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**Generation of “Perestroika”
in Search for Identity:
Problems and Difficulties**
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Main questions of presentation:

- What aspect of the Identity problem of modern Russian Youth are actively discussed in Russian Theoretical discourse?
- How are the Identity Transformations interpret from different theoretical perspectives?
- How the radical change of the society and its social institutes influenced the system of social Identities of the young Generation of Russians?
- How is the young “generation of “Perestroika” time” different from the previous generations?

Definitions of “Generation of Perestroika”

- “Pragmatic perfectionists” (M.Lisauskene)
- “Consumption romanticists” (M.Lisauskene)
- “Generation of Hopes” (V. Lisovsky)
- “Indifferent Generation” (V. Lisovsky)
- “Skeptical Generation” (V. Lisovsky)
- “Disenchanted Generation” (V. Lisovsky)
- “Cynical Generation” (V. Lisovsky)
- “Paradoxical Generation” (Y. Vishnevsky, V.Shapko)

Starting point: Homo soveticus

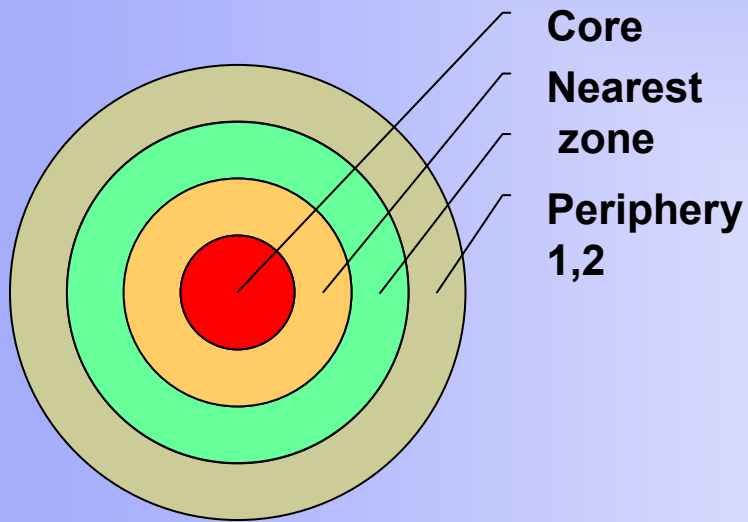


Traits of “Homo Soveticus”

(according Levada’s research)

Declared traits	Real traits
“Person of State”	No achievement incentives
Readiness to serve the State	“Being like others”
Relying on the State support	Double standards
Identification him/herself with the State symbols	Numerous fears
Loyalty to the government	
Trust to the government	
Certainness of his/her future	
Satisfaction with his/her position	
Social optimism	

The Theoretical perspective 1: Identification matrix theory (V.Yadov, E.Danilova, N. Lapin)



- Social Identities is organized into a relatively ordered hierarchic system
- Identity matrix include levels:
 - “core” – basic stable strong Identification with values or groups shared by Majority
 - “nearest zone” - stable values and Identifications shared by Majority
 - Periphery 1,2** – unstable Identifications shared by Minority

Social Identities of Young People (2005) Research “Living with Difference in Russia..” (Mean and Rank Order)

Social groups	Pupils N=1998	Students N=1999	Identification levels depending on the ratio of respondents
Family	4,71 (1)	4,77 (1)	Basic Identification level ("Core") (From 90 to 100%)
Friends	4,50 (2)	4,50 (2)	
Like-minded people	3,85 (3)	3,83 (3)	Stable identification (from 60 to 80%)
Group mates	3,76 (4)	3,71 (4)	
Peers	3,42 (5)	3,26 (7)	Less stable Identifications Significant for Minorities (from 20 to 50% of Respondents)
Speakers of my Language	3,32 (6)	3,30 (5)	
People of my Nationality	3,27 (7)	3,29 (6)	
People of the same sex	3,24 (8)	3,12 (10)	
People of the same social group	3,12 (9)	3,02 (11)	
Inhabitants of the same village//town	3,11 (10)	3,14 (8)	
Rossiyane	3,06 (11)	3,13 (9)	
People of my religion	3,02 (12)	2,99 (12)	
Inhabitants of my Republic	2,85 (13)	2,93 (13)	
Slavs	2,63 (14)	2,89 (14)	
All people of the Earth	2,59 (15)	2,59 (15)	“Periphery” Significant from 5 to 20% of respondents
Europeans	2,45 (16)	2,49 (16)	
Eurasians	2,25 (17)	2,25 (17)	
Finnish-Ugric people	2,15 (18)	2,15 (18)	

Identification with social communities in 1989 and 2005

Soviet person (Y.Levada research 1989)	Post-soviet young person Our research, 2005)
Family	Family
Soviet people	Friends
Professional groups	Groups-mates
Peers (my generation)	Ethnic groups
Ethnic groups	Peers (my generation)
Religious groups	Rossiyane
Friends and acquaintances	Religious groups

Traits of a post-Soviet person (Y.Levada)

- Denationalized, no trust to the Government
- Private person
- Discontent person
- Cunning person
- Paradoxical person living with multiple standards
- Asthenic syndrome – tendency to ignore others/ troubles and suffering and shut oneself off them

The theoretical perspective 2: A cultural play in constructing a new Identity (L.Ionin)

- Subcultures plays important role in reproduction and formation of new social structure by forming new lifestyles and new Identities connected with them
- A Generic mechanism of Identification with new groups and lifestyles is according L.Ionin “cultural play”
- I cultural play, constructing new identity is a movement from external form to acquisition of internal meanings
- The strict vertical Hierarchy in social structure loses its importance and is replaced by horizontal single-order differences



The theoretical perspective 3: Ascending or positive Identity (V.Magun)

- Domination of ascending or positive Identity among modern Russian Youth is analyzed within the framework of the conception of “pretension revolution”, developed by V.Magun. This conception is based on many years monitoring research done by the author, which demonstrate the tendency of sharp growth, revolutionary leap of young generation’s life pretensions compared to those of their parents.
- Comparing the young generation and their parents’ V. Magun states that young people treats higher education as a norm, a stable living standard.
- The highest increase of young people’s life pretension is connected to the material, financial sphere. The desired model is European middle class standards.

Example: The Labor motivation depending on age (Research “Social portrait of Karelia, 2006)

	18-23	41-50	Elder than 60
I prefer to have small, but stable earnings and confidence in future	33,7%	43,3%	49,5%
I prefer to have small earnings, but more free time and easy work	8,5%	20,2%	12,6%
I prefer to earn much, even without any guarantees in future	25,1%	22,1%	9,5%
I prefer to have own business	25,1%	11,1%	3,2%
I don't know	5,0%	1,0%	17,9%
No answer	2,5%	2,4%	7,4%

Example of the Negative Identity: Young people's attitude to personal trust

To what extent do you agree with the statement that "most people today can be trusted"	Schoolchildren	University Students
Rather disagree	31,4%	41,5%
Partly agree, partly disagree	48,8%	43%
Rather disagree	19,8%	15,5%

Example of Complex Identity:

Respondents' ethnic Identity according to type of family (University students, 2005)

	Monoethnic Families (Russian)	Monoethnic Families (Minorities)	Mixed Families (Rus. + Minor.)	Mixed Families (Minor.+Minor.)
Russians	98%	12%	71%	43%
Karelians	0,5%	55%	6%	10%
Finns	0	3%	6%	14%
Veps	0	12%	2%	0%
Double Identity	1,0%	6%	11%	14%
Other	0,5%	12%	4%	19%

Types of Hybrid Ethnic Identities

“Biethnic” Identity	“I have been thinking more often that I am Russian and Karelian at the same time” (Girl, 21 years old,#58))
“Contextual” Identity	“When I live in Petrozavodsk mainly among Russians, I feel Russian. But in my grandmother ‘s place in the country I feel Karelian”.(Girl,18years old,#82)
Negative ethnic Identity	“I’d like so as there wouldn’t be any nationality at all, because in this case we will have piece all over the world” (Girl,18years old, #83)

“Paradoxical human being” (Zh.Toshchenko)

- Many Youth' researchers describe a phenomenon of Paradoxical consciousness and behaviour of modern Russian Youth
- The paradoxes express a combination incompatible things, connections of contradictory to each other aspirations in young people life.
- Paradoxes in Ethnic consciousness: combination of intolerance to some minority groups with recognition of human rights equality and etc.



The difficulties of Search for Identity

- The diversity of standards, norm, lifestyles and etc. make the problem of choice more acute, often causing feeling of confusion and powerlessness
- Weakness of social institutions, high degree of uncertainty in all spheres of the Russian society
- Modern Russian society not only offers new opportunities, but also creates new obstacles to young person's integration into society, which are due to the restricted social, financial and cultural resources

Thank You
For attention!