leading to the constructing of images of nationalism (as cited Shkurkin et al., 2016).

According to Mitrokhin, in general, tolerance of the Soviet party bodies of nationalist proto-groups, nationalist associations and government staff in the Russian nationalist movement is caused by the fact that in Soviet party nomenclature various ethnic myths and manifestations of ethno xenophobia exist, such as, myths about “bad Jews, Tatars and Caucasians”. The main myth among Russian nationalists in the government party reflected portrayed all Jews as being inclined to plotting against the government and the people, possessing negative qualities and being connected by mutual responsibility and birth, while doing nothing useful for Russia and “eating Russian bread”. They are portrayed as not loving Russians, the state in which they live, and being inclined to treachery, often

with the help or at the request of relatives in the West. As required they are ready to run abroad with all their wealth, which is saved up in Russia.

The basis of “the myth about Caucasians” was made by charges of usurpation of power in the 1930-1950s and control of trade and speculation in the markets etc. Sokolov, the only successor of the group, Memory, represented a sophisticated move of Russian nationalism, the Russian National Unity party (RNE). The RNE rose after Vasilyev’s deputy, Alexander Barkashov, quarrelled with the party chief in early 1990 and then left the party together with many supporters (Kuzmin, 2007).

Zhirinovsky nationalism, another brand of nationalism, was against natives of the North Caucasus and Central Asia. The statements of the The Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) leader were fed by a spirit of nationalism, chauvinism and aggression and were perceived to be in reaction to the humiliation of national and state advantages endured by most of the citizens of the country. In 1996-1999 the nationalism of LDPR was exclusively declarative in character. Zhirinovsky’s greatly inspiring speeches did not prevent the party from supporting Westernised government party officials. It could be said that LDPR had no real political basis, being, in fact, a party that was not ideological to begin with (Kuzmin, 2007). At one time it took a pro-Putin stand.

The Movement Against Illegal Immigration (MAII), another political entity, is characterised by vigorous political activity.

According to Maslov and A. Prudnik, events in Kondopoga at the end of August, 2006 have actually created structure on which the attention of the vast majority of the politicized citizens of Russia has been suddenly riveted from one a little known marginal political organization. Someone pinned the hopes for the embodiment of certain political imaginations on this organization, someone saw in the MAII organization of the arising monster capable to destabilize a social and political situation in Russia.

According to Wikipedia, MAII is not officially registered. It is a social movement fighting illegal immigration in Russia. Its purposes and ideological basis are similar to those of European nationalist parties such as the National Front in France and the Austrian Party of Freedom. The estimated number of activists attached to MAII as of 2005 were 5,000 people.

We studied the features of the construction of Russian nationalism at two levels of nationalism, national and regional, as was available in Russian print media (Tatarstan’s newspaper). At the Federal level, these include: “Russian Newspaper”, with a circulation in 2008 of more than 400,000 copies; “News”, with a circulation in 2008 of 234,500 copies; and “The Independent Newspaper”, with a circulation in 2008 of 53,000 copies). Regional level print media included “The Republic of Tatarstan”, the official newspaper of the Government of Tatarstan, with a circulation in 2008 of 27,743 copies; “Evening Kazan”, with a circulation in 2008 of 44,450 copies; “Star of the Volga

Region”, with a circulation of 15,000 copies; and “East Express”, with a circulation of more than 70,000 copies.

We researched samples of Russian nationalism in these newspapers during the period 2000-2008. Selection of materials was based on semantic search of the expression “Russian nationalism” and key expressions such as “nationalist movements”, “nationalist parties”, “skinheads” and others. Due to the large number of materials on the subject only a certain number of samples were selected. Of these, 31 were from “The Russian newspaper”, 34 from “News” and 30 from “The Independent Newspaper”. References to Russian nationalism in the regional press appeared less frequently: there were 20 samples in “Evening Kazan”, 22 in “the Star of the Volga Region” and 12 in the “Republic of Tatarstan”. Only one article was selected for analysis from “East Express”.

The general analysis of publications showed that the image of positive Russian ethnicity in newspapers at the Federal level varied and represented different views on Russian nationalism, ranging from negative commentary to the deconstruction Russian fascism. “The Russian Newspaper” reflected an “official” view of the construction of Russian nationalism.

Our research showed that Russian nationalism is often considered through a prism of German fascism, as seen in the following from “The Russian Newspaper”:

At us for some reason it is considered that that, as for our local homebrew Nazism - it isn't terrible because the

Nazism often is given for patriotism. But the German, Hitlerite Nazism, was given for patriotism too. In each country Nazi moods mask under patriotic. Big threat because patriotism is always in demand also consists in it.

A more rational intelligent approach to modern Russian nationalism is also discernible in “The Russian Newspaper”. According to sociologist Chernysh, the concept of nationalism has been unfairly associated recently with such concepts as “chauvinism” and “fascism”. Nationalism in the most general view is a kind of ‘civil religion’ professed by citizens to promote consolidation of their society. The chief agents of the construction of nationalism are the intellectuals and the elite, who place an emphasis firstly on autocratic and imperial aspects; in modern society, the elite do not see real the mechanisms of constructing a Russian nation and nationalism:

The chief constructor of [nationalism] - the intellectuals. Elite - intellectual, media, economic... The main problem of our [Russian] constructors is in what they don't feel as constructors. The destiny of the conceiving people from Russia developed so that they never felt belonging to the people. It was the servants of the empire serving it interests. The idea of nationalism lived only in some small part of elite community... constructing which was carried

out by elite served strengthening of bases of the imperial state. [As for modern elite] She perceives nationalism as idea hostile... the considerable part of the Russian elite, first of all media, fears nationalism like the plague. And meanwhile if Russia develops, the nationalism in it is inevitable.

The role of the agents of the constructing of Russian nationalism was covered in "The Russian Newspaper" in connection with the social conservative policy offered by the Owl Center's discussion on "the Russian question". The essence of the discussion, which has been named the "Russian Project", was reduced to the need of development and support of state-building ethnos. Covering of this event in print media connected "The Russian Project" with the United Russia party and representatives of power structures engaged in constructing the national identity of citizens of Russia:

No one political party, except "United Russia", can't raise this question, without falling into extremism", and here "United Russia party member" has scarified communists for too Marxist positions (there the worker to be more important, than a national identity), and supporters of the dissolved itself Rodina party and the revived Congress of the Russian communities - for excessive nationalism. "Russians should consider not the one who

is an ethnic Russian, and the one who speaks and thinks Russian and refers himself to the Russian political culture, - Andrey Isaev has declared. - Not blood and an origin, and consciousness is important" ... Also Party members are going to protect the Russian culture, language, traditions and customs.

"The Russian Project" has highlighted the question of migratory inflow into Russia. According to initiators of the project, migration to Russia is inevitable; therefore, only migrants who will respect Russian culture and customs should be invited:

.. Isaev already has much more concrete assignment on "The Russian Project" – preparation of legislative offers on labor migrants who can be embodied in the concrete project - by April. "Russia won't do without labor migrants, but legal labor migrants who would be respectful to customs of the country are necessary for us". He considers that to train such legalized migrant in respect for traditions and customs of the country follows the employer if the migrant breaks our customs, then it is necessary to punish the employer, for example, taking away from him the license.

In general, considering the "ethnic question", "The Russian Newspaper" often used expert judgements for formation of public opinion. For example, it quoted

the authoritative domestic ethnologist, Valery Tishkov on the need for semantic re-conceptualising of the term, "Russian":

Valery Tishkov, director of Institute of ethnology and anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences.... it is necessary to return to pre-revolutionary broad understanding of the word "Russian" as Russian. "If Russians tell that the Russian people are they, tomorrow Russia won't be", - I have warned... academician.

Experts believe that modern development of Russian nationalism is problematic as nationalism absorbs ideas of extremism and xenophobia. According Zorin, the nationalist discourse is peculiar now not only to political powers of a national patriotic sense, but also all range of political forces of Russia. The content analysis of programme and ideological materials of Russian political parties have, according to researchers, given rise to four main types of modern Russian nationalism:

1. The liberal (civil) nationalism, which is putting forward the concept of "the Russian nation" based on a postulate of the "multinational" character of the Russian people.
2. The moderate dominant ethno nationalism defending the thesis about a dominant role of the Russian ethnos in the Russian Federation and considering the Russian/the Russian nation as a

hierarchy of ethnicities led by the Russian ethnos.

3. The radical imperial nationalism, which provides an understanding of the Russian/Russian nation as the multiethnic imperial community integrated on the basis of Russian culture and including besides others, Ukrainian and Belarusian ethnicities, which are not considered in separation from other Russians and do not admit independence.
4. The radical mono ethnic nationalism considering the nation as an exclusively Russian ethnos created or on the principles of unification or on the strategy of a separate ethno insulationism.

DISCUSSION

The construction of social reality is a rather new theoretical concept in the social sciences. This concept is based on the phenomenological tradition, which emerged with the philosophy of Edmund Husserl. It was also interpreted in a new way by sociological scientist, Alfred Schütz. As noted by David and Lulia Jary phenomenology in its philosophical sense represents a direction based on introspective research of intellectual processes in knowledge of phenomena and experience. The central place in philosophical phenomenology is given to the doctrine of intentionality of perception i.e. not a simple understanding or simply understanding something. Social phenomenology is based

on a critical interpretation of philosophical phenomenology and studies the assumptions involved in the creation of daily social knowledge sets as its purpose, within a “bracketed” vital world (Jary, 2001). Thus, the central perspective of social phenomenology is the perspective of daily experience/knowledge.

In Alfred Schütz’s understanding, social reality represents a “set of all objects and the phenomena of a socially cultural world as represented to the ordinary consciousness of people living among other people and related to the diverse relations of interaction”. According to the scientist, studying semantic structures of social reality means studying intersubjective values constituted by people in the course of their activity. These values act in the form of “typical ideas” of objects of social reality of the world and constitute “knowledge”, which together with personal experience of the acting individual is the set of means of orientation taken on trust in this world.

Supplementing Weber’s postulate on subjective interpretation of sense with Thomas’s theorem (“If people define a situation as real, she is real on the consequences”), Shyuts comes to the conclusion that definition of a situation already means action and that interpretation of the world is an initial way of action.

Alfred Schütz’s concept of social constructing of reality was further developed by Peter Ludwig Berger and Thomas Luckmann. The main thesis of this concept was stated in the work, “Social Constructing of Reality. A Treatise on

Knowledge Sociology” and is consolidated to the fact that social reality is at the same time objective and subjective (Berger, 1995, p. 303). Objectivity of social reality is caused by the independence of the individual, and its subjectivity is explained by the fact that it is constantly created or designed by the individual.

Social constructing of reality was defined by Berger and Luckmann as a set of processes, thanks to which “any knowledge system becomes socially recognized as “reality” (Berger, 1995, p. 30). The social reality, thus, is designed through a system of collective ideas of what is “real”. Knowledge of the world around us is included in the historical and cultural context of the subject and is conditional, dependent on circumstances of receiving and use. The social interaction between individuals assumes interpretation and reinterpretation of knowledge of the world around us as providing knowledge of individuals.

Thus, constructing of social reality represents activities of agents of social constructing for its “production”. The construction activity of agents of social constructing can be considered not only from the procedural point of view (constructing technologies/mechanisms), but also from the point of view of the end result, the “image” of social reality and its separate “sides”.

According to Benedict Richard O’Gorman Anderson, the nation is “the imagined political community, and it is imagined as something inevitably limited, but at the same time sovereign” (Anderson,

2001, p. 30). Explaining the definition, Anderson wrote, "It [the nation as political community] imagined as members even of the smallest nation will never know most of the fellows - on - the nations to meet them or even to hear about them while in minds of each of them there lives the image of their community" (Anderson, 2001, p. 30). Anderson claimed that constructedness is the property of one and all ethnic/national communities: "all communities are larger than the primitive villages united by contact face to face (and, maybe, even they), - imagined. Communities should be distinguished not on their falsehood/authenticity, and on that style in which they are imagined" (Anderson, 2001, p. 30).

Eric John Ernest Hobsbawm in general accepted the definition of nationalism offered by Ernest Gellner, adding that he did not consider "nation" as the source of primary, initial or invariable social education. According to Hobsbawm, the nation is social education only so far as it is connected with a certain type of modern territorial state, the "nation state". In the course of formation of nations an important role is played by artificial constructing, purposeful invention and social engineering. One of Hobsbawm's ideas is primacy of nationalism in relation to nations and states: the states and national movements do not arise from already "ready" nations – everything occurs on the contrary.

Adrian Hastings claimed that constructing of the nation on the basis of one or several ethnic groups is guided by such factors as a wide circulation of printed

literature in native languages and a history of a long fight against external threats. The nation not necessarily means the state: it can appear before formation of the state or after it; however, in the second case the nation receives a pronounced consciousness. The most serious contribution to constructing of a nation was made by an ideal of the state nation and world as systems of the nations, which appeared in 19th century politico-philosophical discourse and was embedded in the Versailles contract of 1920. As prototype of the European nations, according to the scientist, was the national model offered in the Bible. In the concept of Hastings the nation appears as a community having stronger consciousness than an ethnic group as the nation is concerned with political identity, autonomy and control of a specific territory. As for nationalism, Hastings considered two points of view: political theory guaranteeing the right of each nation to form its own state and as practical activities which retained the belief of individuals that their own ethnic and national traditions are especially important and have to be protected at any cost through the creation of their own state (Hastings, 1997, pp. 2-5).

According to the author of the concept of "banal nationalism", Billing, settled (i.e. having confidence in the future existence) nations are characterised by a constant reproduction or an independent reminder (flagging) of the idea of the nation (nationhood) which, being imperceptible to the majority, defines practically all socio-political aspects of the life of society.

As a metaphor for “banal nationalism” Billing used an image of a flag which “doesn’t flutter furiously downwind, and imperceptibly hangs on a wall of public institution”. Billing claimed that nationalism and national identity were a “conversation about national” identity, therefore research of nationalism is impossible without research of practice in discussion. Research focus on the concept of Billing is displaced from research of the nations as meta-units to everyday practice and manifestations of nationalism (Billing, 1995, pp. 8-9).

CONCLUSION

This research studied the complex methodology of research into the constructing of nationalism (George Best) combining theoretical development of a contextual constructionism and habitus theory (Pierre Bourdieu). Our methodology considered constructing of nationalism on macro- (print mass media) and micro- (self-presentation of nationalist groups members) levels. We also looked at the interpretation of the concept “Russian nationalism” as the political (politised) culture directed to protect internal and external interests of the Russian people. In addition, we examined the contextual factors of constructing of Russian nationalism at the all-Russian and regional (The Republic Tatarstan) levels.

We looked at the features of representation of Russian nationalism in mass media and the rhetoric of members of national patriotic groups and studied nationalism on macro- (print mass media) and micro- (self-presentation of nationalist

groups members) levels to overcome “offset” of the research focus and to receive the most adequate understanding of constructing of an image of Russian nationalism in a regional context.

The symbolic universe design history links collective events as a coherent whole including the past, present and future. Memory is created in relation to the past. It integrates all who are socialised in this community. The general frame of reference in relation to the future is created in order that the individual may plan actions. Thanks to this, all members of society can consider themselves co-present in a semantic universe, which existed from their birth and will exist after their death. The role of symbolic reality consists in integration of social institutions through the process of legitimisation.

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