

# National Identity and Patriotism among Russian Youth: Representations, Feelings and Actions

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## Abstract

This article is based on data of empirical research in four border regions of Russia. We try to reveal the new trends in youth's national identity through the analysis of social identifications, interpretations of patriotism and patriotic actions. We conclude that youth's national identity comprises traditional and modern traits, proving its nature as social construct, reproduced and shaped through public political discourse and everyday practices. While national civic identification takes the central place in the youth identification hierarchy, young people feel more cosmopolitan than elderly people and give a special meaning to their own cultural and ethno-confessional identities. Their patriotic representations are transformed under worldwide mobility and influence of politically oriented actions; they diverge from understanding of patriotism of other generations, the result is the lower self-evaluation of patriotic feelings, which have become more abstract and less associated with concrete actions and deeds.

**Keywords:** patriotism, youth, national identification, identity, patriotic feelings, patriotic actions

## 1. Introduction

In more than twenty years, Russia has undergone transformation processes in all spheres of social life. Adaptation of people to post-soviet nationhood and new political practices persists and its results are not equal among different groups of population owing to social and economic inequality, different ways of socialization and life styles. Besides, Russia like other countries in the world perceives influence of globalization, economic interdependence and intensification of migration flows, cultural unification and global connectivity. Apart from positive opportunities such as spread of knowledge and modern technologies, these global processes have provoked considerable increase of inter-ethnic tension and irreversible changes in national identities. Social studies show that the impact of globalization on national identity is not univalent (Ariely, 2012). Some authors consider it a force that weakens national identity and reduces attachment to the nation among the public (Norris & Inglehart, 2009), while others argue that globalization strengthens national feelings (Calhoun, 2007; Guibernau, 2001).

Taking into consideration Russia's specific geopolitical disposition, its historically determined multinationality and ambiguous consequences of political and economic reforms in the past the problem of state integrity becomes one of the most important. Governmental institutions try to construct Russian national identity through the state policy in order to ensure social harmony and political stability, but nation-building projects are not uniform. President Putin has put a lot of effort to create a viable national identity for the people of the Russian Federation in his determination to build a strong state based on common purpose and identification with the 'best national practices and ideas, an understanding of cultural, spiritual and political traditions from different points of view'. At the same time, republican leaders try to justify their claims to local sovereignty and develop local traditions and local values (Price, 2007). In such circumstances, young people become the most exposed and sensitive both to global tendencies and to ideological pressure of political elite. Their national identity is controversial and produces social practices, transforming under the influence of the Internet and global trends. Civic and political actions in particular acquire new features, becoming increasingly skeptical and distrustful, resulting in the decrease of traditional political participation (Svensson, 2011). Unfortunately, almost all political projects and empirical assessments are based on adult-centered approach which disregards the meaning and the importance that young inhabitants of Russia attribute to their national affiliation in uncertain, very risky and

polarized world of today. This article seeks to answer such questions and reveal the general and the specific in youth's patriotism interpretations, analyze relations between different levels of identifications, patriotic representations, feelings and actions, influence of social, economic and cultural factors on their subjective assessments.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

In spite of multiple seminal studies over a long period of time, the phenomenon of national identity does not outdate and continues to be a 'part of a modern set of categorical identities invoked by elites and other participants in political and social struggles' (Calhoun, 1993). The language of 'national identity' is ubiquitous in contemporary social science, cutting across psychoanalysis, psychology, political science, sociology, and history (Stryker & Burke, 2000).

National identity may be defined in different ways, depending on what is understood under the core term 'identity'. A short list of definitions may include several variations: 'bonds of solidarity among members of communities' (Smith, 1990); 'feeling of commonality, the sense of affiliation, belonging' (Lewin-Epstein & Levanon, 2005; Huddy & Khatib, 2007); 'self-image based on membership' (Hutcheson et al., 2004); 'a meaning, constructed on the basis of cultural attributes' (Castells, 2010); 'a complex of common ideas, concepts, perception schemes and behavioral dispositions' (De Cillia, Reisigl, & Wodak, 1999). All these definitions underline cognitive, evaluative and attitudinal aspects of national identity, resulting from process of identification with and differentiation from members of other nations. So, in general terms, national identity may be understood as a very subjective and personally meaningful complex of representations, feelings and dispositions relatively common to a group of people who have defined themselves as a nation. The latter is conceived in the framework of our research in the modernist perspective which contains the assumption that nation represent an invented or "imagined" (Anderson, 1991) community, existing due to will and unconstrained efforts of its members.

Antony Smith (1990, p. 15) underlines that national identity has a complex, multidimensional and abstract nature, drawing on different elements of other kind of identity-ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal-political. Nevertheless, scholars of national identity have generally distinguished between two models of nations and corresponding types of national identity: ethnic-genealogical and civic-territorial (Lewin-Epstein & Levanon 2005). The first model presupposes a pre-political organic community integrated on the basis of descent. National identity in this case is a result of ascription and is derived from common linguistic and cultural elements. This is a stronger and more exclusive perception, which is expected to result in less favorable attitude towards non-members of national community and higher rates of xenophobia.

The civic-territorial type is based on the notion of a voluntaristic political nation in a demarcated territory with equal rights and duties. From this point of view every person, regardless of their religion, ethnic or class background, could easily join a nation by allegiance to a set of political principles and institutions representing the nation's values and objectives. Usually the first type is associated with Western and American nations, while Germany and Eastern Europe (including Russia) are principally treated as ethnic nations (Shulman, 2002, p. 554).

The ethnic-civic dichotomy has attracted a lot of criticism as an artificial and in many cases non-relevant methodological instrument owing to its 'deterministic vision of nationhood and the mixture of inclusive/exclusive notions and identity markers in one category' (Janmaat, 2006). Empirical research findings suggest that most states and nations contain both ethnic and civic components (Schulman, 2002). This reasoning is worth applying to the analysis of deeply divided and multi-ethnic societies (similar to Russia), where national identity may have different meanings and support for ethnic and civic aspects of national identity will differ within different social groups.

Accepted as a specific form of collective identity the national identity represents a dynamic system of social relations and representations (Schlesinger, 1987). This system is founded by a shared interactive sense of "we-ness", based on perceptions and feelings 'of a common cause, threat, or fate' and 'collective agency', that 'motivate people to act together' (Snow, 2001). From this standpoint, national identity appears as a process, through which social actors acknowledge themselves as a collectivity, as well as activities in which people are engaged to signify and express who they are.

Attributes, used to construct sameness and dissimilarity of a nation, include different perceptions of shared ancestry, history, myths and memories, language, territory, religion, common public culture, common laws and customs (Guibernau, 2004). Snow (2001) named these interpretive frameworks, dramaturgical codes of expression and demeanor *symbolic resources*, used to bound and distinguish the nation both internally and

externally. To adopt elements of proper national identity, individuals have to possess some substantive knowledge of historical and cultural context of its beliefs and values, they must see them as personally meaningful and 'translate them into concrete practice in their daily lives' (Kellman, 1997, p. 173).

Thus, national identity is manifested in knowledge, affection and actions, coherent with personal identity and oriented towards one's nation. Usually scholars distinguish two types of such manifestations: a negative one, usually implying superiority and hostility to another nation as well the out-group devaluation, provoking exclusionary practices and xenophobia (Latcheva, 2010) known as nationalism and its positive counter-concept-patriotism. In the framework of our research, we focus on the latter point of the continuum.

Patriotism similarly to national identity is regarded as a multi-dimensional and contradictory phenomenon, whose meaning and appearance are not constant. The standard dictionary definition of patriotism is 'love of one's country'. Stephen Nathanson (1993, pp. 34-35) describes patriotism as involving special affection, accompanied by a sense of personal identification with, special concern for the well-being of the country and willingness to sacrifice to promote its good.

While usually described in terms of loyalty to a particular nation, patriotism presumes some 'peculiar regard for the particular characteristics, merits and achievements of one's own nation, providing reasons supportive of the patriot's attitudes' (MacIntyre, 1984). This concern, however, may be different, depending on the level of conformity and reflexivity of the individual.

Thus, T. Adorno and co-authors (1950, p. 107) define 'genuine' or 'true' patriotism, as a combination of 'love of the country' and 'attachment to national values based on critical understanding' opposed to 'pseudo-patriotism'-'blind attachment and uncritical conformity', rejection of other nations as out groups'. Schatz, Staub and colleagues (1999) consider this first form of national identity to be a kind of constructive patriotism, contrasted to 'blind' patriotism. This alternation may be supplemented by comparison of 'patriotism of imitation and obedience' with a 'patriotism of innovation and disobedience' (Morrison, 1959), a 'patriotism of reason and dissent' and 'patriotism of ignorance and irrationality' (Sommerville, 1981), extreme and moderate patriotism (Nathanson, 1993).

We follow Blank, Schmidt and Westle (2001) in arguing that these two types of patriotism are rather distinct, and they have different effects on civic and political participation. The most important features of the first type of patriotism include a self-definition grounded on humanist values, estimation of a nation based on critical conscience, independence of political elites, acceptance of negative nation-related emotions, different views on nation history, high relevance of temporal comparison of the status quo of the in group. The blind patriotism is positively associated with political disengagement, perceptions of foreign threat, importance of symbolic behavior, and selective exposure to pro-national information (Schatz, Staub, & Lavine, 1999).

Adopting this dichotomy as a possible conceptual guideline for our research, we focused on the analysis of core semantic elements, forming understanding and perceiving patriotism by young people living in Russia, their expectations and intentions.

### 3. Methods

This paper relies on original empirical data received from a research "Patriotism and nationalism: mental representations and behavioral strategies of population in modern Russia", conducted in four border regions of Russia (Altaisky krai, Krasnoyarsky krai, Omskaya oblast and Altai Republic) in 2012 (n=2400). The survey was realized in a form of formalized interview at the place of living in urban and rural settlements of Russian Federation. Sampling was stratified, multistage, zoned with quotas on sex and age. Representativeness of sampling was provided by the observance of proportions between population, who live in different settlements (big cities, average and small cities, rural settlements), demographic structure of adult population of the four regions.

Multiple scholars claimed that people define their national attachments using various criteria whose weight depends on public opinion and varies over time and place (Wakefield et al., 2011). In our research, two items were included in the work sheet to explore the level and intensity of national identification. The first, 'yes-no' question 'Do you associate yourself with a citizen of Russia?' was aimed to reveal positive civic identifications and association with Russian citizenship as basic indicators of national identity. The second question 'What describes you the best at this moment' reproduces a 9-item identification scale including different levels: supranational ('Oriental person', 'Occidental person', 'World citizen'); national ('Citizen of Russia'); regional ('Inhabitant of my region'); ethno-confessional ('Representative of my nationality', 'Representative of my religion') and retrospective ('Soviet people') to find out the most salient identification (respondents had to select

only one response).

Several questions were used to study subjective perception and self-assessment of patriotism. Multiple-choice questions 'How would you define patriotism?' and 'What actions do you consider to be signs of patriotism?' were aimed to find the most important meanings of patriotism and their weight in the manifold of interpretations and brought into focus actual patriotic manifestations. Both questions were encoded as separate binary dichotomous variables. The patriotism self-assessment was measured by the 'yes-no' question 'Do you consider yourself a patriot?' and by 9-point scale of intensity of patriotic feelings.

As far as our main concern was to reveal the specifics of youth's representations and attitudes, multiple comparisons were fulfilled using statistical technics relevant for available empirical data. Taking into account the categorical and nominal nature of our data, Pearson chi-square coefficients were used to test the differences in answers among principal age groups and groups of youth divided by gender, level of formal education, subjective assessment of financial situation, nationality, religion, civic and territorial identifications. In cases when it was possible, parametric and multidimensional methods were applied (t-test, one-way ANOVA, multinomial regression).

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The primary data were almost equally split by gender (46% male, 54% female), and age (34% of 15-29 year olds, 35% of 30-49 year olds aged and 31% of people older than 50), while in the youth group 20-29 year olds respondents predominated (72%). The agro-industrial character of regional economies predetermined the prevalence of population living in countryside: 40% of our respondents were urban and 60%-rural. The formal educational level was as follows: 44%-higher education, 26% basic vocational education, 30% general secondary education. The self-assessment on a 5-point richness-poverty scale showed that 12% of respondents considered themselves as poor (8% among young people), 72% as middle class (70% among youth) and 15% as well-to-do and rich (22% among 15-29 year old respondents).

No thorough study of national identity and patriotism can go without ethnic determinants. In our sample, 89% of respondents regardless of their age defined themselves as Russians while the rest of 12% chose other ethnicities. Among young people, there were less Russians-87%, whereas the rest is comprised of Kazakhs (4%), Azerbaijanis, Germans, Tatars, Armenians, Jews, Ukrainians, Avars, Altays, Bashkirs, Belarussians, Bulgarians, Poles, Tadjiks (2-3%). Other ethnic groups were represented by unique observations.

##### 4.1 National Identity of Youth in the Light of Civic and Territorial Identifications

According to the assumptions that social identities have different salience that influence 'how much effort we put into each role and how well we perform it' (Burke & Reitzes, 1981) we attempted to explore the youth's national identity first of all through the prism of civic, territorial and retrospective identifications.

The overwhelming majority of respondents associated themselves with citizens of Russia (98%), demonstrating a high level of state identification, resulting from citizenship rights and responsibilities. However, choosing the most important identification describing their attitudes and self-image, only 59% of respondents in general sample had chosen the state identification, the regional identifications occupied the second place in the rating -19%, the soviet identification appeared vigorous for 10% of participants of all ages. The cumulative percent of supranational identifications amounted to 8%, ethno-confessional identifications to 4% of total responses.

The comparison of the youth and other age groups showed that the difference was significant at 5% level (chi-square test). Young people, in spite of high level of national (state) identification more often chose supranational, ethnic and religious references, whereas the soviet identity was almost non-relevant for them: only 3% of young respondents defined themselves as Soviet people while among respondents aged 30-49 the rate achieved 8% and among 50-75-19%. Given results witnessed about the break of the modern youth with the soviet past, still meaningful for older generations and the complexity of youth's self-definitions, comprising global and local (cultural and ethnic) dimensions.

The bivariate analysis showed that gender and place of residence were non-significant for territorial identifications ( $p > 0.05$ , chi-square test), while other factors (nationality, religion, educational level and financial self-evaluation) had been included as important predictors in multinomial regression. The final model where national (state) identity was used as a reference category had revealed the role of ethnicity, education and economical position in identity ladder construction. In particular, being non-Russian increased the probability of having a supranational identity by 4.8 times and ethno-confessional identity-by 6.2 times (Table 1). In contrast, having vocational education and taking a middle position on a financial self-assessment scale exerted a negative effect on supranational identity. Thus, the national identification of young Russians, especially for those

belonging to working class and having relatively stable economic status was stronger than in other groups, whereas possessing an ethnicity different from the predominant one resulted in dissatisfaction of national boundaries for an adequate self-identification.

Table 1. Multinomial regression model of youth's identifications<sup>a</sup>

Predictors		Supranational identifications		Regional identification		Ethno-confessional identification	
		B	Exp (B)	B	Exp (B)	B	Exp (B)
Nationality	Other than Russian	<b>1.584**</b>	<b>4.873</b>	.620	1.862	<b>1.875**</b>	<b>6.522</b>
	Russian	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	0 <sup>b</sup>	.
	Orthodox	-.112	.894	.272	1.313	-.335	.716
Religion	Islam	-.791	.453	.285	1.330	-.634	.531
	Other religion	.801	2.228	.214	1.238	-18.22	1.218E-8
	Atheist	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	0 <sup>b</sup>	.
Educational level	Secondary	-.233	.792	-.320	.726	-.288	.750
	Vocational	<b>-1.011*</b>	<b>.364</b>	.059	1.061	-.422	.656
	Higher	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	0 <sup>b</sup>	.
Financial self-assessment	Poor	.336	1.400	.429	1.535	.436	1.547
	Middle class	<b>-.688*</b>	<b>.503</b>	-.063	.939	-.530	.593
	Moderately rich or rich	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	0 <sup>b</sup>	.

P-value level: \*p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

a - National identification is a reference category.

b - This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

#### 4.2 The General and the Particular in Youth's Patriotism Definitions

At individual level, patriotism represents a multidimensional complex of meanings, values, sentiments, attitudes and actions, which, presumably, is inseparable from national identity. We wondered whether interpretations of patriotism among young people differ from other age groups and how these representations vary within the youth itself, what factors play a key role in determination of general and specific meanings of patriotism.

A univariate analysis performed in overall (all ages) sample showed that the most frequent definitions of patriotism were 'love for the Motherland' (59% of responses) and 'respect, pride and loyalty to the country' (55%). Thus, patriotism meant having positive but in some way irrational feelings that do not need any justifications or arguments. These emotions were distanced from knowledge of history, culture and traditions which were chosen only by 25% of participants, and other feelings allied with 'attachment to one's birthplace, native home' (16%) or 'love for Russian people, Russian culture' (14%). The 'affection for family and relatives' was also weakly associated with patriotism (13%). Hence, patriotism appeared as an abstract and vague sentiment, which was neither associated with other people, nor a particular place.

Among other definitions of patriotism, a 'military mobilization in case of war or other threat' took a relatively high position (37% of choices). This description accentuated the actionist facet of patriotism as reaction to external challenge in a dangerous situation. Premeditated patriotic engagement in peacetime was considered as non-significant: 'availability for voluntary work for the country' was chosen only by 12% of respondents, 'military duty-by 6%, 'socially useful work', 'efforts for global secure world'-by 4%. Hence, patriotism was perceived as a reactive behavioral strategy, realized in extreme situations, rather than a conscious activity based on personal responsibility for the state welfare. However, the majority of our informants rejected the idea that patriotism may be used as a very powerful ideology by political elites, bureaucracy and social movements for mobilizing people in their political interests, a definition of patriotism as 'an imagined feeling for mass manipulation' was supported by only 2% of respondents. So, patriotism presumed to be a real and strong intimate feeling, assumed in full conscience and awareness.

It is noteworthy that a very little number of respondents (2-5%) noticed that knowledge of state symbols and

support for resurgence of Russian statehood were considered non-significant and compulsory attributes of the 'true' patriotism. Taking into account multiple changes in national ideology, nation-building projects and attributes, occurring throughout Russian history and absence of distinct national ideal at the present time, these results witnessed the accurate differentiation of the state and the country as objects of patriotic feelings and experience.

The comparison of youth's answers with other age groups showed that young participants similarly to the senior group more often defined patriotism as 'love for the Motherland' and relatively rarely used the definition 'willingness to defend their country in the situation of emergency or extreme danger (war or other threat)', which was appropriate especially for respondents aged 30-49. In other cases, youth's representations of patriotism fitted the model of middle age group which was opposed to senior group ( $p < 0.05$ , chi-square test). So, both groups attached more importance to 'respect, pride and loyalty to the country', 'knowledge of history, culture, respect of traditions', 'love for Russian people, Russian culture', than elderly people. At the same time, young people considered voluntary, honest and faithful work for the country, affection to one's birthplace, family relationship and assurance of global security as non-essential features of patriotism. Such results complete our previous implications about the increasing role of territorial mobility simultaneously with individualization and dissociation from real participation in social life. For young people patriotism means having good knowledge of Russia history, its traditions and culture, feeling respect for the nation but does not imply commitment and real actions, especially related to risk and danger.

Young people of different gender, place of residence, nationality, educational level, civic and territorial identifications have underlined different features of patriotism.

Thus, gender influenced the accentuation on its emotional, cognitive or behavioral characteristics. Young women's definitions emphasized pride, respect and loyalty to the country and national traditions (61%, 48% in male group), love for people and culture (16%, in male group-11%), knowledge of history and traditions (30%, in male group-20%). Young men in contrast more frequently noticed the participation in military actions in case of need (40%, in female group-33%) and military service (10%, in female group-2%) as relevant semantic components of patriotism.

The city inhabitants' explanations were based on willingness of voluntary work for country welfare (16%, in among rurals-9%) and military service (15% in male group living in the city and 7% living in the countryside,  $p < 0.05$ ), while the rural citizens' definitions underlined knowledge of history and respect of traditions (28% in comparison with 20% in city group). So, urban and especially masculine variant of youth patriotism appeared as more actionist and aggressive, whereas rural youth and young women preferred a romantic and more traditionalist points of view.

Young people with higher education level highlighted the importance of knowledge of history, culture and traditions as rational justifications of patriotism, opposed to abstract and uncritical 'love for the Motherland'. The willingness to do military service was appropriate for young men possessing the vocational education (12%, 3-4% in groups with general secondary and higher education). We need to take notice that in Russia students of basic vocational educational institutions usually have the right to delay the mandatory military service only until they are twenty years old and don't have an opportunity to complete their studies due to this very short adjournment, so this aspect of social life is highly actualized in their conscience.

Young people with clear civic identifications (those who associated themselves with Russian citizens) much more often mentioned 'love for Motherland' and 'pride, respect and loyalty to the country' as *sine qua non* of patriotism, while for the respondents with marked regional identification this concept was correlated with the attachment to the birthplace. Russian respondents emphasized knowledge of national history, culture and traditions, whereas non-Russian respondents with prominent ethno-confessional identity underlined the role of religion (7.7% in comparison with 0.5%-1.3% in groups with other identifications). The formulation of patriotism as an 'imagined feeling for mass manipulation' was supported by significantly greater number of respondents possessing supranational and ethno-confessional identifications (3-4%) than by respondents with national and regional identifications (1-2%).

Generalizing our findings it is necessary to stress that interpretations of patriotism among young people reflected general traits common for all age population-accent on positive personal feelings, loyalty and attachment, willingness to defend Motherland in extreme situation and good knowledge of national background. It is evident consequence of socialization and patriotic education. At the same time, our research revealed some tendencies bringing certain changes in new generation mind, especially growing importance of nation-wide solidarity, pride and loyalty and at the same time depreciation of attachment to native homeland, including interpersonal and

family relations. Secondly, in spite of existing general comprehension of patriotism there are specific features proper to youth, which have social, economic and cultural determinants.

#### 4.3 Patriotic Behavior as a Function of Patriotism Perception and National Identifications

The next step of our survey was to analyze the most significant markers of patriotism exhibiting in behavior and actions and compare them with the above-analyzed definitions of patriotism and identifications.

The patriotic manifestations most frequently mentioned by respondents regardless of their age were 'service to the people, concrete deeds, need to be useful to others' (37% of positive responses), and 'care of native nature' (35%). Hence, patriotism in action didn't mean any boisterous displays of allegiance or heroic actions which were chosen by only one in five respondents, but engagements in everyday life, kindness and helpfulness for people, hard work and attention to the environment problems. It is noteworthy that these assessments didn't correspond with our data concerning basic definitions of patriotism where socially useful work and voluntary work for the best of the country took low positions in the rating.

The third most cited statement-'intention to live and work in our country' (34%) underlined the importance of civic position, individual deliberate choice for the benefit of the country without possible personal profit. Comparative analysis of answers to this question with emigrational intentions showed that this manifestation of patriotism was actualized among those respondents who wished to emigrate *ad interim* at the first opportunity ( $p < 0.05$ , chi-square test). All these inconspicuous patriotic actions may be designated as 'implicit' and 'routine' patriotism.

About fourth part of responses were focused on 'sustaining' or 'enforced' patriotic deeds, devoted to social order and national political system maintenance: 'law-abiding bearing, living according to moral values', 'intolerance toward different manifestations of contempt for the country and its citizens', 'executing compulsory military duty in the armed forces'. The third group of actions which received only a fifth part of respondents' choices was concentrated on external, outward manifestations of civic type of patriotism-'participation in civic and patriotic activities', 'participation in elections', 'participation in activities devoted to commemorate significant historical events and anniversaries'. These 'banal' (M. Billig) patriotic actions were considered as taken for granted, superficial but not personally meaningful.

Several items possessed highly differentiated answers in age groups. Thus, 'service to the people, concrete deeds and need to be useful', 'living according to moral values' and 'law-abidingness' were much more appreciated in senior groups whereas participation in patriotic demonstrations, historical events and anniversary commemorations, 'intention to live and work in our country' were more appropriated for young people ( $p < 0.05$ , chi-square test). Hence, directing their aspirations through participative manifestations of patriotism and involvement in real political processes the youth demonstrate neglect of conventional norms and duties, values and moral virtues. The more important feature of youth patriotism in the context of globalizing and extremely mobile world become the actualization of patriotic actions exhibited in abandoning of migration intentions.

Although the perception of patriotic behavior was similar within youth groups, we found some peculiarities in choice of several items. Thus, devotion to serving others and heroic deeds most frequently appeared in answers of young people with basic professional education and non-Russian nationality. Young respondents graduated from secondary school and living in cities underlined the significance of military service. Young women and the majority of young people with higher education attached importance to moral values, legal norms maintenance and attention to environment protection. Russian high school graduates underlined intentions to resist against brain drain by living and working in Russia and intolerance towards contempt of the state or citizens, whereas for non-Russian or possessing lower level of education respondents these sides of patriotic behavior were not important. Participation in patriotic activities and historical commemorations was more imperative for city inhabitants with secondary level of education, female and Russians *par excellence*. Hence, young people belonging to different groups not only understood patriotism differently but also were prone to manifest patriotism in their own way, subject to particularities of their upbringing and habitat. Even if they intended to participate in common actions, the meaning they assigned to them was dissimilar.

Patriotism is a supposed to be a remarkable example of human altruism, presuming self-sacrifice and devotion to a country. Being patriot is not simple and means assuming responsibility and accepting the hierarchy of values where personal goals and interests are placed below social ones. Insofar as the image of 'patriot' reflects the representations of patriotism in population, the model of patriotic behavior is attractive and reproduced in media sphere and private lives. The self-assessment of patriotic feelings shows how well social representations correspond to the personal identity,

About 80% of respondents in overall sample considered themselves patriots, so about one fifth of participants could not say that patriotism was appropriate to them. Among youth this rate was much lower-74% ( $p < 0.05$ ). Then, we analyzed the differences in patriotism self-evaluation by means of the 9-point scale of intensity of their patriotic feelings.

The one-way ANOVA permitted to confirm that patriotic feelings increased impressively with age ( $M=5.4$ -among 15-29 years aged respondents,  $M=6.0$ -among 30-49 years aged and  $M=6.3$ -among 50-75 years aged, F-test,  $p < 0.01$ ). In contrast, there were almost no differences in diverse social groups of youth, apart from divided by place of residence and by availability of civic identification. Young people living in cities and associating themselves with Russian citizens had higher degree of patriotic feelings intensity than youth from countryside or possessing negative civic identity (t-test,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Among respondents, noticing 'pride, respect and loyalty to the country' and 'willingness to defend the homeland in extreme situation (war or other threat)' as the most important definitions of patriotism the self-assessment of patriotic feelings was significantly higher ( $M=5.8$ ) than among those who chose other definitions. Indeed, those who chose 'military duty' and 'serving to people, concrete deeds, need to be useful' as representative patriotic actions also reported that they had strong patriotic feelings ( $M=5.7$ ). In contrast, patriotism interpretation as 'an imagined feeling for mass manipulation' was attended with lower self-assessment ( $M=3.6$ ) ( $p < 0.05$ , t-test). These results confirmed that youth was not consistent in perceiving, expressing and assessing patriotism. At least two patterns existed; their choice was largely determined by the degree of conformism and influence of social desirability factor. The first pattern presumed strong patriotic feelings and understanding of patriotism in habitual terms of self-sacrifice and selflessness. The second was based on the denial of traditional patriotic values and was linked with negative civic identification, relative social isolation (evidently inherent to rural place of living) and criticism.

## 5. Conclusion

National identity represents a complex social, cultural, political and psychological phenomenon, constructed, produced and modified through discourses, actions and interactions of governmental structures, organizations of civil society and ordinary members of national community. We found that despite multiple difficulties, related to social and economic crisis effects and periods of political instability, national identification take the central place in self-determination scale of Russian youth.

However, national identity salience and weight of its civic and ethnical elements vary among young people with different social positions and cultural background. Our results show that such factors as relatively stable financial situation and craft-based education level strengthen civic national identification. At the same time, young people of other than Russian nationality attach more importance to supranational identifications and ethno-confessional components of their national identity.

The most frequent definitions of patriotism reproduce its core meanings in terms of love, respect, pride and loyalty, willingness to defend and sacrifice life for the country. These generally accepted sentiments construct patriotism as a powerful and irrational force capable for mobilizing people in case of extreme danger, but neither related to everyday deliberate activity for the all-state welfare nor to support of governmental projects. Defining patriotism, young people pay more attention to knowledge of history, culture and traditions, but devaluate the role of one's birthplace and family as significant objects of patriotic feelings. So, patriotism in youth conscience is not linked with attachment to concrete place or territory, a patriot remains a patriot wherever he or she is located.

Contrary to patriotism perceptions, patriotic actions are primarily defined as day-to-day care of people, attention to the environment problems; absence of emigrational intentions, maintenance and defense of national sovereignty, honor and dignity. The youth vision of patriotic behavior is superficial and politically oriented, young people appear more fascinated in public manifestations of patriotism, especially in mass actions, electoral activities and historical commemorations. This difference in interpretation provides further differences in self-assessment: young people feel much less patriotic than elderly people, especially those who have unstable civic identification. Their representations, based on information, propagated by official educational institutions and mass-media mismatch their self-image as citizens and patriots.

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