

The Battle of Stalingrad as Told by the Children of Stalingrad

La batalla de Stalingrado según lo dicho por los niños de esa guerra

Zoia TININA [1](#); Olga RODIONOVA [2](#)

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ABSTRACT:

The evidences of children in regards to the Battle of Stalingrad provide additional information about World War II from the perspective of young witnesses. The first-hand accounts of the children of war were studied via historical-comparative and historical-philological methods, which allow determining the conceptual figurativeness of texts in their sociocultural and historical significance. The characteristics of all the sources that were studied as sociocultural monuments of Russian folklore were identical. In general, the flashbacks of children of war reflected, by means of modern folklore, the collective mentality that was formed during childhood while living in extreme conditions of World War II.

Keywords: Folklore, Battle of Stalingrad, Children of war, memories

RESUMEN:

Las evidencias de los niños con respecto a la Batalla de Stalingrado proporcionan información adicional sobre la Segunda Guerra Mundial desde la perspectiva de los testigos jóvenes. Los relatos de primera mano de los niños de la guerra se estudiaron a través de métodos histórico-comparativos e histórico-filológicos, que permiten determinar la figuración conceptual de los textos en su significado sociocultural e histórico. Las características de todas las fuentes que fueron estudiadas como monumentos socioculturales del folklore ruso fueron idénticas. En general, los flashbacks de los niños de la guerra reflejaron, a través del folklore moderno, la mentalidad colectiva que se formó durante la infancia mientras vivía en condiciones extremas de la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Palabras clave: Folclore, Batalla de Stalingrado, Niños de guerra, recuerdos

1. Introduction

The term folklore was introduced into scientific discourse by English archeologist and historian W.J. Thoms in 1846 (Gusev, 1966; Sen & Chakravarti, 2008). The scientific legacy of the scientist permanently draws the attention of researchers (Borovitskaya, 2015; Bochkareva, 2009; Ben-Amos, 1971). Folklore studies of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries

continue exploring both English-language national culture and literature (Culler, 1997; Sen & Chakravarti, 2008) and the folklore of other nations, for instance, the early Slavs (Gusev, 1965; Gusev 1966).

In Russia, Russian folklore has been studied for more than two centuries (Anikin, 1996; Baldina et al., 2000; Bogatyrev & Jacobson, 1971). As the science developed, the Russian mythological school was formed, the theory of historical poetics of folklore was developed, its separate genres were outlined and investigated, and the foundation for the history of formation of the Russian language was laid (Bakhtina, 1991; Bochkareva, 2009; Veselovskiy, 1989).

Over the first two decades of the twenty-first century, Russian folklore studies have seen the publication of substantial works. The historiography of folklore studies continues to develop (Folk artistic culture, 2000; Propp, 2000; Shimchuk, 2009).

The concept of folklore studies as a branch of science becomes deeper and closely related to practical life. Considering the initial syncretism of world culture on the one hand and the desire to preserve the national identity of nations on the other hand, professors and associate professors of leading Russian higher educational institutions are implementing the idea of friendship of language cultures in the educational process. For instance, Professor Viktor Kabakchi from Saint Petersburg, an expert in English-language description of Russian culture, has written many textbooks and a dictionary titled *The Dictionary of Russia* to teach students how to use the English language in application to Russian culture while preparing experts for direct intercultural dialog (Kabakchi, 2002; Mikhaylova, 2000).

Emma Shimchuk, a contemporary philologist and Russian language expert, published many papers about the genre of speech, as well as a textbook about general issues of lexicographical theory and practice and philological Russian language dictionaries for the Romano-Germanic department of the Lomonosov Moscow State University (Ben-Amos, 1971).

Contemporary authors have also discovered another type of Russian folklore and a third, nonprofessional, culture and literature. The discussion between traditionalists and reformists in regards to this type of culture is ongoing. Both in Russia and abroad, professionals refuse to accept this type of creative self-fulfillment of individuals in culture and literature (Ben-Amos, 1971; Culler, 1997; Sen & Chakravarti, 2008).

Nevertheless, at the current level of development of civilization in general and the Russian society in particular, the amount of eclectic informal texts, including poetry, grows in an arithmetic progression; such texts are used in both popular and classical literature (Baldina et al., 2000; Bakhtina, 1991; Gusev, 1966). The modern realities of folklore should be reckoned with. The distinguishing feature of informal third literature is a mixture of various elements that have been borrowed from the traditional folklore culture of the past and various modern subcultures originating from special and professional literature in its "high" versions (Folk artistic culture, 2000; Propp, 2000; Sen & Chakravarti, 2008).

One of the first Russian authors to study the folk culture during World War II was Viktor Gusev, Professor at the Saint Petersburg University and an expert in national art and regularities and trends in the development and functioning of folklore and ethnographic tradition. He studied not only the foreign national culture of the years of war, but also the regional culture of the Soviet Union during World War II (Gusev, 1980).

However, neither foreign nor Russian historiography pays enough attention to the features of national culture in regards to the Battle of Stalingrad. The memories of the children of war as a type of folklore in the sociocultural and historical contexts of the Battle of Stalingrad are understudied.

In 2016, a collection of works titled *The Living Memory of the Heart* was published; it included memories of the children of war and was presented on the Internet (*The Living Memory of the Heart*, no date). Having drawn much attention, the book immediately became a bibliographical rarity. Its only copy is kept at the Children of Stalingrad club in Volgograd; its administrator is Vladimir Turov, a participant of World War II.

Thus, the memories of the children of war have been introduced by The Living Memory of the Heart into scientific discourse as historical accounts of wartime childhoods during World War II and as informal texts, including poetry, of contemporary authors, former children of Stalingrad who were not professional linguists or writers.

2. Results

By examining the memories of the children of Stalingrad and comparing them to the memories of children of war, who lived in areas that were not turned into battlefields, it is possible to reveal, through the prism of child consciousness, the problem of the everyday conditions of wartime childhood.

The Living Memory of the Heart was published as a reprint using the risography technique, with a small number of copies, and a size of 100 pages. It contains prosaic and rhymed texts that were written by 24 children of Stalingrad and 29 children of war from other regions of the Soviet Union, a total of 53 original texts. Each text is preceded by the last name, first name, and patronymic name of its author. The age of the children of war ranges from two to ten. The children, who were still infants at the time of the Battle of Stalingrad included the memories of their parents about war, as the parents told them about how they saved their lives during the war. Adolescents of war shared their own experiences of the war.

The common aspect in the memories of both categories of children was the emotional elevation of poetic stories, which had signs of free verse – modern folklore, based on the synthesis of national epos and elements of various subcultures and originating from classical literature. For instance, Tamara Grishina, a child of Stalingrad, recited her mother's memories as follows:

<p>Я родилась на Волге в Сталинграде В тот год, когда гремели канонады, А по стране формировались военные отряды,</p> <p>С одним из них ушёл на фронт и мой отец. А мать, рыдая, его просила не уходить, Наверно, сердце её знало, что больше вместе им не быть.</p> <p>Потом война пришла и к нам на Волгу, Сметая всё на своём бешеном пути, Чтоб сотни тысяч жизней неповинных Стереть с лица моей родной земли. Нам с братом повезло немного больше, Наша раненая мама нас смогла спасти. И мы, голодные, босые, напуганные страшно, Дождались окончания войны... А мать, на белом свете всё кляня, Больной рукой брала лопату, грабли –</p> <p>Сажала огород, чтоб накормить и брата, и меня. Спасибо ей, что она выстояла...</p>	<p>I was born on the Volga in Stalingrad In a year when the cannons roared And military squads were formed across the country And one of them took my father to the frontline. My mother cried and begged him not to go Perhaps, her heart knew that they would never be together again.</p> <p>Then the war came to us, to Volga, Wiping out everything in its way, Wiping thousands of innocent lives Off the face of their native land. My brother and I got lucky, Our wounded mother managed to save us. We were hungry, barefooted, and scared to death, We lived to see the end of the war... Meanwhile, our mother cursed the world Picked up the spade and rake with her injured hand – She planted a garden to feed my brother and me.</p> <p>I thank her for holding out... (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date"pp.14-15").</p>
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Without a doubt, Tamara Grishina used this emotional speech to reflect the elements of the epic tradition, which enabled her to preserve the ideological and thematic content of the text, praise her mother's heroic deeds, and create an image of wartime. At the same time, these elements are synthesized with hexameter, similar to ancient classical literature and the modern system of rhyming (free verse). The poem also breaches the epic tradition of the gender attribute of a male hero. The author attributed the characteristics of the hero to the female mother, who protected her children. The main idea of this poem is to show how people survived in the midst

of the Battle of Stalingrad.

Adolf Makarov's poem is composed in a similar style, but with a less impulsive tone. He spent his wartime childhood in the town of Kineshma, Ivanovo Oblast. Naturally, no specific battles are mentioned in this poem. The author leads a simple and steady narrative from the perspective of the saved children, who continue the businesses of their fathers and grandfathers, who died in the war:

Ещё живут на белом свете
Войны Отечественной дети,
И, никому не удивительно,
Долг продолжают их родителей.
Им память иногда подносит,
Хотя о том никто не просит,
Картины взрывов и пожарищ,
И жизнь нелёгкую товарищей.
Счастлив, кто после Дня Победы
Встретил отца, а может, и деда,
Грустит, кто потерял в бою
Отца, а может, мать свою.
Росли под оком бдительным страны
И помогали разбирать следы войны,
Потом, когда взрослее стали,
Страну из рук отцов приняли.

Ввели страну, как на парад,
По всем приметам в первый ряд.
Знать, дети эти что-то стоили
И космос первыми освоили!

There are still in the world
Children of the Patriotic War
And it comes as no surprise
That they continue the duty of their parents.
Their memory sometimes brings them
Although nobody asks for it
The images of explosions and fires
And the rough life of their comrades.
Happy are those, who after the Victory Day
Met their father or maybe grandfather
Grieving are those, who lost their father
Or mother in battle.
They grew up under the vigilance of their country
And helped undo the traces of war,
Then, when they grew older,
They were handed down the country by their fathers.
They brought the country, with flying colors,
Into the lead, in all terms.
I guess these children were worth something
And they were the first to go to space! (The Living
Memory of the Heart, no date"p. 43").

Obviously, the fact that the author had no experience of battle had a different effect on his poem. The text is calm and elaborate, properly arranged in the quantitative style, which is typical for Russian folk rhyming. It strictly follows the iambus metrical foot and feminine and plain rhymes. The main idea of the poem is to show that the children of the victorious try to be worthy of their parents in peaceful life, too.

An entirely different mood prevails in the poem of Valentina Lyubimenko, child of Stalingrad:

Как я ребёнком несмышлёным
Вбежала с дедом в дом чужой,

Чтобы нас пули не достали,
И чтоб осталась я живой.
Мы быстро в погреб опустились,
Присели и закрыли люк.
И тут снаряды полетели,
Разрушив все дома вокруг.
Я не забуду эти ночи,
Когда горела вся земля,
И пламя, как большое солнце,
Сжигало землю до красна...

When I was a silly child
I followed by grandfather into another person's house
So that the bullets couldn't get us
So that I could stay alive.
We quickly descended into the basement
We sat down and closed the hatch.
Then came the shells
And destroyed all the houses around us.
I will never forget that night
When the land burned
And the flames, as big as the sun,
Scorched the land red... (The Living Memory of the
Heart, no date"p.41").

The author's words are impulsive, imbued with anxiety and fear of the Battle of Stalingrad, which is shown in detail here. The hero of the text is the grandfather of Valentina Lyubimenko,

who hid her from the bombs and bullets in a basement. As a sociocultural monument, the poem is classified as eclectic informal literature that repeats the esthetic stereotypes that are typical for postwar intellectuals of the time. The language of the text, similar to the previous example, is close to professional poetry. It uses iambus and trochee, masculine (люк-вокпуг) and feminine (Сталинграда-награда, потомки-девчонки) rhymes, mimics non-classical rhymes of Silver Age poets (седы-войны, война-нужна), etc.

Another child of Stalingrad, now an honored poet of Volzhskiy, Lyudmila Lyabchuk, wrote four octaves, the distinguishing feature whereof is their obvious annoyance with the would-be partner in conversation about the war:

Мне о войне рассказывать не надо,
Она меня в окопах Сталинграда
Лишила разом детства, кров сожгла,
Что было в нём и вне его, дотла.
Когда с горящего двора мы убежали -
По обе стороны дома вокруг пылали.
Кругом бежали люди – кто куда.
Шальными многих сделала беда.
Бежали как по огненному морю
В другой квартал, к родным, а горе
По пяткам било нас, лишая сил.
Упавший конь дорогу преградил.
Толпа за нами не остановиться.
Брат младший выпустить подол из рук боится.

А рядом мать с младенцем на руках.
В глазах её не слёзы – за нас страх.
В убежище родные приютили –
На ночь, а утром их квартал бомбили.

Куда бежать? Бежим, где дом сгорел,

Последний уголёк ещё, где тлел.
Что было дальше, не дай бог приснится.
На Волгу за водою, чтоб напиться,
Пришлось ходить. Труп чем придётся, толкнёшь
От берега, воды ведёрко наберёшь
И тропкою, средь мин, идёшь обратно.
А ноги под тобою словно ватны.
Горит вагон с консервами – бегу,
Урвавши их – семье еду несусь,
Так каждый день прожить кой-как давалось.
Грудная наша Галочка скончалась.
Не буду дальше душу теребить
Тем, что увидеть довелось и пережить

You don't need to tell me about the war
In the trenches of Stalingrad
It deprived me of my childhood, burned by home
And everything inside it to ashes.
When we ran away from the burning yard –
Houses burned on either side of us.
People were running everywhere, in all directions.
Many were killed by stray bullets and shells.
We ran like across a sea of fire
To another district, to relatives, while grief
Lashed out at us, enfeebling us.
A horse fell and blocked our path
The crowd behind us would not stop.
My younger brother was afraid to let go of the skirt
Next to him was my mother with an infant in hand
With tears in her eyes, fear for us.
Our relatives hid us in a shelter
For the night, while in the morning their district was
bombed.
Where to run? We ran where a house burned down
Its last embers still glowing.
I hope not to dream of what came next.
To the Volga to get water to drink,
We had to go. Shoving corpses with what we had
Away from the bank, fill a bucket with water
Take the narrow path back through the mines.
Your legs are shaking.
A railway carriage with preserves is burning, I run
I grab them, take food to my family,
Thus we managed to get by day by day.
Galochka, our baby, died
But I won't continue with this chilling tale
Of what I had to see and live through (The Living
Memory of the Heart, no date "p.41").

Based on the content of the poem, which is filled with specific events, one could assume that Lyudmila Lyabchuk was an adolescent at that time. A child would not have been able to fill a bucket with water from the Volga, take meat preserves from a burning railway carriage, and risk her life in a minefield to bring all this to her relatives to a basement of a burnt-down house. In terms of its structure, the poem is composed in accordance with the rhythmic principle of a qualitative, non-singing poem that coldly describes events using rhymed colloquial speech. In

each octave, the figurativeness of the story is achieved by using various accentual systems of versification and ways of rhyming lines. The first octave is composed in a syllabic system with alternating feminine, vowel, nonverbal, and verbal rhymes, which is typical for proverbs, riddles, incantations, and, to an extent, bogatyr epos: не надо-Сталинграда (feminine); сожгла-дотла (vowel); убегали-пылали (feminine); куда-беда (vowel). The second and third octaves are composed solely in an accentual system of a folk poem, with alternating feminine and masculine rhymes: морю-а горе (feminine); сил-преградил (masculine); не остановится-боится (feminine); на руках-страх (masculine); приютили-бомбили (feminine); сгорел-тлел (masculine); приснится-напиться (feminine); толкнёшь-наберёшь (masculine). The fourth octave is composed with a mixed, syllabic-accentual or doubled-syllabic versification system. It alternates feminine rhymes (обратно-ватны, давалось-скончалась) with vowel (бегу-несу) and masculine (теребить-пережить) rhymes. The idea of the poem is to show the conditions, in which civilians had to survive during the Battle of Stalingrad.

The fourth author of poems, who was also a child of Stalingrad, is Viktor Mokhov. He described an episode that stuck in his mind, which was related to the capture of the 6th Army of Friedrich Paulus near Stalingrad. He thought that the "moaning, tears, and cries" of the prisoners "were heard all across the town of Kalach". The author does not describe in detail the history of the Battle of Stalingrad before this event, although he does mention that he was an adolescent at the time. Such selectivity of war stories is related to the fact that the author focused his attention only on February of 1943. This explains why most of the text is dedicated to glorifying the "legendary and beloved Stalingrad", the mighty Volga River, and his firm friendship with fellow countryman Ivan Arkov, with whom they "each year in February heartily recalled the Battle of Stalingrad and the victory of our army" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.56"). In terms of its structure, the poem is composed in the free verse system and is a typical example of third culture, which balanced between prose and poetry (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "55-56"). In terms of its idea, the poem features triumphant overtones of the turning point in World War II.

The prose writers, whose works were featured in The Living Memory of the Heart can also be differentiated based on the essence of their accounts of the war depending on their place of residence.

For instance, Lyudmila Karasyova was one year old when the Battle of Stalingrad took place. Her text is based on the stories that her mother – Aleksandra Karasyova – told her: "My mother worked as a nurse at that time. She told me many stories about what she had to live through during the war in Stalingrad" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.36"). The author selected three episodes regarding the history of the Battle of Stalingrad from her mother's stories. The first episode talks about the "horrible bombing on August 23, 1942". She was at a public nursery at that moment and her mother came to pick her up after work. At that moment, aerial bombs covered the city and it grew dark. Aleksandra Karasyova did not reach the public nursery. "An old man was running towards her and shouted at her, telling her to hide and they hid under a staircase. They were covered by earth from bomb explosions, but they dug mother out, because her clothes were noticeable. Mother was shell-shocked, while the old man suffocated" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.31"). In the second episode, the author tells about Aleksandra's regular trips to get water from the Volga with her daughter in hands: "When she came for water, mother left me on the bank, because she did not have the strength to walk up from the river while carrying both the water and a child. This happened many times. Once, when she came back up to the bank, she did not find me where she left me. She searched for me for three days, she searched everywhere and lost all hope, she was on the edge. On the fourth day... she saw a woman walking towards her with me in her hands, two more children holding her skirt, and another boy, about nine years of age, following us. Mother was overwhelmed with joy" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.32"). The third episode shows how fascists treated children in the territories they occupied: "Soon the people were taken to prison, to Belaya Kalitva. Mother, with me in her hands, also ended up there... Once a

German approached a woman who was holding a baby boy in her hands, he took the boy, held him by his feet, and smashed his little head against a wheel of a cart. The boy's mother cried out in terror and went mad immediately" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.32").

All three episodes that the author selected are united by the leitmotif of female and motherly suffering and heroism and the divine deliverance of her child life. This is mentioned in the final part of the third story based on her mother's memories, when the mother lost her daughter on the bank of the Volga and saw her in another woman's arms on the fourth day of her search: "The woman told mother that she found me far from the bank. Her son was against her taking me in. We are too many as is, he told her, how can we take in even more children? His mother answered: "We saved her and God will save us" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.32").

The memories of Lyudmila Karasyova about the war are a historical source on the topic of the civilians' life in the territory where the Battle of Stalingrad took place. The text, which was written in a simple colloquial language, shows the admiration of the author with the heroism of her mother, the outrage at the behavior of fascists, and gratitude to the anonymous woman, like a messenger of God, in whose arms she found herself. The main idea of this prose work is to show the Stalingrad dweller's will to live and constantly look after themselves and their children.

Touching are the memories of Lidia Basova, who was born in Kamyshina, Volgograd Oblast. Her account of the August bombing is as follows: "When they started bombing the city and fascist planes filled the air, I was walking in the yard, I walked far from the house, stretched my arms to the sky, and said: "Plane, oh plane, take me for a ride..." Ilyusha, my brother, who was born on 1926, saw me, picked me up, and ran under the staircase of the house. The bombs fell. Mother grabbed me and we ran to the basement" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "pp.7-8").

This story has the elements of folk drama. On the one hand, it depicts an inadequate and naïve child's perception of life, on the other hand, it reflects the apogee of the tragedy in the life of a four-year-old girl, who viewed the raid of German planes as a game. The paradoxical situation made the child vulnerable and defenseless. The dramatically short phrases of the text are arranged in accordance with the timeline of the events and the rules of the genre. The text has a beginning, a culminating point, and a happy ending. First, young Lida plays carelessly near her home. Then the sound of airplanes fills the air. This sound drew her attention and got her excited. She ran off from her home and unsuspectingly reached out to the German bombers and recited a children's rhyme. The apogee of the drama is emphasized by the actions of her elder brother, who, unlike his little sister, was well aware of what was going on. He quickly picked up his sister and hid under the staircase. That was where their mother found them and took them to the basement. The life of little Lidia was saved thanks to her brother.

Tamara Bredikhina, a child of Stalingrad who was six years old at the time, also recalls the August bombing. One of the bombs hit her home, after which she and her mother Lidia Malysheva started living in a ravine in a dugout "and then in the basement of a destroyed building... water was portioned with spoons and the bread was disgusting"; sometimes they "ate bitter rat meat and tried to endure the cold and hunger". Lidia Malysheva remembered how after February 2, 1943 she used to help her mother at the hospital, brought water to injured people, sang songs, danced, and tried to ease the pain of the suffering people (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "pp.11-12").

Valentina Martekhova, born on August 2, 1933 in Trudovda village on the bank of Ilovlya River, Solodcha District, Stalingrad Oblast, was another witness of the Battle of Stalingrad. Her account, which is one and a half pages long, starts with a list of members of a rural family before World War II. After June 22, 1941, the men of the family (Yegor Chernyavskiy (the father) and Valentina's brothers – Pyotr and Viktor) went to war. The women: Yevdokiya (the mother), the daughter-in-law with two children, and daughters Anna and Valentina remained to work at the collective farm and host refugees "from Ukraine, who came on carts pulled by oxen.

Whole families came: old men, women, and children – they were settled in houses” (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date “p.45”). After Stalingrad was bombed on August 23, 1942, a hospital was organized in their house, which accepted injured people from the destroyed city, while the owners of the house and the Ukrainian refugees moved to the summer kitchen in the yard. Nine-year-old Valentina remembered the loud wailing of village women, who received death notices from the frontline for their husbands, sons, and brothers. Valentina Martekhova emphasized one particular episode that took place during the wartime: “The boys, two Nikolais, went fishing to the river and saw strangers in the reeds. They ran back to the headquarters and reported the strangers. They turned out to be two German deserters. They were brought to the village and all the people gathered to have a look at them. When the Germans were led out of the headquarters, they asked for water to drink and our uncle brought them a bucket of water. They were wounded. Women yelled: “Uncle Vanya, why are you giving them to drink?” To which he replied: “Perhaps my sons will also be given a cup of water”. That is the Russian soul – it does good deeds! Soon after, uncle Vanya got two death notices for his sons – Yegor and Mikhail, who died in the battle of Leningrad” (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date “pp.45-46”). After the victory, “very few men came back from the front to our village, most of them died in the battle of Stalingrad”. After the war, all the work in the village had to be done by women and teenagers (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date “pp.46-47”).

An important addition to the image of the Battle of Stalingrad is the account of Boris Medkov, a child of Stalingrad, who was five at the time. While recalling, similar to other authors, the August bombing, Boris focuses on the measures that Stalingrad residents took to survive during and after the bombing. He writes: “When fascist planes started bombing our city, mother and I ran along the Vishnyovaya Balka (Cherry Ravine) to Gumrak station together with two other families. We lived in an abandoned basement, surrounded by Germans and barbed wire. The older kids used to crawl under the wire to get horse heads, which the Germans threw away. Once, the Germans noticed them and started shooting. The mother of one boy was so worried she had a heart attack and died. My cousin Galina got pneumonia and died... In search of food, our mothers went to the railway station, where carriages with grain stood. When they were returning home, fascists used to shoot them from Messerschmitt planes, which flew very low. God protected our mothers – hungry children waited for them” (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date “p.48”). Boris Medkov continues to write that after the Battle of Stalingrad, “the house where we used to live was destroyed and we had nowhere to return to. Mother sent the elder children to their grandmother in the Tambov Oblast. When grandmother found out about the death of her son, our father, she went mad. We have spent all our lives looking for the grave of our father, who went missing in action in December of 1943. In February, he got a Medal for Bravery... I still have a yellow piece of paper – the certificate of merit. That is all the memory I have left of my father” (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date “pp.48-49”).

Boris Nekipelov was the third child in the family of Pyotr Nekipelov and Aleksandra Nekipelova. He was born on 1932 in special settlement No. 1 in the Kirov Oblast. “My father worked at the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs and my mother was a housewife”. Pyotr Nekipelov’s service had him move to the Kayskiy District, Kirov Oblast and then to Stalingrad in 1938. When Germany invaded the USSR, Pyotr Nekipelov went to the front and his family, which included six children and a housewife-mother, found itself without their breadwinner. Under such circumstances, the new breadwinners of the family were sixteen-year-old daughter Nina and elder sons of Aleksandra Nekipelova – twelve-year-old Gennady and nine-year-old Boris. By the beginning of the Battle of Stalingrad, all of them had become one year older formally, but several years older actually. Boris Nekipelov was a ten-year-old adolescent when the Battle of Stalingrad began. His account of the bombing of Stalingrad on August 23, 1942, which was mentioned by all children of Stalingrad, is supplemented by his observations in regards to enemy planes, which flew so low that he and his friends “could see the crosses on their wings and how viciously the pilots smiled”. The kids yelled “Fascists!” and that was when the bombs fell everywhere. “One bomb hit the neighboring yard and destroyed a house. My friend Volodya Vodyanov died – this was the first victim of fascists that I witnessed with my own eyes” (The

Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.56"). The author then tells how numerous bombings "destroyed supply depots, stores, the granary, the loaders' lodge... the oil combine, oil spilled into the Volga. The river burned for several days" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.57"), how he and his elder brother Gennady went begging, how he chopped off the legs of dead horses in the field to bring food home. At one point, the brothers found themselves on the bank of the Volga with other women and adolescents near a barge that carried cabbage. They were brought there by Germans to load the cargo from the barge into automobiles: "We were organized in a line... Germans with machineguns kept guard. My brother saw the opportunity and tossed a cabbage head into the bushes to pick it up later... a German noticed it, but he just stood there and watched. After the barge was unloaded, they let us go... my brother crawled into the bushes to get the cabbage. It was then when the German ran up to him and hit him with his machinegun. I tried to protect him and he hit me, as well. We barely made it home after the beating. We said nothing at home, we kept silent" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.58"). This was not the only time when the kids were beaten up by Germans. Once, while looking for foods, the kids stumbled upon a German dugout, peeped inside, because they could smell something tasty – "there was nobody there, but there was meat boiling on a stove. We quickly tossed the meat into our bags, grabbed something from the table... and ran". Two Germans started chasing them. "They caught us and spilled the content of our bags onto the snow, but took only the pepper. They were livid, they kicked us with their boots, we were tossed around like footballs... The Germans ran back, while we... we somehow managed to get up, take the meat, take each other's hands, and skate home. We would screw skating blades to our felt boots... Back at home, we did not tell how the Germans beat us up. When our mother asked us how we got the boiled meat, we told her that we came across some kind people who shared with us" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.58"). Boris Nekipelov also acknowledged betrayal among the civilians of Stalingrad: "In early November, an old lady who lived nearby reported us to the Germans: she told them that our father was a communist and worked for the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs. They brought two towing trucks to the house, attached hooks to either side of the building, and pulled it apart; the walls, the roof – everything collapsed... They drove mother and me into the yard to shoot us... one German hit my little sister out of my mother's arms with the buttstock of his machinegun. She fell to the ground. He stepped on her body with his boot, the girl lay on the ground covered in blood and screaming, while he continued to trample her... but another German did not let him shoot us. He lowered the machinegun with his hand, pulled the other German by the arm and said "Mother kaput". They left. We ran to Galina – she was still alive. She survived and is currently living in Ukraine" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.57"). Boris Nekipelov also remembers seeing the German prisoners near Stalingrad: "Almost the entire city, who survived, came to see the German prisoners. The column stretched for several kilometers – ragged, covered in blankets, some of them wore straw shoes. Sick, frozen, humiliated, and hungry – this is what became of the German army. Loudspeakers told about how the Germans were defeated at Stalingrad. Victory! Stalingrad is ours! The whole city rejoiced" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.59").

Valentina Okhitina's memories of the Battle of Stalingrad feature a story about how her brother put a bucket over his head during a bombing, which saved his life. "The bucket was riddled with holes from shrapnel, but my brother was only scratched". She will also always remember the long-awaited moment when the end of the Battle of Stalingrad was announced. "It happened at night, all people ran into the streets, they laughed, they hugged... I remember some soldier gave me a loaf of bread" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.68"). Even after the Battle of Stalingrad was over, World War II continued. The children who survived went to school. Valentina Okhitina recalls: "There was hunger, there was nothing to eat at home, while at school, they gave us three teaspoonful of sugar and a small bun. I had malaria, but even when my body temperature was 40, I still went to school for that bun and sugar" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "pp.68-69").

Stalingrad resident Alevtina Podolskaya tells how her father Ivan helped her, her three-year-old

brother Tolya, eight-month-old sister Nina, and mother Antonina get on a freight train to go farther away from the battle zone. Her father remained in Stalingrad. "The train had not yet left the city when the German planes came and started bombing the train. Everyone ran out of the carriages and to the shallow trenches; we were lucky it was nighttime". Here, the author notices how even the small children grew up in such extreme conditions: "I remember how my little sister Nina held on to the walls of the trench, how she made her first steps... while the planes bombed the train. I still don't understand how we survived" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.70"). The Podolskys, like many other families from that freight train, did not manage to get far from the frontlines, constantly moved from one trench or basement to another, starved, and tried to survive as best as they could. Alevtina Podolskaya writes: "I remember how the adults boiled stew from goosefoot and potato peelings over a fire and fed the children. Our little sister died from hunger. There were three of us left: mother Antonina, me, and my little brother" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.71"). Alevtina Podolskaya does not remember how mother Antonina disappeared from their lives. She only remembers that after the fascists were defeated at Stalingrad, she and her brother lived with their father's sister – Agrippina – and "cried and hoped for our mother to come back" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.71"). Then a tractor factory gave their father a 12-meter room in a shared apartment, he remarried, and took the children with him.

Lyudmila Samoylova remembered that after the bombing, they went on foot to their relatives in the Dzerzhinsky District: "Relatives (mother's sisters) lived in their own houses, they had dugouts. Mother and I... were approaching the Mamayev Kurgan when we heard German planes and our fighter planes. A dogfight commenced. The earth shook from the falling bombs and shells. Fear and terror overwhelmed us from the sound of diving planes. My mother covered me with her own body to protect me from the bombs and shells... In the evening, we managed to reach our relatives, exhausted, black from soot, with shaking hands" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "pp.79-80"). The author then writes: "We were pestered by German snipers. Once a sniper hit my cousin Valya in the neck in front of all the children in the dugout. During the bandaging, the sniper killed a nurse... after the occupation of the Dzerzhinsky District of Stalingrad, the Germans started moving civilians out under guard in automobiles to Gumrak station into a field surrounded by barbed wire... A train approached the station... We hid in hay in the corners of the carriages... the train started moving... after a while, it stopped and all the refugees came out of the carriages". This was Likhaya station, which was surrounded by empty houses. "We moved in and started living there, but this station was also bombed almost every night. So we decided to get away from that place, away from the bombings... After some time, we saw a small farm. A Russian family sheltered us there. We lived there till the spring of 1943 and then returned to Stalingrad" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "pp.80-81").

As one can see, the wartime childhood of Lyudmila Samoylova is similar to that of all other children of Stalingrad with the exception of several nuances. However, her text is not written in a colloquial language. It is composed using proper literary language with events that escalate as the story progresses. In additions, the author does not merely state facts, but actively participates in the episodes of her wartime childhood. This style of narration, which uses characters and personalities, brings her story closer to dramatic folk prose.

Unlike many others, Yulia Solovyova, who was born on August 2, 1935 in Kalach-on-the-Don, was lucky, because her family managed to cross the Volga on a barge, but then return to Kalach after hearing false information about the city supposedly having been liberated from the Germans. "But the rumor turned out to be false. When we were approaching the town, we saw Germans on the entry road, who demanded "chicken" and "eggs"... In December, the Germans ran from Kalach... A tank entered the town and everybody ran out of their homes to welcome, hug, and kiss the tank crew". Little Yulia and her sister and brother got lucky a second time, when their aunt Lyubov Yevseyeva, at whose place they lived and who worked at a hospital, was visited by "Georgy Zhukov together with other military officers. They gave us, the children, candy and we were happy" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.88"). Apparently, the

children were not interested in why their house was visited by a Marshall, which is why no detail or contemplations on this fact are provided in the text.

The next child of Stalingrad, Nelly Strepkova, tells how they lived in a one-floor wooden barracks near the airfield of Stalingrad and how the Germans bombed the aircraft factory where her father worked as a turner. "Father was shell-shocked bad and almost lost his hearing, which is why he was not taken by the army". The family was unable to move away from the bombings, "because father did not feel well". In time, however, they were still forced to pack up and leave the city on foot alongside other refugees. "We reached the Stefanidovka farm in the Solodcha District, Stalingrad Oblast... A family there sheltered us. We thought we had escaped the war, but the farm was occupied by either the Germans or the Soviets. We spent most of the time in the cellar.. When our army was stationed at farm, father asked their commander to join the army. They refused at first, but in the end, he enrolled and soon left for the front. He died in February of 1943" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.90").

These simple sentences that the daughter writes about her father tell of her sorrow from his death and pride of him, of the fact that he refused to remain a petty disabled person, freezing in a cellar, and honorably gave his life for Stalingrad (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.91").

The same style is used in the account of Rimma Fyodorova. Despite her wish "to be remembered and honored" and despite the title of the text – Nobody Forgotten and Nothing Forgotten – it does not mention the name of the village "200 km from Stalingrad", in which Rimma was born, the name of her grandfather, at whose place she lived or the name of her father, who worked as a school headmaster. The text, which fits onto a single page, only indicates the name of the author and has her photograph. Nevertheless, Rimma speaks highly of both her grandfather, whom she calls a "Russian bogatyr", and her father, who spent the evenings "reading information bureau digests in newspapers and then explaining them" to the villagers (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.93").

For comparison, consider some examples of prose accounts of the children of World War II, who witnessed battles with their own eyes. For instance, Nina Orlova was eight years old when the war broke out. Her family lived in the Onega District, Arkhangelsk Oblast. She found out about the war while listening to the radio, when Levitan's voice announced the "attack of fascist Germany. All factory sirens went off, people started sticking paper stripes to their windows... Several months later, mother fell ill and died". Her father went to the front. "We, the three children, were alone... I remember having to stand in lines to get bread... I often ran away to the military base, sang songs, danced, and the guys would share their porridge with me... Once my brother and me found a training grenade and brought it home. Our sister was in the other room, the furnace was burning. My brother disassembled the grenade and pulled out the detonating fuse, which looked like a red pencil. I asked him to give the fuse to me, but he said "Nobody gets it" and tossed it into the furnace. It exploded and a fire broke out. My hand got burnt, my brother's legs were injured. My sister emerged from the other room shouting "Run to the hospital!" A fire brigade came, the barracks was saved. upon being released from hospital, we were sent to a boarding school" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.67").

A different wartime childhood, that of Aleksandra Pocheptsova, took place in the town of Tulun, Irkutsk Oblast. She was eight years old when the war broke out. She writes that whole families lived in barracks together with evacuated children from Leningrad, which was under blockade. They lived in poverty, "bread was handed out when you showed a special card, mother went to different villages to exchange bread for other commodities: a bucket of potatoes, milk, some herbs... We gathered frozen potatoes and used them to make cake, gathered nettle, goosefoot, mushrooms, and berries. In autumn, those who were older went to get pine nuts... We dressed poorly: undershirts, boots with wooden soles, covered with tarpaulin – those were sent to us by Americans" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.72"). Behind the lines, children had the opportunity to go to school. For instance, Aleksandra Pocheptsova "went to school in 1942" and studied till seventh grade. Children "in their spare time played and ran around the

settlement... Women sat on the porch and sang beautiful folk songs". However, these families, too, received many death notices for their husbands, fathers, and elder brothers after the war. "From our family, our father and three brothers of our mother died in the war... Her fourth brother – Pyotr – was alive, because he worked at a military factory" (The Living Memory of the Heart, no date "p.72").

In the first case, the war made children homeless, while in the second case, it left them without their fathers or other relatives. The childhood behind the lines was poor, but it was not taken away from children altogether, as was the case with the children of Stalingrad. Protection from childhood death had an impact on the nature of their memories, which are presented in the form of a calm narrative about the livelihood of wartime, which stuck in the authors' minds.

In modern local wars, residential districts, where civilians live, are sometimes bombed with disregard for the innocent children. In such cases, children, if they survive, become traumatized both physically and mentally from their childhood and these traumas haunt them throughout their entire lives. The herein presented texts that describe the memories of the children of Stalingrad are a good example of this. The authors, whose works were featured in The Living Memory of the Heart have all grown up and become adults, but memories of the war still linger and cause them pain and fear for their lives, which was reflected in the nature of their accounts.

3. Conclusions

The analysis of the accounts written by children of Stalingrad and children of war, who did not witness battles during World War II showed the following. In both cases, the war in not child's play. Regardless of their age, children of Stalingrad were forced to constantly think about saving their lives, either with the help of adults or independently. Permanent survival in extreme conditions made them considerably more mature than they actually were and deprived them of their childhood. The war also had an effect on the childhood of kids, who lived behind the lines, but this effect was not as considerable. Many of them lost their parents and grew up in boarding schools or foster families, had no toys, but were not afraid of losing their young lives. In this sense, the texts of child witnesses of war, especially of those who lived in Stalingrad, who for the first time started talking about their lives during the battle for the city, are unique historical sources that offer additional information about the civilian casualties of the battle. The only source of such information are the estimations of the Soviet command after the first day of mass aerial bombings of the city on August 23, 1942. More than forty thousand civilians died that day. Considering the fact that the German air forces bombed the city many times, the civilian casualties were significantly greater. By gathering small pieces of historical evidence from the children of Stalingrad, it is possible to estimate the actual number of children, old men, and women that were killed during the Battle of Stalingrad. These sources offer additional facts about the course of World War II in general and the Battle of Stalingrad in particular. The first-hand accounts of the children of war can be considered a historical chronicle of the most vivid events of the "past war", which the children's mind remembered the best. At that, the texts that were written by the children of Stalingrad reflect emotional anxiety and are filled with concrete details about the battles for the city and the living conditions in the besieged city. The texts of the children of war, who did not experience a threat to their lives, are composed in the form of a calm narrative about school, children's games, poor life, and their participation in labor for the army on par with adults. They recall how they grew up fast and came to realize their duty to the Motherland.

The texts that were written by the authors of The Living Memory of the Heart are also unique sociocultural monuments. Firstly, the presentation of childhood memories was carried out by adults, who had had experience in both wartime and peaceful time. The authors have the opportunity to compare different times. Secondly, each author managed to not only achieve a mature perception of the world, but also reach a level of intellectual development that was higher than that of children. This enabled them to properly and talentedly tell the story of their

wartime childhood. This resulted in the texts having different styles and genres. The book features memories that are presented in the genre of folk prose and colloquial speech using elements of folk drama. It also features texts that are written in the genre of folk poetry and based on various elements of authentic folklore, ancient classical works, and professional and academic literature. The poems use iambus and trochee, feminine and masculine rhymes, alternate and closed rhymes, elements of modern versification systems (free verse) without any rhyme, rhythm or emphasis. Such folk prose and poetry can be classified as contemporary third intermediate literature, executed in the genre of prose and poetic colloquial speech. The authors of this paper share the opinion of modern researchers, who discovered the third intermediate culture and its features (Baldina et al., 2000; Bakhtina, 1991).

In general, the accounts of children of war showed, by means of modern folklore, the collective mentality that was formed during childhood while living in extreme conditions of World War II.

The study of texts featured in *The Living Memory of the Heart* about the Battle of Stalingrad and the wartime living conditions contributed to bridging the gap in the research of children's accounts of World War II.

These accounts of the children of Stalingrad are unique in that they talk about their life during the battle for the first time and publish their texts in a book. Their memories can be classified as historical sources that bear additional information about civilian casualties during the Battle of Stalingrad.

In general, the study analyzed the texts of 53 young witnesses of war from the perspective of their belonging to historical sources and sociocultural monuments of contemporary folk literature.

The title of the book *The Living Memory of the Heart* implies an emotional narration of children's memories about wartime events. The studied texts, especially those written by children of Stalingrad, who were involuntary witnesses of the battle of the same name, justify such a title. The texts absorbed the emotional state of the authors, which affected their figurativeness that was achieved by using colloquial speech. This aspect allowed classifying the accounts of the children of war as sociocultural monuments of contemporary folk literature.

The historical-comparative and historical-philological methods showed that the texts from the abovementioned book were written in two genres. Some of them were written in the genre of folk prose, colloquial speech with elements of folk drama, while the rest were written as rhymed colloquial speech in the genre of modern folk poetry.

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1. Institute of Arts and culture, Lane. Achinsk, kv 16, 400057 Volgograd, Russian Federation. Contact E-mail: zoiatinina@gmail.com

2. MBOW of sideline education for children, 64 Academic-11, 400074 Volgograd, Russian Federation

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