

ANNA KADYKAŁO
Uniwersytet Jagielloński

THE PIONEER MOVEMENT IN THE CONTEMPORARY PERCEPTION OF RUSSIANS

The aim of this article is to show the multifaceted perception of the communist non-school movement – the pioneers, in contemporary Russian society. The article presents how this mass children’s organization is perceived now, almost twenty seven years after its dissolution. The main aim of the article is to show the attitude of the older generation of Russians (those who remember this movement from their own experience) towards pioneers, as well as how the young generation of Russians that grew up in the Russian Federation look at this relic of the past. The article explores the ways of constructing the memory about the pioneer organization in various memory carriers, including those regarded as pop-culture, which are the most influential in modern Russian society. Additionally, examples of memory carriers are presented here, regarded as official and unofficial collective memory, both accepted and spread by the mass media as well as those functioning outside official channels. The aforementioned memory carriers are analysed based on the category of the collective memory, with the emphasis put on its role as a source of cultural identity and bond-making. Collective memory is understood as ideas of the members of Russian society about its past. The construction of these ideas derives both from personal experience of individuals (in the case of older generations of Russians), as well as from indirect historical memory (in the case of the young generation of Russians). It should also be emphasized that collective memory is different from scientifically researched knowledge about the past (history) because of the presence of emotions and social functions which accompany its creation

and standing¹. According to Maurice Halbwachs, history is an objective account of events, and collective memory consists of selectively constructed perceptions of the past and has as many varieties as there are groups in a society.² As Barbara Szacka has pointed out:

The relations between history and collective memory are complex and the differences are clear. From the multi-threaded fabric of knowledge about the past collected by history and science, in accordance with the rules governing it, only some of the threads enter the social circulation: the ones that harmonize with the present. The perception of the past inevitably adjusts to the way of perception of contemporary times, because we look at the past in the same way as we look at the present.³

The social conditions of storage are also worth noting, which is the central thesis of the works of the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (e.g. *Les cadres sociaux de la memoire*, 1925). The social nature of memory is so important because without the framework of the social reference the individual memory could neither exist nor last. Halbwachs stated that: “No memory is possible outside frameworks used by people living in society to determine and retrieve their recollections.”⁴ This means that memory develops in a human being with the process of socialization. Therefore, as Jan Assmann has pointed out, the expression „collective memory” should not be seen as a metaphor. It is so because while the communities do not have memory of their own, they shape the memory of their members.⁵

The creations of culture examined in this article, the function of which is to maintain and transform collective memory, answer the question to what extent the memory of the pioneer movement unites Russian society, and to what extent it is a conflict-generating factor. The analysis of the perception of the pioneer movement in various circles of contemporary Russian society allows us to find

¹ J. Wawrzyniak, *Pamięć zbiorowa*, in: *Modi memorandi. Leksykon kultury pamięci*, ed. M. Saryusz-Wolska, R. Traba, coop. J. Kalicka, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2014, pp. 346–351.

² M. Król, *Wstęp do wydania polskiego*, in: M. Halbwachs, *Spoleczne ramy pamięci*, transl. M. Król, PWN, Warszawa 1969, p. XIX.

³ B. Szacka, “Pamięć zbiorowa i wojna,” *Przegląd Socjologiczny* 2000, vol. 49, p. 13.

⁴ M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed., transl. and pref. L. A. Coser, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London 1992, p. 43.

⁵ J. Assmann, *Pamięć kulturowa. Pismo, zapamiętywanie i polityczna tożsamość w cywilizacjach starożytnych*, transl. A. Kryczyńska-Pham, ed. and pref. R. Traba, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2008, pp. 51–52.

the answer to the question in what way this aspect of the Soviet history, contextualized in time and space, affects the construction of Russian collective memory.

The Vladimir Lenin All-Union Pioneer Organization was founded in 1922 and united children aged 9 to 16. Pioneers borrowed many of the symbols, rituals and practical elements of operation from the Scout movement present in Tsarist Russia. However, the hierarchy of values cultivated by the members of both organizations was completely different. Scouts were obliged to carry out duties towards God, the Motherland and the Monarch, whereas the atheistically-oriented pioneer movement called for socially beneficial actions and activities that fitted the ideology of the Communist Party. Nadezhda Krupskaya argued that camps, bonfires in the woods and games organized by the scouts were a disguised form of entangling children with a “network of bourgeois principles.” Scouting was contrasted to the pioneer movement, which in her approach should be associated as closely as possible with the labour movement, particularly with female labourers. They were to conduct agitation among the less conscious female workers and peasant girls, explaining to them the benefits for their children from belonging to the “young pioneers” organization.⁶ But soon the tasks of the pioneer organization were greatly expanded. Including children into the structures of the organization was an attempt to convert them into individuals who would be an integral part of the collective, and useful for a society as a whole. Pioneers were the foundation for the future staff of the communist youth – the Komsomol, and then The Communist Party itself. The pioneer organization was some kind of a school of communist upbringing, showing the one and only appropriate way of child development. Children involved in its structures received guidelines regarding involvement in social work (work was the primary value in the Soviet society), as well as spending time in a useful way. The tasks of the organization were to instil love for the Motherland, to be prepared to defend the country and to instil hatred for its enemies. However, the positive aspects of being a part of the organization should not be forgotten. They included instilling in its members values such as comradeship, discipline and responsibility. Many practical skills and habits were taught as well. In addition, the organization offered its members an opportunity to participate in various activities, e.g.

⁶ N. Krupskaya, *Młodzi pionierzy*, w: eadem, *Wybór pism pedagogicznych*, pref. M. Szulkin, Państwowe Zakłady Wydawnictw Szkolnych, Warszawa 1951, pp. 75–77.

sport competitions, bonfires, parades, camps, festivals, and many circles of interest.

The pioneer organization was dissolved in 1991. For several years there have been attempts to recreate an organization that would be similar in form, although free of ideology and indoctrination. The Union of Pioneer Organizations — Federation of Children's Organizations (Союз пионерских организаций — Федерация детских организаций) is considered to be its Russian successor. Since 1998 the Communist Party of the Russian Federation has been annually organizing a show of the adoption of children into the ranks of the new pioneers. This ritual is depicted as a tradition connecting children with older generations. An attempt to achieve historical legitimacy can be seen in it, which reflects sharing by Russian society positive ideas on the Soviet history. Pioneer organizations still operate in many Russian schools. These organizations, which are devoid of ideological elements, are concerned with propagation of patriotism among children, memory of important historical anniversaries, respect for elders (especially veterans), and concern for the common good (through community work)⁷. Despite numerous attempts a uniform all-Russian pioneer organization has not been created — the modern pioneer movement in Russia still remains divided.

The question of the revival of the pioneer organization is also raised at the institutional level. In 2010 President Dmitry Medvedev said that he was not against the revival of social movements in schools that would resemble pioneer and Komsomol organizations. However, he did not support the centralized creation of such structures,⁸ which can be explained by the baggage of negative connotations that is brought by mass organizations created from the top.

Five years later, in 2015, President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on creating a national public organization for children and youth — The Russian Schoolchildren Movement (Российское движение школьников) aimed at promoting national values. According to the decree the organization has been established to “perfect state policy in the area of educating the young generation, [and] to support the forming of personalities on the basis of the value system inherent

⁷ See, e.g., *Муниципальное общеобразовательное учреждение “Средняя школа № 14”, г. Богородицка*, <http://shcola1471.narod.ru/index/0-38> (06.07.2017); *Пионеры школы*, <http://40414-009.edusite.ru/p9aa1.html> (6.07.2017).

⁸ *Медведев поддержал возрождение в школах пионерских и комсомольских организаций*, <http://www.rosbalt.ru/main/2010/10/05/778041.html> (7.07.2017).

to Russian society.”⁹ As the Minister of Education and Science Dmitry Livanov has stated, the new movement should be created taking into account the experience of the pioneer and Komsomol organizations. Livanov admitted that the Soviet system of education and socialization of young people was not perfect and had its shortcomings, but it fulfilled its task. The Russian Schoolchildren Movement is apparently modelled on the pioneer organization: the decree was signed and published on 29th of October, being the anniversary of the founding of Komsomol.¹⁰ The partial revival of the pioneer movement is explained by the need to help young Russians get to know the history of their country, help them with their problems and social issues.¹¹ Forgetting that this movement was also a way of regulating young people’s thinking and served to indoctrinate them is a manipulation of history and collective memory through the development of false memory by presenting a limited amount of information of the pioneer organization and its character. The case of The Russian Schoolchildren Movement can be treated as an example of the growing struggle in Russia about historical memory. As Nikolay Koposov has pointed out,

post-Soviet historical memory is highly politicized. [...] In the 2000s, the evolution of Vladimir Putin’s regime was accompanied by a new revision of history that has again become central to the new “Russian ideology,” assuming, inter alia, the defense of the national past.¹²

There are also other, regional embodiments of pioneers. The activity of the Moscow City Pioneer Organization is **worth mentioning**. On the website dedicated to it there appeared information that the Organization had been registered in 1992, which was defined as its second birth. Previously, there were references to the So-

⁹ A. Dolgov, *Russia to Get 21st-Century Version of Kids’ Pioneers Organization*, <http://www.themoscowtimep.com/news/article/russia-to-get-21st-century-version-of-kids-pioneers-organization/541127.html> (7.07.2017).

¹⁰ *Путин создал аналог пионерской организации*, <https://lenta.ru/news/2015/10/29/pioneer/> (7.07.2017); А. Винокуров и др., *Пионеры возвращаются*, https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2015/10/29_a_7853561.shtml (7.07.2017).

¹¹ *Russia reviving pioneer and Komsomol movements?*, http://www.pravdareport.com/russia/kremlin/29-10-2015/132454-pioneer_komsomol-o/ (7.07.2017).

¹² N. Koposov, “The Armored Train of Memory”: *The Politics of History in Post-Soviet Russia*, <https://www.historianp.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/january-2011/the-armored-train-of-memory-the-politics-of-history-in-post-soviet-russia> (7.07.2017).

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viet predecessor and an indication that the first divisions of pioneers were created in Moscow in 1922, and therefore this organization is the oldest Russian pioneer organization. This clearly shows that the modern structures of pioneers refer to their Soviet origins. The Moscow organization was defined as a patriotic, humanist, independent, social and amateur organization, bringing together both children and adults, for whom numerous sports and cultural events are organized. Its main purpose is to:

помощь ребятам в их становлении как юных Граждан своей Родины в процессе активной, коллективной и творческой, созидательной деятельности, направленной на улучшение своей и окружающей жизни. Организация ставит, кроме всего прочего, задачи помощи ребятам в раскрытии своих способностей и реализации потребностей, в ориентации подростков на самовоспитание и саморазвитие.¹³

Dmitry Lebedev, the Coordinator of Moscow City Council of Pioneer Organizations and a teacher, has admitted that the attempts to create one joint children's organization are doomed to fail, because it would be hard to choose a set of values that would be accepted by all social strata. Lebedev does not consider obvious the idea that the pioneer organization is strongly politicised. He is an advocate of non-party children's movements, and keeping a reasonable, psychologically justified "degree of politicisation" for the formation of citizenship. Lebedev claims that pioneers are still interested in pioneering games, parades, work and expeditions. What is more, he personally disagrees with the statement that collectives impair personality. According to him, a collective can be understood as a group in which there occurs a harmonious connection between the community (collective) and the individual (personality). As he argues, the practice shows that stronger bonds within the division make the creation of a real collective, in which each member devotes more attention and care. When writing about the contemporary pioneer organization Lebedev stated that:

Пионерская организация — это самостоятельная, самодеятельная, гуманистическая, патриотическая, общественная организация детей и взрослых с ярко выраженной общественной направленностью своей многопрофильной социально и личностно ориентированной деятельности, стержнем отношений внутри которой являются коллективизм и товарищество; про-

¹³ *Московская городская пионерская организация*, <http://мгпо.рф/> (7.07.2017).

низанная самобытными традициями, творчеством, игрой, романтикой борьбы и поиска.¹⁴

Opinion polls conducted in Russia showed that this movement creates positive associations among a substantial percentage of Russians, and many people, especially representatives of older generations, sentimental towards it and nostalgically speak about their participation in it. In the year 2000 the Russian Public Opinion Research Centre (ВИЦОМ) conducted a survey in which a question was asked regarding the attitude towards the idea of establishing a children's organization resembling the Soviet pioneers. 49% of respondents strongly positively advocated this idea, and 33% of respondents chose the answer defined as "quite positively." A lack of enthusiasm toward the proposed idea was expressed by 13% of respondents, whereas only 6% of the respondents were strongly opposed to this solution. The data presented above show that the majority of Russians are in favour of creating a children's organization similar to the pioneers. Interestingly, greater enthusiasm was characteristic of female respondents, which can be explained by their desire to involve children in extra-curricular activities that would effectively prevent the possible negative influences of the street. The biggest enthusiasts for organizing such structures are elderly people, aged over 60 (a definitely positive attitude was expressed by 63% of respondents, and a generally positive attitude was expressed by 29% of respondents). It can be assumed that the vast majority of this group of respondents have positive memories about their membership in the ranks of the pioneers. That is why nowadays they are in favour of creating a similar organization that could involve their grandchildren in such activities.¹⁵ The generation's memory of each generation of Russians tends to transmit a positive image of a pioneer. However, Victor Tarnavski's opinion is worth mentioning at this point. According to Tarnavski, who refers to Russian studies, every second Russian aged 16–23 declares having a different worldview from their parents. Young people considered the importance of family authority, which is considered to be a „carrier of outdated value systems” significantly

¹⁴ Д.Н. Лебедев, "О прошлом, настоящем и будущем Пионерии", *Голос миротворцев*, № 248, 9 VII 2006, <http://www.un-museum.ru/vestnik/248.htm#4> (7.07.2017).

¹⁵ *А как бы вы отнеслись к идее создания всероссийской детской организации по образу пионерской организации советских времен?*, http://wciom.ru/zh/print_q.php?s_id=502&q_id=36648&date=30.10.2000 (7.07.2017).

less, while maintaining belief in the family as an important value. A contemporary young Russian is a “materialistic person,” who is often characterized by an egotistic and passive attitude towards reality, lack of initiative, consumerism and scepticism. The image of a young Russian in the social, moral and ethical sphere is shaped by mass culture, whose main means of transmission is television.¹⁶ Taking into account the above characteristics, it can be assumed that according to a large group of respondents, the participation of children in the pioneer movement would counterbalance the negative trends described above. It is worth remembering that a member of the pioneer organization was supposed to be a follower of a value system that was completely different from what is shown above, based on the personality traits of Russian youth. Thus, collective memory concerning pioneers predominantly transmits positive aspects of the movement, connected with the construction of children’s identity and character.

In 2007 a survey was conducted, in which the respondents were asked to express their attitude towards the idea of establishing a children’s organization resembling the Soviet pioneers. 40% of the respondents were in favour of recreating the pioneer organization. Slightly more, 45% of the respondents, were of the opinion that there is no need for its reconstruction, but there is a need for the emergence of a different all-Russian children’s organization. Almost every tenth respondent was of the opinion that currently there is no need for a children’s organization at all.¹⁷ The above-mentioned answers show

¹⁶V. Tarnavskiy, *Dzieci swoich czasów. Ruchy młodzieżowe w Rosji a zmiany kulturowe po upadku ZSRR*, Wydawnictwo Trio, Warszawa 2007, pp. 77–84. The study conducted in 2002 showed that 53% of young Russians perceive achieving good material status as the most important goal of contemporary youth, 19% — getting an education, 17% indicated work and career. This proves the pragmatic and rational position of young Russians. On the other hand, according to research from 2007, the hierarchy of dominant values among Russian youth was as follows: good financial situation, individualism (“I”), career, family, stability, freedom, and others. С. Елишев, *Проблемы современной российской молодёжи: чего хочет молодежь?*, http://ruskline.ru/analitika/2010/8/17/problemy_sovremennoj_rossijskoj_molodyozhi_chego_hochet_molodezh/ (7.07.2017). Although family values are important to young Russians, when compared with older generations, among them there is a higher percentage of those who are attracted by wealth, power or being popular. *Молодежь новой России: ценностные приоритеты*, http://www.israp.ru/analytical_report_Youth_1_1.html (7.07.2017).

¹⁷ *Пионерская организация была самой массовой детской организацией прошлого века. Как бы Вы отнеслись к идее воссоздания единой детской организации в настоящее время?*, http://wciom.ru/zh/print_q.php?s_id=256&q_id=20807&date=15.04.2007 (8.07.2017).

a clear nostalgia for a mass children's organization, and the belief that its structures can also be useful in contemporary Russian society.

This is also demonstrated by the results of another survey, which aimed at characterizing the role played by a pioneer organization in the upbringing of young people. As many as 88% of respondents said that that role was quite positive. The opposite view was expressed by only 2% of the respondents. On the other hand, 5% felt that the pioneers did not play any role in shaping the character of its members.¹⁸ The scale of the positive reception to the role of the pioneer organization is justified by a desire to rebuild its structures in Russian society.

Without a doubt, the above-described state of affairs has been affected by many aspects of the pioneer movement that sank deeply into the social consciousness, and that in the common perception evoke positive connotations. That is why the answers of the respondents to the question about their associations regarding the pioneers and the pioneer organization are interesting (the study is from 2007). The most popular answers included: the pioneer's attributes (trumpets, stamps, scarfs); marches and rallies of pioneers; pioneers' camps; discipline, organization, responsibility; childhood, upbringing, school; bonfires. The less frequent associations included: communism, Lenin; an interesting life, good times; a collection of waste paper and scrap metal. On the basis of the provided answers it can be said that the area of meanings, attitudes and values concentrated around the pioneer movement creates a symbolic language that is used by successive generations of Russians. As Szacka has mentioned: "The existence of this language strengthens the sense of community of the people using it, and distinctiveness from other people who do not know and do not understand it. It provides identification marks that help to distinguish members from strangers."¹⁹ Therefore, it can be concluded that the consciousness of the joint past, shared by several generations of Russians, results in these members defining this society as "we", distinct and different from "the others", who do not have such experiences, which has a crucial bond-making effect²⁰. The answers cited in the research clearly show that nowadays

¹⁸ *Как Вы считаете, какую роль играла пионерская организация в воспитании подрастающего поколения?*, http://wciom.ru/zh/print_q.php?s_id=256&q_id=20805&date=15.04.2007 (8.07.2017).

¹⁹ B. Szacka, *Pamięć zbiorowa...*, p. 18.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

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the pioneer organization often evokes positive connotations, which is undoubtedly partly connected with its place in the early youth of a significant percentage of the respondents: remembering childhood usually evokes positive associations. As Marek Zaleski has stated: “The nostalgic sensitivity refers to empathy, to the language of feelings, to the things that escape rationalization. So it is a kind of sensitivity available to everyone.”²¹ According to Zaleski, a nostalgic person does not yearn for the place of his youth, but his childhood. On the other hand, his desires are directed not to the object which he wants to recover, but to time, which is impossible to recover. Nostalgia refers to a world in which the desires of a given individual were fulfilled without obstacles, which is precisely the world of one’s childhood. The nostalgic recollection is composed of the work of memory and imagination²².

Svetlana Boym has touched upon the issue of nostalgia for her Soviet childhood in an interesting way.

Everyone is always a bit nostalgic for the time and space of childhood, wherever and whatever that might have been, and whether this childhood was, or could have been, happy. I feel that I am lucky that I belonged to the last Soviet generation, and thus cannot be uncritically nostalgic for my beautiful childhood in a Leningrad Pioneer Camp and communal apartment, in the epoch of totalitarian decadence, in the skeptical age of late Brezhnevism. So I can only develop a genre of nostalgia mediated by irony, which combines estrangement with the longing for the familiar — in my case this happens to be a familiar collective oppression.²³

As Ekaterina Kalinina has pointed out:

Fascination with nostalgia phenomena is closely connected to the idea that the past could be quickly forgotten or overcome. In fact, however, the past is constantly present and processes of transition from one political model to another, or from one culture to another, raise difficult questions about the role of nostalgia.²⁴

²¹ M. Zaleski, *Formy pamięci. O przedstawianiu przeszłości w polskiej literaturze współczesnej*, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Badań Literackich, Warszawa 1996, p. 12.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 17–24.

²³ S. Boym, *Common Placep. Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, Harvard University Press, London 1995, p. 290.

²⁴ E. Kalinina, *Refashioning Russia: Mediated Post-Soviet nostalgia in Contemporary Russian Culture*. Dissertation Draft, Stockholm 2014, p. 25, [http://www.sh.se/p3/ext/res.nsf/vRes/inst_f_kultur_och_larande_1390383570802_final_seminar_kalinina_2014_pdf/\\$File/Final_Seminar_Kalinina_2014.pdf](http://www.sh.se/p3/ext/res.nsf/vRes/inst_f_kultur_och_larande_1390383570802_final_seminar_kalinina_2014_pdf/$File/Final_Seminar_Kalinina_2014.pdf) (20.01.2018).

Nostalgia for the previous state of affairs in Eastern Europe is connected with the impact of the drastic transformation of life which caused psychological disorders such as melancholia and depression, resulting from disappointment and failed hopes for democracy.²⁵

As noted by Maria Feretti, a melancholy sentiment and nostalgia for the Soviet era is palpable. It can be seen on street markets, where little Lenins and red stars, statuettes of Pioneers and T-shirts 'СССР' ('USSR') can be found. The restaurants are being opened with Soviet décor and with waitresses that wear the red headscarf of Pioneers. For Feretti it is clear that it is not the nostalgia for Stalinist times, but for the Brezhnev era, perceived

as a time when, in contrast to a present that appeared in many ways incomprehensible and dangerous, human relationships such as friendship were simple and clear, governed by basic values like solidarity and good neighbourliness. [...] To be sure, for many it is also the nostalgia for their own youth, with its dreams and illusions, now lost if for no other reason than age.²⁶

It is worth noting that in the above-mentioned research alongside the elements of a pioneer's life there were also present personality traits which the organization helped to shape, i.e. through engaging children to do useful social work.²⁷ Thus, the pioneers influenced the development of young people's personality, shaping their empathy and morality, passing on values and behaviour patterns. As Mieczysław Łobucki has pointed out, the main aim of moral education was moral development in the cognitive area (realizing what is right and wrong) and in the emotional area (developing moral sensitivity in the behavioural sphere). Particular attention was paid to the accurate assessment of one's own and other's behaviour and attitudes in the category of right and wrong. The main aims of moral education in the normative sense include instilling in children and youth moral norms, principles and values, the approval and realization of which should make them moral people. The value of moral education has been appreciated by many philosophers and educators, i.e. Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Johann Heinrich

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 53–54.

²⁶ M. Feretti, *Nostalgia for communism in post-Soviet Russia*, <http://www.eurhist-xx.de/spip.php%3Farticle39&lang=en.html> (9.07.2017).

²⁷ *Что прежде всего, вспоминается Вам, когда говорят о пионерах и пионерской организации?*, http://wciom.ru/zh/print_q.php?s_id=256&q_id=20804&date=15.04.2007 (9.07.2017).

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Pestalozzi, and John Dewey. Among the methods of moral education Łobocki mentioned are, inter alia: setting an example of moral conduct, implementing moral behaviour, providing moral knowledge, and managing the process of self-education. The effectiveness of moral education can ensure a subjective treatment of children that is manifested in respecting their dignity, strengthening their self-esteem, acceptance, showing emphatic understanding, perceiving in every member a complete person and not his miniature, and letting him express his own thoughts and feelings.²⁸ Without doubt, participation in the pioneer movement significantly affected the effective implementation of the moral education of the young citizens of the Soviet Union.

Memory of the pioneers is preserved in films that occupy an important place in the collective memory discourse. Contrasting of pioneering dreams and ideas with adult reality is an interesting approach presented in a film drama *Pioneer Heroes* (*Пионеры-герои*, 2015), directed by Natalia Kudryashova. Three school friends are the last pioneers of the USSR. They dream of becoming heroes and believe in a bright future. In their 30's they have become successful but they face another reality with no place for big ideas or feelings. Dreaming of becoming heroes and grand things is replaced by predictable existence. Their successful lives bring them neither happiness nor satisfaction. Nostalgia is noticeable in many aspects of the daily life of the film's characters. Contemporary Russian films, the plot of which revolves around various aspects of the pioneer organization or pioneer camp, are *I Give You My Word* (*Частное пионерское*, 2014, dir. by Alexander Karpilovsky), *High Security Vacation* (*Каникулы старого режима*, 2009, dir. by Igor Zaytsev), *S.S.D (С.С.Д.* 2008, dir. by Vadim Shmelev). It is worth mentioning that the pioneer community, especially the pioneer camp, was an important element of many Soviet films, satirical comedies, directed mainly towards the growing Soviet generation, due to the possibility of educating youth viewers through the presentation of appropriate behaviour patterns with the addition of adventure themes, situated on the background of attractive landscapes (f.eg. *Welcome, or No Trespassing* (*Добро пожаловать, или Посторонним вход воспрещён*) 1964, dir. by Elen Klimov; *A Passenger from the Equa-*

²⁸ M. Łobocki, *Wychowanie moralne w zarysie*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Kraków 2009, pp. 14–36.

tor (*Пассажир с «Экватора»*) 1968, dir. by Alexander Kurochkin; *Vacation of Petrov and Vasechkin, Usual and Incredible (Каникулы Петрова и Васечкина, обыкновенные и невероятные)*, 1984, dir. by Vladimir Alenikov).

While analysing the reception of the pioneering movement in modern Russia it is impossible not to mention the nostalgic on-line project entitled “76–82. Encyclopaedia of our childhood” (“76–82. Энциклопедия нашего детства.”) This popular website is very well perceived by Russian Internet users. The website is dedicated to the memories of those born in the years 1976–1982, and one of its parts brings together information and memories about various aspects of the pioneering movement. It describes, among others, the ritual of affiliating members of the organization, pioneers’ rules, games and plays, pioneer campfires, and pioneer scarfs. One can see strong emotional involvement in the described elements of a pioneer’s life, e.g. the characteristics of the popular game “Zarnica”: “С каким азартом мы проделывали все эти военные операции! Это было даже увлекательнее простых дворовых ‘войнушек’”²⁹ or a pioneer’s campfire:

Присутствовало ни с чем не сравнимое ощущение братства и больших надежд. Мы читали стихи, пели ‘Взвейтесь кострами, синие ночи’, беседовали о будущем, а на закуску пугали друг друга страшилками. И были совершенно счастливы!..³⁰.

The individual elements of the pioneering reality are also discussed on an Internet forum of that site and below articles, where many Internet users post their thoughts based on still vivid memories, e.g.:

25.10.2005, Карина (Karina)

Да, пионеркой была целых два года, а потом все отменили, жалко было очень. Так нравилось носить галстук! Гладить его каждое утро! Чувствовать себя частью чего-то большого и сильного! [...] И еще родители подарили мне подарок (не помню какой) в честь такого праздника — Ребенок стал Пионером!

26.10.2005, Алексей

А я помню, как после принятия в пионеры в третьем классе (весной, было ещё довольно прохладно) мы толпой шли по улице с распахнутыми

²⁹ *Пионерская организация, “Игра Зарница”*, http://e-n-d.ru/school_pioneer/899.html (9.07.2017).

³⁰ *Пионерская организация, Пионерский костер*, http://e-n-d.ru/school_pioneer/1064.html (9.07.2017).

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пальтишками — чтобы все видели пламенеющий на шее галстук, и наша гордость, такая это была радость — я теперь ПИОНЕР!³¹

On some Internet forums that focus around the desirability and legitimacy of the pioneering movement there are often formulated opinions that an important advantage of the pioneers was the organization of free time of children. *Ipsa facto* it eliminated the danger of leaving children unattended, which in contemporary Russia remains a big social problem. Moreover, participation in the pioneer movement developed responsibility and discipline.³² However, it is not uncommon to read the memories focused on antipathy based on the compulsory wearing of pioneer scarfs and uniforms, attempts to break the official rules imposed on children and to leave the pioneer organization.³³ Bloggers publishing in Live Journal, focusing on the memories connected with the pioneer movement, mentioned boring pioneer meetings, singing songs, tiring procedure of tying of red scarves (Artem Drabkin), unpleasant consequences after a fight, during which a pioneer scarf of the opponent was destroyed (drozdilla). However, there are also much warmer memories and comments about the pioneer movement concerning, for example, pioneer camps, ending in tears due to the necessity of parting with new friends (Natalia Vorontsova-Iureva).³⁴ The above-mentioned remarks prove that the pioneers still evoke ambivalent feelings and memories. This state of affairs is affected not only by nostalgia, but also by the memory of communist ideology that was an integral part of the movement.

The affiliation to pioneers can be considered as a rite of initiation taking place during a communist holiday (e.g. on the anniversary of Lenin's birthday [April 22]), which is the culminating point of so-

³¹ *Пионерская организация. Пионерская клятва*, http://e-n-d.ru/school_pioneer/293.html (9.07.2017). Memories about joining the pioneer organization (mood, feelings, place and circumstances of the ceremony) are present in the comments below the article: *Как нас принимали в пионеры*, <http://20th.su/2010/02/06/как-нас-prinimali-v-pioneri/> (9.07.2017).

³² *ОКтябрята, пионеры, комсомольцы! Ваше отношение к детско-юношеским организациям?*, <http://travelcaravan.ru/blogs/palatka/oktjabrjata-pioneri-komsomoltsi-vashe-otnoshenie-k-detsko-unosheskim-organizatsijam.html>, (9.07.2016).

³³ *Воспоминания о пионерской организации*, http://www.1543.ru/teachers/remember/vyupusk/forum_01_pionery.htm, (9.07.2017).

³⁴ *Пионерские воспоминания блогеров*, <http://ria.ru/analytics/20100521/236907805.html>, (9.07.2017).

cial life, purifying and renewing the society.³⁵ It is interesting to recall the words of Jean Duvignaud, who said that collective acts of participation (a trial, the unveiling of the monument, divine service, feast, etc.) make the society similar to a theatre. The participants play their respective roles in the scenario which they cannot change because it is impossible to avoid fulfilling the assigned role. Thus, these collective acts of participation suggest the continuity between the social and the dramatic ceremony. It should also be noted that the dramatic situation illustrates the operation in order to give it a symbolic nature, and the social situation gives real shape to social roles, which is to confirm its ability to act and to transform their own structures.³⁶ As noted by Maria Paula Stasiakiewicz:

The feast is characterized by the fact that it is “celebrated” by the community, i.e. its time is specific and it requires specific action, defined by tradition. With feasts, the community experiences moments of bonding, of spiritual communion and joy, of the renewal of values that are important to its members. A characteristic feature of a feast is that all people celebrate it; during the holiday season, all members of the community are more likely to communicate with one another on an “equal footing” than they do on days of daily toil.³⁷

The emotional memories mentioned above related to the affiliation to the pioneers confirm that this ritual played the role of a communist feast that was important not only to the leading participants, i.e. children, but also to their families.

The website “76–82. Encyclopaedia of our childhood” was launched in 2005 by Notamedia. It is constantly updated, and new memories from subsequent guests who recall their childhood years with nostalgia and smile are published there. The published fragments of childhood memories are a valuable source of information about the Soviet culture, which included the pioneers. As noted by Anna Giza:

³⁵ R. Caillois, *Sacrum wykroczenia: teoria święta*, w: idem, *Człowiek i sacrum*, transl. A. Tatarakiewicz, E. Burska, Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, Warszawa 1995, pp. 107–140.

³⁶ J. Duvignaud, *Ceremonia społeczna i ceremonia teatralna*, in: *Antropologia widowisk*, pref. and ed. L. Kolankiewicz, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2005, pp. 197–202.

³⁷ M. P. Stasiakiewicz, *Kisiel w muzeum. O teoretycznych podstawach stosowania działań artystycznych we wspieraniu rozwoju małego dziecka*, in: *Sztuka dla dziecka jako forma komunikacji społecznej*, vol. 2: *Praktyki artystyczne*, ed. M. Karasińska, Centrum Sztuki Dziecka, Poznań 2009, p. 23.

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The story of one's own life is also the story of a social system, both because its institutions and mechanisms open for individuals a space of possible experiences and meanings, and because the reflectivity of the narrators open the horizon of their possible actions.³⁸

The Internet can, therefore, be considered as a further field for the development of the vision of the past for the community. As Krzysztof Malicki stated, a virtual monument can be built for anyone (in this case for the pioneers). Such a monument does not cost much and does not require many permits. Its popularity and universal nature is evidenced by the number of visits confirmed by „clicks.” Thanks to the Internet, boundaries and space lose their meaning³⁹.

The next pool of knowledge of the pioneers, building the collective memory of Russians, is entertainment. A comedy skit, presented by the group “Утомлённые солнцем” (“Club of the Funny and Inventive”, 2000), was very positively received. Mikhail Galustyan, a very popular Russian actor and comedian, played the role of a soloist in the children's choir of the USSR. The skit was based on a popular pioneer song, “Если с другом вышел в путь,” stressing the importance of a friend's support that helps to face challenges. Its humorous arrangement (pioneers dressed in uniforms with scarfs and caps get into mischief and romp, jostle and, after a moment, jump and play cheerfully) provoked peals of laughter and a storm of applause from the audience, which proves that the theme of pioneers is still a winsome topic for artistic creation because it has a large group of recipients who are emotionally associated with this element of the Soviet reality.⁴⁰ It should be emphasized that the memories of childhood, which included participation in the pioneering movement, are characterized by a high degree of subjectivity and the transformation of the fragmented snippets that referred to the past in a coherent picture: “Поэтому воспоминания о детских годах – это всегда препарирование, ‘хирургическая операция’, совершаемая автором над своей памятью, когда

³⁸ A. Giza, *Życie jako opowieść. Analiza materiałów autobiograficznych w perspektywie socjologii wiedzy*, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1991, p. 213.

³⁹ K. Malicki, *Wirtualne wspólnoty pamięci. Przeszłość i pamięć zbiorowa w przestrzeni Internetu*, “Nierówności Społeczne a Wzrost Gospodarczy” 2011, vol. 22, ed. M. G. Woźniak, ed. of the vol. C. F. Hales, p. 257.

⁴⁰ *КВН лучшее – Михаил Галустян – Пионеры*, <http://ag-pricol.ru/kvn-luchshee-mikhail-galustyan-pionery> (6.07.2017).

он выстраивает в нечто единое и цельное то, что изначально единым и цельным не является.”⁴¹ Of all the forms of memory it is the autobiographical memory that is the most susceptible to disturbance and breach of memories.

A separate topic is the juxtaposition of the pioneers with today’s Russian youth. In this context pioneers are recognized as a synonym for the Soviet adolescent generation. The aforementioned juxtaposition is in favour of the bygone youth. This contrast is clearly noticeable in the pictures posted on the Internet, with the appropriate descriptions, aiming to highlight the weaknesses of the education of today’s youth. An example of such a juxtaposition can be a photo, in the background of which one can see a pioneer playing the trumpet, while in the foreground a young man is holding a bottle of beer to his lips. The comment is as follows: “Пионеры уже не те.”⁴² Another photograph shows a tired and bored man, conscious of the hopeless situation in which he finds himself. The descriptions under them say: “Когда я был пионером, мне рассказывали, как хорошо будет жить в будущем. Сейчас мне рассказывают, как хорошо было жить, когда я был пионером.”⁴³ Thus, there is an idealization of the past. In the process of the distribution of positive and negative scenes of the Soviet era, over time, the former are far more visible, especially when combined with the unsatisfactory socio-economic situation in contemporary Russia.

Apart from the positively marked spins of the pioneering movement there are also ironic interpretations of this phenomenon: a pioneer is not always shown as a synonym for a polite, well-mannered and obliging young man, e.g.

Бабка в автобус влезла и рядом с пионером пристроилась. Намекает как бы. Он сидел, сидел, ногами болтал, а потом поворачивается к ней:

—Болят поди ноги-то?

—Болят, внучок, ох болят...

—Небось, когда молодая была, всегда место уступала?

—Конечно уступала!

—Ну вот поэтому и болят.

⁴¹ *Архив воспоминаний о детстве Университета Российской академии образования*, <http://rl-online.ru/info/authors/66.html> (6.06.2015).

⁴² *Пионеры уже не те*, <http://demotivatorp.to/p/103721/pioneryi-uzhe-ne-te.htm> (10.07.2017).

⁴³ *Картинка про жизнь и пионеров*, <http://fun.tochka.net/pictures/75511-kartinka-pro-zhizn-i-pionerov/> (10.07.2017).

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How much emotion is still generated by the phenomenon of the pioneer movement is shown by a lively discussion about the song *Пионер*, performed by the Russian pop group Hi-Fi (which appeared on an album in 1999 entitled *Первый Контакт*). The piece consists of a set of recurring phrases:

Пионер
Всегда готов!
[...]
А пионера
Основное дело –
В путь готовься смело,
В трудный бой иди.
А на пионера
Вся страна смотрела,
Как душа горела
В молодой груди...
As his soul was on fire
In a young breast.

The swift pace and the rhythmic repetition of these simple phrases is similar to a soldier's song, and promotes the rapid assimilation of the song. The tone of the song is fully positive; the song met with numerous comments from listeners, which in the vast majority were positive. The recipients stressed the fact that they felt nostalgia which this piece aroused in them, and they also regretted that in "their times" the pioneers had no such songs.

The collective memory of the Soviet past, and in particular the pioneer movement, is ambivalent in contemporary Russia. According to the survey results, presented by Olena Nikolayenko, almost two-thirds of Russian adolescents disapprove of the Soviet demise: "The young generation seems to reproduce dominant interpretations of the communist past"⁴⁴ and this is the way to explain the popularity of the pioneer organization in contemporary Russia. Undoubtedly, the issue of the revival of the pioneering movement stirs emotions and controversy because of the memory of the Soviet ideological orientation of the organization. Most Russians believe that Russia needs the pioneering movement. The research shows how much the pioneering movement has grown into the consciousness of Russian citi-

⁴⁴ O. Nikolayenko, "Contextual effects on historical memory: Soviet nostalgia among post-Soviet adolescents", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 41 (2008), p. 248, doi:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2008.03.001 (12.07.2016).

zens. The memory about the pioneers occupies an important place in the collective memory of Russians and is transmitted to the young generation. It is probable that the highly positive attitude to the movement in question can be explained by the long-standing influence of propaganda. It should be noted, however, that over the years more and more people do not give a definite answer. Moreover, there is a significant number of opponents of the revival of the organization. The latter generally include young people (according to the survey: 18–24 years), residents of large cities that have a better education in comparison with the supporters of the pioneers, who often cannot find their place in the new reality, and that is why the pioneering structures are so well-known to them.⁴⁵ This shows that the analysed collective memory is not static, but dynamically variable over time. The evaluations of the ideology that is passed on and the educational work that is carried out within the framework of the pioneering structures, are still very divergent. Numerous memoirs dedicated to the pioneers prove that in various circles of Russian society memories of the Soviet era are characterized by nostalgia for that period of the country's history. Collective memory relating to the phenomenon of the pioneers is characterized by the presence of an extensive list of feelings and emotions, mostly positive, which shows that with the passage of time among the social needs of Russians there is still the wish to participate in a collective culture, which was characteristic of the pioneers. The Russians' collective memory of the past, therefore, is affected by the perception of the world by the representatives of different generations, by their systems of values, as well as current feelings relating to the past. Collective memory, widely understood and assessed in the present article, consists of the memory of individual people about their own experiences, the memory of a society that grew out of the common experience of many individuals and the symbolic language of their communication, the image of the past officially transmitted, as well as the vision of the bygone era constructed in popular culture.⁴⁶

The analysis of the memory carriers that store, process and transmit the memory of that Soviet organization as well as earlier enumerated public opinion polls argue that the pioneer movement is an important part of the collective memory of Russians, which are an element of the process of constructing the cultural memory of the Russian na-

⁴⁵ *Пионерская организация была самой массовой...*

⁴⁶ B. Szacka, *Pamięć zbiorowa...*, p. 14.

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tion. In addition, it affects the formation of the group identity of Russians that is oriented around rather positively perceived Soviet-era elements.

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Anna Kadykało

РУЧ ПИОНЕРСКИ WE WSPÓŁCZESNEJ RECEPCJI ROSJAN

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest ukazanie wieloaspektowej recepcji komunistycznego ruchu pozaszkolnego — pionierów — we współczesnym społeczeństwie rosyjskim. W artykule pokazano, jaki jest stosunek do pionierów starszych pokoleń Rosjan (którzy pamiętają ten ruch z własnych doświadczeń) oraz jak młode pokolenie Rosjan, wychowujące się w Federacji Rosyjskiej, spogląda na ten relikw przeszłości. Uwaga została skupiona na sposobach konstruowania pamięci o organizacji pionierskiej w różnych nośnikach pamięci, w tym również w należących do kultury popularnej, a przez to najbardziej oddziałujących na współczesne rosyjskie społeczeństwo. Analiza recepcji ruchu pionierskiego w różnych kręgach współczesnego społeczeństwa rosyjskiego miała za zadanie odpowiedzieć na pytanie, w jaki sposób ten aspekt radzieckiej historii wpływa na konstrukcję pamięci zbiorowej Rosjan.

Анна Кадыкало

ПИОНЕРСКОЕ ДВИЖЕНИЕ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ВОСПРИЯТИИ РОССИЯН

Резюме

Цель статьи — показать восприятие коммунистического внешкольного движения — пионеров — в современном российском обществе. В статье представлено отношение к пионерам со стороны старших поколений россиян (которые помнят это движение по собственному опыту) и восприятие этого реликтового явления молодым поколением россиян, воспитывавшихся уже в Российской Федерации. Внимание было сосредоточено на способах формирования памяти о пионерской организации в разных носителях памяти, в частности, в тех, принадлежащих к популярной культуре и поэтому наиболее влияющих на современное российское общество. Анализ восприятия пионерского движения в разных кругах современных россиян должен был помочь ответить на вопрос, каким образом этот аспект советской истории влияет на конструкцию коллективной памяти россиян.