Р. Р. Хуснутдинова, А. М. Сафина

Этнические стереотипы в представлениях русских, татар и чувашей, проживающих в Среднем Поволжье

Представлены результаты социологического исследования по изучению национального характера трех наиболее многочисленных народов Среднего Поволжья: русских, татар и чувашей. Духовная культура народа раскрывается, в том числе и в этнических стереотипах, представлениях об особенностях характера своего народа и представителях другой национальности. Исследование носит лонгитюдный характер и проводилось срезово на протяжении последних 30 лет. Первый этап был организован в 1998 году, далее в 2008 году, итоги текущего этапа представлены в 2018 году и охват населения на последнем этапе составляет более 1005 человек.

Проведён многоосевой анализ результатов исследования, так как были вовлечены разные группы населения, которые различались: по роду деятельности, по месту проживания (город/село) и по возрасту. Выборка обеспечивает полную картину современного восприятия этнических образов народов-соседей между собой, а также раскрывает их автостереотипы. Выявлены достаточно позитивные взаимные образы народов, что свидетельствует о положительном восприятии соседа и позитивном векторе взаимопринятия между ними. Обнаружено сходство авто- и гетеростереотипов каждого из этносов. Анализ данных подчеркивает устойчивость, неизменность и межпоколенность проявлений национального характера, так как значимых изменений за последние десятилетия в этнических образах русских, татар и чувашей не наблюдается. Представлена попытка анализа причинно-следственных связей возникновения и проявления этнических образов многочисленных народов Татарстана. Продемонстрирован анализ детерминант духовной культуры народов, раскрытых в их национальном характере.

Ключевые слова: духовная культура народа, национальный характер, этнические образы, народы Среднего Поволжья, авто- и гетеростереотипы, причинно-следственные связи

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Ethnic stereotypes in the views of the Russians, the Tatars and the Chuvash people living in the Middle Volga Region

This article is concerned with results of ethnographical studies examining national character of numerous nations from the Middle Volga Region: Russian, Tatar and Chuvash. Also intellectual culture of nations is shown in ethnic stereotypes, visualizations of their nation's pattern and representatives from other nationalities. The research is of longitudinal nature and has been conducted for 30 years. The first step was organized in 1998, then 2008. The results of the present step were represented in 2018 and population coverage is more than 1005 people at the last step.

There were conducted multiaxial analysis of study's results as various groups of population were involved and these groups were distinguished by place of residence (town/village) and age. The sampling shows broad picture of the modern perception of Russian, Tatar and Chuvash characters against each other, as well as their autostereotypes. Positive mutual characters have been detected. Likeness between auto- and heterostereotypes each of ethnos was found out. Data analysis emphasizes stability, permanence and inter-generational demonstration of the national character as there are no any changes in ethncal characters of Russian, Tatars and Chuvashes in the past decade. The article has a try at disclosing causative-consecutive relations of ethnical characters of titular Tatarstan nation's origin and appearance. There is shown determinant analysis of spiritual culture of the nations discovered in their national character.

Key words: nations spiritual culture, national character, ethnic images, peoples of the middle Volga region, causative-consecutive relations

For Reference:
Introduction

In recent decades, Russian society has undergone fundamental changes. The following has been transformed: the state boundaries, the rulers, the social system and the goals in the citizens’ life. The socio-political system entails, among other things, the transformation of people’s spiritual culture. Such changes require adaptation. All segments of the population, both in the social aspect and in the age section, need to adapt to the changing conditions of the social environment. Characteristic for people orientations are lost in the period of transformation.

The process of citizens’ adaptation is closely related with such a phenomenon as ethnic identity. It is ethnic identity that acts as a support in the situation of loss of socially significant orientations. It is necessary to check by trial and error what changes have undergone motivational and value orientations of people and how it will affect the new social situation. The difficulties, associated with the disclosure of the phenomenon of social rehabilitation, are drawn. Particularly, we are interested in aspects of the society transformation impact on the spiritual culture of the nation, which is reflected in the ethnic consciousness. The study of the spiritual culture of each nation requires a special reverent attitude. On the one hand, ethnic beliefs of people are verified for centuries and any attempts to influence them are rigid. On the other hand, we should not forget that ethnicity is extremely emotional and unverified external factors can shake it and provoke a rapid change in its emotional pole.

Disclosure and designation of the determinants of the native ethnic group spiritual culture allows seeing the inner world of the interaction subjects and perhaps looking at the unconscious layers of ethnic representatives’ consciousness. Interaction vectors’ building, based on the study of the spiritual culture of the nation, is important in various fields: from the educational environment to the adoption of sound management decisions.

The phenomena of ethnic identity are maximally hidden. We can observe and study only the external behavioral reactions of the ethnic group. These behavioral symptoms are an integral part of national consciousness and national character of the ethnic representative.

Characteristic features of ethnic representatives are revealed almost in any situation. For example, when we observe the dances of different peoples, we indicate that the dancer’s body movements are different. In European countries, despite their compact settlement, the dance dynamics sharply differs. The Spaniard does not dance like the Frenchman. Dancing of the Englishman is not like dancing of the Greek. Some dance emotionally, others – with restraint, thirds – sensually, weightlessly, easily etc. Confirmation of these facts we encounter in works of literature and art.

Professional, social affiliation has a direct impact on the formation of the national consciousness of the ethnic group. V. Kozlov considers that this fact is more characteristic of many nations. For example, there are clear differences in the mental make-up of people depending on their social status: agricultural workers, trade representatives or civil servants. We get acquainted with these differences in the works of ethnographers throughout Russia. For example, the Siberian is not similar in his behavior to the native of Volga region, the St. Petersburg teacher – to the Tambov farmer. But at the same time, there are some common dominants in the national character, which are stable and constant for the majority of representatives of a single ethnic group [Sadokhin, 2011, p.57].
This conception of the "basic personality" coincides with that used by western researchers. Everyone is characterized by inclinations, ideas, and ways of communication with other people. It is these ways of communication that make an individual capable to perceive a certain culture and ideology. Exactly they allow individuals to achieve adequate satisfaction and stability within the order established by the nation.

R. Linton, A. Inkeles, D. Levinson in their works, in the course of the study of the national character of personality, isolate the features of its basic or modal sides [Inkeles, Levinson, 1969, p.432]. But we must take into account that over time national characteristics of ethnic groups undergo changes. This is similar to how a person changes with aging. Despite the changes, the "core" is saved.

Ethnic identity can be measured. To do this, it is necessary to define ethnic stereotypes. They are the indicators of ethnic community originality [Stefanenko, 2006, p. 137]. Ethnic stereotypes have an important function. They affect human behavior and determine the nature of his/her activities including his/her ethno-cultural socialization. They influence how people, based on the accepted national attitudes, experience positive or negative emotions towards each other in interethnic interaction in different social situations. Ethnic stereotype includes psychological knowledge about the world and thereby assume a reflection of the differences between nations. At the heart of the dichotomy "We are They" two of its most important components are revealed. Autostereotype is a set of attributive features peculiar to representatives of their ethnic group. Heterostereotype is a set of characteristic qualities peculiar to representatives of other national groups. Autostereotype and heterostereotype are not independent units. These are interdependent components of self-consciousness of a person or a community. The content of ethnic stereotype is based on the "knowledge" of universal qualities of ethnic representatives (ethnophors). An ethnophor is an individual, a representative of a national group. People tend to evaluate other ethnic groups through the prism of the values of their own ethnic group. Therefore, if there are distortions in the perception, it is most often associated with the ethnophor’s level of education, his/her professional sphere and social status.

Materials and methods

We have established a longitudinal study that was aimed to investigate the characteristics of Tatarstan’s titular nations’ intellectual culture; especially we were interested in ethnic stereotypes and steadiness of three nationalities which were most common in the Middle Volga Region: the Russians, the Tatars and the Chuvashes. The ethnopsychological questionnaire was implemented in practice [Yusupov, 2014, p. 77]. The first stage was arranged in 1998 and the sample size was 578 people, the next stage was held in 2008, where 946 people participated (the Russians – 327, the Tatars – 325, the Chuvashes – 294). The results of the last stage were presented in 2018 and the sample size amounted 1005 people, 342 among them were the Russians, 354 – the Tatars and 309 – the Chuvashes. The sample was as representative as possible and different population groups were involved in the study. Population groups were distinguished by occupation, place of living (town/village) and age. The questionnaire results of 2018 has special importance, as Tatarstan witnessed the so-called “language issue”, when negative dealing with mutual acceptance between the major nations of Tatarstan splashed out on the Internet.
Discussion of the findings of the study

By analyzing collected over the past 30 years data one should point out that radically significant changes in ethnic images of the Russians, the Tatars and the Chuvash are not observed. Minor fluctuations within 1-2% have not significant impact on the survey results. The ratio of positive and negative ethnic stereotypes also shows no important differences within a stipulated time-frame. Consequently, we assume that the Internet is not reliable field to get information about manifestation of intellectual culture of a community. We confirm stability and constancy of ethnic stereotypes to changes once again.

Let’s consider the results of the questionnaire. Answering about the Russians, the representatives of the Tatar nationality pointed primarily to their kindness, generosity and openness. The Russian representatives point out that the Tatars have diligence (33%), cleanliness (27%) and hospitality (36%). According to the Russians and Chuvashes’ opinion, the undesirable qualities in the manifestations of the Tatars’ character are nationalism and cunning (38%). The Russians write about the Tatars that they are hardworking and hospitable and point out that the Tatars are characterized by a high degree of community. The Russians outline in themselves kindness and openness and reproach for addiction to alcohol (30%) and laziness (31%). The identical results regarding the Russians were noted by the Chuvashes and the Tatars’ answers. N. A. Berdyaev pointed out that the Russians have very positive characteristic features. And among negative ones he identified superficial attitude to labor. A.M. Gorky wrote: “We, the Russians, are mainly talented, but lazy-minded” [quote from Krysko, 2004, p. 150].

70% of the Russians and the Tatars point out that high degree of efficiency is one of the paramount qualities of the Chuvashes. Furthermore, they are characterized by such qualities as persistence, honesty, good nature and sloppiness. This is consistent with their auto-stereotypes. Hospitality and diligence take the first and the second places in the ethnic stereotypes of the Tatars. In addition, cleanliness and cunning, clannishness and nationalism are mentioned.

The presented questionnaire solve not only sociological objectives on identifying ethnic stereotypes of Tatarstan’s nationalities, but ethnographical ones, as an attempt to reveal cause-and-effect relationships on problems of occurrence and manifestation of ethnic representations of ethnic groups. Let’s concentrate on what was meant by the Tatars’ nationalism. Today, in the 21st century, this concept has lost the meaning that was invested in it at the end of the 20th century. The development of the national culture was “frozen” in the Bolshevism period, and only in the 90’s the resonance was regained. These issues deal with religion, culture and education. The issue of historical memory restoration has the main role here. During the Kazan Khanate period freedom of the Tatar nationality was lost and conquered by force of the neighbor. The Tatar can reproach neighbor-nationality for the victim motive, which has existed since the old times. From that time and still there is a condition of income distribution in favor of the center, at the same time, lands are ruined by oil fields, and the environment is being polluted; there is a desire to become more independent from the centre and solve autonomously certain issues [Sagitova, 1998, p. 130].

In our study, the Tatars include nationalism, but it is not personality-oriented one. There 2 types of the nationalism in sociology. 1) An apolitical nationalism, that takes into consideration ethno-cultural characteristics, i.e. patrimonial identity. 2) A political
nationalism, which is based on civil identity [Sagitova, 1998, p. 89]. In most cases, only the predominance of a particular type of group solidarity is noted. Therefore, the nationalism discovered in our studies is not synonymous with ethnocentrism. Because, despite the historical memory, our nationalities are always friendly, the level of mutual acceptance of neighbors in the Republic is quite high.

The common list of ethnic stereotypes revealed such a feature as «community» («clannishness ») or «nepotism», as a feature of Tatar nationality. There is an explanation for that. In the recent past the Volga Tatars lived mostly in rural areas. The migration processes such as the transition of Tatars from village to city prove that. Thus, according to the census data and civil registration indicators

The census data and civil registration indicators show that the proportion of the urban population over the rural one has increased every decade. While the proportion of the rural population was 90.5%, and the urban one – 9.5% in 1920, after 50 years (1970) the indicators have practically leveled out: the population in the city is 51.5%, in the rural areas – 48.5%. The last population census (2010) shows that the majority of population that is over 80% lives in urban areas, and 19% – in rural areas. Thus, we conclude that the population is urbanized, and the historical origin of citizens rooted in the village [Sakayev, 2016, p. 89-90].

People living in the rural areas inherent community structure. This life form is a necessity especially in the harsh climate of Eurasia. A lot of people were needed to settle the land. Therefore, many of the economic hardships were performed collectively by the community. If newlyweds or fire victims needed a hut, people performed collectively too. Many personal and family problems were also solved by the community. Therefore, nepotism and community are important features of the Tatar people in particular, and of people living throughout the historical formation of the ethnos. And the Russians living in Tatarstan came here from far away [Yagafova, 2002, p.124.].

How to explain the fact that the Tatars are inherent in «cunning»? The reason of this fact is the trade and business activities. The Tatars were ahead of others in such activities. The reason for this relates to the traditions of Volga Bulgaria. The geographical location from Europe to Asia was favorable. Conversion to Islam and its permission to trade activities. In the history of Russia the traders had no legal guarantees. The traders were focused on trade through intermediaries. That kind of trade was less dangerous and more profitable. The Tatars were practical nation. However, rapid material success is not the main achievement in their culture. They were also inherent in charity and patronage. The K. Fuchs's works evidenced it. K. Fuchs was a historian and ethnographer in the early 19th century who studied Tatars’ life, customs and their characteristic features carefully. Studying the Tatars he described them as proud, ambitious, hospitable and born to trade people.K. Fuchs identified such characteristic features as cleanliness, vainglory, friendliness and diligence. He noted that the Tatars were conquered and scattered between the Russians, but they manage to remain their customs as if they lived together [Fuchs, 1844, p.23].

At the end of the 20th century, a hundred years later, ethnic studies show that wherever the Tatars live, they form micro groups on the basis of nationality. They are strongly attached to their culture, traditions and way of life. Vorobiev and Khisamutdinov in their work described the Tatars as proud, self-confident, hardworking, cunning people [Vorobiev, Khisamutdinov, 1967, pp.120-121]. The Volga Tatars easily deal with representatives of any nationalities, i.e they possess experience in international communication. Summing up, we may note that the stereotypes about the Tatars are persistent. More than hundred years have passed, little has changed.
Our study confirmed the stability of the established hetero-stereotypes. The Tatars are people who are open for inter-ethnic communication. They are aimed at the positive interaction in interethnic relations.

Furthermore, we are going to describe the image of representatives of the Chuvash nationality. They are characterized by hard work, high efficiency and endurance. Perseverance, good nature, modesty, gullibility and negligence consider as top features of the Chuvash nationality. In the 16th century the Orthodoxy were forcibly introduced. However, many Chuvash still follow their ancient rituals and beliefs. Agricultural rituals foster a good attitude to the native land, the environment and nature. That’s how N.I. Egorov describes the superstitions of the Chuvash [Egorov, 1995, p. 133-142]. The nation was gathering wisdom through the perception of nature for a long time. It became his philosophy, cultural heritage and reflected in the formation of the spiritual culture of the Chuvash ethnic group. For example, researcher A. K Salmin in his works demonstrates that a dog is one of the most important symbols of the Chuvash. According to the traditions, dog serves as a substitute for the ancestral spirits and has a relationship with the afterlife [Salmin, 2011, p.124-128].

G. Matveev, a scientist who has been studying Chuvash for many years, noted that the desire to live by their own labor is the important auto-stereotype for this nationality. They are keen on growing their own bread; pay more attention to the household. Many foods such as bread, potatoes and meat are made by them at home. Every year they sing «Алранкаймиаки-сухи» on their family «кĕрсăри» holidays. This sing is about the agricultural rituals. The important value of the Chuvash is not material value, but spiritual one. «Сакхалăх «мултанмар, ыркăмăлтаныпун» means that the Chuvash is inherent in tact, modesty and peacefulness [Matveyev, 2004, pp.181-183]. Empirical evidences obtained by the research study confirm these findings. These features describe the Chuvashes, the Russians and the Tatars as the closes neighbors. Chuvash men idolize a Chuvash woman. Women consider their men as «teachers», but not as fighters. At the same time an excessive modesty and shyness prevent to solve everyday problems. This is the main obstacle in the unification of the Chuvash in the organization of their life [Nikitina, 2012, p. 167].

The main titular people living on the territory of the Middle Volga region are representatives of Russian nationality. According to the census data, their number prevails over other nationalities. According to heterostereotypes of Russian benevolence, heart fullness, kindness, and hospitality have priority. Cordiality, hospitality, mercy also merits attention. Certainly the Christian religion influenced the formation of the Russian spiritual culture. Religious priorities affect world perception, worldview and behaviour of representatives of Russian nationality. Orthodox Christianity has always sought to cultivate the desire to get rid of negative habits in behaviour. The Christian must be humble, must be able to obey and follow. In Orthodox Christianity God is loving, suffering and merciful. The salvation of man in the Christian ideology is associated with the love of God and neighbour. Orthodox Christianity is different from Protestantism. There is no fear of the final judgment. Self-improvement and transformation of the surrounding world is not an end in itself. As such it is in Buddhism and Taoism. Orthodox Christianity teaches to serve Christ, to accept one’s death martyred and humbly. That is why a representative of Russian nationality is inherent in both kindness and love, frankness and mercy, mutual respect and solidarity [Sikevich, 1996]. Absent-minded behaviour, laziness, alcoholism are unattractive features of the Russians. The reasons disclosing the cravings of the representatives of the Russian nationalities for the use of “heating drinks” rooted in the historical past. Imagine several reasons: firstly, the peculiarities of the harsh climate required the use of alcohol for heating.
Secondly, in the system of subsistence economy, such beverages as moonshine, vodka, spirit were extracted easily. They are often used as a common means of payment or repayment of debts. And the last one is that people mastered the lands of others. The work was exhausting and hard. This required a “pause” for relaxation, and wine was well used for this.

Positive qualities of Russians are the reverse side of negative ones. These qualities are inseparable. Positive qualities derive from negative ones. They don’t compensate for the shortcomings. The suppression of negative qualities will lead to the distraction of the dignity of the Russians. Such ethnic stereotype as generosity, a big Russian soul is a positive feature of such negative quality as “absent-mindedness”, inability to see a business through to the end. The breadth of the soul arises from the wealth of the earth. There are a lot of lands. They have inexhaustible wealth. It is hard for a man from that boundlessness. This spoils the Russian people [Berdyaev, 1990, p. 58]. Therefore, they are not inclined to use their wealth rationally.

Also, the territorial advantage had an impact on the formation of such national traits as friendliness, openness of the Russian people. Russian moved freely by conquering new lands. They had always gotten used quickly to the requirements that were observed among indigenous peoples. They assimilated well their national ceremonies and national holidays. Russians quickly get in touch with other nations and maintain friendly relations. The unifying factor is the common geographical space and the peoples living in it. When communicating mainly individual qualities of people are distinguished, rather than belonging to a national community. The acquaintance with other nationalities occurs in the process of interaction with them [Krysko, 2004, p. 284].

Thus, we have analyzed the determinants of spiritual culture of the peoples revealed in ethnic stereotypes of Russians, Chuvash and Tatars.

**Conclusion**

Thus, the characteristics of the inner world of the ethnic group are associated with natural, psychological and socio-economic living conditions of these nations. And the conditions and factors of viability are the main indicators that affect the behaviour of ethnophors and the formation of their personality. In different situations, they think in a certain way and show similar patterns of behaviour. This behaviour and thinking is linked to ethnic observances and norms, the socio-economic situation and their level of social development.

Multilateral analysis of the research results revealed similarities among these peoples in their auto-and heterostereotypes (see table). This similarity, on the one hand, confirms the positive mutual perception of each other, on the other hand, indicates the proximity in the assessments and self-assessments of these peoples. None of the representatives in the autostereotypes gave only positive answers, pointing out only negative ones to representatives of other nationalities. Both positive and negative features were presented in the mutual determination of the neighbouring nation’s image in all stereotypes.

**Table 1**

Analysis of respondents’ answers on the study of positive and negative neighbouring nation’s image (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>About the Tatars</th>
<th>About the Russians</th>
<th>About the Chuvash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of positive images (in %)</td>
<td>67,9</td>
<td>75,8</td>
<td>69,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of negative images (in %)</td>
<td>32,1</td>
<td>24,2</td>
<td>30,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The identification of similar assessments in the opinions of oneself with the opinions of other nationalities confirms the adequacy of people’s images of three nationalities about each other. There is a psychological identity between the three nations. The proof is revealed similarities between autostereotypes and heterostereotypes. It is clear that the higher identity degree is, the less possible risks in the growth of ethnic intolerance there are. The revealed stereotypes are true. They are coherent and reflect reality "correctly". And we identify the revealed differences in the stereotypes of different social strata by the different frequency of interaction between these groups.

In multi-ethnic region of the Middle Volga, the peoples are mutually tolerant, interpersonal relations are stable. It is confirmed by correlation of mutual representations of three neighbouring ethnic groups in Tatarstan and the disclosure of nations’ spiritual culture. And the study of the peculiarities of spiritual culture in this region is extremely relevant and significant, as the ethnographic context serves as an indicator of the region stability as a whole.

It is possible that due to the current events there will be a restructuring of the psychological characteristics of ethnic groups in the modern world. Changes in the policy, in the economy and in the environment are implied. Then the Tatars will cease to exercise "community", "nepotism". Global warming, improvement of living conditions will distract Russians from drinking. If the heathen beliefs and profane rites of the Chuvash cease to be a priority, they will lose unity with nature, the earth and become later less industrious. But any restructuring of ethnic stereotypes is a long and complex process. This should happen first in the people’s minds, the bearers of the ethnic group, and then in their behaviour.

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