

ABSTRACT

Current processes caused by globalization and multiculturalism result in opposing cultural forms of a positive ethnic identity, related either to hyperidentity or hypoidentity, that depend on the emotional and evaluative attitude of the individual towards his/her ethnic group. This or that cultural form of a positive ethnic identity leads to disharmony of the individual, both with oneself and society in general. The achievement of harmony is possible only if a positive ethnic identity is a norm of inter-ethnic interaction, when members of ethnocultural groups have a positive image of not only their community, but also take into account the value systems of other groups. This dissertation investigates how it is possible to restore a positive ethnic identity by means of artistic practices, which mechanisms help to construct a positive ethnic identity in the status of a norm in the mind of the individual and society in general. The dissertation has two chapters. Chapter I examines the basic theoretical and methodological principles of the construction of an ethnic identity, the conceptual approaches to reveal the nature of ethnicity, explains which of them has a priority and why, describes the main content of a positive ethnic identity, and how the principles of the cultural-semiotic approach are applied to study the constructivist possibilities of artistic practices. Chapter II demonstrates the cultural-semiotic mechanisms of the construction of a positive ethnic identity in art. Using the concepts of worldview, ethnic worldview, artistic worldview and ethnocultural values, the work describes how these mental structures take part in the construction of a positive image of an ethnic community, and how they are related to artistic practices. To reveal cultural-semiotic mechanisms of artistic practices in the process of constructing a positive ethnic identity, it is necessary to address to the Khakass culture. The dissertation highlights not only the certain historic and cultural events that are important for the ethno-cultural group, but also carries out a philosophical and art analysis of fine art paintings and graphic works of the Khakass art as a representative artistic practice of the indigenous peoples of Siberia.

The results of Chapter I indicate that according to constructivism and the cultural-semiotic approach, the artistic practices offer a way to construct a positive ethnic identity as a mental structure through such symbolic forms as the worldview, ethnic worldview, and artistic worldview. They reflect the consciousness of the individual and society in general, and that what is important for the ethnic group and have the greatest potential for the construction of a positive image of an ethnic community. Chapter II reveals the mechanisms of the construction of a positive ethnic identity by example of the Khakass fine art. The dissertation argues that the issue of constructing a positive ethnic identity by means of artistic practices is dialectic in its nature. On the one hand, ethno-cultural values, created in historical development of the ethnic group, have primordial nature, i.e. they are initially a certain construct, regulating the life of the ethnic group. On the other hand, ethno-cultural values, embodied in the works of art, acquire a second life as mental constructs, deliberately created by a person (artist, viewer) and secured by means of artistic practices. It is a certain secondary construct. Therefore, works of art perform a secondary socio-cultural construction of a positive ethnic identity, using primary constructs of ethnic values as their signs.

This dissertation addresses the deconstruction of visual images, an area of increasing a research focus. Within the context of ethnic and cultural studies, it provides the serious ideological content with respect to the mechanisms of the construction of a positive ethnic identity by the members of ethnocultural groups living in a pluralistic society.