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Everyday Life of Children and Teenagers in the Angara Region in 1945-1953

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Our publication is based on the expeditionary materials of the Research Laboratory of Humanitarian Research of the Bratsk State University. The author's scientific interest is aimed at the research of the labour practices in the children's everyday life in the villages of the Angara Region in 1945-1953. As for oral historical sources, which were used, the children labour in kolkhozes, the work at the plot of land were the only way of surviving for many families of the Angara Region in the hard post-war years. The author is examining the process of transferring the social experience (including the culture of life with its regional peculiarity; family's relationships; using of the ties, which connected adults and children) through the labour activity of teenagers.

Keywords: everyday life; oral history; labour practices; children labour; peasantry; Siberia; villages of the Angara Region; post-war years; preschoolers; daycare centres; pioneers camps; pioneers; school education.

Point

The research of the different sections of the population's everyday life is one of the most relevant trends of the modern historical science. Researchers more often appeal to such questions as family, marriage, relationships between parents and children which form the cultural traditions of society. The history of family, in the context of which the history of childhood was examined, has begun its life since 60s in Russia like in other countries. Initially the trend, mentioned above, was a subject of ethnographical research. Family parentage was under the authority of genealogy. The history of family of the newest time became the research subject matter of domestic sociologists.

In the modern historical science the history of family and clan, in Thomas Sokoll's opinion, "presented in different discourses – from the genealogical scheme to the research of it in the microhistorical frames, – is assuming ever greater popularity at present" [1, p.25]. In domestic historiography the family matter trends to subdivide into works concerning to rural family or urban one. In recent years the oral evidences and the methods of their interpretation have become to use more widely in the historical research.

Our publication is based on the expeditionary materials of the Research Laboratory of Humanitarian Research of the Bratsk State University. It should be emphasized that many

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villages of the Middle Angara Region have not already existed. They got into submerged area of the Bratsk Hydro-Power Plant and the Ust-Ilimsk Hydro-Power Plant. At this moment the migration of the rural people of the Lower Angara Region, getting into the submerged area of the Boguchany Hydro-Power Plant, is going on. There is no doubt that the economic development of the region, the process of migration and natural population loss influenced on the state of the informational environment. The most amount of the people being interviewed were born in the 1930s, the older generation is represented in extremely small amount. The respondents from the Lower Angara Region mostly live in cities and towns now where their cultural traditions are rather needed.

The author's scientific interest is directed at the research of the practices of the children's everyday life in the post-war period. The author is examining the process of transferring the social experience through the labour activity of teenagers.

Examples

The problems of the hard war times, the hard peasant labour and the extremely low level of the rural families' material security had great influence on the children's lives of the Angara Region. It should be mentioned that "children's" question in the 1940s – 1950s was not out of the state attention. Nevertheless, children were the least secured age group from the hard post-war times.

The ramified state network of the objects of the childhood, which was intended to occupy all the periods and spheres of the children's life, began to form in 1920s. However, in the period under consideration the most children of the preschool age in the rural area of the Angara Region proved to be excluded from the sphere of the state projects. As the rural women did not have the post-childbirth leave, so the problem of

caring of the preschoolers was extremely sharp. By that reason women were 91 % of the 10532 kolkhoz members not fulfilled the minimum of the workdays in Irkutskaya oblast' in 1947 [2, p.139]. Many female inhabitants of the Angara Region said that the absence of the preschool childcare institutions in the villages was the reason of not going to work. As A.V. Moskovskih, who worked at the kolkhoz farm in the post-war period, remembered nobody had made any allowances for infants, "The foreman came to my place in three days after I'd given birth to my firstborn and said that I had to come to milk cows" [3, p.4]. It should be noted that such situations were rather typical.

Organizing of the seasonal daycare centres became a way out of that difficult situation and was entrusted to the heads of the regional health departments and the heads of the medical sections. Such preschool institutions were recommended to organize during the intensive farm work for providing the most complete able-bodied female kolkhozniks' participation in the production process. The task of improving bringing up and medical care of the rural children was given. The sub-regional committees offered to appoint the "experienced older female kolkhozniks" as kindergarten teachers. Thus, there were 129 kindergartens instead of 134, which were planned, in summer period in Irkutskaya oblast' in 1946 [4, p.71]. At the beginning of the research period preschool education in Bratsk sub-region (the Middle Angara Region) was presented by three seasonal daycare centres in kolkhozes [5, L.1].

Not only those, who did not have any suitable education, were allowed to take care of children in the kindergartens, but also disabled people: old, sick kolkhozniks or teenagers. Such situation with the stuff of kindergartens led to very unfortunate results. Here is the description of the local kindergarten in Panovo village (the Lower Angara Region), which was done by N.N.

Kachina, “In summer the kindergarten worked in the ordinary izba, there wasn’t any care of children, there was a matron and girls – teenagers for helping. The girls themselves wanted to play much and they seated my younger sister on the windowsill, so that she didn’t cry. They ran away, and my sister fell off that windowsill. She broke her spinal column, became invalid for the rest of her life, she wasn’t even taken to school. How she stayed alive!” [6, p.9].

The first steps in the development of the preschool education in rural area of the Angara Region were done in the sub-regional centres in the first place. However, the shortage of financing had an overall impact there. There were not enough books, toys and furnishing. Kindergartens placed in the peasant izbas, which were not suitable for taking care of the little children. It was emphasized that “there is no entertainment for the children in the kindergartens, there are no books to read, no toys to play, the kindergarten teachers did not pay any attention to the children. Sanitary state of the preschool childcare institutions is also very bad. Children sleep on the dinner tables and in their outerwear at that. Food is cooked very badly without any medical inspection” [7, p.2].

Creating of the preschool childcare institutions in the rural area was propagandized actively. There were bright examples for imitation of such creating in the region. As the local newspaper, Udereysky Rabochy, reported in the daycare centre of sovkhov Reshajushy “the children are wearing the identical dresses. They look merry and lively. The room for the rest is tidied well. Every bed is tidily done and has a sign of the child’s name. Youngsters have delicious food for dinner. Every group has different menu” [8, p.2]. But such experience did not get enough spread because of the financial difficulties of the most agricultural artels. The absence of the means of subsistence in kolkhozes and consequently poor financing of the preschool childcare institutions

led to the great scarcity of them. If kolkhozes in Irkutskaya oblast’ allocated 75 % cash funds of the level of 1940 for organizing the daycare centres and the playgrounds in 1946, in 1950 this number made up only 29 %. In Krasnoyarsky Kray it was 49.5 % and 31 % in proportion [9, p.244]. This problem was solved in the sub-regional centres only due to the public funds given by the state. For example, there were only three kindergartens and one daycare centre in the sub-regional centre Nizhne-Ilymsk village in 1950 [10, L.8], so when giving a place in the preschool childcare institutions the single mothers’ children and the children from large families had a privilege [11, p.2].

It should be mentioned that the process of educating was not the main feature in the preschool childcare institutions because the system of education itself was only a part of the sub-regional department of public health. The absence of the qualified staff, even in the sub-regional centres, caused serious difficulties in the process of educating. For example, the local newspaper, Ilymsky Partizan, reported, “F. does not bring up and educate children but only does them harm, therefore crying, shouting and even fighting can be heard in the group, which is entrusted to her. F. is often walking along the village while the children are leaving to their own resources” [12, p.2]. It should be emphasized, though that those children, who visited daycare centres and kindergartens, had sometimes better care, medical service and meals than they had at home.

However, in whole region the problem of the preschool childcare institutions in rural areas became unsolved. In the mentioned period only childcare institutions of the sub-regional centres and towns had showings of growth to a very slight degree. So, for example, the attendance of the kindergartens in Irkutskaya oblast’ were 26.7 % up in 1950 than in 1941 [2, p.151].

There were too little kindergartens in the Angara Region for embracing all the children under seven years. So, the traditional lifestyle of caring of the children by their grandmothers and older sisters were still rather actual over the whole research period. The female inhabitant from Prokopievo village of Nizhne-Ilymsk sub-region remembered that she and her sister had cared of their newborn brother at the age of four, and their parents had locked the house in order that “babysitters” had not run away [13, p.11].

In spite of much attention, paid to primary and secondary education by state and local authorities, there were many problems. Firstly, it was shortage of school financing. The majority of school building did not satisfy to elementary specification of sanitation.

Primary schools, located in some villages, were situated in the adapted quarters. Those quarters that were built specially for schooling had primitive design. All rural school had stove heating and no plumbing. Sometimes the state of such quarters was no good at all. So, the situation with the school of Ancherikovo village was submitted to the general public in 1947. The letter of the instructor of the Sub-regional Party Committee was published in the local newspaper of Bratsk sub-region, *The Flag of Communism*, where following facts were reported: “outward and inward appearance of the building where children study is awful. Doors are broken and there is paper in windows instead of glass. The wind is constantly blowing there as in the open air. There is no illumination as in the vault. The stove is in a very bad condition” [14, p.2]. In connection with it, that is extremely significant, “none of the school buildings was replaced” from the submerged area of the Ust-Ilymsk Hydro Power Plant in 1970s “because of the bad technical condition and non-suitability of the buildings to modern specifications” [15, p.159]. However, in spite of the hardest financing in kolkhozes, rural

workmen built 133 school building with their own means for the post-war five-year period [9, p.167].

Often there were not any studies in the rural school in cold winter days. Teaching stuffs tried to find ways out of the crisis by their own. They stocked firewood, asked parents for help [16, L.93].

There was acute shortage of qualified teaching stuff in rural areas. So, in Kezhemsky sub-region 35 teachers from 109 ones did not have any pedagogical education, 30 teachers, working in 5th-10th grades, did not have any suitable education [17, L.62]. Because of the lack of professionalism teaching consisted of simple facts telling. Many teachers prepared to lessons badly [18, L.6]. There was great percent of pupils who repeated a year in schools. The progress of schoolchildren in studies reached 74 % only in Irkutskaya oblast’ [4, p.71].

In spite of great difficulties, all rural children got primary education. Much attention was paid by state and party authorities to the problem of keeping the contingent of students – the law of universal schooling was strictly controlled. However, over the all period being studied schools could not stop dropping out the students. One of the main reasons was the low level of living in the families which were able neither to feed nor to provide their children with clothes. In Irkutskaya oblast’ 6821 children did not go to school in 1946-47 academic year, it being known that 61 % of students did not go to school because of the lack of clothes and footwear [4, p.71]. It was overall noted that the law of universal schooling was not observed “just only by the reason of low level of living: lack of footwear, clothes, and foodstuff” [19, L.13]. During the academic year the amount of students who gave up school because of this reason was steadily rising. So, for example, in Udereysky sub-region (the Lower Angara Region) according to the data on the beginning of the academic year 1951 the amount of students

(age of 7-15) not attending schools was 83 people, according to the data on the 1st of December 1951 the account of those who did not go to school rose up to 212 people [20, L.42]. It was noted that in Kezhemsky sub-region 300 students were left at the secondary school where 700 people had studied as there was a great dropping out because of the lack of bread. [21, L.4] V.N. Polyakova (out of large family without father) remembers failing to get even primary education, "I cried, wanted to go to school, but I did not have even panties" [22, p.8].

The similar state of things was kept over the all period being studied, especially in small "poorly performing" collective farms. Without any doubt, the government, including, school and collective farm administration, was trying to find the solution to this problem [23, L.59]. For example, in Kezhemsky sub-region in 1950 the fund for material help to schoolchildren was created at the initiative of secondary school and party-and-soviet activists for observing the law of universal schooling. The fund gathered 15,700 rubles of money, 6 centners of grain, 12 centners of potato and 58 pairs of footwear. From the beginning of the academic year the material help was given to 187 students: 45 pairs of footwear, 12 sets of underwear and outerwear; 125 students were also provided with foodstuffs and money [24, L.46]. Rural councils took decisions on allocation of foodstuffs for hot breakfasts of low-income students. For example, in the village of Bedoba of Boguchansky sub-region there were allocated 15 centners of grain, 25 kilos of butter, 150 kilos of cottage cheese, 300 liters of milk, 6 centners of potato out of collective farm's funds [25, p.2].

Even though the situation with the primary education was gradually improving, not many rural children continued their further education in seven-year school. For example, in Irkutskaya oblast' in 1946 98,3 % of children attended

primary school, 83 % got seven-year education, and only 64,2 % got ten-year education [4, p.71] as further education required additional material costs, besides there were some difficulties with school attendance. Most children of the post-war period walked to school several kilometers, "holding linen self-made bags, wearing quilted jackets and felt boots in winter". Schoolchildren wasted much time to get to school, it was especially difficult in slush autumn and in cold winter. To get warm children played football with "horse apples" (droppings) on the slippery snowed road, it was lucky to get to school with a coachman in passing sleigh" [27, p.152] – says the residents of the Angara Region.

In Irkutskaya oblast' about half of all types of schools were situated in the southern part crossed by Eastern Siberian Railway where there were 16 densely populated areas. The situation was more difficult in the remote areas of the Lower and the Middle Angara Region where there was insignificant amount of seven year and secondary schools [4, p.74-75]. So, in Eniseysky sub-region (the Lower Angara Region) in 1951 one of the reasons for reducing the number of students was a great sparseness of settlements. For example, in Makovsky rural councils there were "32 settlements scattered from the schools at a far distance – 100-150 km. There were no school boarding houses in these schools for the exception for one which had school boarding house for 20 people" [28, L.42]. One of the ways out was to open the school boarding houses for children from remote areas. It is necessary to mention that in spite of annual increase of the amount of school boarding houses they could not provide the required dwelling" [4, p.75]. So in Irkutskaya oblast' in 1950 there was 3 sq. km. of bedroom space for a child while the standard was 3.5 sq. km.

Besides large congestion in school boarding houses it was also noted insufficient attention of

school administration to the conditions of life. The subject discussed by the Nizhne-Ilymsky Sub-regional Committee of all-USSR Communist Party in 1950 was insanitation in the sub-regional center boarding house, particularly, it was that “there is much mud, mess in the boarding school house, so it is a shame when the parents come to visit their children” [29, L.3]. However, even by the end of the period being studied the problems connected with the life of rural children in school boarding houses had not been solved.

Most respondents tell that they had to live with their relatives and friends and in some cases with unknown people in other villages.

According to the words of Z.V. Ivanova, there was only primary school in village Moskovskaya, so she went to the fifth grade in the village Burnino, “We lived in the flats of unknown people, slept on the floor, we came home for the weekends, took foodstuffs, loaded on the boat and went in single file, came back dirty, in wet footwear” [30, p.4].

T.E. Mikhaleva reminds (village Guruk, Kujtunsky sub-region), “We would live there for a week. You would come on Sunday, would take bags with all stuffs: potatoes, then we were given bread, so we would take bread, a bottle of milk. It was sharp frost; we used to put on our quilted jackets, put the bottle in our bosoms, and went back. Sometimes the bottle got frozen and burst. But it didn’t matter – we went home. On Saturday when we ran from school we had to wash the floor in our host’s flat. Having washed the floor and tidied up the flat we ran 12 kilometers home” [31, p.12].

The same lifestyle was typical in the distant villages of the Lower and the Middle Angara Region. To continue their education children had to part with their families and live with unfamiliar people in unknown surrounding being engaged with many other matters including taking care of themselves. It should be noticed

that not all children started their independent life successfully. As an example we can take the claim of party organizer of sovkhoz, Shirokoje, in Udereysky sub- region, “Our children have been studying for 5 years, we sent them to Bryanka, then to Krasnoyarsk. While studying in Bryanka my son got completely spoilt, he had bad marks and he was repeating a year in the 5th grade. I found a flat for my daughter in Krasnoyarsk, she studied in 8th grade, and this year she also had had problems with studies. What should I do? We, communists, could not teach our children properly. I had to take my children from school for a year since it was useless to teach children without parents’ control” [32, L.55]. Having the same difficulties with teaching their children many families made decisions to take their children home out of school.

It was also necessary to have a definite family welfare to continue education: “those who were richer can study in Bratsk – there was 10-year school there”; besides the payment for dwelling (often payment was made by foodstuffs), the family lost workforce (men as workers were more appreciated than women). From the personal diary of I.M. Moskovskih we got known that in the village Moskovskaya there were 44 male teenagers born in 1933-1943 (i.e. all male children born in these years lived in the village) went to work to sovkhoz after finishing primary school [33, p.6]. That is why, perhaps, most respondents with higher level of education are women. As the result of all factors mentioned above the level of education was still low during post-war period. So, in 1950 in Komsomol organization of Nizhne-Ilymsky sub-region 72 % of Komsomol members had primary education, 4 % – secondary education and only 0.03 % – higher education [34, L.16].

It should be mentioned that young rural people had opportunities to continue their education. In most sub-regional centers there

were schools for rural young people, however, the contingent of students was hardly half of what had been planned, [4, p.71] and in some sub-regional schools were closed in the second half year in connection with large dropping out of students.

In spite of great financial difficulties, by the academic year 1950-51 in Irkutskaya oblast' the number of comprehensive schools had grown by 20 % in rural area, in Krasnoyarsky Kray this rate was lower and accounted for 10 % in comparison with academic year 1940-41. However, even by the end of the period being studied the number of students was still comparatively lower than it was before war. The growth of contingent by 23 % was only noted in the secondary schools in rural area of Irkutskaya oblast', while being observed the reduction of contingent on the territory of Krasnoyarsky Kray [9, p.253].

The history of children's everyday life, without doubt, cannot be full without paying attention to the role of upbringing in the education which performed the function of children social adaptation. During post-war period pioneers' organizations at school played special part. The model of soviet "happy childhood" of Stalin's epoch represented well-regulated state mechanism of upbringing soviet citizens. Region party committees and all-Union Lenin's Communist Union of Youths paid great attention to this sphere of life. They regularly listened to the reports, controlled and checked the work of pioneers' organization. With the help of pioneers' organization, the soviet state and society cultivated social and cultural norms and values of behavior among children. The concept of "soviet person" was becoming clearer: strong, patient, determined, loyal to their country and party citizens [35, p.14]. Thematic and subject meetings were widely spread. For example, there were meetings in Bratsk's schools, "I.V. Stalin: father, teacher and friend of soviet children", "S.M. Kirov", "Our Motherland", "Peace to

the World", "Setting up Communism"... [36, L.25] The curriculums of some seven year and secondary schools included special classes where the students had discussions on political, scientific and educational topics. Every week the political information was enlightened; in senior classes the students presented the information themselves. They organized reader's conferences with reading newspapers, magazines, fiction for children [37, L.19]. Besides, children gathered money to help orphans, families of war veterans and disabled. Pioneers revived young volunteers' movements, with enthusiasm gathered scrap metal [38, p.145].

They organized circles at schools: mathematic, of drama, choir, "do-it-yourself", literature, physical education, young naturalist etc., but it should be noted that "the activity of circles had informal character and often was connected with celebrations and holidays (for example the activity of drama, choir and literature circles" [39, L.19., L.58]. Physical education of students was improving. In winter pioneers of seven years and secondary schools took part in ski competitions for a prize of the newspaper Pionerskaya Pravda, various war and sports games were held [40, p.107]. Sports sections were organized everywhere, pioneers and students enthusiastically passed the tests on physical abilities "Ready for Labour and Defense", at the same time the role of ideological upbringing was quite high, particularly, it was noted that all the events being held "combined military and physical training with the work of political campaigns, so that they presented some kind of mass cultural events" [41, L.48]. In spite of activization of physical education program in seven year and secondary schools it was noted that there were no simplest sport playgrounds in the majority of collective farms. There were no stadiums in many sub-regional centers of the Angara Region [42, L.22].

Pioneers' squads in sub-regional centers reported to Irkutskaya oblast' committee of all-Union Lenin's Communist Union of Youths that in their schools "pioneers struggle for organized lesson, under the control of teachers and tutors help poor students, fight against facts of unconscientious, attitude to studies" [43, L.26]. Sub-regional committees of Party and Komsomol gave money for rewarding the most conscientious students with valuable prizes. The students remembered such events all their life. They were proud of good students either at home or at school [44, p.145]. So, for example, N.V. Dubrovin remembers, "Then school-leaving party was not a party, but something like a holiday: they congratulated us and awarded us prizes, small ones – I got a belt. But it was the best reward – it was better to have a belt rather than a rope for trousers" [45, p.7].

It should be mentioned that the respondents do not tell much about their pioneer's childhood, "I was a pioneer. Nobody asked us if you wanted or not. Put a tie on, enroll, and you're a pioneer. The teacher enrolled us to pioneers" [46, p.13]; "We sang chastushkas and declared verses at the club on holidays – on the 7th of November, 1st of May, the teacher prepared us" [36, p.2]; "Not all were pioneers, some boy didn't want to, they liked bullying. The teased us, girls, fought. The duty of a pioneer was to study well [47, p.17].

During the post-war period pioneers' camps played important role in the upbringing system. The children from families with low income and families of war veterans mainly got vouchers [48, p.2]. By the beginning of 1950s there were pioneers camps in each sub-region of the Angara Region, though there were great difficulties with their organization. Preparation for summer opening was badly organized. For example, the following was noted in Udereysky sub-region in summer of 1952, "The location of camps has not been defined yet. Pioneers' camps have been

organized in various places for several years. The absence of equipped pioneers' camp prevents us from upbringing work" [49, p.2]. They had difficulties with taking the children to the place of rest, uncomfortable living conditions.

In 1950s in some sub-regions of the Angara Region stationary pioneers' camps were built only for summer rest of children. The number of schoolchildren spending summer at pioneers' camps was increasing. So, it was reported that in Zayarsk in summer of 1953 there would be 540 pioneers resting at pioneers' camps [50, L.20]. The forms of spending leisure at pioneers' camps were various. The children read the books: The story of a Real Man, Young Guard etc., took part in drama, dance and sports activities, passed the tests on physical abilities "Be Ready for Labour and Defense". Rural children had the opportunities to go on excursion tours. "You can't imagine the impressions children had during their first trips to Irkutsk. They had been telling about them for a month. Nowadays we can compare such events only with a trip abroad», – wrote famous historian Yu. A. Petrushin [51, p.146].

However, pioneers' camps could not embrace a large number of schoolchildren, that's why other forms of summer rest for children were organized at schools, for example the newspaper, Kolkhoznik, of Kezhemsky sub-region reported, "Children playground has been organized in the village Prospikhino. There will be organized squad at Kezhemsky primary and secondary schools, and there will be brigades working at all seven year schools of our sub-region and primary school of village Bolturino" [52, p.2].

Hard post-war times forced many children and teenagers to start working since the early age. From one hand, the state considered the easy children labour as the integral part of preparing the labour resources for national economy. From the other hand, the children labour was not only the means of the Soviet socialization in the 1940s.

It often used forcibly in agriculture because of the constant shortage of labour resources. Here are some facts: “the students of the 6th-10th forms had begun to study since 1st-20th October in the majority of schools because they had been working at kolkhozes and sovkhoses” [53, L.14]. I.M. Moskovskih, the native of Moskovskaya village, remembered, “We had begun to study since 15th October. You had to come and register in August and not to forget the references from kolkhoz if you wanted to be accepted to school. The school year finished in May and we were immediately sent to fields” [54, p.9]. Rural children helped on kolkhozes’ fields and farms [55, L.66], worked at the school plots [56, L.18] and took part at the voluntary Sunday work” on the potatoes crowns cutting” [57, L.9]. It is fixed in the reports of a sub-regional committee of the all-Union Leninist Young Communist League and publications of the local newspapers.

In the post-war Soviet villages the children labour was not only the means of upbringing but more often the means of surviving. It is rather interesting to look at “The Statistic Report. Family Members and Usage of kolkhozniks labour in January and July 1952”. It was created in Irkutskaya oblast’ and it is based on the official rate of the children labour. We compared the data received from the report with the oral sources. According to the report there were three groups of children and teenagers who worked at kolkhozes: men – 14-15 years old, women – 14-15 years old, children (without any sex division) – 12-13 years old. In winter one teenager was working at the kolkhoz, 50 people from 140 registered families were working there during the July’s vacation. It makes up 34 % of the boys (in winter it is 17.4 % and in summer it is 74.5 %) and 2.6 % of the girls in winter and 50 % of the girls in summer [58, L.6, 42].

However, the public inquiries, held during the expedition in the villages of the Lower and the Middle Angara Region, showed that

the majority of the 8-9 years old children were working at kolkhozes in summer. Z.V. Ivanova from Moskovskaya village reminds, “We’d been working at kolkhoz since 9 years old. Our foreman knocked at the window in the morning and told where to go. We were weeding fields in summer, storing up the firewood and sawing trees in March during the spring vacation. Every child had to work at kolkhoz, it was obligatory” [36, p.7]. M.I. Kulakova from Yarkino village (the Lower Angara Region) told that she, like the majority of rural teenagers, had been working at sheaves tying since 11 years old [59, p.5]. One of the inhabitants of Ufimtsevo village (Nizhnelymsk sub-region) remembered, “We, girls, were sent to the hardest work and there was nobody to protect us in front of the foreman. We hadn’t got fathers” [60, p.3]. 12-13 year-old boys were sent to plough without any assistance. I.I. Rukosujev from Yarkino village remembered that he was seated on a horse when he was five and fastened that he could not fall while the adults were operating the wooden plough. Being teenagers, he and his friend were sent to plough a remote field. It was a warm May day. The work was going fast and well. They decided to have a rest after dinner and fell asleep. The foreman arrived the next day only and woke the children up, “We caught it hot, the field wasn’t ploughed” [61, p.4]. The respondents noticed that nobody made allowance for the age or sex in the time of they were working at kolkhozes. The same situation was in many sub-regional centres. It was pointed out on a meeting of Zayarsk sub-regional committee of the all-ULYCL that “teenagers and young workers in the age of 13, 14 and 15 have already been working at workshops, storehouses and garages for eight or even ten working hours in day-shifts and night-shifts. Forty-three teenagers in the age of 13, 14, 15 work for eight hours at the Yakuttrans Trust. The labour protection of teenagers is absent. Some of them work in night shifts or at the detrimental to health workshops.

The law about six hours' working day for teenagers younger than sixteen is not executed. The same situation is at the other enterprises" [62, L.7-8]. Children and teenagers became familiar with labour both in family and at school. Having got a job some of them found themselves in the hard working and living conditions. They were faced with misunderstanding and inertness of people at the top.

Having worked hard, children came into adult world too fast. At the same time in the middle of the 1950s the practice of using the children labour in kolkhozes and enterprises was over.

Because of the high intensification of the adult labour, caring for supporting housekeeping (keeping the house cleaned, responsibility for harvest in the garden, caring of the cattle etc.) was children's duty, especially in summer. N.P. Panova noticed, "My brother Vanya and I dug up the whole garden and our grandmother promised to boil an egg for both of us, then" [63, p.9]. M.P. Afonina remembered, "I've been weeding and watering since 9 years old in the garden. Mom planted a lot" [64, p.7]. N.V. Bruhanova said, "I used to be running and not to sweep the house, mom punished me... We helped with harvesting. I was 8 and already milked cows" [54, p.3].

There is no doubt that the role of labour in socialization of children was very high in the villages of the post-war Angara Region. T.E. Mikhaleva remembered, "Before leaving for work my mother leavened dough for bread and asked me to knead it when it rose. She put the dough into the stove and ordered, "As soon as the bread turns brown, take it out." Now I'm able to cook the magnificent bread because I saw it by my own eyes and learnt. I can milk cows and feed pigs since my childhood. It was going on of itself and imperceptibly. We were taught and forced to learn and didn't refuse" [37, p.14]. Upbringing of children was built on the personal examples of adults. It was not always the examples of their

parents because children could not see them very often. Teenagers entered into different relationships through taking part in general work of kolkhoz. They were getting the experience of traditional labour culture of an ordinary Siberian village.

Working at kolkhoz did not solve the problem of life supporting, that is why fishing, hunting, picking up mushrooms and berries were of great importance in an ordinary Angara village. It should be mentioned that adults did not almost do any gathering because of being busy a lot. It was a part of children's and old people's duties. M.I. Porfirova, whose childhood was at Kezhma village, told us that their grandmothers had often taken them to pick up berries. They had gone with the downstream of the Angara for picking up berries and children had towed boats back along the bank, "We were trying with all our strength and were tired enormously. After a while we're allowed to have a rest by our grandmothers. It meant that we might sit in the boats and rowed" [65, p.5].

Z.V. Ivanova remembers that the majority of the boys in Moskovskaya village were busy hunting. They laid snares for catching hares and caught squirrels [36, p.9]. Thus, 60 young hunters of Krasnoyarsky Kray took an active part in the competition for the best young hunter and went its conditions over in 1946. M. Pashin from the Partizansky sub-region gave 2500 rubles worth of furs, thereby going over the quota 500 % up. M. Zhirnov from the Eniseysky sub-region gave 2400 rubles worth of furs. Young hunters from the Boguchansky sub-region gave 7000 rubles worth of furs [66, p.2]. S.M. Kosolapov, who lived in the Nizhne-Ilymsk sub-region, told that his grandfather had taken him for hunting since the early childhood and, being 12 year-old boy, he had shot at squirrels much better than his grandfather. He had been allowed to go to the Taiga on his own since that time [67, p.7]. I.M. Moskovskih explained, "The old men shot better

than the youth. And, by the way, they shot not from the buttstock but from the hand. My father trained me to shoot with a rifle. We shot at sparrows. And he also trained me to shoot on-the-run while swinging. I was swinging and hitting the aim. I had to be able to do it because it would be more comfortable to shoot in such a way while you were riding a horse [63, p.4].

It should be noticed that many young Angara girls helped adults (more often their mothers) even in fishing.

The overwhelming majority of the girls from the Lower and the Middle Angara Region were busy needleworking, embroidering and knitting. Traditionally peasant women were busy sewing, weaving, mending clothes and their daughters were always side-by-side. "Mom didn't teach me how to needlework. I took the crochet hook and began to try knitting. I asked my friends about patterns," Z.V. Ivanova explained [36, p.11]. A.V. Moskovskih said that mothers did not have enough time to teach their daughters, "I was taught by my older sister and I showed my friends how to do" [3, p.9].

As concerns cooking, those respondents, who live in the villages of the Middle Angara Region, report that they learnt how to cook their traditional everyday dishes watching the adults. It should be mentioned that it was not the boys' duty.

There was a custom in Yarkino village of the Lower Angara Region: girls were not being taught how to cook intentionally, that is why not to break cooking traditions of their future husbands' families. It had to be done by their mothers-in-law [68, p.3]. Taking part in the housework children could assimilate the culture of life, acquire the social skills they needed in

family relationships, such as division of labour, style of family communication etc.

Resume

Thus, there was "ordinary", "normal" children's experience in the Angara Region. It was such experience of socialization, which was typical for many peasants. It did not contradict the official doctrine of the Soviet childhood but it was modified by everyday realities. There was a great difference between the culture of the childhood in the half-urbanized sub-regions and the childhood of peasants in the post-war years. The last one depended on the zigzags of the state policy and traditional peasant way of living. Formation of the stable inner village traditions was happening in a natural way because of the special mechanism of bringing person in the culture of the society where he was born, but it would be in prospect to become a person of full value in that society. Child acquired the behavior that had been cultivated by his natives for centuries, while they were adapting to the local conditions, and imprinted in the culture of this society. Besides that the constant communication with natives in the network of the specific activity and special psychological atmosphere formed the appropriate set of moral valuable and habits of a person.

Having gone to school, child did not have so much family influence because parents were busy by providing family and children with a source of permanent income in the post-war years. Comprehensive school and junior social and political organizations became the main socializing institutions having undertaken the duty to teach child the formal models, norms and roles of behaviour in the post-war years.

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