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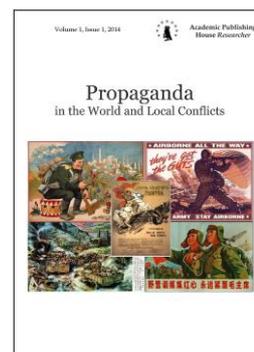
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Articles

The Birth of the Military Government Propaganda in the Don Host Oblast (1880–1890): Several Observations

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Abstract

In 1880-1890, a series of books came out in the Don region, which contained elements of military patriotic propaganda. A noteworthy fact is that their publication was initiated by the staff of Ataman N.I. Svyatopolk-Mirsky. The ataman also took other steps that can be interpreted as an attempt to arrange targeted military propaganda – his office coordinated preparations to establish the Don Museum, it tested and refined measures of “moral influence” on Cossacks to maintain their morale, etc. The paper generally endeavors to explain the reasons behind the development of such military government propaganda among Don Cossacks. To achieve the goal, the author reviews the essential military patriotic texts of the time, written by N.A. Maslakovets (assistant to the ataman), A.N. Pivovarov (army headquarters aide-de-camp), A.A. Karasev, S.F. Nomikosov and Kh.I. Popov (members of the Don Statistical Committee). The most important finding of the research suggests that the Don military propaganda naturally evolved from the bureaucratic infighting of army officials against zemstvo leaders who demanded to make the army service easier for Cossacks.

Keywords: Don Cossack Host, age of counter-reforms, military propaganda, N.A. Maslakovets, S.F. Nomikosov, Kh.I. Popov, A.N. Pivovarov.

1. Introduction

In the first half of the 19th century, an outstanding Don historian, V.D. Sukhorukov, the author of first studies into the history and statistics of the Don Host, categorically included the way of fulfilling military obligations into the range of army privileges (Sukhorukov, 1891: 263-267). The approach, which considered Cossacks’ long-term military service at their own expense as a *privilege*, rather than a *duty*, may seem rather odd, but V.D. Sukhorukov provided detailed arguments in favor of his view. He pointed out three factors that made the method of doing military duty quite profitable. First, a Cossack spent only part of his service term in the army, and periodically returned home for quite long stays; secondly, Cossack units offered a door for lower ranks to an officer career based “solely on their virtue and merits”; the last but not the least, contrary to popular belief, service Cossacks were entitled to certain payments from the state

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treasury (the amount was 75 rubles in the 1820s) (Sukhorukov, 1891: 265-267). Another well-known Don author, N.I. Krasnov, also wrote about the relative ease of service for Cossacks in the 1860s. He, in turn, emphasized the fact that the Cossack conscription was “easier than the recruiting duty and, moreover, implied such land ownership advantages that were not available for other social classes in the country” (Krasnov, 1864: 207). The “ease of service” of Cossacks (literal quotation!), as compared to the recruiting duty, was also stressed by Orenburg Governor General A.P. Bezak, calling for the reformation of the Orenburg Cossack army (Otchety..., 2016: 255).

On the other hand, the same N.I. Krasnov noted that Don Cossacks’ unique perception of their military service as a privilege gave root to peculiar changes in their mindset: “The Don Host regards the military service as a right, rather than an obligation, in unshakeable conviction that in return for this duty of every citizen towards their state, the Host has indubitable cause to be exempt from all financial obligations, owning vast lands and enjoying exclusive privileges” (RGVIA. F. 330. Op. 10. D. 290. L. 116-116ob.). By the 1860s, the idea of Cossacks being not obliged to do their military duty, but enjoying the right to serve in exchange for privileges spread beyond Cossack troops. For example, a young officer of the regular army, N.A. Maslakovets reacted to it in the following way: “This estate has been established to reside in a certain area with the obligation to do active military service in return for the rights and benefits it was granted” (OR RNB. F. 1055. Ed. khr. 98. L. 55ob.).

As long as the Cossack military service was not hard, as compared to the service of Russian peasants, and Cossacks themselves enjoyed significant privileges, the situation did not pose any problems. However, in the second half of the 19th century, the circumstances changed. The price of Cossack equipment rapidly soared; most of Cossack privileges were revoked or became increasingly irrelevant, and in the rest of the empire, the backbreaking recruiting duty was replaced by universal military conscription comparable to the Cossack service. Of course, in the new conditions, Cossacks ceased to look on their service as a privilege and began to view it only as a duty. To make things worse, they started questioning to what extent the class benefits that Cossacks still retained compensate for the severity of their service. Some members of the Cossack intelligentsia wrote without reserve that Cossacks should not do their military service, since the service became too costly and, in fact, led their homesteads to ruin. For example, a Don public figure of the early 20th century, V.Ya. Biryukov, postulated regarding the issue that “Neither special rights and advantages nor other motivations have left now for the sake of which or by virtue of which it would be acceptable to impose special duties on Cossacks as compared to the duties of the rest of the population in the empire” (Protokoly..., 1899: 125).

A logical consequence of the changes was an attempt by the authorities to organize some forms of military propaganda in the Cossack community, to translate the idea that a Cossack is a warrior by his nature and must serve. Apparently, for this purpose, even some modifications were introduced to the system of Cossack conscription in 1880-1890. V.Ya. Biryukov himself wrote about efforts to exert “moral influence” on Cossacks, which, however, in practice, rather made one lose a liking for service – it came to the public humiliation of inappropriately equipped conscripts who were forced to ask for forgiveness before the stanitsa community (stanitsa – a Cossack settlement and an administrative-territorial unit (and center) in the Cossack regions) (Protokoly..., 1899: 119, 126). We can assume that other measures put into operation on the Don in 1880-1890 also had integrated elements of military propaganda. In particular, establishing the Don Museum in Novocherkassk was the responsibility of the Ataman’s Office and the Oblast government since 1884, and the authorities engaged with local history enthusiasts only after the latter chose another leader when non-resident officials in the Ministry of Public Education were replaced by Kh.I. Popov, a Don Cossack, distinguished for his conservative and patriotic stance (Boiko, 2010: 98-99).

This storyline, which deserves a detailed exploration, has been omitted by historians so far, and we would like to partially fill in the gap at least in part. Without touching on most forms of propaganda, we will analyze several texts written in 1880-1890 to show how the Don authorities took first step, awkward and stumbling though they were, in war propaganda.

2. Materials and methods

Subjects in our analysis will be four books published in 1880-1892, i.e. “Explanatory note on the application of the Don Zemstvo reform to the region on the grounds corresponding to the local conditions of the region and the everyday characteristics of the main (Cossack) mass of its

population” [Ob"yasnitel'naya zapiska k voprosu o primenenii k oblasti voiska Donskogo zemskoi reformy na osnovaniyakh, sootvetstvuyushchikh mestnym usloviyam kraya i bytovym osobennostyam glavnoi (kazach'ei) massy ee naseleniya] by N.A. Maslakovets, “Statistical description of the Don Cossack region” [Statisticheskoe opisanie Oblasti Voiska Donskogo] by S.F. Nomikosov, “Brief historical and statistical description of the Don Army” [Kratkoe istoricheskoe i statisticheskoe opisanie Voiska Donskogo] by A.A. Karasev and Kh.I. Popov and “Don cossacks” [Donskie kazaki] by A.N. Pivovarov. Two of the books were published with the consent of Don Ataman N.I. Svyatopolk-Mirsky, and the remaining two were authored by people from his staff (by an assistant for civil affairs and army headquarters aide-de-campe). All of them contain elements of military propaganda, and using the historical-comparative method we can trace its development in the Don in the late 19th century. On the other hand, the historical-descriptive method will help us reconstruct the context in which the books were created and which is vital to understand their features and the reaction that they set off in the public.

3. Discussion

The history of military government propaganda on the Don stemmed from the conflict between the Host authorities and zemstvos (zemstvo – an elective council responsible for the local administration of a provincial district in czarist Russia). As they faced with Cossacks’ reluctance to pay zemstvo duties, Zemtsy (Zemtsy – delegates to the bodies of local zemstvo self-government) explained this, among other reasons, by the “onerous burden” of military service for Cossack farming homesteads and raised the question of the need to alleviate the service (Maslakovets, 1880: 8). We should note that the Ministry of War itself refused to grant such a request, and, theoretically, the Host authorities, when rejecting the zemstvos’ proposals, could confine themselves to referring to the fact (Maslakovets, 1880: 2). However, General N.A. Maslakovets, Assistant to the Host Ataman for Civil Affairs, a prominent researcher of the Don, prepared arguments that are key to the topic of our paper, which explained why the Cossack service should not be alleviated in principle: “Conscription is a frequent subject in the propositions of stanitsa communities, submitted on various occasions, but not at all as a onerous burden, but as an immutable fact, from which Cossacks are accustomed to constantly proceed in all their actions. Protests against the requirements of zemstvo authorities, complaints about the shortage of land suitable for agricultural use, poor crops and similar phenomena adverse for the economic well-being of the Cossack population have been at all times brought about by the same invariable cause – the necessity to do military service. And if the compulsoriness of this service alone is accepted in the Cossack life with complete obedience, it is only because <...> that in the perception of a Cossack, his personal well-being is unthinkable without doing military service in one form or another, whether it will be personal service in the combat units mustered by the Host, or making a payment of a certain amount to the Host budget in substitution of personal service” (Maslakovets, 1880: 81-82).

Therefore, in the late 1870s, the Don Host authorities supported for the first time the view of the Cossack military service not as a privilege or even a duty, but as a constant and an “immutable fact”. The position manifested obvious deceit – just in the previous period, from 1860 to 1870, major military reforms took place in the Don Host, which, in a number of aspects, alleviated the situations of Cossacks. It was not until 1876 that an official of the Central Department of Non-regular Troops, A.M. Grekov, published an article on the reforms, where he noted that the new law on military service “grants significant benefits to the Cossack population” (Grekov, 1876: 98). While earlier a Cossack was conscripted in the field grade for fifteen years and he was called to active duty two or three times in the period, now the field grade assignment time was reduced to twelve years, with a single call-up (Grekov, 1876: 76-78). On the other hand, the price of Cossack equipment significantly went up (at least 1.5 times) in the same period (Peretyat'ko, 2018: 159-160). Of course, these changes greatly affected the hardships of the Cossack military duty, and could make it both an “easy service” and an “onerous burden”. Accordingly, with all dynamic changes in 1860-1870, the Cossack service could no longer be an “immutable fact” and a starting point for doing other duties.

Then again, fulfilling the requirements of military service by Cossacks “with complete obedience” was a blatant exaggeration on the part of N.A. Maslakovets. By virtue of his position, he certainly had access to the information collected from the Don stanitsa assemblies and officials

with regard to the mass conscription of unequipped Cossacks in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878. This information suggested that, although Cossacks officially did not protest against universal military service, in practice entire stanitsas looked for illegal methods to alleviate it. We will confine ourselves to providing one very illustrative example. The head of the Cherkassk District complained: “Some stanitsas sent all their Cossacks not excluding well-off people who, exploiting the weakness of their fellow villagers incapable of taking any coercive measures against them, did not care about their equipment and argued that well-off Cossacks had the same right to public money as the poor ones; and this equipping practice not only utterly exhausted stanitsas’ funds; but some of stanitsas incurred significant debts” (GARO. F. 310. Op. 10. D. 85. L. 124ob.). As a result, at least some of the Cossacks preferred to pay for equipment out of someone else’s pocket, not only evading Russian laws, but also pushing their own stanitsas into debt. Of course, no one speaks that such Cossacks showed any special respect for the compulsory military duty.

However, the inaccuracies made by N.A. Maslakovets will be quite understandable if we consider his words as an attempt to convince readers that for “true Cossacks”, military service is both an “immutable fact” and the greatest value, whose requirements were fulfilled “with complete obedience”. It should be noted at this point that in general playing with information was quite typical for Cossack documents of 1860-1870. For example, in early 1860, it was N.A. Maslakovets who put forward a proposal to liquidate the Orenburg Cossack Host, which sparked anger among the command of the army. Its representatives responded to “gospodin Maslakovets” with a humiliating rebuke, where not only did they distort the surname of their opponent and accuse him of having no idea about the history and life of the Orenburg Cossacks, but also, when explaining the financial benefit the existence of the Orenburg Cossacks gave to the Russian Empire, “lost” some expenditure and income items and cited others twice to get the desired result (Peretyat’ko, 2019: 251-252). A similar maneuver, but at a much higher level, was designed by the Ministry of War central apparatus in 1875 in their reply to Minister of Internal Affairs A.E. Timashev. Despite the fact that the latter only objected to particular aspects of the military reform in the Don Host, they credited him with attacking the “privileged position of Cossacks in the country in general”, and then refuted his arguments by using fabricated statistics (Peretyat’ko, 2020: 87-91; 103-104). We can therefore conclude that deliberate distortion of information to produce a certain effect on the reader was a common practice in the apparatus’ games in 1860-1870, and N.A. Maslakovets had experience of involvement in such situations. There is a high probability that in his battle with the Don zemstvo officials, he quite deliberately dressed up his somewhat idealized notion of how ordinary Cossacks should perceive military service in the garb of a true fact. It is important to understand that N.A. Maslakovets considered his picture of Cossacks’ attitude to the service to be totally right, and lied for good in an attempt to lend more credence to his point of view.

In most cases, information distortions by Ministry of War officials in 1860-1870 could not be considered as propaganda as they were made in documents intended for internal use. However, the explanatory note about zemstvos submitted by N.A. Maslakovets was soon published, and, surprisingly, without any official stamps (we will explain this below). Moreover, the note became widely known among other Don authors of the late 19th century: for example, S.F. Nomikosov, Secretary of the Don Statistical Committee, rated the “Explanatory note on the application of the Don Zemstvo reform to the region” as one of the most reliable sources of Don statistics, and emphasized the “deep understanding of the situation” with which the work was written (Nomikosov, 1884: 5-7). In his “Statistical description of the Don Cossack region”, S.F. Nomikosov also repeatedly referred to the study by N.A. Maslakovets, quoting and developing the key points of the text. For example, S.F. Nomikosov underlined that “a Cossack <...> wants to remain a born warrior and shun a taxed estate” (Nomikosov, 1884: 616). As he postulated the idea of the Cossack service as an “immutable fact”, S.F. Nomikosov also reiterated N.A. Maslakovets’ statements that it was unacceptable to alleviate the service, at least if the initiative was escalated by lower administrative levels, i.e. by zemstvos: “Zemstvo institutions in the region, just like in the rest of the country, are intended, provided the local population has all rights and obligations, to create for it the best possible economic environment” (Nomikosov, 1884: 616). However, we should note that S.F. Nomikosov also made efforts to justify the usefulness of the Cossack service from the perspective of the Zemtsy’s concept, according to which the military service for Cossacks was the payment for their privileges. At the same time, he argued that “the correlation between the duties and the methods of their fulfillment is many times more beneficial for a Cossack than for a

peasant”, and “the severity of the Cossack military duty that was much discussed by zemstvo leaders and some publicists on the Don, was not at all as great as people tend to think” (Nomikosov, 1884: 361-362). Yet, the Don statistician did not go as far as to call the Cossack system of service a “privilege” and described it in the section on “duties” (Nomikosov, 1884: 336).

Therefore, “Statistical description of the Don Cossack region” by S.F. Nomikosov developed N.A. Maslakovets’ idea at the angle of interest to us and proved that a Cossack, as a warrior by nature, must serve, and the existing system of service gives him advantages. Furthermore, the book became a classic for the Don historiography. Contemporaries spoke of it as “the best work of its kind, and, moreover, created in a literary style of writing” (Dontsy, 2003: 341). It is only logical that, in the end, S.F. Nomikosov’s work became, as A.A. Volvenko, today’s leading expert in the history of Don Cossacks of the second half of the 19th century, notes, “a major element in molding the views of those individuals in the position of power and in society who believed that the more demanding requirements for the service of a Cossack are fully paid off with his privileged position” (Volvenko, 2017: 154). We would also like to add the following: the “Statistical description of the Don Cossack region” spread the opinion in society that military service was natural for Cossacks. Moreover, A.A. Volvenko points out that the book was printed by order of Don Ataman N.I. Svyatopolk-Mirsky, and, in fact, contained the rationale for his policy carried out towards Cossacks (Volvenko, 2017: 154). N.I. Svyatopolk-Mirsky, in turn, who became the Don Ataman in 1881, was a combat infantry general, had little concern with the affairs of the civil administration in the region and heavily relied on his staff (Karasev, 1899: 113). The post of assistant to the ataman for civil affairs, essential in this environment, was still held by N.A. Maslakovets until 1884 when S.F. Nomikosov’s book came out. It is not surprising that the thoughts he expressed of military service as an “immutable fact” for Cossacks, formed an integral part of both the policy of the new ataman and the “Statistical description of the Don Cossack region” by S.F. Nomikosov. As a result, by publishing not an official document, but a comprehensive book that had pretensions to a scientific character and on the other hand interpreted facts in line with the authorities’ stance, the Don Oblast government made a final step from an apparatus infighting to propaganda.

An important digression should be made here. Modern researcher Goran Rajovic comes to the interesting conclusion in his paper “The History of Military Propaganda: The Horizons of Related Research in the 21st century” that military propaganda before 1900 was employed mainly in times of revolutions and wars of independence, and armies did not have the institution of military propaganda officers in place (Rajovic, 2019: 46). As for the Don Host Oblast, first attempts to exercise targeted military propaganda took place in the Crimean War, but they emanated from individual officials and public figures, had no much success and gained no immediate development (Peretyatko, 2018: 39-48). According to G. Rajovic, it was only as late as after 1900 that the importance of military propaganda grew, and dedicated military bodies responsible for it took root (Rajovic, 2019: 47). And we can see how the government’s military propaganda was a “self-generated” phenomenon in the Don. Initially, no one hardly even thought that it was possible; there was regular apparatus infighting under way between the military administration and zemstvos. Distorting information by parties concerned in order to get neutral officials and senior authorities round to their way of thinking was a standard practice for the infighting. However, it was decided to discuss zemstvos’ life with the elected representatives of the entire Don Host, including ordinary Cossacks (Ob"yasnitel'naya zapiska, b.g.: 2). The host authorities resolved then to use their proven information handling methods on them by publishing the explanatory note by N.A. Maslakovets. Evidently, military commanders were pleased with the outcome (indeed, the balance of “public opinion” tilted to the disadvantage of zemstvos in the end) (Ob"yasnitel'naya zapiska, b.g.: 2). They decided to continue with the experiment, and soon the de facto head of the Don Statistical Committee funded by the Don Host prepared a learned work that justified correctness of the government’s policy towards Cossacks. Riding on the wave of the success of the works which insisted, among other things, on the naturalness of military service for Cossacks, the administration of N.I. Svyatopolk-Mirsky moved to providing consistent financing for military propaganda in peacetime, although a full-fledged unit to specifically deal with propaganda was not yet created.

Publication of first specialized military patriotic books on the Don was the most obvious consequence of the effort. While the works by N.A. Maslakovets and S.F. Nomikosov only glossed over the army topic, and were, above all, robust scholarly studies, albeit not completely unbiased,

they were followed by works printed in Novocherkassk, aimed at the general reader and describing the exploits of the Dontsy and the intrinsic bond between Cossacks and military service. “The inhabitants of Great Britain and the Iberian Peninsula were the only ones who did not hear the whooping of the Don surge triumphantly sweeping over their land”, one of the books said (Karasev, Popov, 1887: 25). “Peoples of the Caucasus will never forget the Dontsy and Vlasov and Baklanov together with them; Turks have more experience in meeting with Don Cossacks than all other peoples: it came to the point that they preserved the severed head of Don Starshina Frolov to send it to the Sultan; Arabs, roaming in Palestine, are aware of the Dontsy; finally, in Egypt, at the foot of pyramids, a half-savage Arab sheikh exclaimed at the words ‘Don Cossacks’ – ‘Ah! these are valiant warriors! true shaitans!’” another informed (Pivovarov, 1892).

We will confine ourselves to a brief analysis of two such works. In 1887, “with the authorization of the Host Ataman”, “Brief historical and statistical description of the Don Army” [Kratkoe istoricheskoe i statisticheskoe opisanie Voiska Donskogo] was published (the book was edited by prominent historians of the Don region, Kh.I. Popov and A.A. Karasev and authored by “members of the Don Regional Statistical Committee”). Contrary to the title, the book was completely different from the earlier historical and statistical descriptions of the Don, which were issued from the pen of V.D. Sukhorukov, N.I. Krasnov and S.F. Nomikosov. It comprised a number of loosely interconnected parts – a brief outline of the Don Cossack history, a geographic and statistical record of the Don Cossack Oblast, a list of Don Atamans, a story about the Defense of Azov and several Cossack songs. The central theme of the “Brief historical and statistical description” was the service of Cossacks to Russia, portrayed as a natural fact of their life, and this was done in a completely unscientific manner. “The meaning, imperceptible to the eye, but comprehensible to the mind and the heart, of the inscription on their (Cossacks’ – A.P.) victory banner becomes natural: *White Tsar* and *Orthodox Faith*, a flag that Don Cossacks held in their hands when honorably passed through the entire history of the unification, expansion and glorification of the Russian tsardom. The Dontsy’s fundamental commitment to the tsar’s power was expressed even in their domestic life (italicized by the authors – A.P.)” (Karasev, Popov, 1887: 3). And it was solely military service – there are no examples of other types of service in the “Statistical description”, but the military exploits of Cossacks, extending from Ivan the Terrible to Alexander II, are highlighted in detail, emotionally and without mentioning any situations when the Dontsy felt burdened by their military duty (Karasev, Popov, 1887: 1-25). Of course, previous Don historical and statistical descriptions also wrote about the centuries-old service of Cossacks to Russia, but they did it in a markedly different, much calmer and more scholarly manner. An excellent illustration of the attitude can be the corresponding passage from the “Military review of the Land of the Don Army” [Voennoe obozrenie Zemli Voiska Donskogo] by N.I. Krasnov: “Cossacks have been doing their military service in the country over three hundred years, first at sea, then on land; they have forged a peculiar kind of military duty, specified by part I in book II of the Code of Military Regulations and use a drill and ceremonies statute that differs from the one of regular cavalry regiments; as well as they learned a distinguished course of action in a war” (Krasnov, 1864: V). Further N.I. Krasnov also addressed exclusively the topic of military service of Cossacks, which was determined by the genre of his book as a military review. However, he at the same time elaborated both on the exploits and triumphs of Don Cossacks, and on the emerging issues, and even wrote about the “extinguishing warrior spirit of Cossacks” (Krasnov, 1864: XVI). V.D. Sukhorukov in his “Statistical description of the Land of the Don cossacks” did not focus on the Cossack military service at all. Even in the list of privileges of Don Cossacks, he put the model of government in the first place, rather than the way of service (Sukhorukov, 1891: 259-263). Therefore, until the 1880s, the authors of historical and statistical descriptions of the Don depicted the military service of Cossacks as an important but not the only defining characteristic of the Cossack life; in addition, they admitted that Cossacks themselves did not always display an invariably positive attitude to the service. As for the new “Brief historical and statistical description of the Don Army”, never before had the works of the genre considered military service as the prime constant of the existence of Cossacks.

On the other hand, the book under review explored the tradition of military patriotic literature that had already taken form on the Don. Its most obvious precursor was the two-volume treatise “Donets” [Dontsy] by M.Kh. Senyutkin, who, by the way, was the editor of Donskiye Voyskovye Vedomosti news sheet during the Crimean War, when the editions were broadly utilized

as a military propaganda tool (Peretyatko, 2018: 44-45). In the final section of the two-volume book, entitled “A View of the history of the Don Host” [Vzglyad na istoriyu Voyska Donskogo], M.Kh. Senyutkin also wrote without scientific and objective reasons about military service as an immanent historical vocation of Cossacks. Here is how he characterized “the value of the subject of the history of the Don Host”: “A whole poem of miraculous exploits, as superb as the glorious Iliad and almost excelling it in grandeur and truthfulness of its events, will instantly appear before your astonished eyes. For, no matter how vivid the poetic imagination can be, it is unlikely to ever be able to reconstruct such bellicose ideals as shown by the life of Cossacks” (Senyutkin, 1866b: 158-159). However, the series of “patriotic” texts on the Don history, inspired by the Crimean War and continued by M.Kh. Senyutkin, was advanced by the “Brief historical and statistical description of the Don Army” with many novelties. First of all, until the 1880s, such texts were personal initiatives of their authors and did not enjoy any designated support from the military authorities. During the Crimean War, patriotic short stories and poems for Donskiye Voyskovye Vedomosti were produced mainly by people totally unknown in the Don history and literature, who apparently were influenced by patriotic zeal (Peretyatko, 2018: 45-46). M.Kh. Senyutkin's “Donets” was published in Moscow, and although he himself, undoubtedly, belonged to the Don Cossack elite, neither in 1850, nor in 1860 did he hold any positions that entailed intimate connections to the military authorities (Dontsy, 2003: 439-440). Now the situation was different, and the publication of books, propagandizing military service in the Cossack communities, was bolstered by the ataman's staff. In addition, if we take early Don “patriotic” texts that can be defined as research works, rather than works of fiction, their authors, nevertheless, sought to ensure objectivity and introduce unknown historical information. And, while the first aspiration was compromised by the love amateur historians felt for their homeland, the second one was actually achieved by them. M.Kh. Senyutkin's “Donets” is a vivid example of the achievement as it, for example, provided a detailed description of Don Cossacks' operations against the Nogais for the first time in the Don historiography (Senyutkin, 1866a: 91-180). The author's preface also emphasized that the two-volume edition was created with a two-fold goal – to demonstrate Don Cossacks' “everlasting devotion to the Russian throne”, and to “protect many valuable documents of the past century from inevitable destruction” (Senyutkin, 1866a). “Brief historical and statistical description of the Don Army”, by contrast, was a strictly publicizing essay devoid of academic originality – it retold facts that were well known to specialists and were repeatedly described. Therefore, we can define the book as the first purely propagandist text, coined with a single aim to shape desired views about the Don region and its history, without any scholarly content.

As a result, “Brief historical and statistical description” had a rather odd and obviously transitional character. For example, the geographical and statistical overview of the Don Host Oblast, included in its structure, was written in a barren academic style, standing out of the rest of the text (Karasev, Popov, 1887: 1-7). In a brief outline of the Don Cossack history, the authors also had to divert their attention to non-military topics with occasional references, for example, to the “reforms of the Tsar Liberator” on the Don (Karasev, Popov, 1887: 23). Apparently, it was a bad idea from the very start to combine two literary and academic traditions that existed in the Don Cossack society and what is more used opposite methodologies – the tradition of comprehensive and predominantly scientific historical and statistical descriptions of the region, and the tradition of military patriotic literature. Of course, it was possible that historical and statistical descriptions (for example, the one by S.F. Nomikosov) contained elements of patriotic propaganda, but the genre itself meant voluminous geographical and statistical sections in such a book, which hardly were of any interest to general readers and thematically did not suit well the purpose of promoting military patriotic ideas. The Don military propaganda needed to look for another narrative genre that better met its goals, and the one was actually found in in the 1890s.

1892 saw the publication of the book “Don Cossacks” (Donskie kazaki) by A.N. Pivovarov. By contrast to the works reviewed above, this edition did not make it clear that it was printed “with the authorization” or “by order” of the Don Ataman. However, its author was an active army headquarters aide-de-camp, who received the His Imperial Majesty's Grace and a gold watch a gift for his book (Dontsy, 2003: 358-359). It was the first work in the Don literature and historiography whose author openly admitted in the preface that the focus of his book was not historical, but military and patriotic, and that the author not so much quested for little-known facts and collected rare documents, as he intended to invigorate the eagerness about military service of contemporary

Cossacks, harnessing examples from the Don history. We would like to cite the entire corresponding passage: “The knowledge of the exploits experienced with selfless valor excites deep sympathy and respect for the people who performed them, nurtures and further heighten the feeling of love for the cherished fatherland and for the beloved sovereign, and, finally, gives birth to an unconscious desire to model oneself on these splendid brave men and courageous performers of their duty. Unfortunately, we still have not collected accounts of the exploits of our Dontsy. This collection of stories is the first experience in providing concise descriptions for several feats of bravery, accomplished by Don Cossacks, their combat resourcefulness, devotion to duty, etc.” (Pivovarov, 1892). Actually, already during the Crimean War, one of early Don writers, I.S. Ulyanov, wrote a short story “Military ingenuity” (Voyennaya smekalka), narrating the exploits of M.I. Platov and making the pretense of being historically authentic: the author said he only reproduced accounts heard from the older generation of Don officers (Peretyatko, 2019: 11-12). One of our papers showed that the genre of (pseudo) historical short story, which was employed by the author to put ideas of importance to him into the mouths of historical figures had iconic significance for Don Cossacks, was later developed in the Don literature, especially by P.N. Krasnov in his “Pictures of the past Tikhii Don” (Kartiny bylogo Tikhogo Dona) in the early 20th century (Peretyatko, 2019: 12-14). A.N. Pivovarov was a pivotal figure in the history of the Don military propaganda, a transitory link between I.S. Ulyanov and P.N. Krasnov: he made a pioneering effort to bring to public the entire history of Don Cossacks, using not the conventional forms of a journal article, historical or historical statistical description, but an innovative form of a cycle of patriotic short stories about the “exploits of the Dontsy”.

Indeed, “Don Cossacks” collected short stories about the Don heroes from the time of Yermak Timofeyevich to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. However, the book, like “Brief historical and statistical description of the Don Army”, did not have considerable success among Cossacks. Like his predecessors, A.N. Pivovarov made a mistake trying to preserve inappropriate elements of the scientific genre in the propaganda book. In some cases, the author simply took newspaper reports or archival documents and duplicated them word by word. For example, here’s how A.N. Pivovarov described the assault on Plevna on August 30, 1877: “On August 30, during the assault on Plevna, due to thick fog, our infantry units open fire at each other. Cossack Kireev of the 30th regiment was assigned to stop the shooting. The daring Kireev crossed himself and rushed straight into the terrible crossfire; to the right, to the left and to the front, bullets hissed, ours and enemy's. God saved the bold Don Cossack – not a single bullet struck him. Thanks to his valor, our crossfire was stopped, and the hero himself was awarded Order of St. George” (Pivovarov, 1892: 275). This excerpt is a verbatim reproduction the material that appeared in the Donskaya Gazeta newspaper in 1877 (Pivovarov, 1892: VII). Although it contains certain literary elements, the material by A.N. Pivovarov is frustratingly matter-of-fact and academic if compared with the corresponding description from “Pictures of the past Tikhii Don”. P.N. Krasnov depicted the assault on Plevna using a much more emotional and lucid style of writing: “On August 30, a grueling, bloody assault on Plevna commenced. Our infantry performed prodigies of valor. In front of the dense infantry lines, Skobelev astride a white steed stormed into Turkish redoubts. Since the seizure of Izmail by Suvorov, Russian troops have not yet shown such courage, such determination to win or die. Extended among the infantry units, Don Cossacks equaled their brothers, the Russian soldiers, in courage. At one time, the fog and smoke of rifle fire made impossible to discern where our troops were and where adversary ones, and our infantry units started shooting at each other. Cossack Kireev, who was assigned to the infantry chief of the 30th regiment, was detached to stop the fire. Kireev crossed himself and rushed into the heavy crossfire. Bullets whistled past him from all directions, but God saved the bold Don Cossack – not a single bullet stroke him. The crossfire was ceased...” (Krasnov, 1909: 487-488). So, to secure conspicuous success among the general public, comparable to that of “Pictures of the past Tikhii Don”, the book by A.N. Pivovarov lacked a literary style and a willingness to deliver imaginative story telling (and sometimes to think up missing pieces) for historical events. On the other hand, educated contemporaries, based on information that has survived to our days, severely criticized “Don Cossacks” for being one-sided and flagrantly ignoring peculiarities of the Don’s civilian life (Dontsy, 2003: 359). In sum, it remains to conclude that A.N. Pivovarov failed to create an analog of S.F. Nomikosov’s “Statistical description of the Don Cossack region” for the general reader – he failed to write a book that would be able to efficiently cultivate an idea of the “immutable fact” of the service among ordinary Cossacks.

Therefore, the period from 1880 to 1890 marked first attempts to publish special-purpose patriotic books for Don Cossacks. Although the books in many respects advanced the traditions set forth by earlier works on the Don history, it was the first time when the historical texts about the Don's past gave the military patriotic and propaganda components dominating priority over the research aspect. It is also important that the initiative to publish the books came from the staff of Don Ataman N.I. Svyatopolk-Mirsky. It was so far only initial, rather timid experiments of such military propaganda, and the authors of the patriotic texts did not risk totally moving away from the established canons of the Don academic historical literature. However, writing patriotic books required inventing new forms and methods, and it is not surprising that the books by A.N. Pivovarov, Kh.I. Popov and A.A. Karasev elicited a varied reaction among the public. Nevertheless, it was these ground-breaking works that laid the foundation which enabled the creation of the "Pictures of the past Tikhii Don" by P.N. Krasnov, which became the pinnacle of the pre-revolutionary Don military propaganda.

4. Conclusion

So, an attempt to shed light on the history of military propaganda on the Don in 1880–1890, at least in broad terms allowed us to make quite many conclusions that help understand how the amateur military propaganda of the 19th century essentially shifted to the professional military propaganda of the 20th century.

1) The causes that brought about the birth of the government military propaganda in the Don Host Oblast had a fundamental, but purely local, Cossack-specific nature. Until the 1870s, when the recruiting duty was repealed in the Russian Empire, Cossacks perceived their peculiar service system as a privilege, and a number of sources pointed out to the relative "ease" of the service. However, beginning in the 1870s, the situation changed: the Russian system of universal conscription appeared to become easier than the Cossack system of military service, and as a consequence critical voices began to call not only for the alleviation of the Cossack service, but for its complete revocation. In this context, mounting propaganda efforts to improve the attractiveness of the military service among Cossacks was an obvious and logical step on the part of the authorities.

2) On the other hand, the specific events, which led to the forming government military propaganda on the Don, were not Cossack-specific, and similar processes could also take place in other regions. The military propaganda originated from the apparatus infighting between officials. The end of the 1870s saw the signs of a conflict showing between the military authorities and zemstvos, in which the Zemtsy viewed the Cossack service as a duty and complained about its onerous severity for Cossacks. In response, Assistant to the Host Ataman N.A. Maslakovets proposed a concept in which the military duty was not a privilege or a duty, but an "immutable fact" of a Cossack's life. To substantiate his point of view, N.A. Maslakovets distorted real facts to a certain extent, which was typical for the apparatus infighting in the circle of Cossack officials in 1860-1870. However, N.A. Maslakovets' explanatory note was published because the issue raised by zemstvos was discussed in the Don Host Oblast with the elected deputies. As a result, the practice of pushing certain positions among Don officials in the apparatus infighting gradually evolved into the mass military propaganda.

3) The success of N.A. Maslakovets' publication and the support of military officials by the Don's "public opinion" against zemstvos paved the way to the growing use of the practice to print books that promoted the rightness of the policy of Don Ataman N.I. Svyatopolk-Mirsky. As the core component of the policy was the idea about the "immutable fact" of the Cossack service, the apparatus infighting between officials and public advocates continued to develop into the military propaganda proper.

4) With each subsequent book that came out, the process took a step forward towards professional military propaganda. The "Explanatory note on the application of the Don Zemstvo reform to the region" by N.A. Maslakovets was an official document published only due to a conjunction of circumstances. The "Statistical description of the Don Cossack region" by S.F. Nomikosov was planned for the printing right from the beginning and was a serious research study with integrated elements of military propaganda (the book substantiated and promoted the idea of the naturalness of military service for Cossacks). The "Brief historical and statistical description of the Don Army" by A.A. Karasev and Kh.I. Popov was the next step, from a research

study to a popular military patriotic book that does not contain new scientific information, but is intended to shape the idea of the intrinsic bond between Cossacks and military service in the general reader. However, the authors still proceeded cautiously without completely breaking with the academic tradition of historical and statistical descriptions of the Don and admitting the propagandist essence of their work. The risk was taken by A.N. Pivovarov in his "Don Cossacks", when not only did he write in the preface that his book conveyed a patriotic message rather than pursued scientific goals, but also find a genre that eventually became prevalent in the Don military patriotic literature – a cycle of historical short stories. In the early 20th century, this evolution set the scene for the creation of a military propaganda book that has demonstrated its relevance up to date – "Pictures of the past Tikhii Don" by P.N. Krasnov.

5) The publication of the four books within a relatively short period (1880–1892) naturally gave rise to an emerging circle of people in the Don Host administration, who stood to gain more from the military propaganda. Although a designated propaganda organization was not established, many related projects were implemented by members of the Don Statistical Committee (S.F. Nomikosov, A.A. Karasev, Kh.I. Popov, who set up the work of the Don Museum in Novocherkassk simultaneously with the events described). Government decorations received by A.N. Pivovarov for his "Don Cossacks" and the engagement of Kh.I. Popov as a leader in a number of propaganda initiatives can be considered as the progression of the government military propaganda to the professional stage in Cossack society.

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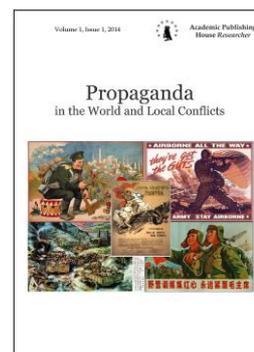
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Seize or Regain: Chernigov and Severian Lands in the Political Thought of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth before the Middle 17th century

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Abstract

In 1503, Muscovy acquired the Smolensk and the Chernigov and Severian lands from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) following the war. The substantial loss became for Vilna one of the factors that induced it to ally with Poland and form a union state – the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Even before the unification took place, there were vigorous debates among diplomats and intellectuals on what grounds their state should require to return the land. It was in this period when Muscovy’s seizure of the territories was conceptualized as a dishonest act in breach of international agreements. As a result, when Warsaw managed to reconquer the Smolensk and Chernigov-Severian lands, it began to define them as “*rekuperowane*” which meant “regained from the enemy”. The terminology became embedded both in political journalism and official documents of the state. For example, the term “*ziemie rekuperowane*” was already used in the sejm constitutions (official documents of the Sejm of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), although the lands were not yet officially integrated. To ensure a more effective incorporation of the new lands, Warsaw granted the Magdeburg rights to many cities in the region, and the document itself also emphasized that these cities and lands were successfully recovered from the hands of the adversary.

Hence, at first political journalism and historical and geographical treatises of the Kingdom of Poland, and later those of the Commonwealth justified Krakow’s/Warsaw’s right to the Smolensk and Chernigov-Severian lands. When the lands – first de facto and then de jure – became part of the Polish-Lithuanian state, they were described using the term “*ziemie rekuperowane*”.

Keywords: propaganda, political journalism, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Chernigov region, Truce of Deulino, incorporation.

1. Introduction

The Polish-Lithuanian state, Rzeczpospolita, established at the Sejm of Lublin in 1569, immediately received a tremendous geopolitical advantage and not only emerged as one of the potentially most important political players in the Eastern European region, but also inherited major political issues. The issues historically were relations with the Crimea, Ottoman Empire and Muscovite State. While Krakow had no territorial claims to Bakhchisarai and Istanbul, the situation was completely different with Muscovy. After the signing of the Annunciation Truce that led to the loss of the Chernigov-Severian and Smolensk lands, Vilna never stopped regarding them as their “*dedichny*” or legitimate, hereditary domain. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth inherited the vision of the Chernigov and Smolensk regions from the GDL. An additional factor, which nourished

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the desire of the Polish szlachta to regain the Chernigov lands, was that all Ukrainian lands, which were part of the GDL were handed over to Poland following the Union of Lublin. For this reason, the Chernigov lands were viewed as a very promising region for colonization.

Warsaw succeeded in officially regaining the lands in 1618. The incorporation of the Chernigov and Smolensk lands into the Commonwealth was stipulated by the Truce of Deulino, which marked the end of the Polish-Moscow war of 1609-1618, although in fact the Polish rule gained a foothold here much earlier. The territories received the official name “*ziemie rekuperowane*”, i.e. regained lands, and were under the control of Prince Władysław.

2. Materials and methods

The challenge of gaining lands back into the state, conquering or acquiring them through any other means not only has military and political aspects, but also intellectual ones. A claimant country should not only muster an army and devise a war strategy, but also provide an intellectual rationale for its claims. Given this, a question arises as to how the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth justified the restitution of the Chernigov-Severian lands. Such claims should appear in the political literature in advance of the event, they were supposed to explain the reasons behind the developments, and then enact (make legitimate) the new status quo. With the progression of the szlachta democracy in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, political literature and journalism began to play an important role. Texts in the genre, as well as historical and geographical treatises should be the research field to scrutinize for references mentioning the Chernigov region, Severia and the legitimacy of the claims of the Polish-Lithuanian state to the lands. As the process is rather lengthy, our research has a broad chronological framework. The starting point is the middle of the 16th century. Beginning in this period, the Polish szlachta stepped up their literary activity, and this explains the choice of the lowest chronological limit. The main driver behind the increased focus, in my opinion, was the realization of the important role literary means played in political agitation. Journalistic texts were inspired by momentous personal/family/state occasions and events.

The upper chronological limit is set for the period of the final integration of the Chernigov lands and Severia into the administrative structure of the Commonwealth.

The research source base includes political journalistic texts, historical and geographical treatises and sejm documents in the specified period. The significance of the source base appears to be self-evident, to my mind. It is the pages of such political texts that mediated the proliferation of political ideas into the socio-political discourse. After some time, this made it possible to refer to such ideas as true ones, because they were written down in books.

3. Discussion and results

We can assume as a working hypothesis that the political and historical literature of this period contains multiple references to the Chernigov and Severian lands particularly with an emphasis on the hereditariness of the lands with regard to the Commonwealth. Authors of the texts underscored that the lands had been taken from the GDL by force, in violation of agreements and consequently should be recovered.

Historical and geographical treatises were popular in the Kingdom of Poland, and later also in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Scarcely any library owners had not such books. This is also evidenced by private library records that survived (Torój, 1997; Kramperova, 1960). For this reason, it would be a mistake to ignore the propaganda significance of such texts. One of the most well-known and widely read annals in Poland was “Chronicles” of Jan Długosz. As an influential Russian historian, Boris Flory, noted, Długosz's text covers relatively much information on the territory of the former Kievan-Rus state. The information is innately ideological and constitutes a part of the author's historical concept. For example, the chronicler defined the East Slavic tribe of Polans, which lived near Kiev, as being the same with Polish Polans from the Gniezno region. Hence, he argues that Kiev was governed by the Polish dynasty, and the Rurikids were mere invaders. Consequently, Poland has historical rights to the territories (Pashuto i dr., 1982: 156).

One of the most renowned historical treatises was the European Sarmatia Chronicles by Alexander Guagnini, an Italian military officer and diplomat on the service of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In the text, which describes the events of 1499, the author clarifies the

factors that brought about the Muscovite–Lithuanian war of 1500–1503. The pretext was that Lithuanian Prince Alexander did not build an Orthodox church for his wife Helena (a sister of the Moscow prince). Ivan III then began to rally his allies and Tatars for a war against Lithuania. Taking advantage of the absence of a voivode in Bryansk, Moscow troops overran and burned the city: “This way, the fortresses of Chernigov, Starodub, Novgorod-Seversky and others fell then into the hands of the Muscovite prince”. The narrator calls the forces of the Lithuanian prince alternately either “ours” or “Lithuanians”. For example: “When *lithuania* came to the Vedrosha river, *moscow* saw a small *lithuanian* army”, or “when they saw that *our* troops did not have any reinforcements, they mounted a great battle” (Gvan’ini, 2007: 351) [italics added by me – V.P.]. The spelling “lithuania” and “moscow” without initial capital letters means that they are used as ethnonyms, rather than names of countries.

The outcome of the war for the GDL was the loss of the Severian lands. Guagnini portrays the Severian Principality as “large and wealthy, there is quite enough of various riches”. Once it was “under the authority” of Lithuania, and later – of Poland, but “Ivan Vasilievich, the Grand Prince of Moscow, treacherously took possession of the principality on false pretenses, just as he did with other countries” (Gvan’ini, 2007: 584).

According to Yuriy Mytsik, Guagnini employs Herberstein’s “Notes on Muscovite Affairs” when constructing descriptions of the Chernigov and Severian lands, although he supplements them with his own information (Gvan’ini, 2007: 310).

If compared with the text of Herberstein’s “Notes”, Guagnini’s writing shows minor textual differences that nevertheless have semantic and ideological importance. For example, Herberstein says that the marriage agreement between Alexander and Helena included a clause on the construction of an Orthodox church in Vilna: “*Since they delayed the execution of this for some time, the father-in-law leverage the circumstance as a pretext for a war with Alexander...*” (Gerbershtejn, 1988: 66–67), and the subsequent description of the battle of the Vedrosha not even mentioned either “treachery” or “false pretenses”. Guagnini, in turn, gives the dishonesty and treachery of the Muscovite Tsar a special focus. By doing this, he as if asserts the right of Lithuanians to the Chernigov and Severian lands, because their seizure was dishonest and treacherous.

The Austrian diplomat gives a rather accurate description of the Battle of the Vedrosha River and its implications: “*Lithuanians, filled with fear, were put to flight, their commander with a large part of his suite was taken captive, and the others in fear surrendered the camp to the enemy...*” (Gerbershtejn, 1988: 67). Guagnini, however, does not provide this vivid account. Of course, the Italian in the service of the GDL should do his best to avoid describing the Lithuanian army’s defeat in the “Chronicles”.

Herberstein’s represents the conquest of Severia by the Muscovite prince without any characterization. The author simply narrates the events and makes no attempts to evaluate them in terms of ethics or diplomacy rules (Gerbershtejn, 1988: 140–141).

The de jure transfer of the Chernigov and Severian lands to the Commonwealth took place after the Truce of Deulino was concluded in late 1618. In an effort to smoothly incorporate the newly annexed cities, King Sigismund III began granting the Magdeburg rights to them. A city’s acquisition of the right to self-government was per se a fairly powerful propaganda lever capitalized on by the royal court, as Muscovy had no city autonomy in place, and all cities were considered as “the sovereign’s cities”. This fact contributed to the propaganda component in the very muniments on the Magdeburg rights. The right to self-government was granted to Novgorod-Seversky, Chernigov, Nezhin, Mglin, Starodub. As the document had a typical form, we will use the charter issued for Chernigov as an example. It relates the circumstances of the city’s joining the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: *...za expedicią najaśniejszego królewica Jego Mości Władysława syna naszego pod stolicą moskiewską, jako i ynsze zamki, mista y włości państwa naszego, którebył za prodków naszych dziedziczny nieprzyiacel Moskwoicin pakta złamawszy fortelnie różnemi czsy oderwał y posiadł, tak y nasze miasto Czernihów szczęśliwie z rąk nieprzyjacielskich iest recuperowane y do państwa naszego przywrócone* (Sitij, Al’f’orov, 2013: 116)¹. [put in bold type by me – V.P.]

¹ After the military expeditions of His Grace Prince Vladislav, our son, to the capital of Moskow, as well as to other castles, cities and parishes (volost – administrative unit similar to district) of our state, which the

This interpretation was reproduced in each of the charters issued for the cities of the Chernigov region, and later was repeated in ratification documents.

On the other hand, the Moscow annals, the transfer of the lands to the Commonwealth was described in entirely different, neutral terms. For example, “Novyi Letopisets” (New Chronicler) tells the following of the transfer of the 14 cities: “...and gave the Muscovite cities to Lithuania: Smolensk, Belaya, Nevl, Krasnoy, Dorogobuzh, Roslawl, Pochev, Trubchesk, Sebezh, Serpeysk, Starodub, Nov gorodok, Chernigov, Monastyrevskoy and executed appropriate deeds” (Rabinovich, 2018: 25).

According to Petr Kulakovskij’s findings, the royal chancellery introduced the term “ziemie rekuperowane” in official documents with regard to the Chernigov lands long before the Truce of Deulino. For example, as early as the first Sejm Constitution of 1611, which dealt with the conquered lands, the lands were called “rekuperowane”, that is, regained.

The tradition was maintained in subsequent years. And in 1620, the Sejm adopted a constitution entitled “Regulation on the provinces regained from Moscow” (Ordynacya Prowincyi od Moskwy rekuperowanych) (Kulakovskij, 2006: 52, 54).

The ownership of the Chernigov and Severian lands was over time also enshrined in the official title of the king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. For example, Władysław Vasa was titled the Prince of Severia and Chernigov: *Vladislaus Quartus Dei gratia rex Poloniae, magnus dux Lithuaniae, Russiae, Prussiae, Masoviae, Samogitiae, Livoniaeque, Smolenscie, Severiae, Czernichoviaequae necnon Suecorum, Gothorum Vandalorumque haereditarius rex, electus magnus dux Moschoviae* [put in bold type by me – V.P.]. But that was normal practice.

The description of the newly added lands was to change in the historical and geographical treatises some time after the accession. Even Moscow did not raise any questions or doubts with regard to the accession. For example, “Polska albo opisanie położenia Królestwa Polskiego”, the description of one of the most prominent Polish writers of the first half of the 17th century, Szymon Starowolski, lists the Chernigov region in Red Ruthenia, while the Smolensk region – in White Ruthenia:

«Tu trzeba dodać, jak sądzimy, województwo Czernihowskie, za Dnieprem położone, które Władysław IV od Moskwy oderwawszy, do Królestwa Polskiego przyłączyli oprócz starostów miast ustanowił w tym województwie dwóch senatorów, wojewodę mianowicie i kasztelana, wyznaczając im miejsca w senacie Królestwa; ufundował ponadto w wielu miejscach liczne kościoły katolickie i dla kształcenia młodzieży kolegium księży Towarzystwa Jezusowego w Nowogrodzie założył» (Starowolski, 1976: 86)¹.

«Ostatnie tam i największe województwo jest Smoleńskie, które obejmuje Księstwo Siewierskie, ziemię czernihowską (w dwu ostatnich siedemdziesiąt zamków się znajduje) i powiat orszański. Smoleńsk zaś, z całym Księstwem Siewierskim, przed laty około stu zajęty został przez Moskwę, lecz Zygmunt III, król nasz [poprzedni], w roku 1611 odzyskał go drogą wojny, a ponadto wyrwał wrogowi ziemię czernihowską [romnejską i sierpiejską] i do województwa smoleńskiego przyłączył» (Starowolski, 1976: 89)².

We note that the first edition of the treatise, published in Cologne in 1632, had no the paragraph about the Chernigov region at all. An explanation can be, I believe, a change taking place in the administrative and political status of the Chernigov and Severian lands. In 1635, the process of establishing the Chernigov Voivodeship was completed. The “regained lands” were in the possession and under the personal control of Prince Władysław Vasa until that time. But in 1632,

enemy of Moskovit conquered using tricks in the times of our ancestors, our city of Chernihiv is now happily recovered from the enemies and included into our state.

¹ Here we must add, as we believe, Chernihiv province, located beyond the Dniپر, which Władysław IV annexed from Moscow and joined to the Kingdom of Poland. In addition to the elderships in the cities he established two senators, a voivode and a castellan (castle commander) determining their positions in the Senate. He founded numerous Catholic churches in many cities and a college of the Society of Jesus in Novgorod to educate young people.

² The last and the biggest voivodeship, which includes Siverian Principality, the land of Chernihiv (both include 70 castles), and Orsha district. Smolensk and the whole Siverian Principality was under Moscow occupation for the last 100 years. It’s our king Sigismund III (previous) who returned Chernihiv lands due to military actions and joined the lands to Smolensk province.

Władysław was elected king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and initiated the process of setting up the Chernigov Voivodeship. This clarifies why the author, in two paragraphs devoted to the Chernigov and Severian lands, refers to the positions of the Chernigov castellan and the voivode (the positions were called *uryads*) instituted and the corresponding officials introduced into the Senate – with these steps, the establishment of the voivodeship was complete.

We can see further in the text that Starowolski tries to avoid elaborating on how it happened that the lands were previously owned by Muscovy and later returned to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, except for mentioning that the king “wrested them from the enemy.” What reason made the ideologist of Polish Sarmatism reject the opportunity to glorify the Polish army? From my viewpoint, the question of the Chernigov-Severian lands’ possessor was no longer relevant at the time when “*Polska albo opisanie położenia Królestwa Polskiego*” was created. The book was published in Cologne in the Latin language, and the author was obviously intended to reach the European audience and had no need to explain to it the intricacies of the Polish-Muscovite relations. It was sufficient to state the fact that the Chernigov and Severian lands belonged to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Another issue that intellectuals discussed on the pages of their journalistic texts was the administrative and legal reforming of the conquered lands. Petr Kulakovs'kij notes, “political debates on the structure of the Chernigov and Severian regions ensued as soon as the Polish-Lithuanian control was actually restored over them, even before the signing of the Truce of Deulino, and indirectly even earlier – as part of the theoretical-journalistic discussion on the Ukraine colonization methods in the late 16th and early 17th centuries” (Kulakovs'kij, 2006: 78). The researcher gives the names of the discussion participants – Józef Wereszczyński, Petr Grabowsky, Wawrzyniec Gembicki and Szymon Starowolski, and points out that their works voiced ideas that were later employed in the integration of the “*rekuperowane*” territories. The ideas include the required cavalry military service, *volok* reform (regulating the land use rules), possibility of transferring land to foreigners, introduction of the feudal law (Kulakovs'kij, 2006: 78-79).

To my mind, the above authors seldom wrote specifically about the Chernigov region and Severia – they primarily focused on the possibility to reform the Ukrainian lands in the context of the military and political confrontation between Poland and Turkey (Pilipenko, 2010; Pilipenko, 2008).

4. Conclusion

Briefly reviewing the results, we can say that our working hypothesis is obtaining confirmation. The historical and geographical treatises and political journalism texts, created between the mid-16th and mid-17th century, indeed contain information on the Chernigov and Severian lands and their incorporation into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Importantly, the information is ideologically motivated and is dished up in such a form as to make it clear for readers that the Chernigov and Severian regions are the original Polish territory that was snatched away by the Muscovite state, and these lands must be recovered.

I can also point out the viable future outlook of the research as the current text is only an initial effort to approach the problem. A feasible objective for further research is to carry out a more accurate delineation of the source base. I think that the use of political literature from the interregnum (*bezkrólewie*) and the time of the Zbrzydowski rebellion can be highly revealing. Another very promising line of action is the work with sejm documents, such as sejm speeches of influential szlachta party leaders, the king’s writs to local sejmiks (letters of legation) and sejm constitutions. In addition, a large corpus of occasional literary works exists created during the Polish-Muscovite wars of the early 17th century, and, of course, the texts contain information on the Chernigov region and Severia, the then relevant state of affairs and prospects of the lands conquest and integration the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had.

The Chernigov and Severian lands were part of the Commonwealth for only three decades. This time saw changes in the administrative status of the lands – they were initially under the control of Prince Władysław Vasa, and later became a separate voivodeship. With the outbreak of the Khmelnytsky Uprising, the Chernigov region was among the first areas to come under the jurisdiction of Cossacks, and afterwards, to be integrated into the Muscovite state as part of the Hetmanate. Despite the loss of some of the Ukrainian lands, the Polish szlachta retained the fact of

possessing the territories in the historical memory. The long-lasting nature of the historical memory related to the Chernigov region is evidenced by the fact that the position of the Chernigov Voivode existed in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth until the end of the 18th century. The last voivode was appointed in 1783 (Urzędnicy, 2002: 199), while the voivodeship itself had been inside the Muscovite state over more than a hundred years by the time.

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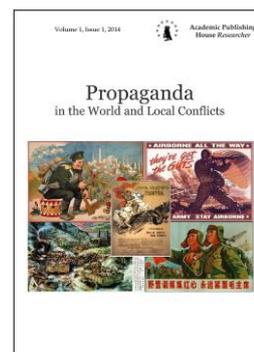
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Stalingrad Victory – 1943: US Propaganda and Public Opinion

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Abstract

The article dwells to the US media-coverage of the Soviet troops victory at Stalingrad battle. The battle itself was shown at the US media as a crucial disaster of Nazis at the Soviet Union at the beginning of 1943. It also confirmed power of the Red Army and its ability to fight the enemies – the believe, shook after the failed Kharkiv battle of the spring 1942. As the authors show, the USSR victories at the frontline and at the home front spread over the American mass-media by the US Office of War to shift the public opinion from the US and UK failures at the Atlantic, Southeast Asia and Northern Africa. The US Government itself made such a “image making” efforts, and former US secretary of war Patrick J. Hurley visit to Stalingrad shortly after the battle. His telegrams along with another personal recollections, brochures and movies, positive to the image of USSR and Joseph Stalin, were printed and mass disseminated. To our mind, it was made to reduce Americans’ awareness of the Axis success and show, the US is not alone, but has mighty Allies. It also should be noted, that there was a discussion over the USSR image at the Office of War Information. Its employees tried not to lie to Americans, but to concentrate their attention on Russian people achievements on the eve and at times of World War II.

Keywords: Patrick J. Hurley, US, USSR WWII, Great Patriotic War, Stalingrad battle, Office of War Information, propaganda.

1. Introduction

The American society entered 1943 at positive mood. Anglo-American troops defeated the German-Italian “Afrikakorps” at El Alamein on November 20, 1942 passing in 2 weeks 850 km to occupied Benghazi. The retreat of E. Rommel's troops became irreversible, and it was obvious: the liquidation of the Mediterranean theater of military operations was a matter of time. At the same time Red Army completed the landmark Battle of Stalingrad, which lasted more than six months in the distant Soviet Union. The American society received materials about the battle from the diplomatic channels, through the All-USSR Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, but the most massive circulation was the materials of Anglo-American journalists accredited in the USSR and information distributed with the support of the Office of Military Information. This department was established in April 1942 by a decree of U.S. President F. Roosevelt to inform American society, and in fact – to conduct “interventionist” propaganda. Among the materials distributed by American propagandists were personal impressions in the USSR about the host country, its people and leader, as well as Soviet documentary films.

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2. Materials and methods

Our main sources were personal recollections, published at the times of Stalingrad battle (July 17, 1942 – February 2, 1943). These are “Mission to Moscow”, the memories of the former US Ambassador at Moscow (January 25, 1937 – June 11, 1938) Joseph E. Davies and current US Naval representative at in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk Axel Pearson book “Russian port adventures told”. The Davies memories were written at times of “Great Terror” at the USSR, and fully benevolent to the official version of the “purges”. That’s why some jigsaw called “The Submission to Moscow” the movie, based on Davies’ book. Besides that there were some telegrams by former US war secretary Partick J. Hurley, who was astonished by the courage of Soviet soldiers and talents of their commanders, and by the traces of Romanian, Hungarian, Italian and German troops epic defeat at Stalingrad. We trace publication and circulation of these personal reminiscences by the US Office of War information (OWI) that tried to make a mainstream of the US media. We also analyzed some “Russian events” publications of the US central press to understand the effectiveness of OWI efforts, and made final conclusion of US public opinion based on the Gallup surveys, published at the book by famous American historian H. Cantril. So our concept is that the US public opinion was formed by the OWI and some media holdings, which had some short-term alliances during WWII. We think that President Roosevelt’s interventionist foreign policy needed the necessary public support from the US citizens, so the OWI establishing was inevitable. It played a crucial role at mobilizing US mass opinion for resistance to Japanese aggression and to produce land-lease military equipment for UK and USSR. But, from the mid-1943 the US corporations became speaking on necessity to be “constant combat ready” even after the victory at WWII, which should save the nation from the “Great Depression” repeat. We suppose this to be an economic basement for the cold war.

3. Results

One of the landmark films of 1943 was "Mission to Moscow". The scope of the film was taken from the former US Ambassador at Moscow Joseph Davis book with the same title. Jack W. Warner, one of the founders of the company "Warner Brothers", gave such an idea to President F. Roosevelt, who ordered the State Treasury to give 2 million dollars. The film became, as critics from the State Department called it, a “Submission to Moscow”. The reason was it absolutely uncritical perception of J. Stalin and it justification of the “Great Purge” of 1937. On the contrary, the movie was about “firm but merciful "Uncle Joe"*, sipping a pipe, determined against the invaders. He led the happy collective farmers and merry workers to destroy the Hitlerites who invaded the Holy Russia” (Fleming, 2001: 294).

The attitude towards the Soviet leader differed even within the same publishing house. Thus, during the Second World War, the G. Lius Corporation published three magazines: "Fortune" (a monthly magazine for businessmen), the illustrated "Life" for the mass reader and "Time", which published analytical articles (including on domestic and foreign policy). The Soviet general secretary looked focused, but kind and pleasant at the pages of “Life” magazine. On the contrary, the "Time" characteristics of Stalin sound like "This is a tough man, quite earned his steel name <...> And if anyone was able to survive in the conditions of those historical trials in which he found himself now, he could (Alexander, 1989: 32) at September 1941. But in a year and a half the same magazine spoke about Stalin following "...impenetrable, practical, persistent Asian, spent at the desk for 16-18 hours a day ... He is still firmly in the hands of the reins of government; in addition, his ability as a statesman, albeit belatedly, was recognized outside Russia ... The flow of distinguished guests from other countries, rushing to Moscow in 1942, forced Stalin to leave his impenetrable "shell": under it was found a cordial host and a skilled player at the international "card table" (Time, January 4, 1943). It was the "Time", who made Stalin its man of 1942 (in 1938, a similar "title" there received Hitler). Interesting to note, that firstly Stalin appeared as the “Time”

* For the first time, "Uncle Joe" or "D.J." for Stalin's designation was heard in the correspondence W. Churchill and F. Roosevelt on July 16, 1943, but this address was heard in the press earlier. In particular, in the spring of 1942, this was the name given to the Soviet head photographer of "Life" magazine Margaret Bork-White, who was struck by his kind smile (see Alexander C.S. "Uncle Joe": images of Stalin during the period of the highest development of the anti-Hitler coalition, The American Yearbook, 1989. P. 31).

person of the year at 1939 as a ruthless despot. And in 1943 the same Stalin was shown as a fearless fighter against Nazism. A few months later, a photograph of the Soviet leader was placed on the front page of Life magazine.

Modesty and intellectual power of Stalin astonished Richard Parker, the "New York Times" journalist. He wrote about Stalin's innovative offerings. Parker described the Soviet leader as a revolutionary, a fighter for building a state "in which all citizens have political, economic, and cultural freedoms and rights <...> no private interests are allowed to prevent the development of natural wealth for the well-being of all" ([The New York Times, August 23, 1942](#)). John Dewey and Susanne Lafollet, the same contributors of the "New York Times", made the most extensive and objective critical film "Mission to Moscow" review.

With the support of the Office of Military Information, two landmark books were published in 1943. These were the diaries of the American naval representative in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, Axel Pearson, and the second edition of the memoirs of former U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Joseph Davis "Mission to Moscow". Pearson draws a vivid image of Soviet people: "We were dropped bombs morning, day and night. We were worried about 14 bombings a day. I counted the raids for thirty-eight days: we were bombed 168 times, after that I gave up recording... My God, what kind of people are these Russians? They're harsh, but they're also friendly. They're kind and they look happy. They're pretty sure they'll win the war... Women, strong, big and tough, do men's work eleven hours a shift. They live hungry – on black bread and soup. They never complain, only express indignation at the Germans. I like the Russians. They know what they're fighting for..." ([Pearson, 1943: 5-6](#)).

The telegrams related to the visit to Stalingrad of Brigadier General (National Guard) Patrick Hurley were another important factor in shaping the Americans (including the political elite) opinion. He fought in France at the American expeditionary corps during the First World War, and with the beginning of the Second World War he was recalled from the military reserve and he performed a number of inspections in the location of the U.S. troops and their allies on behalf of the highest military command of the United States. P. Hurley visit and his entourage at Stalingrad during the counteroffensive of Soviet troops covered by Soviet state security agencies, were disclosed in the articles of Doctor of Law V.S. Khristoforov ([Khristoforov, 2013a: 24-28](#); [Khristoforov, 2013b: 135-156](#)). But about there were also remained telegrams of the second secretary of the American Embassy in Moscow L. Thompson, sent by him to Franklin Roosevelt about this visit (see ([Belov et al., 2014: 132-139](#))). In his reports on this mission, which also included American military and naval attachés, Thompson describes polite Soviet soldiers who helped the Americans (both business and information). At the Red Army headquarters, which were visited by Americans in the area of Serafimovich - Golubinskaya, they met with Generals I.M. Chistyakov, N.T. Tavartkeladze, P.I. Batov and N.F. Vatutin. They told about the precautions taken to prevent the breakthrough of the ring around the Paulus group, about the logistics of their troops. These conversations, along with the view of the military equipment thrown by the retreating enemy, made a great impression on the guests. Soviet commanders, described by Thompson, look like this: "At the moment, the Red Army is commanded by officers who went to the school of this war. We have been told that the quality of control has increased dramatically compared to the beginning of the war. Generals, for the most part, are young men who are good at learning new things in strategy and tactics. What we have seen allows us to assert that they meet the challenges that the Germans are facing them on the strategic and tactical levels. As can be seen from Thompson's telegrams to Washington, the refrain in all conversations with Soviet soldiers was their questions about the timing of the opening of a second front in Europe and the delivery of goods on the Lend-Lease. Americans were pleasantly surprised by the Soviet mobile repair shops for military equipment and tractors, which showed good mobility of the RKKA. In the end, an American diplomat concluded: "I am convinced that the Red Army has become a much more organized combat unit and is much better managed than it was at the beginning of the war. However, its supply and transport problems will become more acute. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that the defeat of the Axis troops in Russia will increasingly depend on supply from the United States" ([Belov et al., 2014: 135, 138](#)).

4. Conclusion

As we can see, those Americans who were in the Soviet Union and directly communicated with Soviet people were very high opinion about their military allies. But the problem with the American media during World War II was that the opinion of the Office of War Information and its allies was not the only propaganda meaning at the United States. Shortly before the 1943 presidential campaign began, the former U.S. ambassador to Moscow, Joseph Davies, described the situation in the media as follows: "Dog times are coming. We are on the eve of sharp political battles. There is ... a real collusion between 70 % of the so-called "newspaper chain", hostile to the president and constituting almost all the press. There are many signs that hostile newspapers articles press are implemented according to the plan and well coordinated... Just before the president last speech <on June 28, 1943> at least one radio channel broadcast a program against international cooperation and glorify the American flag ...» (Malkov, 1988: 267).

The presented examples show how selectively the American mass media covered the USSR. If sympathies for "Soviets" were leaking to ordinary Americans, these were positive assessments of ordinary Soviet citizens. Both the Department of Military Information and the editors of the central editions were careful not to appear sympathetic to the Soviet social and political order. And its leader, if he received positive assessments, only after a long series of negative epithets. Thus, playing by halftones, the leading American propaganda agency of the period of World War II (WVI) formed the position of the American public towards the USSR. But, to be fair, let us note that the Department was not the only one here, and Franklin Roosevelt's moderate "Sovietism" was opposed by powerful and cohesive political and media forces.

The most persuade propaganda is the one, based on real-life success. Soviet achievements against Hitler and Axis troops spoke for themselves. So, 1943 was the year of the highest Americans sympathy to Russia at 1930's – 1940's. At June 1943, nearly 81 per cent of Americans believed tin future equal cooperation between the US and USSR at war and after it (Public Opinion 1935–1946, 1951: 372).

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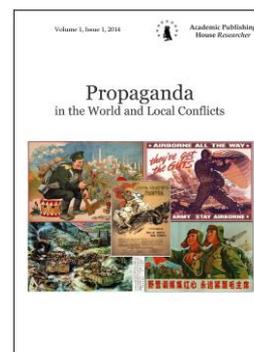
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German Propaganda in Occupied Territories during World War II: The Case of the Town of Yeysk in Krasnodar Krai

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Abstract

This paper explores the characteristics of German propaganda in occupied territories in the Soviet Union, more specifically in the town of Yeysk, Krasnodar Krai.

The research reported in this work was conducted using a small body of documents from the State Archive of Krasnodar Krai (Krasnodar, Russian Federation). More specifically, these materials were retrieved from the R-498 archive holding for the Yeysk Town Council.

The author's conclusion is that German propaganda materials directed at the civil population in the town of Yeysk may be divided into the following two categories: (1) prevention of infractions of law and (2) organization of civil administration in a new climate. In other words, the German leadership was focused not only on keeping up the repressive pressure on the population but also on creating a large social base among the population that would be loyal to the new order. With this in mind, the Germans were taking account of errors on the part of the Soviet authorities at local level.

Keywords: German propaganda, World War II, collaborationism, Yeysk Town Council.

1. Introduction

During World War II, propaganda was employed on a large scale by all sides in the conflict, both in the front lines and in rear areas. With that said, rear propaganda was given no less significance than front-line propaganda, as this was important in terms of mobilization and labor resources, as well as in terms of keeping the population calm in the occupied areas. This paper will examine one such occupied area. It will provide an insight into the characteristics of German wartime propaganda through the example of the town of Yeysk in Krasnodar Krai, Russia. This area was captured by German troops in the summer of 1942.

2. Materials and methods

The research reported in this work was conducted using a small body of documents from the State Archive of Krasnodar Krai (Krasnodar, Russian Federation). More specifically, these materials were retrieved from the R-498 archive holding for the Yeysk Town Council.

The work's methodology is based on the principles of historicism, objectivity, and chronological consistency. The objectivity principle helped avoid stereotypical views and assessments, while the use of the chronological consistency principle helped gain a chronologically organized insight into the German occupation of the town of Yeysk.

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3. Discussion and results

The sample discovered in the State Archive of Krasnodar Krai numbers just a few large-circulation documents hung on noticeboards in the town of Yeysk during the occupation period. These documents may be divided into the following three groups: (1) orders (there are three orders available at this time – No. 2, 4, and 7); (2) documents regulating the new order in the area of land use; (3) documents regulating the organization of public order (instructions from the Mayor). The documents were produced between August 12 and December 23, 1942.

Some of the orders appear to be missing – out of at least seven documents of this type there are only three available at this time. It is known that the town of Yeysk was captured by the German army on August 9, 1942. It cannot be stated precisely when the first order for the population was published, but it is known that Order No. 2 was published on August 12 and Order No. 7 was published as early as August 13, which suggests that between August 12 and 13 at least six orders for the population were published.

These documents were produced by a man named Vorozhbeev, whom the Germans had appointed Governor of Yeysk District and President of the Town Council. It is worth understanding that, whenever control of a populated locality changes hands, there may ensue in that area a lack of governance, a time characterized by violence, plunder, and rioting. Yeysk was no exception, either. On August 12, 1942, they published Order No. 2, which bore Vorozhbeev's signature and contained a set of instructions on the organization of oversight of the population and the transition to a peaceful life. Specifically, the document stated the following: “§ 1. For the purposes of protecting the assets of both the State and private individuals, the Yeysk District Council is admonishing all citizens that any theft of property, no matter whose property it may be, much less plunder and rioting, will be considered a crime. Persons guilty of any kind of theft, plunder, or rioting will be arrested immediately and then subjected to harsh punishment. § 2. This is to advise all residents of the town of Yeysk and the District that a) no resident is allowed to move from their apartment to another apartment in order to spend a night or several nights there; a person, whether an owner or not, who lives temporarily in somebody else's apartment in violation of law will be arrested and brought to justice; b) any person entering the town of Yeysk for residency purposes is to receive a permit from the District Police Office. § 3. I am ordering the Mayor of the town of Yeysk to do the following: appoint in each quarter a quarter officer from among males; appoint in each house a person who will be responsible for enforcing compliance with relevant housing, sanitary, and fire safety ordinances; make it clear to each quarter officer that they will bear responsibility for the movement and relocation of residents of the quarter under their charge. § 4. The police chief is to instruct each quarter officer as to the procedure for checking on and enforcing housing rules in both communal and private houses, and then check on how the order is carried out. § 5. I am ordering all public service establishments and former industrial cooperatives, such as shoe-repair shops, tailor shops, barbershops, watch-repair shops, and sewage disposal services to start work on August 12, 1942. If a business does not have a person in charge at present, a workmaster, or a compeer, from it is to apply for a special certificate in order to assume management responsibilities at the facility. § 6. Retail at the town's marketplace is allowed to operate from 5 a.m. to 4 p.m.” (GAKK. F. R-498. Op. 1. D. 1. L. 2).

That same day, they published Order No. 4, which may briefly be called ‘On the Arms Handover’. It is worth understanding that following the retreat of the Soviet army there could be left in the town a large amount of weaponry, both in weapons caches and with former NKVD staff. It is for this reason that via Order No. 4 the Mayor demanded as an ultimatum that all weapons be turned over. The document stated the following: “§ 1. I am ordering all residents of the town of Yeysk and the District to turn over within a three-day period, i.e. between August 13 and 16, 1942, any arms, ammunition, and military accoutrements that they have in their possession. One is to turn over all firearms (rifled guns, hunting shotguns, Berdan rifles, revolvers, and pistols of any type), grenades, bullets, shells, cartridge cases, clips, and any explosives, as well as sabers, daggers, and sheath knives. § 2. All afore-mentioned items are to be turned over to the Yeysk Town Police Station (the building formerly occupied by the Military Commissariat). § 3. Failure to comply with this order, including through refusing to turn over the arms in one's possession on time or attempting to conceal any, is punishable by death” (GAKK. F. R-498. Op. 1. D. 1. L. 4).

Order No. 7 of August 13 takes the reader back to issues related to plunder and rioting in Yeysk in the transitional period. Specifically, the Mayor stated the following in the document:

“§ 1. I am ordering all residents of the town of Yeysk and the District who during the flight of the Reds appropriated willfully to themselves or received from the region’s former Soviet authorities for storage or use various types of assets from military, civil, cooperative, collective-farm, and other facilities, such as cattle, furniture, uniform clothing, office and shop equipment, plant and factory tools, and other inventory, to turn such assets over within 24 hours of this order being made public. § 2. 1. If such assets were taken from facilities that have resumed operation, they are to be returned to those specific facilities. 2. Otherwise, such assets are to be turned over to a representative of the District Council in the courtyard of the former First Five-Year Plan collective farm (on the corner where Efremov Street and Pushkinskaya Street intersect), while in rural populated localities they are to be turned over to the village chief. § 3. Anybody who knows the whereabouts of stolen and unsupervised assets, including machinery parts, is to inform the police about it so that these assets can be put to use with benefit. § 4. Those found guilty of concealing misappropriated assets will be punished by death (GAKK. F. R-498. Op. 1. D. 1. L. 7).

During the complex period of establishment of the occupation authority, the newly established civil Administration in Yeysk threatened the population with capital punishment for failure to comply with its ordinances. After a while, the situation in the occupied territory of the Kuban region stabilized. In October of 1942, the Commandant's Office of the city of Novorossiysk worked out and published a set of instructions for the mayors on keeping track of the population. Pursuant to the document, each Mayor was to keep track of the population and, if need be, provide the records to the German Administration. The list had to be of the following three types: (1) a list of residents who lived in the area prior to June 22, 1941, except for Jews, foreigners, former Workers' and Peasants' Red Army service-people, partisans, members of the Communist Party, and criminals; (2) a list of individuals who settled in the area after June 22, 1941; (3) a special list, which included individuals excluded from the first list (GAKK. F. R-493. Op. 1. D. 2. L. 3, 3ob.).

An issue of great significance for the population of Krasnodar Krai was the introduction of new rules on land use. On December 23, 1942, the Reichminister of the Eastern occupied territories, Alfred Rosenberg, passed a law regulating land use in the area. It was stated in the cover note accompanying the law that the text of the document was to be communicated to all stanitsa council chiefs, collective farm chiefs, and collective farm members (GAKK. R-1324. Op. 1. D. 3. L. 189).

Here is what the document stated: “New rules on land use. A. Elimination of collective farms. 1. All laws, decrees, and resolutions adopted by the Soviet Government that are related to the creation, management, and running of collecting farms will be eliminated. 2. The Charter of the Agricultural Artel will be declared void. 3. All collective farms will be transformed into community farms. B. Community farms. 1. Community farming is a transitional form from collective farming to sole land use. Community farming will be performed as per directives from the Agricultural Department of the German Administration. 2. Special regulations will be introduced regarding the organization, administration, and management of community farms. 3. The land of community farms will be cultivated in a joint manner. 4. All employable members of community farms must take part in joint work. 5. Livestock farming by members of a community farm will not be subject to restrictions. 6. Subsidiary plots that are in use by members of a community farm will be declared their private property and exempt from taxes. 7. Each subsidiary plot must be used as thoroughly as possible, and mainly for growing vegetables, fruits, root crops, and forage plants and particularly for the development of livestock farming. 8. Starting in 1942, there may be an increase in the size of subsidiary plots, which is possible as long as that does not affect the operation of the community farm. Applications regarding an increase in the size of subsidiary plots are to be filed with the Office of Community Farms, which will examine the applications and work out a special plan on subsidiary plot allotment. This plan must be approved by the District’s Agricultural Department. 9. In terms of increasing the area of subsidiary plots, the priority must be with a village’s long-standing inhabitants who have shown themselves as being good workers and possess what it takes to work an enlarged subsidiary plot. Peasants banished under Soviet power will be equated in this context with a village’s long-standing inhabitants. 10. The person in charge of a community farm will be accountable for the generation and provision of the necessary amount of produce. C. Soviet farms and machine-tractor stations. 1. Soviet farms and machine-tractor stations that used to be state property will pass under the control of the German Administration. Soviet farms will be renamed state farms (zemstvo farms). 2. Machine-tractor stations that meet relevant requirements will be transformed into agricultural facilities, which will serve the purpose of facilitating

improvements in the level of the rural economy in the area and creating the proper conditions and infrastructure for the purpose, including in terms of the cleaning and replacement of stock seeds, development of demonstration fields, use of large agricultural machinery, keeping of breeding males for the purpose of improving livestock farming, pest control, etc. D. Shift to sole land use. 1. On community farms that meet relevant economic and technical requirements, land may be divided among peasants for sole cultivation and use. 2. To shift to sole land use, a special permit will need to be obtained from the Agricultural Department of the German Administration. 3. Such permits will be granted only to community farms that have fulfilled their obligations before the German Administration, specifically those on output. 4. No unauthorized division of land will be allowed. The procedure for the use of land that was divided in an unauthorized manner after the arrival of German troops will be established by the Agricultural Department of the German Administration. Peasants found guilty of misappropriating land after the adoption of this ordinance will be brought to justice, and will be granted no land in the future. 5. A common form of land allotment will be division into strips in each field in the rotation in a community farm (Chapter E). The division of land into holdings and formation of farmsteads (Chapter F) will be permitted only if a set of special conditions have been met. Issues relating to the form of and timeframe for shifting to sole land use will be handled by the Agricultural Department of the German Administration. 6. Members of a community farm who have failed to fulfill their obligations before the German Administration or in respect of the community farm, those who have violated the ordinances, as well as those found to be politically untrustworthy or those incapable of running a sole holding, will be granted no land. All other peasants will be granted land for sole use. 7. If a community farm is allowed to divide land into strips, each peasant household entitled to land will receive in each field of the community farm's rotation a plot of land for permanent cultivation and sole use. When dividing land, it is advisable to take into account the quality of the plot's soil and the distance from the plot to the peasant's house. 8. Peasant households that are entitled to land and have at least two employable family members in them will receive plots of the same size regardless of how the family's size will change in the future. The number of family members or employable family members will be taken into consideration only where necessary for economic and food-related reasons. 9. The Land Surveying Department of the German Administration will be in charge of all land surveying work required to divide the land. E. Sole holdings based on farming partnerships. 1. Peasants receiving land for sole use in strips will form a farming partnership. A new ordinance will be issued regarding the organization, administration, and management of farming partnerships. 2. Seeding plans for fields in the rotation will be established by farming partnerships based on directives from the Agricultural Department of the German Administration. Compliance with a seeding plan across the sole use strips is mandatory. 3. Production and draft cattle, agricultural cattle for drawing equipment, and agricultural implements belonging to community farms will be divided upon their transformation into farming partnerships among groups of peasants or individual peasants as needed economically. Large agricultural machinery, tractor-drawn implements, and complex threshers will remain the property of a machine-tractor station or a farming partnership. 4. Plowing and seeding will, normally, be performed in a joint manner, with peasants entering into an agreement with the machine-tractor station or using the machinery, inventory, and draft cattle of the partnership, which they will be provided with for group or sole use from among former collective-farm assets. 5. Peasants are to make complete use of the draft cattle and inventory at their disposal that they will be using for the joint working of the land. Otherwise, the cattle and inventory will be taken away from them. 6. Sole plowing and seeding may be permitted if a peasant household have enough inventory and draft cattle to ensure the proper working of the land. 7. Following a joint seeding session, all field boundaries will be restored and each peasant will individually work the strips designated for them and will gather the crops from them, to which end the partnership's machinery could also be used. 8. Peasants are to work their strips in a proper manner. Those found to have failed to fulfill this obligation will be deprived of the plot of land granted to them for sole use in favor of others' welfare. 9. Livestock farming in farming partnerships will be conducted on a sole basis exclusively and will not be subject to any restrictions. 10. On land plots granted for sole use, an in-kind tax will be levied. This tax will be levied on each farming partnership. It will be the responsibility of each farming partnership to collect the parts of this tax from its members and then submit the produce on time. Members found to have failed to

fulfill their tax obligations will be deprived of their land plot in favor of other members' welfare. 11. The in-kind tax may be levied in such a manner that a portion of the crops subject to submission will be gathered right in the field, i.e. standing, by personnel of the machine-tractor station. F. Independent sole farms in the form of farmsteads and holdings. 1. Land may be divided into holdings and farmsteads may be created only if there are enough inventory and draft cattle to run an independent peasant farm. 2. Holdings and farmsteads will be granted only to hardworking and efficient peasants, individuals who have shown themselves as being thrifty and capable of running an independent farm in a proper manner. 3. Independent farmers will be expected to work their land in a consistent and comprehensive manner and in a manner compliant with the seeding plans and rules for agricultural practices prescribed by the Agricultural Department of the German Administration. Farmers in this category will be expected to pay the in-kind tax on time. Peasants doing a poor job of working the land granted to them or found to have failed to fulfill their tax obligations will be deprived of their land in favor of other peasants' welfare" (GAKK. R-1324. Op. 1. D. 3. L. 189ob, 190, 190ob.).

Without question, this document was introduced for propaganda purposes as well, as to a significant portion of the Soviet population the issue of elimination of the collective farms system remained highly relevant. However, in early 1943, in light of a complex situation around Stalingrad, the Germans began to retreat from the Caucasus, and on February 5, 1943, the last German units left the town of Yeysk.

4. Conclusion

German propaganda materials directed at the civil population in the town of Yeysk may be divided into the following two categories: (1) prevention of infractions of law and (2) organization of civil administration in a new climate. In other words, the German leadership was focused not only on keeping up the repressive pressure on the population but also on creating a large social base among the population that would be loyal to the new order. With this in mind, the Germans were taking account of errors on the part of the Soviet authorities at local level.

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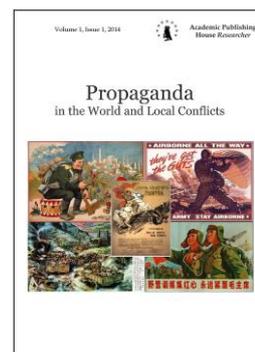
GAKK – Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Krasnodarskogo kraya [State archive of Krasnodar Krai].

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Military Propaganda around the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War: Official Materials of Armenia and Azerbaijan Defense Ministries (as illustrated by the first day of the conflict – September 27, 2020)

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Abstract

The paper spotlights the now relevant issue – propaganda related to another round of the fierce Nagorny Karabakh conflict from September 27 to November 10, 2020, which over the past two and a half decades not only has altered the balance of regional forces, but also predetermined major territorial changes; the outcome of this, without any exaggeration, full-scale war is the victory by Azerbaijan. However, the balance of forces and outcomes of the conflict lie outside our research interest that is here centered on the forms, methods and content of the propaganda war which was as intense as the operations carried out on the front line. Moreover, the war expanded beyond the media of the opposing sides – Armenia and Azerbaijan – and even “permeated” into those of other countries, above all Russia and Turkey.

The paper, discussing the propaganda activities in the context of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, applied both by the sides in the conflict and third countries, analyzes materials from the official military sources of Armenia and Azerbaijan, published on the first day of the war – September 27, 2020.

The paper briefly summarizes the theories of propaganda (H. Lasswell, W. Lippmann, J. Dewey), gives a historical overview of how strained inter-ethnic relations develop, delivers a classification of sources on the problem of propaganda. The analysis and classification provided covered messages by the Defense Ministries of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the first day of the conflict. The paper also identifies the methods used by the sides in their propaganda activities and suggests an overall assessment of their quality.

Keywords: Karabakh conflict from September 27 to November 10, 2020, propaganda, propaganda activities during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, first day of the war.

1. Introduction

The “acute phase” of the decades-long Karabakh conflict became one more tragic event in 2020. Of course, the media of the opposing sides – Azerbaijan and apparently, it would be fair to say, Armenia – also waged an unrelenting ideological war. The fray was instantly joined by foreign media, first of all in Russia that has entered into alliances with both adversaries: with Armenia

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under the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)¹ and with Azerbaijan under the CIS treaty.² The forms, methods, “stylistics” and metamorphosis of the propaganda, as reviewed from the onset of the conflict to its end, create a substantial historical and political research field.

The paper makes an attempt to study the propaganda activities of the states with regard to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Hence, to pin down a more specific research area within the body of an individual paper, we will analyze exclusively official sources, namely, the websites of the opposing sides’ defense ministries. However, even in this case, we have an excessive volume of material to analyze, and so we decided to boil down the subject of research in this paper to the first day of the conflict only – September 27.

2. Materials and methods

For sources, the paper utilizes official publications by the Armenian and Azerbaijani Defense Ministries on the first day of the military conflict, namely September 27, 2020.

The sources can be classified into several types using a variety of criteria:

1. Based on the sides involved in the conflict, the sources can be broken down into Armenian and Azerbaijani ones. In the legal sense, the Republic of Armenia does not participate in the conflict – the war involves the armed forces of the unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic only. Nevertheless, judging from the amount of support, which Armenia quite naturally provided to Nagorno Karabakh during the conflict, we may suggest that the former may actually also be identified as one of the sides in the conflict. Therefore, our analysis comprises not only the reports by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry, but also the messages issued by the Armenian Defense Ministry.

2. Based on the message form, we can distinguish between:

a) statements (messages that are publications having a political nature, which proclaim/demonstrate specific principles of the military agency’s activities, taking into account the current situation in domestic and foreign policy);

b) front-line “status reports” (messages that detail developments in the combat environment and review gains and failures of own armed forces directly from the combat operational zone. As the term “status reports”, in contrast to its use in the media with the reference to the period of the World War II, is already outdated, we put it in quotation marks)

c) information messages (publications that are devised to “plug” information gaps; in particular, reporting on the state of the armed forces (their own and those of the enemy), military equipment specifications, the work of logistic services and support units, etc.).

3. Based on the genre, we can classify propaganda means as follows:

a) traditional means (posters, leaflets, brochures, television and radio messages, etc.);

b) forms of art (theater, ballet, cinema, music, sculpture, painting, variety, etc.);

c) tools of mass communication (the Internet and related elements: departmental, news and content-specific websites, social media, video aggregators (YouTube, TikTok and others), etc.).

As we emphasized above, we take only one “genre” – the official messages of the sides’ military departments, published on the Internet.

The work employs typological, comparative historical, chronological methods and other historical research methods.

3. Discussion

Speaking of the theory of propaganda, academic and popular literature can offer many works ranging from fundamental treatises to very concise pieces. However, the scientific community typically discusses three basic theories:

¹ The CSTO or the Collective Security Treaty Organization is a regional intergovernmental organization acting on the basis of the Tashkent Treaty of May 15, 1992, and constitutes a military alliance of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. Azerbaijan withdrew from the treaty in 1999.

² The CIS or the Commonwealth of Independent States is an international organization acting on the basis of the Belovezh Treaty of December 8, 1991, aimed to regulate trade, economic and foreign policies of the nine member states, most of which are the USSR former national republics (out of fifteen states, six did not join the CIS).

1. Harold D. Lasswell believed that propaganda seeks to affect vulnerable elements in the consciousness of an individual, i.e. their fears related to personal (for the life and health of themselves and their family, getting dependent on someone and/or something, etc.), economic (material well-being, quality of life, etc.) and political (loss of liberty, freedom of expression, independence in decision-making, etc.) matters. Therefore, the primary target of propaganda is human fear. For this reason, propaganda efforts should be implemented in a system way and be clearly planned, i.e. have “strategic” rather than “tactical” purposes (see, for example, [Lasswell, 1927](#)). H. Lasswell was one of the first to substantiate the propaganda effectiveness as a tool to “demonize” the enemy ([Lasswell, 1938: 71-100](#)), and the decisive proof of this was offered by the wars both in the 20th and 21st century.

2. The second theory, suggested by Walter Lippmann, is built in its core on an ideology similar to the previous one. However, Lippmann said that the mass man in the street is unable to put together a coherent picture of the diverse information around them, especially at moments of critical importance for themselves and their family (war, famine, hostilities, etc.), in particular considering the scarcity of reliable information, and therefore, they are not self-dependent in decision-making. To address critical moments, according to W. Lippmann, a dedicated government agency is required to closely monitor and eliminate misinformation while accurately and timely “providing” the desired information. He formulated the idea of “filtration” and “dosage” of ideological propaganda, as he believed that the diversity (i.e. full and objective volume) of information is only relevant for the political elite, while the common people need only the level and amount of “filtered data” that fit the interests of the government (see, for example, [Lippmann, 1922](#)).

3. Their ideological opponent, philosopher John Dewey, gave shape to another theory stating that individuals can and should dispute propaganda, and the instrument of the resistance is the broad enlightenment of the masses. An educated average man, according to J. Dewey, is quite capable of distilling reliable data from the information diversity without outside help and determining the mode of their personal behavior, including in critical situations. The researcher also considers it a mistaken idea to delegate control over information to elites as (see, for example, [D'yui, 2000; D'yui, 2002](#)).

As we will directly analyze sources in this work, we think it unpractical to pay further attention to other works on propaganda.

4. Results

Speaking about the propaganda of the warring sides and the international community in the context of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, we should provide a brief overview of the origins and essence of this interethnic confrontation.

The Karabakh conflict is rooted in ethnic and territorial causes, i.e. it is a type of interethnic conflict brought about by the mismatch between the state ownership of a certain territory and the ethnic community that lives in it.

Since the earliest times, the Karabakh area was inhabited by Armenians (who gave the name “Artsakh” to the region, which was mentioned since the 4th century AD), but it passed alternately to Persia and Armenia. The Turkic-speaking nomadic Azerbaijani tribes, which step by step settled in the region after the 11th century (namely, after the fall of the Armenian statehood in 1045) and roughly in the 16th century, gave the name “Karabakh” to the region. Karabakh rulers (khans) acknowledged their vassal dependence on Persia (Iran) (see, for example, [Istoriya Azerbaidzhana, 1960a](#)).

The Karabakh Khanate was annexed by the Russian Empire in 1813 following the Russo-Persian War of 1804-1813 won by Russia, and was established as the so-called Karabakh province with a predominant Persian (Iranian) population. Being loath to live “under the flag” of Russia, Persians migrated to Iran, while Armenians, being Christians and not willing to live in Muslim Iran, migrated to Karabakh. The plague epidemic, which raged across the region in the late 1820s – early 1830s, forced half of the Armenian families to return to Iran, and a significant portion of those who remained died from the plague. However, the sturdiest families refused to leave and embarked on consistent development of this rocky uncooperative terrain, to adapt it for sedentary living, while Azerbaijani tribes utilized the territory mainly for nomadic cattle breeding. Shusha emerged as the largest and most prosperous city and by the early 20th century the Armenian

population formed a majority here. That time marked the onset of the interethnic tension documented in history. As the Russian Empire collapsed, the independent Azerbaijan Democratic Republic succeeded in securing Karabakh's recognition of Azerbaijani jurisdiction, but routs became commonplace, right until the region was captured by Soviet Russia. After a single rout by each of the sides (Azerbaijanis and Armenians), the conflict was kept at bay both through ideology and (mainly) by military force, but at a political level, the solution was a compromise – the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO), established in 1923, although it remained within the Azerbaijan Soviet Social Republic (SSR), had very broad powers of autonomy. Despite the unceasing appeals by the Armenian SSR leadership to make Karabakh its part, the Soviet government never handled the “frozen” controversy – as soon as the USSR's statehood became weaker during the perestroika period, the ethnic conflict escalated into an “acute phase” to spiral into a full-scale local war in 1991–1994. As a result of the Armenian army's victory, Nagorny Karabakh attained de facto independence, and the conflict was once again “frozen”: Almost all Armenians were in fact driven out of Azerbaijan, while Azerbaijanis and Kurds were forced to leave Armenia (see, for example, [Istoriya Azerbaidzhana, 1960b](#); [Dashdamirov, 2005](#); [Kornell](#) and others).

The year 2020 witnessed another war with the violent phase taking place from September 27 to November 10, which ended with the actual victory of the Azerbaijani army: most of the unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic was brought under the control of Azerbaijan, the rest part (including the “Lachin corridor” connecting Armenia with the remaining Karabakh territories and the so-called transport “Meghri corridor” that provides access for Azerbaijan to its Azerbaijani Autonomy of Nakhchivan) – under the control of the Russian peacekeeping contingent. Although President of Azerbaijan I.G. Aliyev speaks of the “final” settlement of the Karabakh conflict ([Aliyev, 2020](#)), the top leadership of Russia and Armenia does not publicly share his optimism.

We should note straight away that the first signs of the aggravating interethnic conflict in Nagorny Karabakh in 2020 became visible several months before the “acute phase” – as early as in the summer, from 12 to 16 July, when an intense exchange of fire took place between the sides with casualties on both sides. The skirmishes became known in the media as “Tavush (Tovuz¹) clashes” ([Boi v Tuvashe](#)) or “fighting in Tovuz (Tavush)” ([Boi v Tovuze...](#)). The flare-up was triggered by an incident on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border on July 12, 2020, in which a UAZ vehicle of the Azerbaijani armed forces crossed the state border of the Republic of Armenia, the Armenian side claims. The Azerbaijani servicemen were turned out back home, but inexplicably, they left the service vehicle behind on the territory of Armenia, after which the mutual shelling commenced. The active phase of the conflict continued until July 16; the sides agreed on a ceasefire starting from July 17, but the agreement was violated by both sides until the end of July, although with the use of small arms only, and heavy weapons were not engaged any more.

The “Tovuz conflict” appeared to be a prelude to far more serious clashes that took place from September 27 to November 10, 2020, which can be termed as a local war in the full sense of the word. For this reason, the work will focus on the analysis of the latter hostilities that was named “Nagorno-Karabakh armed conflict (September – November 2020)” by historians and the media. Since it is impossible to cover the entire plethora of messages released by official agencies and media within one paper, a decision was made to take the most “crucial” day in terms of propaganda – the first day of the military conflict, and limit the review solely to the messages by the military agencies. Hence, the subject of this work will be front-line status reports, statements and information messages of the Azerbaijani and Armenian Defense Ministries on September 27, 2020.

As defined in the above classification, we can divide the messages under review as follows:

4.1. Statements by the sides on the first day of the conflict (September 27, 2020) Statements of the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Armenia

On the very first day of the conflict, September 27, 2020, after the offensive of the Azerbaijani forces, the Armenian Defense Ministry released a message about potential misinformation in first place: “The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia convincingly urges the mass media and users of the social networks to refrain from spreading unverified, unofficial information. It is necessary to clearly realize that the opponent, besides the actual combat operations, also carries

¹ The different spellings refer to the pronunciation nuances and spelling – the more accurate Armenian name is “Tavush”, and Azerbaijani name – “Tovuz”.

out a large-scale information attack through all the possible channels, which implies the spread of a huge amount of misleading information, particularly on the social platforms. We urge you to be vigilant and not to become a participant in another provocation undertaken by the opponent” ([Zayavlenie Ministerstva oborony RA 1](#)). This message falls into the group of statements (which, in fact, is indicated in its headline) and immediately drives it home to citizens that they must “listen to” and “hear” only official sources; of course, the approach is by no means novel and prepares fertile ground for further propaganda efforts.

The following message, which should also be classified as a statement based on its form, aims to inspire patriotic sentiments: “In recent hours, there have been numerous cases when individual citizens and groups (up to 10,000 people) apply to the military commissariats throughout the country with a request to join the army and leave for the Artsakh-Azerbaijani contact line. The RA Ministry of Defence, highly appreciating the readiness of our compatriots, informs that there is no need for volunteering at this moment, and in case of occurrence, the RA Ministry of Defence will make a separate, special announcement” ([Zayavlenie](#)). It is clear we have absolutely no right to assess the objectivity of the statement, but it delivers its intention to raise patriotic sentiments very inconspicuously.

Statements by senior officials include, but not limited to, Lasswell’s “demonization of the enemy”, i.e. drawing its vilest portrait. We think it appropriate to quote the unabridged texts of the messages without “cutting” them into quotations to ensure a complete understanding of the accuracy and quality of the propaganda work. We denoted the division into paragraphs with ellipsis points. D. Tonoyan, RA Minister of Defense: Dear compatriots, ... Early this morning, grossly violating the current norms of the international humanitarian law and logic of the peaceful negotiation process to resolve the conflict, the Azerbaijani armed forces attacked at the entire length of line of contact between the armed forces of Artsakh and Azerbaijan using rocket-artillery and aviation and targeting the combat positions of the Defence Army and peaceful settlements of Artsakh. Thus, the military-political leadership of Azerbaijan bears the entire responsibility for the consequences of the combat operations. ... At the moment, the Defence Army of the Republic of Artsakh is stopping all the attempts of the enemy to attack with decisive counterattacks, causing heavy losses to the enemy. ... Being the guarantor of the security of Artsakh, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia are ready to provide any assistance to ensure the security of the people of Artsakh. It is already obvious that the Azerbaijani authorities, not learning lessons from the inglorious defeats of the past, have once again overestimated their abilities, for which, I am sure, they will be severely punished. ... This adventure will have severe consequences for the enemy. Our response will be tougher than ever. The Armenian army has all the necessary means to once again destroy the enemy encroaching on our Homeland. ... Dear compatriots, comrades-in-arms, ... Unity has built all the victories of our history. I am sure that at this crucial moment we will jointly and honorably carry out our combat mission, teaching a lesson to the enemy who only understands the language of force” ([Obrashchenie ministra oborony RA...](#)).

Chief of the General Staff Onik Gasparyan, in turn, also posted an address to Armenian armed forces: “Generals, officers, sergeants, servicemen, my comrades-in-arms of the glorious Armenian army, ... It is time to affirm the glory of the Armenian Armed Forces once again. Our freedom and independence, earned at the cost of the thousands of lives and blood of the best sons of Armenia, are once again under threat. ... Azerbaijan, evoking by the multifaceted support of the centuries-old enemy of our nation- Turkey, cannot accept the fact of a crushing defeat in the combat operations it incited in Artsakh in April 2016 and in the northeastern part of the Republic of Armenia in July 2020 and now it has unleashed a war again. Azerbaijan is currently attacking at the entire length of the frontline of the Defence Army using rocket-artillery and aviation and simultaneously shelling the civilian settlements. ... The units of the Defence Army are successfully thwarting its plans causing significant losses to the opponent. ... My comrades-in-arms, ... I call to continue honorably fulfilling the sacred mission of the defender of the Homeland, relying on the power of our strong arm, ignoring danger and enemy, fighting with unwavering devotion and self-sacrifice. The brave fighters of the Armenian Army, the time has come to show the courage of your spirit, strength of your arm, boundless hatred towards the remainders of the nomadic and having no fatherland cave tribe. ... You are the servicemen of the army having splendid and glorious victories. ... Let’s be worthy of the glory of the Armenian weapon and glory of the name. ...

Our work is fair. We defend the sacred land of our ancestors, our paternal home, our honor and right of our people to live peacefully in a free country. ... WE WILL WIN!" ([Obrashchenie nachal'nika general'nogo shtaba...](#)).

You can see the same techniques are put to work – demonization, appeal to patriotism and declaration of military advances. In addition, the last message makes use of the retrospection method – the words of the Chief of the RA General Staff are demonstrably reminiscent of V.M. Molotov's phrase concluding his speech on the day the Great Patriotic War broke out: "Our cause is just. The enemy shall be defeated. Victory will be ours!"

Overall, we can point out the propaganda in the form of statements was organized at a very high professional level in the military department of the Republic of Armenia.

Statements of the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The initial statement under the heading "Armenian armed forces committed large-scale provocations along the entire length of the front" skillfully capitalizes on a propaganda technique that can be conditionally (and ironically) called "search for the guilty" as the military agency accuses the Armenian armed forces of provocations while justifying the use of its own armed forces. We emphasize that we absolutely have no intention to verify the accuracy of the messages, but are aimed to study them only in terms of the quality of propaganda activities. To ensure an objective understanding, we will quote the complete text: "Civilians and human settlements of Azerbaijan exposed to enemy fire ... On September 27, at about 06:00, the armed forces of Armenia, committing large-scale provocations, have subjected to intensive shelling from large-caliber weapons, mortars, and artillery mounts of various calibers of the positions of the Azerbaijan Army along the entire length of the front and our human settlements located in the frontline zone. ... There are killed and wounded among the civilian population as a result of the intensive shelling by the enemy of the Gapanly village of Terter region, the Chiragli and Orta Gervend villages of Aghdam region, the Alkhanli and Shukurbeyli villages of Fizuli region, and the Jojug Marjanli village of Jabrayil region. Serious damage was caused to civilian infrastructure. ... Information on casualties and wounded among the civilian population and military personnel is being specified. ... The foremost units of the Azerbaijan Army are taking retaliatory measures to suppress this provocation of the enemy and to ensure the safety of the civilian population living near the line of confrontation of the troops" ([Armyanskie vooruzhennye sily sovershili...](#)). The message appears to be a model of the quality propaganda work, especially given that this is in fact the first message about the beginning of a full-scale war – it shifts the blame for the conflict (and inevitable future victims) onto the opponent; is keen to incite hatred (by reporting of the killed and wounded among the civilian population and damage inflicted to civilian facilities); does not speak directly of the results of the clashes, keeping their options open to further add clarifications and comments, depending on how the situation will change in the future. The choice of wording for the statement has been delivered, without doubt, in a remarkably seamless manner in terms of propaganda.

The statements of the Azerbaijani side, in contrast to the Armenian military agency, harnesses another propaganda technique that can be conditionally called the "method of official denial"; in cases related to hostilities, it means refuting, counter-balancing or substantially downplaying the opponent's military successes. By their form, such messages rather belong, from our viewpoint, to statements than to front-line status reports or conventional information messages. This can be illustrated by the following message: "Information spread by Armenia about allegedly shooting down of 3 tanks, 2 helicopters and 3 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) of the Azerbaijan Army is false and disinformation. ... We pointed out that, our units have complete advantage over the enemy in the front" ([Ministerstvo oborony oproverkaet...](#)).

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry also turned the attention of its citizens (and, considering the information – not only the one released by Azerbaijan, but also that of its opponent, as well as of third countries – is generally available and open) to the fact that its actions were "right and legitimate"; the method can be conventionally called "justice of our deeds". Here is a respective quotation: "As reported earlier, the command staff of the Azerbaijan Army decided to launch a counter-offensive operation along the entire front to suppress the combat activity of the armed forces of Armenia and ensure the safety of the civilian population. ... We officially announce that the Azerbaijan Army does not target the civilian population, civilian facilities, and civilian infrastructure. Unlike the occupying country Armenia, during military operations, Azerbaijan

complies with the requirements of the regulation of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions. ... The Armenian army deliberately places its firing points inside and near human settlements. ... The Azerbaijan Army makes calls for the civilian population in the occupied territories to stay away from military facilities” ([Azerbaidzhanskaya Armiya ne podvergaet...](#)).

The numerous messages issued by the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan (the tactic, we think, is also used deliberately because, first, it is easier for a “common” person to get confused in the glut of information, and, second, it allows you to continuously and consistently implant a certain idea/information/thought to the masses, “wrapping” it in various texts) include the message by the nation's leader, President of Azerbaijan and Supreme Commander-In-Chief of the Azerbaijani Army I.G. Aliyev’s “President Ilham Aliyev appealed to Azerbaijani people”, which combines a video with a text ([Prezident Azerbaidzhana Il'kham Aliev...](#)). The voluminous address, which we cannot give here in full because of its large size, can be called a perfect example of highly efficient propaganda work. It “demonizes” the opponent (in particular: “...This is another manifestation of Armenian fascism”; “...Armenia's military provocations against Azerbaijan have become regular of late”; “...What objectives did Armenia pursue by committing this provocation? First of all, Armenia plans to occupy Azerbaijani lands and does not conceal that. ...A new policy of occupation for new territories – this is the policy of Armenia’s military-political leadership today. ...It is as a result of Armenia's hypocritical, unconstructive and false policy that the negotiations have actually stopped”; “...Today, the Azerbaijani Army protects the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan on its territory. What are Armenian soldiers doing in our lands?! What is the Armenian army doing in our lands?! It is no secret that 90 percent of the personnel in the “Nagorno-Karabakh army” are Armenian citizens. Armenia is an occupying state, this occupation must and will end”, etc.); it also appeals to religion, i.e. it carefully draws on the confessional factor in inciting hatred of the enemy (for example: “...As a result of the enemy fire, there are casualties among the civilian population and our servicemen. Some people have been wounded. May God rest our martyrs in peace! Their blood will not remain unavenged”), praising own successes (“...The Azerbaijani Army is currently firing on the enemy's military positions, and as a result of these strikes, many units of the enemy's military equipment have been destroyed”; “...In July, Azerbaijan gave a fitting response to the enemy, preserved its territorial integrity and once again showed that anyone speaking to Azerbaijan in the language of threats will regret doing that. Unfortunately, this was not a lesson for them. However, after the July provocation, I said that this bitter defeat by Armenia should be a lesson for them”, etc.); in addition, it provides arguments substantiating the justice and legitimacy of the actions by their own armed forces and emphasizes the repeated “situations of harassment”, caused by the “neighbor’s” “unfair” actions (for example: “...As a result of the crushing blows, the Armenian side was forced to accept a bitter defeat. I have said this and I want to say again that if we had wanted, we could have conducted military battles on the territory of Armenia. However, we do not have military targets in Armenia, and this being the case, a ceasefire was introduced a few days later”; “...In August, Armenia launched yet another military provocation”; “Armenia's provocations against us do not end at that. Recently, the “swearing-in” ceremony of the head of the so-called criminal junta was held in Shusha, an ancient city of our ancient Azerbaijan. Isn't this a provocation? This is an insult to us. They thought that we would put up with this insult. They are deliberately provoking us and they will see the bitter consequences”, etc.). Moreover, the Azerbaijani President used the nearly verbatim quotation of V. Molotov’s legendary phrase he said on June 22, 1941: “...We are on the right path. Ours is the cause of justice. We will win!”. The move primarily targeted citizens aged 40 and above, who experienced the period of the Soviet Union at a conscious age and, accordingly, were partially or entirely brought up in the environment of Soviet propaganda. Moreover, in Azerbaijan (as it is the case in Russia, Armenia, some Central Asian countries; unlike, for example, Baltic states and Ukraine, partly Georgia), the victory in the Great Patriotic War is widely commemorated, and the chapter in the Soviet history is an integral and crucial element in the government propaganda, and consequently, Molotov’s phrase strikes the right chord with the younger generation either.

For this reason, the content of I.G. Aliyev’s statement and its publication on the military department’s website can be described as the right decision that produced the propaganda effect. Armenian Prime Minister N.V. Pashinyan did not make such statements, which can be considered a mistake in terms of propaganda. On the other hand, “keeping silence” by “other sides” was

justified (and above all because the Republic of Armenia is not legally involved in the conflict); we would venture to suggest that the situation was impelled by political motives.

Although the decree of the President of Azerbaijan “On declaring martial law”, dated on 27.09.2020, is both a statutory document and, to a great extent, a propaganda vehicle, however, we think its analysis makes no sense, since its title speaks for itself ([Ukaz Prezidenta Azerbaidzhanskoi Respubliki...](#)).

Azerbaijan’s Defense Ministry, just as its Armenian “counterpart”, unswervingly capitalizes on propaganda techniques that imply “demonstration of justice and legitimacy”, primarily in the aspects related to victims among civilians: “As reported earlier, the command staff of the Azerbaijan Army decided to launch a counter-offensive operation along the entire front to suppress the combat activity of the armed forces of Armenia and ensure the safety of the civilian population. ... We officially announce that the Azerbaijan Army does not target the civilian population, civilian facilities, and civilian infrastructure. Unlike the occupying country Armenia, during military operations, Azerbaijan complies with the requirements of the regulation of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions. ... The Armenian army deliberately places its firing points inside and near human settlements. ... The Azerbaijan Army makes calls for the civilian population in the occupied territories to stay away from military facilities” ([Azerbaidzhanskaya Armiya ne podvergaet...](#)). This message should also be categorized as a statement, rather than an information message, since it has a prominent political context.

Analysis of the statements with a political dimension shows that the sides used similar methods such as “denial”, “justice” and “justification” of their own actions, “demonizing the opponent”, “confirming military successes” and others, but the Defense Ministry of Azerbaijan employed a broader range of the techniques.

4.2. Front-line status reports on the first day of the conflict (September 27, 2020)

Front-line status reports by the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Armenia

The Armenian Defense Ministry naturally launched its front-line status reports by demonstrating its military successes on the front line with appropriate headlines, embedded videos and no body texts: “The annihilation of Azerbaijani tanks and manpower” ([Unichtozhenie azerbaidzhanskikh tankov...](#)), “Other destructions of Azerbaijani military equipment” ([Ocherednye porazheniya azerbaidzhanskoi...](#)), “The Armenian armed forces continue the destruction of the Azerbaijani military equipment” ([Armyanskie VS prodolzhayut porazhat' 1](#)), “The Armenian armed forces continue the destruction of the Azerbaijani military equipment” ([Armyanskie VS prodolzhayut porazhat' 2](#)). In terms of their format, the messages can be defined as front-line “status reports”, but the absence of body texts appears to be quite logical and well-considered because, first, video is more effective than words, and second, this leaves room for further comments and clarifications, where required.

Front-line status reports by the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Unlike the initial status reports by the Armenian military agency, Azerbaijan’s Defense Ministry provides only textual information, and by doing this, it, of course, looks less convincing than the contesting side: “The firing points and the combat activities of the armed forces of Armenia are suppressed with the interaction of foremost military units, missile and artillery units, frontline aviation, armored vehicles, and other branches of troops deployed in the tensest Tartar-Aghdam and Fizuli-Jabrayil directions of the front. ... Currently, the Azerbaijan Army is taking retaliatory actions and our troops fully control the operational situation. ... The mass media and the public will be additionally informed about the events taking place in the frontline zone” ([Podavlyayutsya ognevye tochki...](#)).

The Azerbaijani military agency also releases neutral messages in terms of military advances. By their form, it seems it would be correct to describe them as front-line status reports: “Units of the Azerbaijan Army are fighting for important heights located under the occupation of Armenian troops in the Terter-Aghdam, Fizuli-Jabrayil directions, and in the direction of Murovdag Mountain. ... Rocket and artillery troops and aviation assets strike at enemy command posts, destroying a large number of maneuvering forces, military equipment, and military facilities. ...

Fierce battles are taking place along the entire length of the front” ([The Azerbaijan Army’s counter-offensive operation](#)).

In the afternoon, the Ministry began to post status reports that included video footage. In contrast with the Armenian Defense Ministry’s website, the Azerbaijani military agency adds fairly straightforward comments to the videos, in particular: “As a result of the counter-offensive operation of the units of the Azerbaijan Army, a large number of military personnel and military equipment of the Armenian troops were destroyed in various directions of the front. ... The video shows the moment of destruction of enemy’s military equipment” ([Unichtozheny boevaya tekhnika...](#)). Taking into account the theory of propaganda and previous global experience, this kind of “propaganda” explanations are devised primarily for poorly educated readers; to the eye of informed “viewers”, the messages by the Armenian Defense Ministry compare more favorably with this background. A similar context is created in other front-line status reports provided by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry on September 27, 2020, in particular: “As a result of the counter-attack operation of the Azerbaijan Army units, enemy troops retreated and left a large number of armored vehicles on the battlefield. ... This video shows destroyed and abandoned Armenian combat vehicles” ([Protivnik bezhit...](#)).

Other front-line status reports (see, for example, [Unichtozhen sklad oruzhiya...; Unichtozheno eshche dva tanka](#), etc.), posted by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry on the first day of the 2020 Karabakh conflict, incorporate very similar ideology and content, and therefore, it is impractical to analyze them, in our opinion.

A number of front-line status reports are written in the neutral style, and through this, they serve as a powerful propaganda lever for the highly educated population and expert community (both the military and journalists), for example: “As a result of the military operation carried out by our troops in the direction of Goranboy, the Murov peak in the Murov mountain range was liberated. ... As a result of the operation, the Vardenis-Agdara military highway, which connects the occupied territories of Azerbaijan with Armenia, was taken under control visually, as well as under fire control of firearms and artillery means. The gained military advantage allows hinder the transportation of additional military cargo from Armenia to the occupied Kalbajar and Aghdere. ... The combat operations continue” ([Osvobozhdena vazhnaya vysota...](#)).

As we can see, the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry, provided the status reports in great abundance, as opposed to similar publications of the Armenian Defense Ministry, and created them with various audiences in mind. This, on the one hand, enhances the reach while, on the other hand, “diverts” educated citizens away from the blatant flag-waving messages.

4.3. Information messages on the first day of the conflict (September 27, 2020) Information messages by the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Armenia

On the very first day of the war, the Armenian Defense Ministry calls on citizens not to post information on the military equipment movements in public domains: “The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia, considering the spread of the videos on the movement of the combat equipment of the Armenian side absolutely unacceptable, strongly urges to refrain from such actions. It is necessary to clearly understand that the internet is thoroughly monitored by the opponent and any such video turns the combat equipment into a target for the Azerbaijani armed forces” ([Zayavlenie Ministerstva oborony RA 2](#)). Although the message headline says that it is an “announcement” (statement), it actually brings some information to the public’s notice and calls on it to be on its guard. The message key goal is to only steer people towards the sources that are fully controlled by the government, meaning they give thoroughly “filtered” information from the point of view of propaganda.

Information messages by the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The Defense Ministry from the onset (in the second message following the first one that announces the beginning of hostilities) published a requirement to use only official information as part of a front-line status report. It pursues the same purpose as the Armenian military agency in its the messages, and therefore, the communications require no additional analysis because they reflect identical ideas: “We urge users of social networks, electronic media, and other mass media representatives not to use unofficial, unspecified, and biased information in order to avoid

confusion among the population and to ensure the safety of our servicemen” ([Podavlyayutsya ognevye tochki...](#)).

An essential attribute of the “right” ideological approach is to demonstrate battleground successes: “The command staff of the Azerbaijan Army decided to launch a counter-offensive operation of our troops along the entire front to suppress the combat activity of the armed forces of Armenia and ensure the safety of the civilian population.

The military personnel and tank units, with the support of units of the Rocket and Artillery Troops, frontline aviation, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), determining a large number of manpower (military personnel), military facilities, and military equipment of the Armenian armed forces located in the forward line and in the depths of the enemy's defense, have destroyed them. ... According to the information received, 12 OSA anti-aircraft missile systems of the Armenian air defense units were destroyed in various directions. A combat helicopter of the Air Force of Azerbaijan was shot down in the Terter direction, the crew members are alive. ... The blitz counter-offensive operation of our troops continues” ([Voiska Azerbaidzhanskoi Armii pristupili...](#)).

The information messages also use the propaganda method of “official denial”, in this case, with respect to the military losses reported by the Armenian side: “Information spread by Armenia about allegedly shooting down of 3 tanks, 2 helicopters and 3 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) of the Azerbaijan Army is false and disinformation. ... We pointed out that, our units have complete advantage over the enemy in the front” ([Ministerstvo oborony oproverkaet...](#)). We do not categorize the message as a front-line report, because in its form it removes information “gaps”, instead of keeping track of the current combat situation.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis conducted, we can sum up and formulate the following findings:

1. Looking at the messages by the Armenian and Azerbaijani military agencies through the lens of theory and the practice that has taken shape in the 20th and 21st centuries, we should admit that they have top quality and were presented at a high professional level. The sides resorted to an extensive toolkit of propaganda techniques.

2. The review of initial messages by the Defense Ministry of Armenia on the first day of the war suggests that its propaganda efforts were adequately orchestrated, ranging from appeals to the feeling of patriotism and clear (with no text) demonstrations of military successes to calls for vigilance and “demonization” of the opponent. The military agency’s senior officials – the Minister of Defense and the Chief of General Staff – released their statements, and each of the messages, one way or another, uses all the specified techniques: inspiring patriotic sentiments, “demonizing” the opposing side, confirming military successes, as well as giving a retrospective allusion to the prophetic legendary words of V. Molotov, who broke the news of the beginning of the war with Germany to the Soviet people.

3. The first messages, issued by the Defense Ministry of Azerbaijan on September 27, 2020, were expertly contextualized in the current situation in terms of propaganda. In addition to the methods of “demonization”, retrospection (Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces I. Aliyev virtually quoted the final phrase of V. Molotov’s speech at the end of his address to the nation), raise of patriotism, demonstration of military successes, denial of the opponent’s military successes, they also utilized a religious lever and many others as propaganda means.

4. We do not have enough arguments in favor of the propaganda materials under review of either of the military agencies, because each side displayed great professional competence in tackling the challenge.

The strengths of the propaganda, organized by the Armenian side, include its focus on ensuring “visible objectivity” (videos of military successes with no comments), generating laconic and clear messages (concise items of information are better absorbed by people), providing addresses of the military leaders to the nation.

The strengths of the propaganda, organized by the Azerbaijani side, include posting multiple messages (consistently repeated information becomes as a rule fixed in the minds of readers; in addition, the tactic beneficially generates more opportunities for the media to disseminate “various” news), putting emphasis on the religious element in propaganda (it is quite logical that it

is present only in the President's address to the nation), engaging a wider audience to reach both the poorly educated population (through "flag-waving" messages), and highly educated readers and expert community (through "neutral" status reports explaining the advantage gained in combat operations).

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