LOCAL SOCIETY: SPECIFICITY OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT
Review of the basic characteristics of “identity” concept in respect to modern local communities (small ethnic groups living in a nonethnic environment are meant) is suggested. The authors consider this category as a boundary cut of ongoing process of development and determination of personality (community, group, society).

Keywords: identity, identification, social group, individual, local society, construction.

INTRODUCTION
In the conditions of modern Russian society, the issues of functioning of various forms of citizens’ self-organization in the framework of arrangement of living space are among the most relevant. Social categories include such concepts as “people”, “nation”, “confessional community”. The most popular concept of the modern Western social theory is identity that acquires meaning of fundamentally dynamic, procedural and, variable phenomenon in the most common interpretation. This concept has an exceptional position in the academic discourse of social theory, as it remains the only general category that denotes a binding thread that integrates not only diverse modern social education (from social groups to states and civilizations), but also embodies the principle of a man’s construction (together with the close concept of “the Self” – “me”) as a heterogeneous complex of mental and social strata of life. All other categories that could be suspected of broadcasting ontological realism within the meaning of sociality were either forgotten or marginalized (“national spirit”, “mentality”, etc.).

It should be noted that in the Western socio-humanitarian theory, presented mainly by the theorists of sociology, “disintegration of national communities and former socio-cultural identities, bound to the natural living territory of human groups and local social context, is mainly subjected to apologetic reflection”[8, p.252-253]. Transition of the modern anthropological research discourse from the formula “blood and soil” to the formula “language and culture” leads the authors to go beyond the study of small ethnic groups and to use the concept of “local society”, “local community”.

In the article “Local community in the social structure of the city”, Parakhonskaya G.A considers the following definitions of the local community, based on foreign researchers. “There are sociological and anthropological traditions of communities’ research in science. Weber M., Durkheim E., Chicago school works represent sociological. Park R. drew attention to the need to explore different areas of the city. Communities were considered as ecological formations, community of people (ecological agents) living in a certain territory. Anthropological tradition considers community as a different socio-cultural education [cit. 5]. Among the Russian sociologists, there is an interest of the urban community study; typology of modern communities is given. In the scientific literature of the last century there were studies of the lifeway of various local groups of the population” [5, p. 259].

The phenomenon of identity is understood as a necessary condition and result of interaction between society and an individual. When defining the term, it is necessary to take into account the constant...
variability of identity, its transformation under the influence of social factors during life of an individual. Identity cannot be represented as a constant, isolated system, so it is necessary to consider this phenomenon in its social context.

Social and personal types of identity are often singled out when studying identity. However, this classification is also criticized: "It is no longer possible to separate personal and collective identities. Individuals now belong to different social networks and groups that... develop their identity, and they copy the social elements needed for self-determination. Today they are faced with lots of choices than previous generations" [9, 7163-7164].

Thus, the key role in the process of identity construction is assigned to an individual himself. The opportunity to get an education gives certain career chances, choice of a living place is conditioned by a high level of social mobility, constant intercultural communication in everyday life requires language skills and forms new cultural values. In the context of modernity, the phenomenon of cultural identity is constantly reconsidered in order to denote its dynamics.

We consider identity against the background of modern processes, including those related to the migration processes discourse and globalization. Castells M. defines identity as a process of constructing values based on cultural attribute. In this process, the author knows himself and confirms his attitude to the social structures [2, p. 160].

So, initially the concept of “identity” was used in the philosophers’ reasoning about the nature of things, their essence, but since the Modern times the term has been used to characterize the feeling of self-identity and continuity of existence in time and space. Identity is also understood as a certain stability of individual, sociocultural, national or civilizational parameters that allow answering the questions: “Who am I?” or “Who are we?”. As a result, at the present time, the idea that identity is inherent only to the subject – an active person, able to think and to be aware of himself, is dominated in science. In this case, we can speak about identity only in relation to a person or a group of people who are able to be aware of themselves and to distinguish themselves from others. For inanimate objects, whether “brand” or “area”, the term “identity” should not be used. It is possible to speak only about their identification by people that is about determination of their specificity and belonging to a certain type, class, group [3, p. 136].

The role of the regional context for understanding ethnic identity is also important. Place, space, regional landscape have importance when we are confronted with the phenomenon of uncertain identity [1, p. 61]. Spatial factors are relevant in relation to both individuals and social groups. The region can be viewed as a history, a narrative. Its perception is a recollection and memory, sensation and development of socio-cultural skills. These skills can be defined as cultural practices.

CONCLUSION
We consider cultural practices in a narrow sense as specific forms of communication or joint activities on formation (construction) of regional and ethnic identity. Cultural practices, as a mechanism for development of communication, are aimed at creating new objects of spiritual culture, filled with new meanings. Bourdieu P., the author of the theory of practices, habitus and social space, wrote that “History of intellectual and artistic life can be understood as a history of changes of the functions of institutions for production of symbolic products and structure of these products itself, which correlates with the gradual formation of the intellectual and artistic field, that is, as a history of the autonomy of the cultural relations of production, circulation and consumption”. Indeed, as “intellectual and artistic field seeks to be constructed simultaneously with the body of relevant agents, defining itself through opposition to the instances that may claim legislative power in the sphere of culture on behalf of the power or authority, external to the field of production itself, the position of intellectuals and artists in this relatively autonomous space always seeks to become the principle of developing their position, and, at the same time, transformation over time of these developed positions first in the sphere of aesthetics, and then, policy ” [4, p. 166-167].

The regional researcher, Popova G. S., offers the following “kinds” of human identities in her paperwork “Trinity in the spiritual culture of ethnos (as exemplified by Sakha). She separates human identity, gender identity, ethnic identity, territorial identity, ideological methodological identity,
ideological identity, social (subcultural) identity, spiritual and creative identity and age identity [7, p. 84], which we consider in the proposed context as components of a single category, that is cultural identity.

REFERENCES