

Schoolbook as an instrument of in-group cohesion and social integration: various strategies of intergenerational cultural transmission in the Latvian and the Polish primers and textbooks of Russian emigration in 1920s*

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ABSTRACT: The article reviews a problem set of intergenerational cultural transmission through the example of primers, which were published for Russian-speaking children in Latvia and Poland in the period of 1920s. We compare the content of the alphabet books published in limitrophe states with the content of the alphabet books published in Soviet Russia at the same time, so as to reveal the particular nature and instruments of socio-cultural transmission in the communities of Russian-speaking minorities who found themselves in the actual emigration. Conceptual framework of research consists of culture typology by M. Mead and recent studies of intergenerational cultural transmission and social cohesion. Source base of conducted research consisted off three primers published in 1920s in Latvia and one primer published in Poland. In addition we reviewed two primers published within the same time frame in Soviet Russia. Model of intergenerational transmission in the analyzed Latvian emigrant primers is based on a child's urge to individual development of values and guidelines, testing of behavioral practices, etc., using means recommended by adult community, i.e. knowledge and education. Therefore, Latvian primers «allow» children to be included in network of weak ties, thereby loosening in-group cohesion, but preparing children for integration into dominant culture. In the Polish edition of primer for Russian-speaking children one can observe classic post figurative type of intergenerational cultural

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transmission. This «permanence» of conveyed values and illusion of stability homogenize community, both vertically and horizontally, and provide in-group cohesion, protecting the group as a cocoon from cultural diffusion and assimilation. In Polish textbooks this cohesion strategy is supported and strengthened by representation of external environment as hostile and in-group environment as stable, based on age-proven popular wisdom and support of superior, i.e. divine, essence. Content analysis of primers published in 1920s in Soviet Russia allows talking about reconstruction of postfigurative type of intergenerational cultural transmission. In the context of actual abruption of cultural continuity the strategy of extrapolation of intrafamilial model to the society at large is used here. It enables to normalize current social transformations and legitimates established social hierarchy.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of education; Primers; Intergenerational cultural transmission; Latvia; Poland; XXth Century.

The beginning of the 20th century was marked by the period of «culture wars» in Europe¹, when new foundations of nation states started to rival the previous basic principles of intra-European state structure and ethnic cultures. It is no coincidence that at the time passions ran high in regard to the possibility of inclusion of foreign culture and language in the content of school education. «Primer wars» escalated after the emergence on the European continent of «the second or even the first Russia» that left its homeland, one way or another. In the context of foreign culture environment a schoolbook, especially the one intended for elementary education, becomes an instrument of adaptation for the whole community by means of defining a «starting point» and creating a sort of lens through which new generations perceive and interpret multidirectional socio-cultural influences. The opportunity to define reality for the next generation is at stake on this “battlefield” because it is in the school where a child gets closer to or becomes estranged from the culturally-based worldview system and religion of his/her parents, adopts beliefs about the right and the proper that conform to or contradict the values communicated to him/her at home. Therefore, when groups that coexist in one political space differ in religion, language or nationality, school education inevitably turns into an object of immediate interest for each group, serving as a means of preservation of language, faith and traditions, and eventually becoming an instrument of integration for group and/or society as a whole. Values, perception patterns and norms of behavior, which are communicated through a schoolbook intended for cultural minorities, on the one hand, reflect, and on the other hand, define the strategies of group development in general²: orientation to assimilation

¹ C. Clark, W. Kaiser (edd.), *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

² For details interaction and mutual influence of cultural and social structures see review: B. Steensland, *Moral Classification and Social Policy*, in S. Hitlin, S. Vaisey (edd.), *Handbook of*

or, on the contrary, cohesion in an attempt to preserve identity and culture of exodus, or orientation to complicated work on transformation of identity and norms of in- and out-group interaction in order to facilitate integration of group from a foreign culture minority into dominant society³.

By means of intergenerational cultural transmission society integration is performed in both diachronic, which implies children's adoption of values and norms of behavior of previous generations, and synchronic, which is based on intragenerational unity of value-based dispositions, dimensions. A schoolbook then becomes the most important instrument of intergenerational cultural transmission. That is why development and transformation of Russian language schoolbook publishing in the diaspora countries of the first wave of emigration period after 1917 are of interest for historians, sociologists, and representatives of applied branches of various social sciences, who are somehow involved in the work on integration of migrants into receiving community.

In this article we review a problem set of intergenerational cultural transmission through the example of schoolbooks for elementary education (alphabet books), which were published for Russian-speaking children in Latvia and Poland in the period of 1920s. Content analysis of primers is preceded by a brief historical note on the status of Russian-speaking community in the indicated countries during this period because consideration of socio-cultural context is essential for understanding of the norms communicated by schoolbooks. Further on, in the course of analysis we compare the content of primers published in Latvia and Poland with the content of textbooks intended for children of the same age, with the same goal of teaching reading and writing, and published in the same period of 1920s in Soviet Russia, in order to detect the particular characteristics of content and instruments of socio-cultural transmission in emigrant community. Finally, we summarize the results of our observations and attempt to include the obtained conclusions in the context of the modern studies of social cohesion.

the Sociology of Morality, Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research, Springer Science-Business Media, LLC, 2010, pp. 455-468.

³ See strategies of adaptation of foreign-culture migrants: assimilation, separation, marginalization, integration [J.W. Berry, *Social and cultural change*, in H.C. Trindis, R. Brislin (edd.), *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology*, Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1980, vol. 5, pp. 211-279; J.W. Berry, U. Kim, T. Minde, D. Mok, *Comparative studies of acculturative stress*, «International Migration Review», vol. 21, 1987, pp. 491-511].

Russian schools in Latvia and Poland in the beginning of the 20th century: historical note

After the collapse of the Russian Empire four independent states were formed (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland), Bessarabia merged with Romania, whereas the Kingdom of Poland became a part of the newly recreated Republic of Poland. Native Russian-speaking population lived in limitrophe states, and Russian-language schools were not traditional emigrant schools, but were notable for their centuries-old history.

In Latvia the golden age of Russian-language education occurred during the period of Empire; however, after the formation of independent state of Latvia political situation inside the country for some time was favourable to maintaining of Russian-language education. In 1920s Russians in Latvia possessed rights of cultural autonomy (Russian speech was heard in the Saeima, newspapers were published, Russian schools were open). On 8 December, 1919 the People's Council of Latvia passed *Latvian Educational Institutions Act* and *Latvian Organization of Schools for Minorities Act*. The latter provided to national minorities right for education, including secondary education, in native language; in other words, it provided right for school autonomy. In the beginning of 1920 under the Latvian Ministry of Education Russian, Polish, German, Belarusian and Jewish national departments were formed; these departments were in charge of the issues of school education of the corresponding national minority. By the end of the school year 1919/1920 there were 127 Russian middle schools and 12 secondary schools in Latvia. In the school year 1929/1930 there were 231 Russian middle schools and 11 secondary schools in Latvia⁴. One could also obtain higher education in Russian language; moreover, the work of Russian University Courses was financed from the state budget.

The status of Russian-language education in Poland was markedly different. Whereas before 1918 there were several thousands of primary and secondary schools on the territory of the Kingdom of Poland that formed part of the Russian Empire, starting from 1918 Polish government began to pursue the policy focused on gradual liquidation of Russian-language schools. Schools that wanted to teach on the basis of Russian education programs and in Russian language either got closed or became private. Private education was expensive; therefore, many parents preferred to send their children to Polish schools. Private school variety also assumed absence of right to issue school certificate, which in its turn deprived graduates of opportunity to obtain higher education.

Every year each school had to receive a license for its activities. This permit was granted by the government on the condition that during two years the school would switch to teaching in Polish language. Even Orthodox theological

⁴ V. Gushchin, *Sud'ba russkoj shkoly v Latvii* [The fate of Russian schools in Latvia], <<http://www.bilingual-online.net/>> (last access: 31.03.2017) (in Russian).

seminary was transferred to the status of government institution with Polish-language teaching. Overall, it resulted in reduction of students and subsequent shutdowns of Russian-language schools. During the period from 1922 to 1924 the number of educational institutions with teaching in Russian language dropped by more than one-half, from 52 to 21, by the middle of 1920s there were no higher schools, and there was only a small number of primary and secondary schools⁵.

Government policy of struggle with Russian-speaking population also affected religious life of the country; forced Catholicization of population ensued. In spite of the conditions of the Treaty of Riga and the Treaty of Versailles, as well as provisions of the Polish Constitution of 1921 that guaranteed freedom of religion, persecution against the Orthodox Church in Poland extremely intensified during 1920s: Orthodox churches and chapels were given to Catholic clergy, Orthodox monasteries were forcibly secularized, destroyed or closed.

Thus, cultural policy of Polish government shaped essentially different context of existence for Russian school in comparison with Latvia. However, even in Latvia the democratic solutions of the problems of national minorities' secondary and higher education that was characteristic for the third decade of the 20th century provoked objections from some radically-minded politicians. In 1925 an unsuccessful effort was made in order to change the education act and deprive national school of right for national autonomy. Nevertheless, in the beginning of 1930s national schools became the target of greater pressure. A. Kenins, who was then Latvian minister of education, and his supporters from the Party of democratic center insisted on switching the whole secondary education to Latvian language, but this initiative was met with strong opposition from all the national minorities, and in 1933 A. Kenins had to resign. However, from the beginning of 1930s the number of Russian-language schools was steadfastly reducing. After the coup d'état on 15 May, 1934 the status of national minorities substantially deteriorated. One of the first decisions of K. Ulmanis was liquidation of school autonomy. As early as in June 1934 new public education act was passed, the number of Russian-language schools decreased drastically; by the end of 1930s only two Russian state gymnasiums were left in the country: one in Riga and another one in Rezekne⁶.

Therefore, due to the fact that we discover the starkest contrast in the attitude toward the Russian-speaking community on the part of the dominant society in

⁵ A. Mikulenok, *Problema russkoj nacional'noj shkoly v Pol'she v 1920-e* [The Problem of Russian national school in Poland in the 1920s], «Theory and practice of social development», n. 15, 2015, pp. 105-109 (in Russian).

⁶ T. Fejgmane, *Russkaya shkola v Latvii (1918-1940)*, «Russkie Pribaltiki». Mekhanizm kul'turnoj integracii (do 1940 g.) [*Russian school in Latvia (1918-1940)*, in «*The Russians of Baltic*». *The mechanism of the cultural integration* (up to 1940)], Vilnius, 1997, pp. 129-138 (in Russian).

Poland and Latvia, in particular during the third decade of the 20th century, we will focus on this period for the purpose of this article. We believe that content analysis of schoolbooks which were published in such different socio-cultural contexts allows to specify some aspects of intergenerational cultural transmission theory, as well as to detect similarities and peculiarities in socio-economic, socio-legal and cultural status of Russian-speaking population in these countries and strategies of preservation or transformation of cultural identity.

Strategies of intergenerational cultural transmission in the primers and textbooks published in Latvia, Poland and Soviet Russia

Source base of conducted research consisted off three primers published in 1920s in Latvia and one primer published in Poland:

- I. Davis, *Novaya russkaya azbuka. Obuchenie chteniyu, pismu i razgovornoy rechi po naglyadno-prakticheskomu metodu*. [New Russian primer. Teaching of reading, writing and informal speech by the practical and visual method] Riga, Valters un Rapa, 1923.
- A. Selunskiy, *Veselyj bukvar' dlya derevenskih detej* [Joyful primer for village children] Riga, Valters un Rapa, 1927.
- N. Gudkov, *Naglyadnyj russkij bukvar' po novej orfografii* [Russian visual primer on the new spelling], Riga, N. Gudkov's Book Publishing, 1929/1930.
- K.M. Kirillov, *Russkaya azbuka v kartinkah* [Illustrated Russian primer], Warsaw, 1930.

In addition to these books we reviewed two primers that were published within the same time frame in Soviet Russia:

- P.P. Mironosickij. *Slovechko. Knizhka dlya obucheniya gramote* [Good word. A book for teaching of reading and writing.] 4th ed., rev. and corr. Leningrad, E.V. Vysockij's Seyatel', 1924.

Intended for the first teaching of reading after alphabet books, but still a «primer»:

- I. Sverchkov. *Pioner. Detskij bukvar'* [Pioneer. A primer for children] Leningrad, Gosizdat, 1924.

Obtained results and their discussion

In the course of analysis of illustrative and text content of the primers published in 1920s in limitrophe states for Russian-speaking children we review two key aspects that allow us to form an opinion of the nature of intergenerational cultural transmission and patterns of community cohesion: what values are communicated to children by pedagogical community and who exactly is represented by the schoolbook as a bearer of these values; i.e., whom the schoolbook advises a child to listen to and when.

The members of the older generation, such as parents and teachers, are almost absent in Latvian textbooks. A child is quite self-sufficient, both in a home space: «At school and at home. I wake up early. I get dressed and put on my shoes. I eat and then I go to school. At school I read, draw, play, sing. It's fun to be at school»⁷, and at school, in particular during the teaching activities: «At school. I write. Yasha draws. Katya sings. Varya eats apple. Kolya and Azya are naughty. The bell rings and everybody sits still»⁸. The bell, as a universal impersonal force, becomes an external factor that organizes children's activity.

When adults appear in the text of the schoolbook, they act in one of three capacities:

1. As a context of child's life, deprived of voice and other means of will declaration and influence on the younger generation: «Our family. I have father, mother, sister, grandfather and grandmother. In the morning father goes to work, mother stays at home and cooks dinner, cleans rooms and repairs clothes. Grandmother knits stockings and looks after my little sister. Grandfather is very old and weak. He can't walk a lot that is why he mainly sits by the window and reads a book»⁹.
2. As an object of care. For example, in the first part of the primer, where child gets acquainted with letters and is taught syllabi reading, on the page with the letter D one can see the word "ve-dyot" [leads] illustrated by the following picture: a boy leads an old man who experiences difficulties with moving by himself and for this reason the man leans on the boy's shoulder¹⁰. On the page with the letter [...] Short I/Yot there is a short text "Nishchij" [Beggar]: «A beggar came. He was pale and hungry. The beggar knocked on the window. I gave him my kaftan and a loaf of bread»¹¹. The accompanying illustration depicts a man with a long grey beard and a stick. Apparently the hero of this text is not a child; in that

⁷ N. Gudkov, *Naglyadnyj russkij bukvar' po novoj orfografii* [Russian visual primer on the new spelling], Riga, 1929/1930, p. 36 (in Russian).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

case his kaftan would be rather small for the beggar. However, given the fact that this narration is told from the first-person point of view, one can assume that that this text communicates such pattern of care that children should perform in relation to the needy, including adults. Therefore an adult in the provided examples and in the primer in general doesn't act as independent, strong and in charge, but rather as dependent and waiting for a patronizing support. This pattern is strengthened and reinforced by the following context of adult representation.

3. As an object (!) of cultural transmission, recipient of norms and knowledge communicated by the child: «A letter. Fedot received a message from grandson: his grandson lives far away in the city. What writes grandson, grandpa needs to know; but he can't read it by himself. A boy goes down the road near to the village. Grandpa cries: 'Mishuha, here, read this!'»¹²; «Kolya and mother. Kolya came from school. Mother was at home and was sewing a shirt. 'Read a book, Kolya!', says mother. Kolya read a fairy tale. Mother was glad»¹³. Therefore, the child is represented as a bearer and source of knowledge.

Knowledge is power and sacralization of this exclusive knowledge is performed through proverbs and admonitions included in the primer: «Knowledge is light, ignorance is darkness»¹⁴, «Read a lot, walk a little»¹⁵, «Learning will always come useful»¹⁶. The only found example of an evident intergenerational transmission also communicates the value of knowledge: «Glasses for children. A boy says to his father: 'Dada, buy me glasses, I want to read books like you' – 'All right', answered father: 'I will buy you glasses, but for children'. And father bought the boy an alphabet book»¹⁷.

Therefore, the main value that is actively and clearly communicated by the textbooks for Russian-speaking children in Latvia, i.e., the value of knowledge/education as it is, is represented in the reviewed textbooks as an instrumental value¹⁸. The set and hierarchy of terminal values, target values, are left by the author of the primer to the decision of not even the child's immediate circle, but rather to the decision of a child him/herself: «a child will receive an education and after that, owing to this education, will find out what is wrong and what

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁶ A. Selunskij, *Veselyj bukvar' dlya derevenskih detej* [A fun ABC book for children of the village], Riga, 1927, p. 31 (in Russian).

¹⁷ I. Davis, *Novaya russkaya azbuka* [The New Russian alphabet], Riga, 1923, p. 36 (in Russian).

¹⁸ We came across one more case of value transmission: «My brother says to me: 'it's a sin to take other people's things'» [Gudkov, *Naglyadnyj russkij bukvar'*, cit., p. 37]. One can see that in this case an instrumental value of honesty is communicated and the bearer of this value is the member of the same generation, this is horizontal transmission.

is right by him/herself». Knowledge obtained and occasionally monopolized by the younger generation acquires a sacred status in Latvian textbooks.

In the Primer published for Russian children in Poland we observe an essentially different situation in comparison with Latvian textbooks. The differences involve three aspects.

First of all, parents – mother and father – appear on the pages of the primer as soon as a child gets acquainted with the letters from which one can compose these words: they open the first two pages where the child is provided with the list of words for syllabic reading. Mother becomes a key character for the whole theme which includes two texts and a proverb: «there is no such a friend as mother: by day she is my sympathizer, by night she is night worshipper»¹⁹. It is important to note that in the quoted proverb, as well as in the both texts, mother acts as a protector and a guarantor of child's well-being in the world which is in general dangerous and hostile for him/her: «It's bad without mother. Misha dropped in the neighbor's house. It's bad in his home. Children are filthy, with dirty shirts on, with unkempt hair. Small children are lying on the floor, the other two are fighting and the eldest one is ill in the bed and there's nobody to look after him. At that moment, Misha remembered that neighbor's wife recently died and also remembered his own mother: he ran back home and hugged tightly his mommy»²⁰.

The second aspect that defines the core of the differences between the content of the Primer published in Poland and the content of Latvian textbooks is the place and role of divine and sacred in the texts and illustrations included in the textbook. In the very first basically primer part we see A as Angel and C as Church, while the word «faith» can be found among the first words²¹. Divine Spark is present in each thing that supports human being and brings him/her joy: labor («With a quiet prayer I will plough and sow. Grant me, Lord, a good crop, Breadcorn is my wealth!»²²), beauty of nature, good relationships with the people around you. As we saw, mother's care is also introduced together with God's help. In the following texts this connection is reinforced: good deeds performed by adults with regard to a suffering child are presented as God's interference. For example, C.A. Peterson's poem included in the textbook, where an orphaned baby is sheltered, warmed and fed by an old woman, ends with the following verse: «God feeds birdie in a field, Sprinkles dew on flower, Homeless orphan He won't leave In the darkest hour!»²³.

¹⁹ K.M. Kirillov, *Russkaya azbuka v kartinkah* [Russian alphabet in the pictures], Warsaw, 1930, p. 37 (in Russian).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26

²² Abridged poem *Ploughman's Song* by A.V. Koltsov in Kirillov, *Russkaya azbuka v kartinkah*, cit., p. 50.

²³ Kirillov, *Russkaya azbuka v kartinkah*, cit., p. 40.

By the way, it is worth noting that in the Polish edition for Russian-speaking children address to grim, scary and wrenching topics, such as death, orphanhood, poverty, is not uncommon. These topics are actualized both in the initial sections, where a child is given words for syllabic reading («be-da» [trouble], «po-zhar» [fi-re]), and in the text section, in the abovementioned texts *The Little Orphan, It's Bad without Mother*, as well as in the tale *The Old Man and the Death*²⁴. According to the typology of mentionings of death in primers suggested by A. Lyarskij, examples that we found in the Primer of Polish edition could be identified as “didactic” type: «Death in the family becomes a source of suffering and disaster for children who are left without relatives’ support, but at the same time turns into a chance for people around to show kindness, pity, compassion and mercy»²⁵. This admonition communicated by the Primer edited in Poland in 1920s is essentially important. As all the specified features, characteristic for the schoolbooks of Polish edition, mentioning of death and other tragedies and troubles, which a child experience or may experience, serves for consolidation of the Russian-speaking community.

The third noteworthy aspect is the abundance of proverbs included in the Primer by K.M. Kirillov. Here proverbs are used as the first phrases for independent reading in the section that follows the primer and precedes the texts. They are not separated by any typographic means and are interspersed with phrases that contain no value orientations, as, for example in the following block: «Masha salted porridge. Learning is not pain. Bring us raspberries. Our cats have eaten flatbreads. One’s own home is like mother. Race a horse with oats, not with whip. Good won’t die and evil will perish»²⁶. Proverbs included in the Primer address the topic of labor («No song, no supper», «Don’t rush with your tongue, rush with your deeds»), attitude towards people around, hospitality («The glory of a house is its hospitality»), friendship («Be slow in choosing a friend, but slower in changing him», «Never forget good turns, but forgive the evil done to you»), and also communicate instrumental values of self-restraint («Least said is soonest mended», «Think today and speak tomorrow»), shrewdness («You reap what you sow», «What goes around comes around»), frugality («Many a little makes a mickle», «Money to spare likes good care»), education («Knowledge is light, ignorance is darkness»)²⁷.

Therefore, the textbook published in Poland completely reproduces orientations and strategies of postfigurative culture, according to M. Mead’s terminology: formation of values and behavior models of the younger generation appears as a result of direct unilateral actions and deeds of their parents²⁸. In

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 237-238.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-32.

²⁸ M. Mead, *Culture and commitment. A study of the generation gap*, Garden City, Natural History Press, 1970, <<http://www.countries.ru/library/texts/mid.htm>> (last access: 01.04.2017).

such a case, a child becomes a passive recipient of the “cultural baggage”, while the process of transmission reduces to automatic copying²⁹.

In Latvian schoolbooks, on the contrary, one can observe a combination of elements of configurative and prefigurative cultures. Prefigurative type of cultural transmission, in which adults and older generations can learn and are learning from their children, adopt some more modern behavior models, could be clearly detected in the given examples, where members of the older generation seek help from a child as a bearer of special knowledge, i.e., literacy.

Succession that characterizes configurative type of culture is notable by the fact that both adults and children equally well can adopt patterns of behavior from their peers³⁰. It is the communication of such model that we mostly detect in the primers for children of Russian-speaking population in Baltic states: child characters of the texts are surrounded by peers with the same native language and primarily interact with the members of their generation. In general, this model of culture is inherent not only to emigrants, but also, as noted M. Mead, to societies that undergo industrialization stage: members of such societies obtain new information from their peer partners, develop innovations and novelties, and propel society to the next level. Theoretical connection of configurativeness with industrialization prompted us to perform content analysis of the primers published in 1920s in Soviet Russia.

In the primer for small children that was published by prerevolutionary teacher with taking into account transformation of the previous life circumstances into the contexts of the new regime we find a morning situation similar to the one that was presented in the Latvian primer. A child is getting ready for school: «Grandmother woke Masha up: ‘It’s time, Masha! It’s time, dear, to go to school!’ Masha got dressed quickly. Grandmother gave a hot flatbread and a cup of milk. Masha ate her meal and went to school»³¹. We see here a decidedly different situation: a child is tended to by an adult who takes responsibility both for child’s well-being and successful performing of child’s duties. At school a child is met by an equally caring adult whose professional duties suggest communication of values and norms of behavior, pedagogical “reduction of individual noise”:

I remember how a bag was sewn for me and I was sent to school for learning. My grandmother went with me. She told the teacher:

- ‘Here, my dear, teach my little darling. He is a smart boy but a noisy one’.

- ‘Never mind, - said the teacher, - smart is enough and noise we can quiet’.

And she showed me where to sit on the bench³².

²⁹ D. Barni, S. Ranieri, E. Scabini, R. Rosnati, *Value transmission in the family: do adolescents accept the values their parents want to transmit?*, «Journal of Moral Education», vol. 40, n. 1, 2011, pp. 105-121.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ P.P. Mironosickij, *Slovechko. Knizhka dlya obucheniya gramote* [Word. Book for learning to read], Leningrad, 1925, p. 76 (in Russian).

³² *Ibid.*, p. 78.

One can compare this text with the extracts from the Latvian primer quoted above. In that primer a child gets ready for school being completely alone and at school he/she learns reading and writing surrounded by similarly lonely children. The only behavior regulator turns out to be an impersonal formal signal (bell) serving as law under which everybody is equal, regardless of individual and social (familial, class, ethnocultural, regional, religious) peculiarities and attributes. Therefore, while in Latvian primers a child is removed from the primary groups (family) to the world of secondary groups and institutionalized impersonal relationships, in Soviet primers he/she stays rooted in the primary, i.e., familial or similar to familial, interactions, and it's not a coincidence.

In the primers published in 1920s in Soviet Russia a child surrounded by adults practices characteristic types of activity, taking part in the working process and performing doable functions: «In summer we lived at granddad Pahom's house. We worked with granddad at hay cutting. I wasn't strong enough for that work but I also had pitchfork»³³; mimicking working practices performed by adults who directly contact with the child (as a rule, connected with him/her by blood ties): «Children were in granddad Ivan's house. They saw granddad's nets. Granddad Ivan's children are fishers. Granddad had nets and fishing rod. Children threw the rod and sat»³⁴.

In the given examples one can find again manifestations of cultural transmission of postfigurative type. At first sight this "outbreak" of postfigurativeness in the culture of industrial society that just recently experienced massive political and socio-cultural disruptions is bewildering. However, it is the massiveness of occurred transformations that explains actualization of quite archaic forms of cultural transmission: complexity and unpredictability of the real events in tumultuous times is overshadowed by replication of everyday stable events, and thus dramatic effect is completely erased, «events that should be related to unusual surroundings... take the familiar forms in memory»³⁵.

The tragic and the indeterminable is supplanted³⁶, only the sublime remains: «steady apodictic feeling of one's speciality, all-permeating realization of rightness of any life aspect, characteristic for postfigurative cultures, could appear and could be reconstructed on any level of culture of any complexity»³⁷.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

³⁵ Mead, *Culture and commitment. A study of the generation gap*, cit.

³⁶ Sensitive and scary topics disappear from the primers of the first Soviet decade: poverty, orphanhood, illness, death; these topics were present in the prerevolutionary and emigrant primers: see A.B. Lyarskij, «Vot ya! Zachem zval?»: *smert' v bukvaryah i knigah dlya chteniya v Rossii dlya nachal'nogo chteniya v Rossii konca XIX — nachala XX v.*, *Nachalo ucheniya detyam: rol' knigi dlya nachal'nogo obucheniya v istorii obrazovaniya i kul'tury*. [*"Here I am! What was the matter?": the death in the primers and readers for the initial reading in Russia in the late XIX — early XX century*, in *The Beginning of exercise for children: the role of the books for primary education in the history of education and culture*], Moscow, 2014, pp. 231-254 (in Russian).

³⁷ Mead, *Culture and commitment. A study of the generation gap*, cit.

Let's focus on the strategies for society consolidation that are realized in the Soviet primers. Here the elder members of primary social groups also become child's guides to the broad ideologically charged social environment, in the meantime always staying with him/her through actions and objects, providing his/her connection to primary group of blood relations. At the same time a child provides their connection with the environment; through the correct use of right gift he/she legitimates adults' loyalty, granting them the status of «proper citizens»:

The drum.

Uncle Ivan bought a drum on the market and gave it to Vasya.

Vasya put the drum on, went outside, started singing a song, while beating on the drum:

That's us, that's us,

We're pi-o-neers!

We're young, but we are

Revo-lu-tio-na-ries!

Our Vasya is a pioneer. He's got a scarlet band on his shirt³⁸.

In such a way a slightly older, or rather more prepared (who learned the ropes of elementary [political] science), child enters into denser transmission flow. Apart from the members of primary groups, society as a whole becomes a bearer of values and patterns of behavior. One can also see gradual changes in “transmission straps”, i.e., forms and instruments of value transmission. Not only adult family members but also symbolic forms play a direct role in child's life and engage him/her to participate in the working activity:

We came to the classroom and saw a new big framed portrait on the wall with red and black ribbons around the frame.

The teacher said to us:

– Look, children: This is LENIN'S portrait. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was a friend of working people. And you, be friends of worker and peasant!

We stood up and everybody said loudly:

– ALWAYS PREPARED!³⁹.

In the primer intended for children of older age one can observe the same logic of narration: first of all, the fact of intergenerational succession is stated («Our city stands on river. There is a plant on the shore of our river. Our river is called Neva. Even our grandfathers lived on it»⁴⁰) and a child's place in this vertical structure of cultural reproduction is defined («Masha and Misha lived at the plant. There are houses and cabins at the plant. Misha's father is

³⁸ Mironosickij, *Slovechko*, cit., p. 71.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁴⁰ I. Sverchkov, *Pioner. Detskij bukvar'* [Pioneer. A children's primer], Leningrad, 1924, p. 17 (in Russian).



Pic. 1. *Our revolution*⁴⁵

at the plant. And Misha's mother is at the plant. Misha and Masha are little»⁴¹; «Petya and Sima are pioneers. Petya and Sima have a work. Petya and Sima worked. Petya and Sima are workers' children. Petya and Sima's mother and father are workers. Their father is a worker»⁴²). Further on, representation of grandfathers' and fathers' experience as a model of life for children becomes a foundation for forming of intergenerational cultural transmission line: «We are pioneers, workers' children. Young pioneers. Young revolutionaries. Workers' children»⁴³. Children are united as one whole “We” with the “heroes of revolution”: «We had a revolution. Before the revolution we were slaves. We worked for the rich. Our plants were their plants. Our houses were their houses. We were slaves. We lived like slaves. 8 years have passed since we are not slaves. Plants are ours. We are sated, have shoes and clothes. We feel good». On the accompanying illustration (dwg. 1) one can see a demonstration of workers, where among other mottos there is one that reads «Children are our future», and this future walks in the forefront: the future of children is represented as continuation of their grandfathers' and fathers' fate, but now they are introduced as a force that is generalized in abstract concept: «We, young pioneers, are children of revolution»⁴⁴.

Afterwards, the vertical structure of cultural transmission is specified and hierarchized:

Our posters.

Those are our posters.

Always forward!

Pioneers take over from Komsomol members and communists.

We, pioneers, are young revolutionaries.

Pioneers are children of working people [...]

Pioneer is faithful to the cause of the working class and Ilyich's legacy. Pioneer is a younger brother and helper of Komsomol member and communist⁴⁶.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 97.

Through the family categories, such as «children» and «younger brother», blood tie unity is actualized again and the process of transmission acquires the form of direct transfer of behavior patterns from ancestors to descendants.

Intergenerational cultural transmission in different cultural contexts: succession and interruptions

Intergenerational cultural transmission is an important basis of social stability. Due to its connection between different generations is maintained, culture-specific knowledge and beliefs are preserved and behavior models are reproduced⁴⁷. After the content analysis of the primers published in the same period but in different socio-cultural contexts we detected three types of strategies of vertical (intergenerational) cultural transmission.

The first type is a classic postfigurative type that represents transfer of cultural traditions in the intact form from older generations to younger. We find it in the schoolbook published in Poland for Russian-speaking children. Texts included in the schoolbook largely replicate the content of Russian prerevolutionary primers, with original cautionary tales and folklore material, such as proverbs. This “permanence” of conveyed values and illusion of stability homogenize community, both vertically and horizontally, and provide in-group cohesion, protecting the group as a cocoon from cultural diffusion and assimilation. Representation of the external environment as hostile in these schoolbooks becomes the first stage in the development of Russian people cohesion strategy. If we list all these stages one by one, we observe the following picture: an image of hostile and dangerous environment is created, with insiders as a relative guarantee of well-being. In this case, insiders are the people who have blood ties to a child, i.e. family, and in a broader circle they are compatriots, members of Russian community. This transition from blood ties to cultural ties is performed through the inclusion of Divine Spark in the Primer. Considering persecution against the Orthodox Church in Poland during the historical period in question, resort to God in the schoolbook’s texts becomes rather powerful instrument of cohesion. In the world full of ill-wishers, where child’s well-being depends only on blood relatives, but where these relatives are also under threat, there is nobody to trust in other than God. Here one can see the complete implementation of E. Durkheim’s ideas about the essence and functions of religion: religious beliefs are collective and the notion that grants religion the role of connecting and forming element of the whole human life is not the one about religion as an abstract idea, but rather as participation

⁴⁷ U. Schönplugg, *Intergenerational transmission of values: The role of transmission belts*, «Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology», vol. 32, n. 2, 2001, pp. 174-185.

in social life that takes place on its basis. That is why religious beliefs and actions are social life itself. Authority and power of religion are authority and power of society, intensity of religion reveals the principal aspect of social life. Religion is a society itself; it is the center of the social aspects that possess the quality of sacredness. Hence the almost infinite influence of religion on culture, personality and the main principles of human thinking as well⁴⁸.

Thus, by means of construction of external environment as hostile and in-group environment as stable the grounds for social cohesion in both synchronic and diachronic aspects are formed. Intergenerational cohesion is also reinforced by the noted communication of “ancient wisdom”: an abundance of value-charged statements and proverbs that were included in the Primer with an obvious methodological goal of training the skills of composing words from letters and phrases from words, as well as a latent didactic goal of constructing a vertical structure of cultural succession and imbuing the new generation with wisdom of the previous one.

The content analysis of the primers published in 1920s in Soviet Russia reveals a seemingly paradoxical situation: despite the actual interruption of cultural succession as a result of fundamental changes of life circumstances in the country, the primer represents postfigurative type of intergenerational cultural transmission, whereas intrafamilial intergenerational model is extrapolated to the society in general. On the one hand, it permits to normalize already happened and still happening transformations (through the adoption of everyday practices of average actors), on the other hand, it legitimates established social hierarchy (through its likening to intrafamilial structure). Therefore, construction of model of cultural transmission in public (pedagogical) discourse also quite successfully performs stabilizing function, creating illusion of reproduction of previous (intrafamilial, domestic, everyday) channels of transmission, in fact, filling them with ideologically charged content. One way or another, connection between generations is shown and stated as preserved and even reinforced.

The model of intergenerational transmission represented in Russian-Latvian primers substantially differs from these models. In families of migrants and ethnic minorities the degree of similarity between values of parents and children theoretically should differ from the degree of similarity between values of parents and children in majority groups. In the case of migrants and ethnic minorities it is important to understand that both children and parents are involved in the process of acculturation⁴⁹; experience obtained by them is not always the same and they are not always oriented to the same reference groups. Goals of migrant parents and children in the new cultural environment could be

⁴⁸ YU.N. Davydov, *Istoriya teoreticheskoj sociologii* [History of the theoretical sociology], Moscow, RAS, 2015, p. 276 (in Russian).

⁴⁹ P. Vedder, J. Berry, C. Sabatier, D. Sam, *The intergenerational transmission of values in national and immigrant families: The role of zeitgeist*, «Journal of Youth and Adolescence», vol. 38, n. 5, 2009, pp. 642-653.

different⁵⁰. In view of this, additional value differences could emerge between migrant children and their parents, apart from those that appear as a result of imperfection of socialization process⁵¹. In Latvian textbooks for Russian-speaking minority a child apparently doesn't need protection and constant care⁵², he/she is quite emancipated and is encouraged by adult community to individually develop values and guidelines, test behavioral practices, etc., using means recommended by adult community, i.e. knowledge and education. Therefore, we observe institutionalization of intergenerational interruption: parents, whose cultural values and developed behavior patterns could become irrelevant to new conditions, recede into the background, their influence on the younger generation is minimized. As shown above, the value of education becomes the only indisputable cultural value; however it doesn't restrict goals that are probably vague to adults themselves, but just defines means for achieving the goals that children are advised to find on their own in the new socio-cultural environment. It is likely that intergenerational transmission of values shouldn't be always perceived as undoubtedly adaptive phenomenon because on the course of social changes younger generations more often face new difficulties and tasks to which "old" decisions doesn't correspond⁵³. Significant similarity between values of parents and children in the majority's families indicates successful adoption of social values, whereas in families of migrants and ethnic minorities integrative potential of the next generations could increase as the distance from the values of their parents and grandparents grows.

Therefore, cohesion patterns conveyed by the primers of 1920s have different vectors intended for solution of different tasks: closing inside cultural linguistic enclaves and lowering of their walls for successful integration. Primers for Russian-speaking children published in Poland focus their efforts on the struggle against denationalization of Russian children, consolidate the community of Russian emigrants in resistance against dominant culture through actualization of "strong" blood ties. Latvian primers, on the contrary, allow children to be included in network of weak ties, thereby preparing children for integration into dominant culture of the host society. In this article we reviewed both types and compared them with the situation in new Russia.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ J.S. Phinney, A. Ong, T. Madden, *Cultural values and intergenerational discrepancies in immigrant and non-immigrant families*, «Child Development», vol. 71, n. 2, 2000, pp. 528–539.

⁵² See the first section of the article where we describe friendliness of the host population towards minorities and prosperity of Russian schools during the period in question.

⁵³ I. Albert, G. Trommsdorff, L. Wisnubrata, *Intergenerational transmission of values in different cultural contexts: A study in Germany and Indonesia*, in A. Gari (ed.), *Quod erat demonstrandum: From Herodotus ethnographic journeys to cross-cultural research*, Athens, Pedio, 2009, pp. 221-230.