

Asian Social Science 2015 vol.11 N7, pages 183-189

Historical reconstruction as a new space of patriotism for youth

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Abstract

© 2015 Canadian Center of Science and Education. All rights reserved. In recent years Russia has witnessed a massive expansion of national-patriotic youth associations. Following the decades of officially de-ideologised politics and withdrawal of the state from the discussion of national identity young people turned towards various informal interpretations and enactments of Russianness. The article investigates one particular case of such enactment. It describes cultural, economic, and political practices of the Orthodox military-patriotic club "Rus'" based at the Saint Vladimir church. The club is a scene uniting members of various subcultures. It was formed as a place for young people interested in history, and reconstruction of historical military equipment, and a platform to discuss and promote Russian nationalist ideas. The research, based on participant observation of the club's activities, and interviews with its members, analyses internal organisation of the club, ideological orientations of its members, and relations with other similar organisations, notably, with the club of Orthodox bikers. The article demonstrates how in Russia a space of a religious institution becomes a platform where subcultural identities are discussed and negotiated.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n7p183>

Keywords

Case-study, Observation, Patriotism, Reconstruction, Religious institution, Subcultural identities, Subcultures, Youth