

MORAL COORDINATES WITHIN INTERSUBJECTIVE WORLD OF MODERN YOUNGER GENERATION: RESULTS OF THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This paper presents the results of a phenomenological analysis of an intersubjective world of modern Nizhny Novgorod schoolchildren based on their assessment of the spiritual and moral qualities, the motivation for actions and deeds of the generation of their ancestors who took part in the Great Patriotic War (WWII). Both general scientific methods and special research methods were used in the research, namely, the qualitative sociological method of a phenomenological analysis. A theoretical overview is given of the central idea in Alfred Schütz's concept of intersubjective world. The empirical basis of the research included 300 essays of schoolchildren, which were chosen for the contest within the city interactive event The Victory Project, dedicated to the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the victory in WWII. The research revealed that modern schoolchildren, despite knowing about their legendary ancestors only from the words of their closest relatives, honor the memory of their great grandparents.

Keywords: phenomenological analysis, schoolchildren, generation of ancestors, patriotism, Great Patriotic War (WWII), intersubjective world, family.

1 Introduction

In the year of celebration of the 75th anniversary of victory in the Great Patriotic War, much is said about the need to instill in the younger generation a sense of patriotism and love for the Motherland. Victory Parade, TV programs, movies and books about the war, rare meetings with the war veterans play an important role in telling the young people the story of their nation. However, in the authors' opinion, the vivid look into the history of own country by learning the past of own family, through memories shared by the relatives about the events of those years are much more conspicuous and convincing arguments than some abstract and distant, i.e. "alien" examples. Activation of search activities inside the families to study their own history, information about the heroic deeds of their ancestors who took part in the Great Patriotic War is an important educational task in the overall process of fostering the educational environment in the city. Participation in the search and submerging into everything that occurred at that time become the best teacher for the modern younger generation. Children, who by the example of their relatives, know about the hardships of the war, about the atrocities of the Nazis in the occupied territories of our country, about the tragic price of victory in the Great Patriotic War for the Russian people, will never participate in the neo-fascist movement, will never vandalize the tombs and monuments of the veterans of the Great Patriotic War.

Thus, the relevance of this research is stemming from the need to explore the spiritual and moral world of the modern schoolchildren for revealing what is their common knowledge of the historical past of the generation of ancestors, brave soldiers and homefront workers of the Great Patriotic War.

2 Literature Review

The foundations of the phenomenological analysis were laid by E. Husserl (2004), who drew the attention of scientists to the need to return to the "natural setting", i.e. the space where the ordinary people live and think, rather than philosophers or phenomenologists. According to E. Husserl (2004), the scientists' eyes should be turned not to the "pure" consciousness, but to the consciousness of an ordinary person, his intersubjectivity. Alfred Schütz (2003), developing E. Husserl's

ideas (2004), continued his research into the "life-world", i.e. the world of common people, their experience of ordinary everyday life. The choice of qualitative methodology in this research was predetermined by the need to analyze biographical materials in the form of schoolchildren's essays. Their essays contain both biographical data and emotional assessment of the events, actions, and desires of the generation of ancestors participating in the Great Patriotic War. The essays depict the life-world of a single family and show the moral guidelines set by great grandparents. Thus, we believe that A. Schütz's qualitative methodology (2003) best serves the purpose of our study of schoolchildren's perception of the generation of ancestors participating in Great Patriotic War.

O. A. Nemova, A. A. Chervova, O. A. Sizova, T. Yu. Medvedeva, A. V. Khizhnaya, D. Yu. Vagin (2020) in their work analyze the intergenerational transmission of musical preferences between different age cohorts.

M. V. Zharkova (2017) presented the experience of fostering educational environment in the city through boosting the activities of public organizations.

We have also found some valuable insights for our research in the work of A. D. Andreeva (2019) on developing a mental image of childhood in the parents of modern schoolchildren. M. M. Basimov (2019) revealed the key psychological features of political culture and political activity of modern youth.

3 Research Methodological Framework

Research purpose was to identify the moral coordinates of the intersubjective world of the modern younger generation of schoolchildren based on their assessment of the life and activities of the generation of ancestors who took part in the Great Patriotic War.

The main objectives of the research are as follows:

1. Give an analysis of the intersubjective world of the family.
2. Conduct a phenomenological analysis of schoolchildren's perception of the generation of ancestors who took part in the Great Patriotic War.

In general, the research employed both general scientific methods (analysis and synthesis; induction and deduction, comparative-historical and dialectical methods) and special, namely, the qualitative methods of sociological research (a method of phenomenological analysis).

The object of our research were schoolchildren (aged from 7 to 17 years), who participated in the contest of essays dedicated to the veterans of WWII.

The subject of the study are spiritual and moral phenomena in the intersubjective world of modern schoolchildren as revealed based on their assessment of the life-world of the generation of ancestors who participated in WWII.

The empirical basis of the study included 300 essays written by Nizhny Novgorod schoolchildren for the interactive contest The Victory Project, which passed the competitive selection first at the level of schools, then at the level of the city districts and then were posted in the public domain on the website of Chkalov's Palace of Children's Creativity (The Victory Project).

4 Results and Discussion

In each family, a unique life-world, consisting of unique family values, rules and habits, is formed as a result of daily interactions. In fact, the family life-world is a product of both individual social creativity and collective creativity of family's previous generations.

4.1 An Intersubjective Family World as a Methodological Basis for Phenomenological Analysis

A human perceives the intersubjective world as a world existing objectively, i.e. independently of him, created long before his birth. Participants of family communication through daily interactions create the systems of knowledge about the intersubjective world, which are constituted and passed from generation to generation. This knowledge is created and acquired through primary socialization in the so-called "we-group", i.e. the family. "We-group" is a problem-free space, where due to the common system of mutual understanding the flow of communication is smooth. Joint celebration of solemn dates, housekeeping, care for incapacitated family members, tragical occurrences and joyful events, legends and myths, stories from life, family legends, funny and embarrassing memories, all this constitutes the intersubjective world of a person. Thus, the intersubjective world of the family is built by many generations of the family and forms part of the all-Russian intersubjective world, which is commonly called the mentality. Despite the unique character traits of each person, unique family values and traditions of a single family, there is a common mental space shared by all representatives of a single ethnos, people, and nation, which facilitates mutual understanding. Therefore, the intersubjective world is a product jointly created by the entire Russian society.

Accordingly, in a family, the commonality of the intersubjective world becomes a good soil for mutual understanding between spouses, generations of parents, great parents, children, and the nearest and distant family circle. The harmony of intrafamily relationships directly depends on the commonality of the family's intersubjective world, which is an aggregate of common thoughts, intentions, dreams, desires, motives behind actions, etc. The sociocultural world of a family is a unique breeding ground for the younger generations, where children learn to build family relationships, get knowledge of the culture of relations between a man and a woman, acquire specific musical and artistic preferences (Nemova et al., 2020).

The stock of everyday knowledge is determined by the biographical situation. In the process of socialization, children typify and systematize everything happening around them, which in the future will form the core of their individual knowledge. The younger generations consciously and unconsciously learn to assess the surrounding world, typify everything happening around them and create a value (axiological) scale, i.e. deciding for themselves what is most and least important for them, what is right and wrong, honest and dishonest, beautiful and ugly, pleasant and unpleasant, etc.

As children grow up, their biographical situations also change, and as a result, the first order constructs undergo changes as well, as they gain new experiences, knowledge, skills and abilities, the overall experience expands and the typification process is accelerated proportionally. Knowledge and experience obtained from the out-of-family environment (educational institutions, working environment, surrounding society) are the constructs of the second order. So, the second order constructs include ideal types of scientific, economic, social and political concepts. Then, the life-world of a human is a construct of common, everyday, mystical, religious, professional, political and social knowledge. The society as a whole is at the same time an object and a subject of the intersubjective world, i.e. we all create it and under its influence we all are changing.

4.2 Phenomenological Analysis of Schoolchildren's Perception of the Generation of Ancestors Who Took Part in the Great Patriotic War

The scientific attention to the essays of schoolchildren written in the memory of their distant great grandfathers who took part in the Great Patriotic War was spurred by a strong determination to reveal the moral coordinates within the intersubjective world of the modern younger generation. It is important to understand which values are highlighted by the modern schoolchildren in

the spiritual and moral world of their legendary great grandparents, what is the attitude of modern schoolchildren to the events of WWII and whether great grandparents are role models for the modern youth.

This research presents the findings of a phenomenological analysis of the essays written by schoolchildren for a contest The Victory Project in nomination The Book of Memory and Glory, initiated by the Department of Education of the Nizhny Novgorod City Administration. The scientific, methodological and organizational aspects of this project were dealt with by the Palace of Children's (Youth) Art named after V.P. Chkalov (under supervision of N. V. Panov) and the City Research and Practice Laboratory for Upbringing and Family Issues (under supervision of N. N. Belik).

On the website of the Palace of Children's (Youth) Creativity named after V.P. Chkalov a virtual interactive "book of memory and fame" was created, which consists of more than 300 essays written by schoolchildren as a tribute to their legendary relatives who fought in the Great Patriotic War or made their contribution to the victory as the homefront workers. Below we cite some extracts from the analyzed essays (The Victory Project).

We may see from the essays of schoolchildren that they draw knowledge about their legendary ancestors mainly from the stories of their parents, grandparents. Most children start their narrations in the same way as Momonov Roman, a 9th grade student, did.

Momonov Roman, 9th grade: "Much to my regret, I have not known in person my great grandfather, the grandfather of my mother Kruchinin Vladimir Ivanovich, born in 1913, the participant in the Great Patriotic War, he died long before I was born to this world".

In this regard, a phenomenological analysis of the attitude of modern schoolchildren to the events of those years becomes particularly important. Not knowing their great grandfathers and great grandmothers alive, children derive knowledge from the memories of their immediate circle: parents and grandparents. Accordingly, for family members, knowledge about the past of their great grandparents is important and valuable information that is preserved and transmitted from generation to generation.

Khorova Ekaterina, 11th grade: "I saw my great-grandfather during his life, he showed me his awards, but he never liked speaking about the war, in such moments there always were tears in his eyes. My great-grandmother told me about his acts of heroism" (The Victory Project).

For a family group, the events of those distant years are important and significant, worthy to be preserved in the memory. Here we see a collective selection of spiritual and moral values significant for the family, which constitute a spiritual and moral "matrix" for the intersubjective world of the family.

The young people today are getting more and more exposed to the effects of the mass consumerism (de Graaf et al., 2016). Contrary to the trends of the time, children emphasize that their great grandfathers were not interested in stockpiling possessions, material wealth or personal gains, but were driven by a feeling of deep love for their Motherland and desire to protect their loved ones from enemies.

Vorobieva Daria, 10th grade: My great grandfather was not destined to live to the victory day, to take his wife and children in his arms. He was not destined to see his grandchildren and great grandchildren. He perished in the terrible battles in the Eastern Prussia near Kenigsberg. A peasant from Ryazan lying in the soil of Prussia! Was my grandfather, an ordinary gunman, thinking about strategies and politics? I doubt this. Most probably, his thoughts were with his home and family. He knew that his way home goes through Berlin, and only the victory could bring him home" (The Victory Project).

School students also pay attention to such moral and ethical qualities of their ancestors as kindness, responsiveness, love for the close ones, mutual help and assistance, sense of justice, appreciation of family lifestyle.

Erefenin Nikita 11th grade: During the war, she (great-grandmother, author's note) went through terrible hardships, which made her character tougher and left an undeletable mark on her life. But even this could not prevent her from being a kind, responsive, noble and humane person shining her light and warmth on others. I am very proud of my great grandmother (The Victory Project).

The best spiritual and moral qualities continue to form the core of the national mental code and are passed on from generation to generation as being significant. The memory of the courageous acts of veterans on the battlefield is lovingly kept by their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Awards and medals, memorable award sheets, death notices and letters from the front are carefully passed on from generation to generation.

Urutina Anastasia, 10th grade: "On January 22, 1945, in the battles for the village of Piplovenki, acting in the advance guard, my great grandfather destroyed from a machine gun 12 German soldiers and 2 officers, who put up persistent resistance, and thereby ensured the rapid advance of our units. In the battles bringing final defeat to Hitler's Germany, my great grandfather proved himself as a worthy, devoted son of his socialist homeland" (The Victory Project).

Children highly appreciate the remarkable endurance of those who were forced to go through all the hardships and difficulties of the wartime. Tremendous resilience, self-sacrifice, and resourcefulness of the Russian soldier are appreciated all over the world to this day.

Anastasia Sukhanova, 11th grade: "During the war, Sergei Alexandrovich Paikov showed himself to be a brave and determined man, capable of extraordinary thinking and decisions in difficult moments. It is only owing to such people that our country defeated fascist Germany. Courage and patriotism, strength of spirit and moral firmness, self-sacrifice and compassion of the defenders of the Motherland are worthy of the deepest respect and admiration" (The Victory Project).

One of the important mental traits of Russian socium is the value of hard work. Through persistent constructive labor, the Russian people have created an authentic culture unique in many respects. Schoolchildren note that their ancestors were also demonstrating this value. It should be especially underlined that children draw a comparison between their great grandparents and themselves. Actually, they assess the behavior of their peers, which has a high educational value.

Kashnikova Margarita, 2nd grade: When the war started, she (grandmother - author's note) was 11 years old. At that time she lived in the village. To the west, here was a tower, she went there every day and brought hay. In addition to hay, she gathered crops from the fields, knitted socks that were delivered to soldiers. She worked 12 hours a day at her young age. She could also be picking potatoes all day in the cellar without seeing the daylight (The Victory Project).

In almost every essay, in conclusion schoolchildren write that they are not only proud and admire the exploits of their glorious ancestors, who had to go through the ordeal of war, but also want to be like them, to take the best features of their character and behavior. This is the essence of the mechanism for intergenerational transfer of experience.

Blokhin Victor, 11th grade: My grandfather is my life teacher, he can always give me precious advice that helped me out so many times before. I am immensely grateful to him for everything! In conclusion, I would like to say that each person should have a hero to be proud of. After all, having such close people, a person will always be able to find the right path in life, will always be able to ask for help and advice. I am sure that my grandfather

also had his own hero, who helped him to become a decent man. I hope that all people on the planet have such heroes next to them and will always keep them in their hearts!" (The Victory Project).

Schoolchildren are also concerned about existential problems, in particular, of the fragility of human existence. Thus, many children write that if their great grandfather or great grandmother had not returned from the war, the bloodline would have ceased to exist and they themselves would not be born to this world.

Smyslova Julia, 8th grade: "She sees her staying alive (great grandmother – author's note) as the greatest award. It has been 75 years since the victory in the Great Patriotic War. These tragic pages of history will forever remain in our memory. The tribute we owe to the people who have not returned from the battlefield, and those who managed to go through these years and live many more years, does not let us forget about them. After a long arduous way to the victory, in the hard post-war years my grandmother managed to bring up 6 children, 13 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren. I am proud of her being such a strong person and that I am her great granddaughter" (The Victory Project).

Since the schoolchildren's essays are the informal biographical sources, the analysis of these works also requires non-standard, i.e., not quantitative research methods.

The choice of qualitative methods, namely, a phenomenological analysis, is rooted in the need of a thoughtful emotional reading.

More than 2000 essays were submitted to the city contest in nomination The Victory Project, and as a common thread running through all works without exception is the children's boundless pride in their relatives who suffered the horrors of the Great Patriotic War. There was not a single work with the words of criticism or condemnation with regard to the behavior of veterans and homefront workers of the Great Patriotic War. Without exception, all the works are imbued with a sincere attitude to the heroic events of that era, children's delight and admiration for the life and work of the generation of ancestors, a firm desire to be like their relatives, to take the best features of their character. In addition to the narration itself, the essays of schoolchildren contain factual material about their close relatives, the visual evidence of children's heartfelt attitude (scanned photos, letters from the frontline, award sheets, death notices, awards and medals, etc.).

5 Conclusion

The phenomenological analysis of the contest essays written by schoolchildren helped us to reveal the following phenomena in children's perception of the generation of ancestors who went through the hard years of the Great Patriotic War:

1. Spiritual and moral qualities of ancestors are more important for schoolchildren than the piling of material possessions. The great grandchildren take a particular note of such qualities inherent in their ancestors as kindness, responsiveness, love for the close ones, mutual help and assistance, a sense of justice, always putting family front and center, industriousness and patriotism.
2. Children highlight the fact that the generation of WWII veterans did not like to talk about the war, but that their families keep the memory of their heroic deeds that are a matter of pride for all generations.
3. In each essay, the children's message is that they would like to be like their legendary ancestors and inherit their best character traits and behavior.

The practical utility of the study is the possibility of applying phenomenological analysis to assess the effectiveness, relevance, value and significance of certain city-level contests among the representatives of youth.

The phenomenological analysis of school essays has shown to the contest organizers the value of such events and contests for

strengthening intergenerational ties, reviving the best family and national traditions, cultivating and strengthening a deep feeling of pride for the ancestors who have defended the native land in the face of mortal enemy, and for inculcating the true patriotism.

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