

Constructing Identity through Children's Literature (The Soviet Union 1938–1964)

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Abstract:

Children's literature, as a specialised text corpus, was established throughout the existence of the Soviet Union. This literature, besides its "function" as a fictional narrative, had another purpose as well – to construct the new Soviet person. Forming and shaping the new type of person was the main intention of identity politics of the Soviet Union. The study analyzes Soviet Russian and Soviet Georgian children's literature, composed during 1938–1964 time period. The importance of the study is defined by the essence of identity politics – forming and shaping identity is a crucial part of any society. Therefore, studying already existing approaches and mediums (children's literature, in this case) for shaping identity carries great importance. The analysis of the process of forming identity is crucial for understanding specifics of the history of the Soviet period, peculiarities of development of the Soviet culture, the role of literature in forming identity; also, the analysis is essential for defining the impact of local specifics.

Keywords: literature; children's literature; ideology; identity; the New Soviet person

Introduction

There are different types of identities: ethnic, national, cultural etc. Cultural identity often becomes a target for political manipulations as political elites tend to impact, and try to reshape cultural identity. Forming and shaping a new type of person was a main intention of identity politics of Soviet Union. Soviet ideology was aimed to form new type of person, who would identify with the Soviet Union, instead of certain nation. This would create the new Soviet community - new "imagined community". B. Anderson used this term to define the concept of nation. The nation is imagined, because no member, even of the smallest nation will meet other fellow members of the nation, yet in the mind of each member lives the image of their communion (Anderson 2006, 6). The Soviet people were meant to form similar "imagined community". Thus, it was necessary to develop a sense of belonging to a community. The goal of the Soviet identity politics was to create the Soviet identity.

Even though the Soviet Union was supposed to be supra-national in its essence, it was composed of different societies, that already had fully formed and shaped ethnic and cultural

identities. Anthony D. Smith defines markers of national identity: an historic territory (homeland), common myths and historical memories, a common, mass public culture, common legal rights and duties, and a common economy for all members. According to Smith, national identity can be combined with the other types of identity, like ethnic, class or religious identities. Furthermore, nationalism, as an ideology can be also combined with other ideologies, such as liberalism, fascism and communism (Smith 1991,14). Therefore, for constructing the Soviet person's identity, it was crucial to "cover" these already existing identities. This implied constructing new shared territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, etc.

The most important group for such manipulations were children, which is caused by the fact, that the process of forming identity is focused on next generation. Therefore, new mediums/methods of impact were needed for this specific group. One of such mediums was children's literature. The literature was representing the Soviet life, the Soviet citizens and the Soviet values; Obviously, it was writer's talent and skills, that determined quality and intensity of this description. For example, the whole story of "Timur and his squad" (A. Gaidar) is focused on war situation, pioneers and the Soviet values, while "Chuk and Gek" from the same author represents the Soviet reality insofar as the boys live in the Soviet Union. Certain values and situations are emphasized only few times.

Astrid Erll analyzes effects of literature in connection to collective memory. According to Erll, literary work, with its narrative structure, defines: understanding of meaning of events and their sequence, perception of the relation between past, present and future. Literature shapes memory through its forms, structure and mainly, contents: by representing historical events (wars, revolutions, etc.), historical figures, myths and imagined memories, literature can have an impact on a reader. This way, it can define and shape the perception, knowledge and everyday communication, thus lead to political action, or make an indication for further representation (Erll 2011,155).

To make an impact on collective memory, literature should be perceived as a medium of memory. It should be read by the majority of the society. It could be done by adding the literary text into school or university curricula, by using literary quotes in everyday speech, by canonization or by state-sponsored publications (Erll 2011, 155).

Shared collective memory (by society or its particular groups) is one of the significant markers of identity. Therefore, Erll's idea also suggests the impact of literature on forming identity.

The importance of literature and children's fiction, as a method of impact upon the masses, soon becomes the subject of interest after the revolution. In 1918 newspaper "Pravda" publishes an article "Forgotten weapon" by L. Kormchi (real name L. Piragis). The article was highlighting the significance of children's fiction in educational purposes, as well as outlining the necessity of the new Soviet children's literature, representing Bolshevik ideas (Gaprindashvili et. al. 2010, 117)

A. Ghviniashvili in her work "Studies from history of Georgian Children's Literature" mentions, that after establishing the Soviet state, the Soviet teachers and scientists increased their studies and scrutiny of Russian children's fiction/literature, with special "care" of the party and the government. They maintained the course given by Maxim Gorky (Ghviniashvili 1972, 9). Meanwhile, "Children's

publishing book house” in Moscow was working on theories concerning children’s fiction; at the same time, it was creating history of the Soviet children’s fiction (Ghviniashvili 1972, 10). On the one hand, it was essential to review already existing fiction for children, and present it to children in ideologically proper way; on the other, it was crucial to compose the new Soviet literature/fiction for children. Thus, the main topics for the Soviet children’s fiction were already defined and clear in 1930s.

S. Marshak discussed the significance of composing the Soviet literature/fiction for children in his articles “About legacy and succession in children’s literature” (1933) and “Children answer to Gorky” (1934). In the first article, Marshak asks – if there is a book, that shows a real, changing, fighting and transforming world to children, and not the fake one (as it was before) (Marshak 1990, 325). According to Marshak, it is important to carefully examine children’s fiction that existed before revolution, to make clear what can be maintained as a literary tradition, and what should be feared, as a reactionary remains. It must be divided into useful literature, that would enrich child’s imagination and sugary didactical belletristic, that is soaked in ideas of morality and well-being of bourgeoisie (Marshak 1990, 330).

Marshak presents M. Gorky’s letter to pioneers in the article “Children answer to Gorky” (1934). Gorky states, that he received more than two thousand letters, answering his questions: what kind of books pioneers read and what kind of books they want to read. Writer informs pioneers, that their demands will be declared on the congress of writers. Meanwhile, his friend S. Marshak will revise some part of the material (letters) and publish it (Marshak 1990, 357-358). Gorky’s letter is followed by the pioneers’ letters and their wishes.

As it turns out, pioneers are interested in: everything about a pioneer; the past and especially the revolution, war thematic and soldiers, politics and socialistic work. We must mention, that the same issues, as the methods of impact, were underlined in almost every analyzed source during the research. This makes obvious, that process of forming and shaping the Soviet identity was carefully controlled and conducted, and it was not determined by author’s outlooks about life and ideology.

Regarding Georgian literature, D. Rayfield notes, that closed and the party-controlled union of the Soviet writers, as an assembly of writers, was established in Georgia in 1932. According to Rayfield, this event put an end to inspiration and individuality for over twenty years. Literature turned into propaganda (Rayfield 2000, 212). It is important to mention, that Georgian literature lacked in quantity of the Soviet children’s fiction. However, translations from other languages (especially Russian) were actively practiced.

When discussing process of forming identity in Georgian literary space, it is essential to focus on a notion of the communistic “new person”, suggested by A. Bakradze. Based on a study and analysis of the Soviet Georgian fiction/literature (for adults), Bakradze presents characteristics of the communistic “new person”: first, the communistic “new person” is a collective’s journeyman, who is ready to kill and rob in interests of the collective (Bakradze 1990, 167); second, the “new person” must be voluntary police officer (militsiya), member of KGB¹ and he must arrest members of his own family (Bakradze 1990, 171); third, the “new person” must love only proletariat, simple love

towards fellow human being must be regarded as a weakness (Bakradze 1990, 173); fourth, the “new person“ doesn't care about nationality (Bakradze 1990, 177). Also, there are differences based on social class – woman, who is a member of aristocracy, bourgeoisie, or kulak² (Bakradze focusses on women, however our study represented such characteristic for both, men and women) ruins and destroys a Bolshevik, a labourer/worker and a peasant (Bakradze 1990,175).

Characteristics of the “new person” stated by A. Bakradze, are also represented in children's fiction. They are called markers throughout the paper³. Because of specifics of the research material (literary works/children's fiction) markers are not expressed separately and independently, on contrary, they are mostly intertwined, interconnected or related. In this situation, when issue shows connection to several markers, it is linked to the marker that is more underlined in the plot, during narration of the story; the other marker is represented in correlation with the first marker.

Throughout the research, we analyzed the following Soviet books for children:

- 1) Lazar Lagin “The Old Genie Hottabych” (1938)⁴;
- 2) Arkady Gaidar “Chuk and Gek” (1939);
- 3) Arkady Gaidar “Timur and his squad” (1940);
- 4) Valentina Oseva “Vasyok Trubachev and his Comrades” (1947-1951);
- 5) Anatoly Rybakov “The Dirk” (1948);
- 6) Nino Nakashidze “The Diary of a Pupil”, “Korean Heroes” and “On the Moranbong hill” (1954);
- 8) Anastasia Perfilieva “The sword of D'artagnan” (1955);
- 9) Anatoly Rybakov “The Bronze Bird” (1955-1956);
- 10) Edisher Kifiani “Ten-sheet Notebooks” (1956);
- 11) Lado Mrelashvili, “The Boys from Ikalto” (1957);
- 12) Otia Ioseliani, “The Adventure of Kakha” (1960);
- 13) Alexander Chkaidze “When Childhood Ends” (1962);
- 14) Yuri Tomin “Borka, I and the Invisible” (1963);
- 15) Pavel Kataev “Five Robinsons” (1963);
- 16) Yuri Tomin “A magician walked through the city” (“Wizard walked through the city”) (1963).

The research covers the time period from 1938–1964, or from the start of the Second World War until the end of Nikita Khrushchev era. The selected time period is based on the following facts: 1. The start of the Second World War is a significant juncture in the process of forming the Soviet identity: the core of the Soviet identity was formed and shaped during the Second World War and the late Stalinism. Later, the Soviet person's identity would be based on this core. 2. The rule and policies of N. Khrushchev (often referred as “*otpepel*”) continued the process of forming the identity, though made some changes in it. After Khrushchev's *otpepel*, there comes a new era of Leonid Brezhnev, with its “developed socialism” or “stagnation”. This era has new specifics and peculiarities, so it is not covered in the research.

The research analyzes Russian and Georgian children's literature, written between 1938 and 1964, in the context of center-periphery. The similar markers are underlined, as well as differences in comprehension of markers are highlighted (the perception of markers of identity in the Soviet Russian and the Soviet Georgian narratives/stories).

The criteria for selection the narrative/story was its popularity; how renowned the book was during the mentioned period of time, how big was its influence on mass culture for children (for example, several stories, analyzed in the research, also are adapted for the screen, as children's films. A. Gaidar's story "Timur and his squad" even influenced the whole new movement – Timurite movement (Timurovtsy). Timurite movement was so popular, that it was competing with pioneer organization). However, it is important to note that the selected Georgian narratives/stories are not as renowned as Russian stories (Russian stories were translated and published throughout the Soviet republics), therefore they don't have the same amount of impact. In this case, Georgian stories are selected for their, or their author's significance in Georgian literature.

The aim of the study was to represent the process of forming and shaping the identity of the Soviet person by analyzing the Soviet Georgian and the Soviet Russian fiction literature for children.

The study uses qualitative content analysis, which allows to make systematic analysis of the narrative regarding certain topic, theme, and marker. Qualitative content analysis consists of different methods of analyses. In our study we used two of them:

1. Discourse analysis: this method allows to analyze how is a social reality depicted and represented in the narrative.
2. Comparative analysis: this method is used to analyze the same marker in different narratives, also it lets us compare and analyze Georgian and Russian sources.

The research uses structuralistic approach as a theoretical framework. Structural analysis of a narrative allows to define its integral components (fragments concerning the plot) and determine structural elements, which are meaningful for the research (the ideological fragments).

The results of the study might be interesting for specialists of identity studies, as well as for representatives of the other fields: culture researchers, historians, education sphere. The study can help researchers of culture analyze the importance of early socialization stage in the process of forming identity, the influence of the state on literature and creative field, generally, under the totalitarian regime, peculiarities of forming and development of the Soviet culture; historians – to study the Soviet era as a whole, and the Soviet Georgian history exclusively. And the representatives of education field might be interested in analysis of success and failure of the Soviet education system in utilizing fiction narratives (children's literature); also, the usage of these texts for forming identity, in connection with other resources, during educational process.

Impact Topics and Markers

The Pioneer

Since the study analyzes children's fiction, a *pioneer* is a natural and inseparable part of the

stories. The stories not only tell adventures and everyday lives of pioneers, they also provide examples of specific traits and behaviours, which are essential for a *pioneer*. Thus, a reader (a child) gets full set of markers, compulsory for a *pioneer*. By this indirect way, the markers for a certain position (the *pioneer*) linger in a reader's/child's mind and form child's identity. These traits and behaviours correlate with the "rules of a Young Pioneer". The rules were revised throughout the existence of the Soviet Union. Obviously, it was impossible to construct the image of the *pioneer* while ignoring these rules. In some cases, situation, depicted in a story may be representing a certain rule.

The formation of the *pioneer's* image shows the process of constructing the model for a reader (a child), whose traits and markers are exemplary and valuable in certain culture and society. This process corresponds to one of the concepts of cultural difference by G. Hofstede: the hero. The analysis of the fragments and quotes shows that the process is aimed on constructing the model of the *pioneer*, and not culture hero in general. Obviously, for forming the pioneer's image only by the values given in "rules of a Young Pioneer" were not enough, the process required providing more markers.

The process of forming the *pioneer's* image develops most actively from 1940s until the mid-1950s. Not only there are specific traits represented (such as obedience to superior, the importance of being the pioneer, community/collectivism, cooperation, social work, thinking in ideological and political terms) but there is also shaped the pioneer's negative, improper image (as an example of how pioneer mustn't behave - showing individuality, aloofness, being pampered by parents, being related to bourgeoisie or aristocracy,). After mid 1950s the intensity in the process of formation of the image decreases.

Furthermore, we must underline the differences between forming the pioneer's image in the Soviet Georgian and the Soviet Russian stories. In the Soviet Georgian stories friendships and relationships in general, are more accentuated, than ideology, while in the Soviet Russian stories ideology dictates the rules of friendship. What is considered as being a telltale in Georgian stories, has ideological meaning in Russian stories – pioneer must always say truth, thus revealing your friend's wrongdoing isn't betrayal; quite contrary – it is a chance for a wrongdoer to become a better pioneer and a friend. Also, in Georgian stories characters are referred as children and friendships are formed between children (being a pioneer is not highlighted), while in Russian they are *pioneers*, and only after that "rank" they are children. Also, there are different attitudes towards girls and towards boys, that affect the process of forming the pioneer's image. In Russian, they are *pioneers* and they must act as equals (even though there are childish boy/girl stereotypes, the idea of being *the pioneer* is cultivated); while in Georgian there is a distinct difference in attitudes towards girls and towards boys, that emphasize stereotypical gender roles, despite ideological impact.

Komsomolets

After the pioneer, Komsomolets is an important image to be formed by the Soviet identity shaping process. This is a rank, that *the pioneer* aspires to achieve. As in the pioneer's case, the image of the komsomolets also includes certain traits and responsibilities. However, unlike the pioneer's image, which

served as an exemplary model only for pioneers, the komsomolets combines the following features:

1. The Komsomolets (as a rank);
2. Pioneer leader;
3. Warrior/partisan.

In this chapter only two features - The komsomolets and the pioneer leader are discussed, regarding the fact that these two are often intertwined. The third feature– warrior/partisan represents the characteristics of a culture hero; thus, it is analyzed in another chapter.

The image of the exemplary komsomolets is given quite thoroughly in the Soviet Russian stories: the importance of the rank is underlined; the obligations as a pioneer leader are highlighted; outlooks about politics and battle are clearly defined; also, relations between the Komsomolets-Pioneer leader - pioneer are emphasized.

In contrast to the Soviet Russian children's stories, in the Soviet Georgian stories there is no such well-developed exemplary image of komsomolets. There are representations of komsomolets as the Pioneer leader and his improper behavior. Significant difference between the Soviet Russian and the Soviet Georgian stories is attitude of the elders towards komsomolets: in the Soviet Georgian stories komsomolets are still regarded as children, while in Russian stories they are war heroes. However, at the start of 1960s even in the Soviet Russian stories there are representations of improper, non-exemplary Komsomolets and Pioneer leader. This fact depicts the process of transformations in the image of Komsomolets.

Meeting (Collective)

“Meeting” revealed itself as an important part of the Soviet person's identity forming process. During the scenes of a *meeting* in the stories, the significance of collective or collective opinions are shown; thus, it is examined as an independent marker. Based on the fact, that meetings were part of pioneers' and komsomolets' lives, almost every story describes a scene of a *meeting*. Therefore, insets, depicting meetings, were effective method for affecting reader and the process of identity forming. The features of pioneers and pioneer leaders are thoroughly portrayed throughout the scenes of pioneers *meeting*.

The importance of meeting (collective and collective opinion) in the process of identity formation varies in the stories of different time periods. Until mid-1950s the importance of collective and collective opinion is essential. The traits, responsibilities and requirements are given so clearly and meticulously during the meetings, that they already form certain images (e.g. The komsomolets). Also, the differences between the Soviet Russian and the Soviet Georgian stories must be considered. In the Soviet Russian stories ideology regulates and balances the relations inside the collective (“Vasyok Trubachov and his comrades”, “The Bronzes Bird”), but in the Soviet Georgian stories friendship and age gap have the same power and influence, as ideology. In the Soviet Georgian stories, meetings have less importance in general, compared to the Soviet Russian stories. However, throughout analyzed the Soviet Russian children's

fiction, different attitude is represented in “Borka, I and the invisible” (Y. Tomin). In this case, established attitude towards meetings and collective opinion is not shared, but changed into opposite point of view.

“Us” and “Them” groups

During the process of forming identity, it is crucial to define, who is considered as a member of the group “Us”, and who belongs outside of the group - member of the group “Them”. The “us” group might be extended from two people to certain community. “Imagined communities” - a concept by B. Anderson, refers to the groups, that are too big for its members to know every other fellow member of the group, however, the image of their communion lives in the mind of each member (Anderson 2006, 6). In other words, in the mind of each member lives certain “us” group, that differentiates itself from “them”. The process of identification of the group “them”, affects the process of self-identification of the group “us”.

It is essential to clarify the distinction between the group “them” and the enemy image: “them” denotes outsiders—strangers or the unknown—who are not necessarily enemies. However, every enemy is, by definition, an “other.” The group “them” needs to go through certain process, to become an enemy (Vuorinen 2012, 2).

The groups “us” and “they” are clearly defined in the analyzed children’s fiction, which is important marker of identity. In this chapter groups “us/ them” represent two definitions: 1) Us (the Soviet people)/them; 2) small groups of “them” existing inside the big group “us” (the Soviet people). The second definition is depicted mainly in the Soviet Georgian stories. “Them” as an enemy, is covered in the chapter “Enemy image”.

It is important to show the processes inside the group “us”. These processes were essential for forming the Soviet identity, because they involved distinction by ideology and nationality. The representation of self-identification process in the Soviet Georgian stories is especially noteworthy, because it underlines the development of self-identification process of the Georgians towards the Soviet Union, as for “imagined community”, defining its own identity inside the bigger “imagined community”.

The group “them” is mainly determined by ideology. Because of one’s ideological outlooks, a member of “us” might become a member of “them”; as well as a member of “them”, might turn into a member of “us” (at least partially), because of certain ideological reason.

Enemy image

Forming the enemy image is an essential aspect in the process of forming identity. M. Vuorinen in the book “Enemy Images in War Propaganda” (2012) analyzes the process of forming enemy. According to M. Vuorinen, enemy image, in its essence, is an image of threat. It represents the approaching danger towards self (group “us”), and motivates self (“us”) to stay vigilant, to plan defense (or even engage into pre-emptive attack). The main difference between enemy image and “other/them” lies in their actions: enemy is perceived as a carrier of a real threat, while “other/them” is considered unthreatening (Vuorinen 2012, 3).

It is essential to define where is the *enemy* situated, in order to form the enemy image. Generally, self (“us”) locates itself in the mental center, while different enemies are placed around the definite centre: the outer circle is occupied by military enemies of the state/nation and are called *enemies from outside*; This outer zone contains both neighbouring states and distant ones (beyond direct contact). Next circle is occupied by *intimate enemies*: who live inside the same society, but outside the defining self (in other words, they are not the members of the group “us”), particular class or ideologically different group. *Intimate enemy* is easier to notice, thus easier to deal with. The most menacing enemy is the *enemy within*: an invisible danger hiding inside the group “us”; this makes it difficult to notice and therefore, especially threatening (Vuorinen 2012, 3)

Stories, analyzed in the study represent well developed enemy image. There are clearly defined *enemies from outside* and *intimate enemies*. *Enemies from outside* include: the fascists and the United States of America; also, there are mentioned Entente, the Winter War (the Soviet Union-Finland) and Japanese. *Intimate enemy* is defined by class and ideology: Mensheviks, kulaks, aristocracy. There are also personified images of the enemy in the stories: Wandendalles/Khapugin (“The old genie Hottabych” L. Lagin), Erofeev (“The Bronze Bird” A. Rybakov). Also, there is a depiction of *enemy within*: Serov (“The Bronze Bird” A. Rybakov).

The enemy image started to transform in the early 1960s. From absolute enemy, the U.S.A. turns into “other/them”, becomes subject of curiosity, rather than threat (“When childhood ends” Al. Chkhaidze). Transformations in enemy image includes the fascists: In “Borka, I and the invisible” (Y. Tomin) there is no negative context and tales of extreme heroism while discussing fascists; they are used as a comparison, a measurement for some threat.

A Culture hero. Sacralization of war

War, is a theme covered in most of the analyzed children’s stories. It is strongly connected to a culture hero: the development of the culture hero is represented through the war. Furthermore, there is often shown connection between development of the culture hero and glorifying/sacralization of war.

Despite the fact, that the sacralization of *war* usually refers to the Great Patriotic War, however, for the same reason (glorifying/sacralization of war) civil war or different battles can be narrated (if the story describes the period before the Second World War).

According the G. Hofstede, heroes are people, dead or alive, real or imaginary, who have the characteristics that are highly valued in certain culture, therefore, they serve as role models for behavior (Hofstede 2011,16). The culture hero is not always a common soldier (referred as Red Army man), it might be a colonel or a general, because they are the best representations of the culture hero’s basis. Positive image is created by certain phrases, as well as an entire plot.

The changes concerning the culture hero and war image are clearly depicted in the children’s stories. Sacralization of war and transformation of soldier into the culture hero - processes that took place in 1940s, are represented in stories, such: “Chuk and Gek”, “Timur and his squad”, “Vasyok

Trubachev and his comrades". Obedience was suggested as an important trait/marker for the culture during this period. At the end of 1950s and early 1960s there are explicit modifications: sacralization of war softens and the culture hero is being reshaped.

Labour

Labour as a significant marker is represented in several analyzed children's stories. It is not surprising, that labour was considered as an element of the Soviet person's identity and a marker of the culture hero. However, the intensity of its depiction is worthy of notice. The first story in our study, that mentions *labour* is the "Old genie Hottabych" (1938). After this, *labour* does not appear with the same intensity for a while; mainly, the warrior image is being developed. From the mid-1950's children's stories continue to represent the significance of *labour*.

Therefore, it can be concluded, that *labour*, as a marker is not revealed in the analyzed stories with the same intensity: in some cases, there are only suggestions or remarks; on the other hand, there is an attempt to create a culture hero based on this marker. The story of Al. Chkhaidze "When childhood ends" represents the transformations in the notion of culture hero; culture hero was formed and depicted by warrior/soldier, although, after the modification, the image of a labourer became the essential part of it. Images of the warrior/soldier and the labourer started coexisting as the Soviet culture hero.

The past

The past is one of the main markers of the identity. Collective memory is created and defined by the beliefs about the past, including what is remembered and how is remembered. It was crucial to create common image of the past shared by the Soviet people to form the Soviet identity. Therefore, it was important to form and develop certain attitude towards some historical events.

Regarding the fact, that the process of reconstructing the image of the past in the Soviet Union was based on ideological reasons, the past in the stories is divided into two periods: 1. Before the revolution, 2. After the revolution.

The period before the revolution covers and depicts the hardships of life, class discrimination and hatred. However, in some cases, depending on the plot or character, past might be depicted as unacceptable or odd, but not plainly negative. It must be noticed, that this kind of depiction/marker is not represented in every story.

The period after the revolution, obviously, describes the revolution and following changes in positive context.

The past, together with other markers, determines the formation of the Soviet identity. The past forms the "other/them" group, which often develops into enemy; The negative image of the life before the revolution is created; historical continuity is achieved by the connection with the events from pre-Soviet history, that represent victories and heroisms. It is distinctly defined, what should be remembered and how should it be remembered.

The description of Sovietization of Georgia bears great significance for the study. It depicts the Soviet government as a liberator, whereas the Georgian government and army as traitors. (“The diary of a pupil” N.Nakashidze)

Conclusion

The research has shown, that from the markers of national identity, defined by A. D. Smith (an historic territory (homeland), common myths and historical memories, a common, mass public culture, common legal rights and duties, and a common economy for all members) (Smith 1991,14) special attention was given to the first two markers for forming the Soviet identity.

Naturally, to form the Soviet identity, it was essential to link the identity with certain, defined territory – the Soviet Union, as homeland. The connection between development of *homeland* and defining “us” (self) was represented in the analyzed stories. For instance, A. Gaidar’s story “Chuk and Gek” ends with the scene, which depicts clear definition of the group “us” and the homeland.

The connection between communion of people (“us”) and the Soviet state is underlined in L.Lagin’s “The old genie Hottabych”. Also, by adding the Azerbaijanian and the Georgian characters, the members of the group “us” are emphasized. Furthermore, the hierarchy of the Soviet republics is shown, and the function of Georgia – place for visiting at leisure time.

The connection between the group “us” and marker *homeland* was also depicted in the Georgian story: in “Boys from Ikalto” by L. Mrelashvili (1957). The Georgian language is mentioned twice, as a marker of identity. However, the first mention only shapes the group “us”, but the second mention defines Georgia as a homeland, using the Georgian language as a marker. At that time, according to Soviet ideology, children — especially pioneers — had to be raised as Soviet citizens and perceive the Soviet Union as their homeland. Instead, the story depicts a process of self-identification with Georgia rather than with the Soviet Union. The Georgian language is emphasized as the mother tongue.

From Georgian children’s fiction, the Soviet Union, as a homeland is represented most intensely in “The diary of a pupil” (1954) by N. Nakashidze. The idea is repeated several times as well as the phrase “Socialistic homeland”: Aliko, the main character emphasizes that he is a patriot of the socialistic homeland. This is the reason of his desire to join the battle on the front line. Aliko’s father also says, that he is a patriot of the socialistic homeland (Nakashidze 1957,121). It is mentioned in Voroshilov’s letter: the Soviet socialistic homeland and the patriot pupils (Nakashidze 1957, 178). Aliko’s uncle, Elizbari also emphasizes the notion of the Socialistic homeland, when he tells the story of a battle (Nakashidze 1957,147).

Forming of the *homeland*, as a marker of identity, proceeds together with the other markers, or it is represented through them. For instance, quite often while defining the group “us”, the homeland is also implied, but the word, homeland is not mentioned explicitly. In this case, the idea is clear from the context. Also, there are important differences between Georgian and Russian stories: in Russian stories, the Soviet Union and Russia are interchangeable concepts. This is the reason, why the concept of *homeland*, is not always highlighted; or the meaning of concept of homeland – the Soviet Union and Russia are mentioned

in the same story simultaneously. For example, in the “The old genie Hottabych” by L. Lagin, there is a phrase – the Soviet Socialistic country, meanwhile, they are referring to Russia: when Wandendalles voices his desires, he says that he wants to have Russia (not the Soviet Union) in his possession.

The same happens, when friend of Volka, Zhenia accidentally finds himself in India and tells the Indian, that he is Russian. This phrase emphasizes the fact, that Russians were the main nation of the Soviet Union and the self-identification of the Russians differed from the self-identification of the citizens, who were the members of other Soviet republics. This is the reason, why the concept of homeland has no consistent definition in Georgian stories.

The second important marker of identity is common myths and historical memories. For forming this marker were used different approaches: making an impact directly on the *past*, or using other markers and through them make an indirect impact. The process of developing the pioneer's/komsomolets' image is a good example. During this process, fragments, concerning the past are often used. The results of the research can be grouped around two events: 1. The revolution and civil war 2. The period before the revolution.

The revolution and civil war create and maintain the notion of common past, shared by the people of the Soviet Union. Obviously, there are differences between the Soviet Georgian and the Soviet Russian stories, caused by historical context (The revolution and civil war in Russian, and sovietization of Georgia in Georgian stories). However, establishing of the Soviet Union defines the common image of the past.

The past, as a marker, is not only connected with the enemy image or the group “they/them”, these markers determine each other. This approach is clearly shown in depiction of the period before the revolution.

Also, by using the *past*, impact is made on glorifying the revolution and the Soviet state: depiction of a negative topic is given in contrast with the change caused by the revolution. With this approach, at the same time, the impact is made on a reader, the negative image of the period before the revolution and positive image of the period after the revolution are formed and defined.

After the markers, analyzed above, the most important marker in the process of forming the Soviet identity, is the war image. The war image is clearly represented in children's fiction, both in the Soviet Russian and the Soviet Georgian stories. The process of forming war image is in close connection with the culture hero, enemy image, and the determiner of identity – obedience.

The great patriotic war has a significant importance in the process of forming and developing the Soviet person's identity. A war is understood as an event with sacral meaning, therefore, the death in the war is perceived as a magnificent and glorious. If the revolution and the civil war depicted the battles of revolutionists and Bolsheviks precisely, the Great Patriotic war touched the lives of the Soviet citizens. Both the victory and death are connected with the Soviet people. The fact is clearly defined by the active role of the Komsomolets in the war. The war became the integral part of the komsomolets' image.

The perception of the Great Patriotic War faced some changes during 1947-1963 years. At

first, it was glorified and sacralized; then it became the event of the past with significant meaning, but is not always sacral any more. Despite these changes, for the period mentioned above, the war was already an essential and integral part of the Soviet person's identity.

For studying the process of forming the Soviet person's identity, it was important to define and examine the culture hero. Culture hero, according to G. Hofstede, heroes are people, dead or alive, real or imaginary, who possess characteristics that are highly prized in a culture, therefore they serve as models for behavior (Hofstede 2011, 16).

Regarding the importance of the war, a military man has a significant role. If pioneer and komsomolets were forming the exemplary images, aimed towards certain age group, the military person forms the culture hero, which covers and includes every age group. Following traits: obedience, vigilance and being ready to discover an enemy proceed directly from the culture hero (military man).

There are some transformations in the culture hero at the end of 1950s and at the start of the 1960s. The sacral image of culture hero – military man, soldier, war hero – became detached from the present generation; It has become harder to aspire. From this period develops new image of culture hero: labourer, which forms the new, working model of culture hero. This image starts to co-exist with culture hero's established image.

For forming identity, it is important to define, whose interests are main in the certain culture and society – interests of an individual or society. According to this, societies are divided in individualistic and collectivistic societies. Collectivistic society means that interest of the group prevails over interests of an individual. The study of the Soviet children's fiction clearly represented the attempt of forming collective and collectivistic society. It is important to note, that in given context the word *collective* refers to the group "us" and confronts "them/they", which might be not only a group, but an individual as well. In the stories, collectivism is most clearly represented during the description of meetings (pioneers, komsomolets). Until mid-1950s the importance of *collective* and *collective opinion* is essential, however, at the end of the 1950s and the start of the 1960s situation changes. The significance of the *collective* during the meetings decreases and it is not displayed as clearly as it was before.

The groups "us" (self) and "they/them" are distinctly represented in the stories, however, it is often depicted in connection with other markers. It is essential to define the group "us", which also means defining and opposing "they/them". In the analyzed stories, "they/them" doesn't always mean an enemy, "they" might be understood as a friend.

In the analyzed Soviet children's fiction, groups "us/ them" represent two definitions: 1) Us (the Soviet people)/them; 2) small groups of "them" existing inside the big group "us" (the Soviet people). The processes inside the group "us" were also clearly shown. These processes had great importance for forming the Soviet person's identity, because they pointed out criteria of dividing: by ideological reasons (intelligentsia, scouts, etc.), or by nationality.

The group "they/them" mostly is defined and determined by ideological reasons. The most obvious representation of the "other" is enemy image. Second representation is, when member of

“us” can turn into the member of “them”, because of ideological reasons. Furthermore, because of certain ideological reason, the member of “other/them” can become a member of “us” (at least partially. For instance, when political views form signs of membership of the group “us”, some transitional stage between “them” and “us”).

As it was already noted, the most obvious representation of “they/them” is enemy image. Enemy image was one of the most significant markers of the Soviet person's identity. The Soviet person always had an enemy, with or without certain definition and name. Thus, enemy image was constructed in two ways: forming the enemy image on the basis of ideology, state, nationality, individual) and forming general enemy image (without name). The first case has more representations in the analyzed children's fiction. Also, there are depictions of enemies from outside and intimate enemies (the concept of M.Vuorinen) (Vuorinen 2012, 3).

Enemies from outside clearly depicted the fascists and the U.S.A., Entente, white Finns (the winter war) and Japanese. Intimate enemies are defined by class and ideological characteristics: Mensheviks, kulaks, aristocracy. There are given personified enemy images, one of them is the image of an enemy within.

For the forming and development of enemy image, it was essential to show some of its traits, such as: ruthlessness, cowardness, low intellectual abilities. At the same time, positive traits of the Soviet people are underlined (pioneers, komsomolets, warriors). As it was in the case of culture hero, enemy image changes at the end of 1950s. Attitudes towards the fascists and the United States of America undergo through some transformations.

The process of forming the Soviet person's identity included providing pioneer's and komsomolets' exemplary images. Through those images, reader was receiving a combination of traits, responsibilities and behaviours, that should form the Soviet person's identity; create its basis – the core. Therefore, the markers examined above, are also connected and represented in the cases of pioneer/komsomolets images. This way, the markers are not understood as concepts detached from everyday life; their meaning becomes obvious for people, especially for the children and teenagers, who are the same age as pioneers and komsomolets. Thus, markers such as individualism and collectivism, the groups “us” and “they/them”, obedience, constant vigilance and readiness to find an enemy, become the integral part of pioneer's/komsomolets' cognition, judgment, behaviour, dealing with problems or happiness and victory. Therefore, they linger and stay in readers minds in these characteristics.

The differences between the Soviet Russian and the Soviet Georgian cultures are most often represented through the pioneer/komsomolets images. The research has shown, that there are significant differences between the Soviet Russian and the Soviet Georgian children's fiction, in general. Despite the ideological impact, both cultures transformed the mentioned impact according to the values of their own cultures. Each culture interpreted and represented the markers, intended to form the Soviet person's identity and aimed on next generation (children), based on its own values. The differences were revealed: in relationships inside the group “*collective*”, in the way of forming the groups “us” and “they/them”, in the attitude towards labour; there is obvious difference

in attitude towards the pioneer leader; there is striking difference between friendship/relationships between boys and girls. The topic of relationships between man and woman, boy and girl are shown with more intensity in Georgian stories, than in Russian. In Russian stories the emphasis of such relationships is ideology, while in Georgian children's fiction they are more complex.

The intensity of ideological impact changes: starting in 1938, it becomes especially intense after the Great Patriotic War and maintains as such until mid-1950s. Then the intensity decreases a little bit. At the end of the 1950s and at the start of the 1960s some transformations are obvious.

In conclusion, we can say that markers that already existed, have been transformed and modified by ideology to form and shape identity of the new Soviet person. Also, there are distinct differences in methods of impact on markers between the Soviet Georgian and the Soviet Russian children's literature, which are caused by the differences between these two cultures. The study has shown, that the markers, acknowledged as basis of the Soviet identity, were interpreted differently by each culture. Despite the fact, that both cultures were impacted by the same ideology, it couldn't unify the core values of each culture. These differences were represented through markers and images depicted in the Soviet period's Georgian and Russian children's fiction.

Endnotes:

1. Committee for State Security.
2. Term, which was used to describe a wealthy peasant.
3. It must be noted, that features, given by Bakradze are broad, while marker is more defined and specific. Therefore, one feature may cover several markers, for example: love of collective could be understood in terms of individualism/collectivism, us/them, and enemy image. In such case the analyzed fragment is linked to the marker, which represents more ideological intensity than others.
4. Apart from the fact that narratives were composed to represent the ideology, they often were edited. There are three different editions of "The Old Genie Hottabych": the original text, written in 1938, was published as a book in 1940; first revised edition in 1951, and second revised edition in 1955. It is not certain, who revised the narrative – the author himself or a member of soviet censorship. The research does not study this topic.

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