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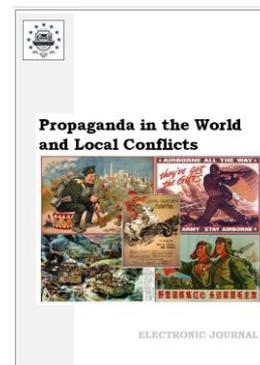
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Articles

Elements of Propaganda in “Essays on the Geography of the Almighty Don Host” by V.V. Bogachev (1919)

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Abstract

The paper highlights “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” (Ocherki geografii Vsevelikogo Voyska Donskogo), a textbook on the geography of the Don region, which came to print amid the Civil War thanks to the initiative of a Don Ataman, P.N. Krasnov. The paper shows that the textbook, in combination with the “Don chrestomathy” (Donskaya khrestomatiya), created in the same period, was supposed, as the authors devised it, to imbue students at Don schools with devotion to their homeland, to shape them as “useful servants of the Almighty Don Host”. The book, among other things, contained the propaganda of the military devotion of Don Cossacks.

Analyzing the text of “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” and looking at it through the lens of the Don social ideas, which existed at the turn of the 20th century, the author concludes that the majority of the ideological constructs, which V.V. Bogachev promulgated, were not novel. V.V. Bogachev, like several earlier authors, championed the importance of the Cossacks’ military devotion and argued that future generations of Cossacks should be prepared to defend their land. However, as he formulated the positive values that Cossacks stood guard of, V.V. Bogachev attached particularly great virtue to irrational love for the Motherland, regardless of whether it was justified or not. Moreover, V.V. Bogachev insisted that Cossacks were superior in their moral qualities to Great Russians whom his text styled in the obvious image of “strangers”. Although similar views could be found among hard-right Don authors before 1917, V.V. Bogachev was the first to include them into a textbook and substantiate them with a unique Cossack heritage, on top of that. The author comes to the conclusion that V.V. Bogachev’s book clearly demonstrates how, in times of war, the declared propaganda of “love for the Cossackdom” transforms into the propaganda of xenophobia with only a thin line separating it from radical nationalism.

Keywords: Don Cossacks, Almighty Don Host, Civil War, military propaganda, school textbooks, V.V. Bogachev.

1. Introduction

In 1919, at the height of the Civil War, Novocherkassk saw publication of two books intended for Don schools. One of the books – “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” by V.V. Bogachev – was created, as the author himself wrote in the foreword, “on the proposal of g<ospodin> Don

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Ataman” (further it becomes clear that he meant P.N. Krasnov, not A.P. Bogaevskii, who succeeded him in February 2019) (Bogachev, 1919). The second book, “Don chrestomathy”, was in fact “an edition of the Don Host”, its flyleaf read (Donskaya khrestomatiya, 1918: forzats). Of particular interest is the editorial board of the chrestomathy: it included people of rather divergent stances, such as a far right Don regional historian, Kh.I. Popov, and a former liberal State Duma deputy from the Don Host, A.I. Petrovskii (Donskaya khrestomatiya, 1918: forzats). We will see below that the publication of the two books was a single project that was given a major priority by the Krasnov administration. The new state, the Almighty Don Host, needed textbooks to promote its ideological pillars.

Already after P.N. Krasnov’s resignation, the Don Host published another book, “Essay on the political history of the Almighty Don Host”, and this time it specified no author, but had a portrait of Ataman A.P. Bogaevskii on the flyleaf (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919). The foreword informed that the book was published in three versions: in Russian, French and English, to “make our Allies aware of the historical fate and political role of the Don Cossackdom” (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: I). Even the Russian edition was in the first place designed not for Russians, but for the “newly established Slavic states akin to us” (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: I). Therefore, despite the awfully harsh conditions of the Civil War, the Almighty Don Host rolled out a sufficiently large-scale publishing efforts by printing books to propagandize its ideas. And the conditions indeed made book printing a very challenging undertaking: for example, V.V. Bogachev openly complained that he did not have many of the resources needed at hand, and the printing of his “Essays” was slowed down as typesetters were mobilized and there was a lack of good paper (Bogachev, 1919: b. s.). Publishing as many as three books in such conditions in a short time definitely indicates the crucial role attached by the Don administration to propaganda and indoctrination of the younger generation and allies in its ideology.

A reservation should be made right away that, of course, we cannot speak about a coherent and explicitly formulated ideology in the Almighty Don Host. The policies, pursued by the administrations of P.N. Krasnov and A.P. Bogaevskii, were in stark contrast, as well as Kh.I. Popov and A.I. Petrovskii were far from sharing the same views. However, against all odds, they managed to frame a rather adequate compromise concept, substantiated in the forewords to the books, at least in “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” and “Don chrestomathy”, intended for schools. They emphasized that love for the homeland and its history was a quality of any normal human being, fostered in childhood, but there were no dedicated textbooks for Don schools on local history, geography and literature. “Modern pedagogy prescribes to begin the study of geography not with a general course, not with learning terminology, not with definitions of what a peninsula, cape, promontory, tongue of land or spit is, but with discovering one’s homeland in the narrowest sense of the word – the surroundings of one’s home town”, V.V. Bogachev wrote (Bogachev, 1919: 1). And it was after providing such a substantiation for the relevancy of his book when he proceeded to its specific Cossack content: “Having no love for one’s homeland is unnatural. <...>. A Professor at the Kharkov University, N.D. Borisyak, whose works we will mention below more than once, was amazed how Cossacks loved their Don and held it in great awe” (Bogachev, 1919: 2-3). The compilers of the “Don chrestomathy” put it even more articulately: “The prime purpose of the Don Chrestomathy is to provide the younger generation, future citizens of the Don land and the Russian state, with material for after-school reading and with samples to study various types of fine prose and poetry. The content of the book should contribute to the free comprehensive discovery by readers of their home land” (Donskaya khrestomatiya, 1918: b. s.). And again, Cossack leanings were only outlined after these general words: “It is a conscious love for their Fatherland, elevated to readiness to make sacrifices, can edify a young Cossack into a ‘faithful, sensible and useful servant of the Almighty Don Host’” (Donskaya khrestomatiya, 1918: b. s.).

Hence, “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host”, created amid the Civil War, were supposed to nurture a love for their home land, for the Quiet Don, and a willingness to make sacrifices for its sake in the students of Don schools. The text, however, did not touch upon ideological issues that tore apart the Cossack elite at that time – it stressed neither the monarchism of Cossacks, nor their devotion to democratic traditions and involvement in popular uprisings; it pinpointed the particularism of the Don region on the one hand and emphasized an inextricable connection between the land Russia on the other one, etc. But the propaganda of the military predestination of Cossacks and their natural superiority over Great Russians was presented full force on the pages of the book of interest to us. And our paper will make an attempt to analyze precisely these features of the propaganda.

2. Materials and methods

As a main source, our research will use the text of “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host”. For this reason, it is appropriate to briefly describe the structure and peculiarities of the textbook, as well as portray the personality of its author. His autobiography, which was written in 1960 and can now be accessed on the website of the RAS Geological Institute, says that V.V. Bogachev was born in Novocherkassk in 1881, studied at a Novocherkassk gymnasium and already at the time established a collaboration with the Don Museum (Bogachev, 1960). The museum was headed by Kh.I. Popov, not only an eminent Don scholar, but a person with very right-wing beliefs, who as early as before 1917 put a high value to P.N. Krasnov. A historian of Don nationalism, B.S. Kornienko noted that the Donskie Oblastnye Vedomosti newspaper, edited by Kh.I. Popov, reprinted almost all articles by P.N. Krasnov from Russky Invalid daily (Kornienko, 2013: 93). V.V. Bogachev was a graduate of St. Petersburg University and later a teacher of geology at Yuryev University. Despite this, he continued to maintain contact with the Don administration – he prepared a soil map of the Don Host Oblast as commissioned by the military authorities (Bogachev, 1960).

V.V. Bogachev described his activities during the Civil War very briefly: in 1917, he was offered a teacher position by Kharkov University and Polytechnic Institute in Novocherkassk, and of the two offers he chose Novocherkassk (Bogachev, 1960). It goes without saying that a Soviet scholar should not make mention of his contacts with the regime of P.N. Krasnov. Nevertheless, the contacts seemed to be no coincidence: in 1943, V.V. Bogachev was arrested for “staying in the occupied territory”, he wrote (Bogachev, 1960). However, there is information that the respected professor of geology was in Rostov-on-Don, occupied by Germans, for a reason, as he was a member of the Special Commission for Cossack Affairs, created by Nazis (Problema kazachestva..., 2010). Unfortunately, there are no dedicated biographical research about V.V. Bogachev, but, apparently, not only was he an excellent geographer who taught for many years in higher educational institutions both in the Russian Empire and the USSR, but he also clung to far right views, and specifically far right views with the Cossack bias, like P.N. Krasnov and Kh.I. Popov. At least, the content of “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” confirms this suggestion.

V.V. Bogachev himself considered “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” not a very good book: he wrote that what he felt about the work was “not even dissatisfaction”, but “an ultimate, clear realization of its unsatisfactory nature” (Bogachev, 1919: 516). V.V. Bogachev pointed out a whole range of shortcomings in his work, caused by the haste, in which he worked, volume limitations and the unusual task to develop a new genre for Don historiography – geographical essays for schools. First, V.V. Bogachev “examined nature, but overlooked individual”, meaning that purely geographical sections prevailed over ethnographic topics in his book (Bogachev, 1919: 516). Still, he wrote in his defense that works on Don ethnography had always been voluminous, and even a concise but adequate description of the people, living in the Don region, would take more than half of the number of sheets, agreed for his publication, and P.N. Krasnov personally advised him to concentrate on geography and said that the issues of Don ethnography were planned to reflect in the “Don chrestomathy” (Bogachev, 1919: 516). Second, despite thus divided scopes, the ethnographic section in “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” turned out to be too big for the text volume planned for publication, and the author had to shorten it, “which totally violated the harmonious balance of the parts” (Bogachev, 1919: 517). Third, V.V. Bogachev was criticized for introducing an extensive historical element into his textbook and for his excessively close attention to historical aspects at the expense of geographic and ethnographic descriptions (Bogachev, 1919: 517). Finally, V.V. Bogachev admitted that he could also be accused of Kazakomanstvo (Cossack-mania), but argued that his book was characterized not by Kazakoman inclinations, but by “a love for Cossacks” (Bogachev, 1919: 519). Yet, even the explanations supplemented for the book made it clear that the love was discriminative: for example, without viewing Cossacks as a “distinctive tribe”, V.V. Bogachev not only said that Cossacks could have evolved into such a tribe if the circumstances had played out differently, but also argued that Cossacks were a stronger and happier social class than most non-Cossacks, which explained why the latter were hostile towards them (Bogachev, 1919: 518-519). It is easy to see: the work was far from being perfect as the author himself provided so many excuses in the afterword to his book.

In fact, “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” was a repetition, to a greater or a lesser extent, of the typical structure found statistical descriptions of Russian regions. V.V. Bogachev called the book “Nature and population of Sloboda Ukraine” (Priroda i naselenie Slobodskoy Ukrainy),

published in 1918 in Kharkov, as a model he was guided by (Bogachev, 1919: 517). However, similar works about the Don Host also existed. Although V.V. Bogachev admitted that he advanced the tradition of statistical descriptions, introduced by V.D. Sukhorukov, N.I. Krasnov and S.F. Nomikosov, he believed that all the works became out-of-date (Bogachev, 1919: 4). Ironically, even before Bogachev published his own book, critics, who read its drafts, commented that 4/5 of the material simply retold its precursors and therefore was often obsolete (Bogachev, 1919: 515). Indeed, even if we take the overall structure, V.V. Bogachev generally followed the same plan as his predecessors. For example, the volume about the Don Host Land, published by N.I. Krasnov in the “Materials for geography and statistics of Russia, collected by officers of the General Staff” series back in 1863, included 8 sections: a historical overview, a geographical and topographic description, a description of the physical properties of surfaces, characteristics of plants and animals, characteristics of inhabitants, an overview of industry, an overview of education and an overview of the life in the Don Host (Krasnov, 1863: I-III). S.F. Nomikosov’s “Statistical description of the Don Cossack region” was comprised of 19 chapters organized in a similar order: first history, then geography, then a general description of the population, followed by a description of the life and governance system in the Don region (Nomikosov, 1884: I-XV). Accordingly, V.V. Bogachev’s work is interesting for its deviations from the traditional structure of statistical descriptions, and the novelty is in replacing a comprehensive historical section with historical digressions in the introductory section and in the section on the Don population, as well as in adding a section on individual districts of the Don Host (Bogachev 1919: b. s.). As for our research interest with regard to V.V. Bogachev’s book, it primarily concerns the historical lines and episodes, included into the textbook on geography, for which, as we can see, the author was disapproved by his contemporaries. Significantly, V.V. Bogachev used a format to present historical facts other than his predecessors, earlier Cossack authors of statistical Don Host descriptions, who scrupulously and thoroughly dug into historical issues in dedicated sections or chapters. He revised their practice by inserting historical statements, usually without detailed discussions of pros and cons, into the body of geographic and ethnographic text as a matter-of-course fact. At the same time, as V.V. Bogachev himself admitted some of his statements also were at variance with “the most popular literature”, but the Don geographer felt it was his “moral right to think this way and not otherwise” (Bogachev, 1919: 517-518). And the approach enabled V.V. Bogachev to put a number of very controversial ideas into his textbook, which, however, were in line with the policy of the P.N. Krasnov administration.

It is no accident that we elaborated at length on the features of “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host”. Before everything else, our intention was to show that the book was created in a hurry, was not checked, and hopefully, despite all its imperfections, more accurately and sincerely reflects the position of its author on controversial political issues. “Essays” arouse interest not only considering the facts they contain, but also as a document created in a blazing and bloody era. In view of this, our research will broadly use both comparative and descriptive methods of historical analysis to reconstruct the features of military propaganda in the book.

3. Discussion

The engagement of Cossacks in the Civil War was and remains one of the dominant themes in the Don regional historiography. Following the collapse of the USSR, the subject was covered in print both in monographs (we would specifically highlight the works by V.P. Trut (Trut, 1997) and A.V. Venkov (Venkov, 2008), as well as in dedicated collections of documents (Don v gody revolyutsii..., 2017). However, issues, related to the propaganda of the White Cossack Don government, were peripheral to most researchers. For example, the monograph by Yu.V. Grazhdanov “The Almighty Don Host during the Civil War (1918–1919)” (Vsevelikoe Voysko Donskoe v gody Grazhdanskoy voyny (1918–1919)) devoted several pages to the activity of White propagandists already under A.P. Bogaevskii, with a primary accent on the inefficiency of their exercises (Grazhdanov, 2015: 213-215). It is only the recent decade that has brought about publication of research papers with a key focus on the Don anti-Bolshevik propaganda during the Civil War, but they typically describe the period of A.P. Bogaevskii’s atamanship and the organization of propaganda agencies (Egorov, 2013; Kirichenko, 2015). Peculiar characteristics of propaganda forms, especially of indirect one, through textbooks, have not been subject for study so far.

Modern authors also paid certain attention to the personality of V.V. Bogachev. Nevertheless, as it was mentioned above, there are no specialty biographical works about him. His legacy actually turned out to have a rather curious fate. V.V. Bogachev as a professional and competent geologist is

extensively spotlighted by so-called “atlantologists”, supporters of the existence of Atlantis, who position him as “the founder of Russian scientific Atlantology” (Fanagorov, b.g.). V.V. Bogachev allegedly published in 1912 a book “Atlantis – mythical Atlantis and geological Atlantis” (Atlantida – Atlantida mificheskaya i Atlantida geologicheskaya), which, while denying the existence of “political Atlantis”, depicted by Plato, insisted on the existence of “geological Atlantis”, a bridge between Europe and America in the prehistoric era (we failed to find a copy of the book, and atlantologists in their descriptions refer to each other (Fanagorov, b.g.). Speaking of other writings by the Don geographer, it is remarkable that the greatest prominence was acquired right by “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host”, which were repeatedly appreciated by Don regional historians in the post-Soviet period, but most often they limited themselves to a short summary of the work. The only paper worthy of note is I.Yu. Yurchenko’s article “V. Bogachev’s textbook ‘Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host’ of 1919 as a source on the history of the Don ecology and independent Cossack historiography”, although it only provides some of the features of the book under review (Yurchenko, 2013).

4. Results

Although the book appeared in a very eventful time, “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” makes no explicit mentions of Bolsheviks. Apparently, V.V. Bogachev understood that such mentions in the work on Don geography and ethnography would be inappropriate, all the more that he positioned himself as a person of “academic mold”, a scientist who followed the “templates of scientific research” (Bogachev, 1919: 517). However, his unconcealed partiality and love for the Cossackdom made it impossible for him to completely leave out the fact of Cossacks’ role in what was deemed a fight against the forces destructive to Russia. It might be the reason why V.V. Bogachev supplemented the book’s introductory section with subsections not only with basic geographical features of the Don Host Land, but also about the history of the region (Bogachev, 1919: 9-14). The composition indeed, as his critics noted, could not be regarded as a felicitous choice: a compressed overview of the Don history, from Scythians to 1918, on several pages inevitably was very chaotic, and a number of the facts it contained were repeated later.

Nevertheless, the chaotic retelling of a mainly ancient history found was explained and justified at the end where it became clear why part had pivotal importance and was not thrown out when the book was shortened. V.V. Bogachev, who more than once emphasized the strategic meaning of the Don region, which for long was a cherished prize for different competing forces, called Rostov-on-Don “the heir of Tanais the First”, “Tanais the Fifth” (Bogachev, 1919: 14). He stressed that the struggle for this new Tanais was not over yet, and again, as in ancient times, “both peaceful colonists and armed crowds of half-wild people flocked to the Don” (Bogachev, 1919: 14). And V.V. Bogachev’s most significant argument deserves to be quoted in full: “As the disproportionately replenished peoples of Asia, pushed by poverty, land shortage and scarcity of nature, came together and assaulted prosperous countries, bringing destruction, ruining world culture, unable to create anything themselves, and carried the germs of degeneration inside themselves, so in our days the Don region found itself on the way of those who have lost faith in themselves, in the future, and, most importantly, their love for their homeland” (Bogachev, 1919: 14). Moreover, V.V. Bogachev made an attempt to provide geographical reasons why the situations, in which Don would stand as a borderline between civilization and barbarism, would inevitably repeat in the future: “While the outlying areas of the East European Plain have barriers of their own: the wooded Carpathians, seas, marshes, Arctic Ocean, Ural Mountains, deserts, Caucasus, where nature or human infallibly withstand disorderly hordes – our land is exposed to their raids from all directions like to the winds” (Bogachev, 1919: 14).

In principle, the ideas were not original. The opinion that Cossacks were military defenders of certain positive values was time and again voiced by Don authors as early as in the 19th century. For example, V.V. Bogachev referred to the works of V.M. Pudavov, a half-forgotten Don amateur historian (Bogachev, 1919: 233). Meanwhile, V.M. Pudavov wrote about the high mission of Cossacks as military defenders of Christianity in a somewhat florid style: “With sublime pride, the Cossack realizes that the heroic soil and burial mound of Tanais, which gave birth to him and raised him, from the depths of pre-Rurik times and until now, only nourished a man who worships the sword. <...>. For him, alive and sacred are the legends of the forefathers, who three centuries ago deeply understood the significance of their bunchuk – ‘all lands envied our Cossack life’, they said, ‘Then we shall stand up for Christ, so that we may not waste our ataman glory and valor, so that our tsar’s name may not be reviled in other

lands” (Pudavov, 1895: 15). The tendency to compare revolutionaries not simply with barbarians, but with old-time enemies of Cossacks, emerged in Don historiography after the 1905–1907 Revolution. For example, here is what P.N. Krasnov, who commissioned to create “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host”, noted in his “Pictures of the past Tikhii Don”: “Time after time, Don Cossacks held Russia against external and internal enemies; it was not long ago – in 1855, the entire host took up arms against Turks; under Peter, Cossacks quelled Astrakhanites and Bulavin, they fought under Catherine and against Pugachev – now the Tsar called upon them to protect the Russian people and Russian cause from insurgents, who under the banner of freedom wanted to plunge Russia into shame and slavery” (Krasnov, 1909: 516).

Hence, by translating the fight against Bolshevism as a logical continuation of the Don region history, V.V. Bogachev expanded on a specific historiographic tradition. The author’s fresh move is not in suggesting the ideas themselves, but in including them in the introductory section to the textbook on geography, as well as in an attempt to interpret the Don’s warlike history through its geographical position – the absence of natural boundaries that could guard against “disorderly hordes”. We can see V.V. Bogachev presented the fight against Bolsheviks in his book only as an episode in Cossack history, and the very geography of the homeland compelled a young Cossack to prepare to defend it from new enemies in the future. And, naturally, the propaganda of the military service and preparedness to defend Russia and the Don from any new enemies became a prominent thematic line in “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host”, which included implicit anti-Bolshevik propaganda as an insignificant component.

However, the ethnographic subject and the focus on the current condition of the Don Host were obstacles for the fairly dutiful V.V. Bogachev: while his historical digressions regularly emphasized the military role of Cossacks, the descriptions of contemporary Cossacks rather demonstrated the decline in military traditions in Cossack stanitsas. As a consequence, many parts of his text convey a somewhat ambiguous impression, and sometimes it is not even totally clear what the author meant to say. For example, “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” began with a brief untitled section that provided acknowledgements and a small lyrical text of V.V. Bogachev himself. He underlined there that the Don “combined elements of the present with a glorious past”: “A speechless guardian of steppes, a stone baba, a nomad knight, stands at the root of foundation: he envisions the future arrangement of life and history of the Wild Field, the Great Meadow, the Don steppes. In the expanse of the steppe, primordial Scythians tame horses – a pre-image for the dashing Cossack cavalry of our era. The picture is taken from the belt of a vase unearthed in southern Russian barrows. Cossack freemen, reveling and bellicose, look at us from the seal of the Don Host” (Bogachev, 1919: b. s.). However, the geographer admitted later that all this “was once, but now is long forgotten”, and the Don experienced a different era, the era of farmers and miners, rather than warriors (Bogachev, 1919: b. s.). But, having admitted the fact, V.V. Bogachev again altered the course of his reasoning, and ended his lyric text with the following maxim: “The black shapes of the mines are merely a shadow of the White Cossack Cathedral. It renders aspiring upward, to the sky, to the kingdom of the Spirit, and the mine is to plunge into the depths, in search of earthly riches” (Bogachev, 1919: b. s.).

In general, V.V. Bogachev’s description of Cossacks infers a similar contradiction. On the one hand, he provided a lot meticulous episodes from the past of Cossacks (excessively meticulous for a geographic textbook of limited size), putting a clear emphasis on military history and idealizing bygone days of Cossacks. On the other hand, he admitted that Cossacks of his time differed drastically from the Cossacks who lived only fifty years ago. His general notion of Cossackdom was that of an estate equal to the Russian aristocracy and superior to all other estates in the former empire: “Three centuries ago, Cossacks performed the same duty to the state as nobles with boyar children, so it is understandable why they sought a reward of the same measure. The privileges of the Don Host were bestowed on them by tsars for their great service. As early as under Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich it was written by Kotoshikhin that but for the help of Cossacks, Ivan the Terrible would not have conquered the Tsardoms of Kazan and Astrakhan” (Bogachev, 1919: 270). However, contemporary Cossackdom was depicted by him as a class going into decline and losing their former military strength. V.V. Bogachev not only blatantly wrote that “the situation is different nowadays: a Cossack has become a farmer” but also gave descriptions of the following sort: “Indeed, have been preserved and brought up since childhood through stories, examples, competition and ancestral Cossack pride – military honor and deftness, a desire to excel in battle trials, courage is an hereditary quality, but the love for weapons and custom to parade them do not

exist any longer” (Bogachev, 1919: 271). Parallel to the decline of military traditions, other instances of the fine Cossack culture also seemed to recede into the past: “The Don folk song has been now fading from memory and has been substituted by verses of the all-Russian production, with mediocre composition and set to poor music” (Bogachev, 1919: 262-263).

Therefore, the high duty of military service was rather described by V.V. Bogachev as some unattainable ideal, most noble and useful for the native land, but quickly receding into the past. Here, again, he lacked originality. As early as in the late 19th century, the Cossack society was pervaded with the tendency to idealize olden times and with the belief that the historical Don Host Land was not a wild and dangerous frontier, but a prosperous country of heroes. As N.A. Maslakovets, a distinguished expert on the Don region, Assistant to Host Atamans N.A. Krasnokutskii and N.I. Svyatopolk-Mirskii, said, “a Cossack of the Don was perhaps for too long enchanted with the beauties of these epic tales, which is why he missed that vitally important moment in the economic life of nations, when victory is claimed by those who are more artful and far-sighted in the fight in the market of life, while plows and rakes can beat both sharp swords, and thundering cannons” (Maslakovets, 1899: 6). One cannot but agree with N.A. Maslakovets: even V.V. Bogachev, as he embedded propaganda elements into his textbook and championed the idea of the Don Cossackdom as a military force there, could never distinctly formulate those purely Cossack values that Cossacks would stand up for (to put it more precisely, his formulation of the values was very peculiar and xenophobic, and we will write about it in more detail below). In addition, the facts he provided allowed a suggestion that Cossackdom with its historical particularism tended to sink into decline, and the process was objective and imminent brought about by rising agriculture and manufacturing production in the Don region.

Returning to the question of what Cossacks, according to V.V. Bogachev, defended, note should be taken that he paid special attention to the profound Christian faith of Don Cossackdom. “Cast away by the twist of history and the miserable lot of Russia on the borderlands of Russian lands, Cossacks staunchly adhered to the Orthodox Greek Russian religion. They were very pious, and their only calamity was that they had no priests”, the geographer wrote about the early history of Cossackdom (Bogachev, 1919: 263). However, in his interpretation, Cossacks of his time also firmly adhered to Orthodoxy, and, significantly, without superstitions and with a “wise and calm attitude” towards religion (Bogachev, 1919: 265). Interestingly, V.V. Bogachev also put Old Ritualist Cossacks into Orthodoxy in the broader sense of the word, insisting that Old Ritualists “differ from Church Orthodoxy only in certain liturgical practices, rituals and prayers” (Bogachev, 1919: 267). “Sectarianism”, however, (for example, baptism) was condemned by V.V. Bogachev who nevertheless noted that it was not widespread among Cossacks. To his mind, “the purpose of sectarianism is to justify the foulest human motives: treachery, refusal to take an oath not only of allegiance to one’s motherland and the tsar, but also in the course of judicial investigations, a desire to justify debauchery or cowardice in wartime (one may not kill) or simply unwillingness to perform one’s state or public duty” (Bogachev, 1919: 267-268). Hence, one of the traditional Cossack values, which Cossacks defended in the Civil War, according to V.V. Bogachev, certainly was the Orthodox faith.

However, the defense of the Orthodox faith could by no means be regarded as an exclusive Cossack characteristic. And further V.V. Bogachev proceeded to what could actually be construed only as explicit Kazakomanstvo. He attributed a whole range of peculiar features to Cossacks, which were shaped by military service and compelled them to love their birthplace in a unique way beyond the comprehension of “Russians” (Great Russians and Little Russians). “The life in fights and camps evolved a tremendous sense of camaraderie in Cossacks, unknown to those born in the peaceful countries of central Russia and Little Russia”, he argued (Bogachev, 1919: 268). From the sense of camaraderie, V.V. Bogachev derived the special love of Cossacks for their native land, also allegedly incomprehensible to Russians: “In fact, remarkable is the love for one’s village, the pride in belonging to it, an instinctive pride in its entirely obliterated glorious past. This *does not* exist in peaceable Russia” (italicized by V.V. Bogachev) (Bogachev, 1919: 268). And, building on all these ideas, V.V. Bogachev ended up by contrasting Cossacks not with Bolsheviks any more, but with Great Russians in general, considering the former to be bearers of loftier moral qualities: “Cossacks treat each other with cordial, friendly trust or simply as if they were a family, as opposed to Great Russians who are envious and suspicious” (Bogachev, 1919: 269). On this premise, V.V. Bogachev fully excused Cossacks’ arrogant attitude towards non-Cossacks, as towards people of the “inferior estate”, arguing that the attitude was completely “explained by history” (Bogachev, 1919: 269-270). Hence, in V.V. Bogachev’s

understanding, Cossacks should defend Cossackdom itself in the first place. Furthermore, in his opinion, a love for one's homeland and ancestral traditions was beautiful and should be nurtured in children even if there was no objective underlying basis: "So a child does not see the ugliness of its mother, even after it feasted its eyes on the beauty of other women" (Bogachev, 1919: 2).

As a result, V.V. Bogachev's text took form of propaganda not so much against Bolsheviks as against Great Russians in general and primarily against Don peasants. Many accusations and insults were leveled at them, concealed by outward impartiality. For example, V.V. Bogachev in every possible way emphasized the uncleanliness of peasants in expressions like this: "Peasant homesteads are much dirtier than those of Cossacks, terribly soiled with manure, whereby a multitude of fleas and flies hatch (their larvae feed on dung)" (Bogachev, 1919: 341). Describing the interior of peasant houses, V.V. Bogachev noted that their comparatively simplistic inner part was explained "partly by peasants' poverty in comparison with Cossacks", but immediately added that peasants generally had "uncultivated tastes" and lacked "the inclination for exquisitism and dapperness" (Bogachev, 1919: 340). However, moving on to the description of Taurida natives, wealthy migrants from the Taurida and Yekaterinoslav Governorates, V.V. Bogachev did not at all see fit to highlight in some positive way their large and robust houses with a well in every courtyard (on the contrary, he criticized the houses for their allegedly standard style as compared to the Cossack style) (Bogachev, 1919: 344-345). While the geographer depicted the impoverished peasantry in the unreservedly pejorative manner for poverty and untidiness, Taurida natives were accused of "disagreeable insolence and rudeness in their treatment" (apparently, of Cossacks), stemming from their being "conscious of wealth and independence" (Bogachev, 1919: 346). And, naturally, speaking about Don peasants, V.V. Bogachev again made a reference to events of the time, pointing out that "class hatred and envy of their neighbors who have land plots (i.e. of Cossacks – A.P.) evoke deaf hostility that became particularly visible in 1917–1919" (Bogachev, 1919: 339).

And again V.V. Bogachev only carried on a tendency that characterized an earlier period. In an ad hoc government commission led by N.A. Maslakovets and created in 1899 to identify root causes behind Cossacks' impoverishment, stanitsa delegates and members of the Don aristocracy did not hesitate to labeling peasants as "leeches" that allegedly sucked juice from Cossack farms (Protokoly..., 1899: 104). The Don right-wing press of the early 20th century non-Cossack peasant settlers – *inogorodnie* – were blatantly compared with Jews, allegedly, as "God-sellers, who will not yield to any Israel in profiteering" (Kornienko, 2013: 182). However, the official imperial rhetoric, with few exceptions, did not support the opinion. First of all, it was considered offensive by Russian officials who served in the Don region. For example, A.A. Chigrintsev, the Novocherkassk prosecutor, commented in his private letter to N.A. Maslakovets on the statements made by the members of the latter's commission: "It is quite a shock for someone who is not a Cossack to perceive the somewhat hostile attitude of Cossacks towards the so-called *inogorodnie*, who, according to the law of 1868, gained the right to buy real estate in the Don Host. <...>. In this case, Cossacks forget the natural law according to which as nature does not tolerate emptiness, so uncultivated land attracts working people, and if the latter are not in sufficient quantity in the area, they come from the outside. Besides, the *inogorodnie*, as farmers, turned out to be more civilized than Cossacks. We resent Belgians for seizing and exploiting our abundant mineral resources, but this resentment is like the vexation of a child who is able to overcome an adult" (OR RNB. F. 1055. Ed. khr. 24. L. 5-6). A major pre-revolutionary ethnographic study of the Don region, conducted by M.N. Kharuzin, directly said that Cossacks humiliated and discriminated against Russian (Great Russian) peasants, although the former totally relied on the help of the latter in farming (Kharuzin, 1885: XXVIII).

Therefore, peasants were pinpointed as a danger threatening Don Host Cossacks long before it was done by V.V. Bogachev. However, the views were considered marginal and pertaining to Kazakomanstvo in the official discourse. The fact that they jeopardized stability in the Don region was obvious: according to V.V. Bogachev's own estimate, Cossacks accounted for only 42.7 % of the Almighty Don Host population, which meant they were already a minority (Bogachev, 1919: 258). And this time the opinion was voiced not simply in an official edition, but in a textbook intended not only for Cossacks, but for all schools in the Don region. Although V.V. Bogachev avoided writing about this in an explicit fashion, the very logic of his text allowed an inference that Cossacks should be prepared to defend their land not only from Bolsheviks, but also from peasants in principle. In this context, it is interesting that V.V. Bogachev bluntly demonized Taurida natives, the best-off and most influential group of Don peasants, accusing them of betraying Orthodoxy and sectarianism: "There are no

churches in their villages. Utmost materialism is combined with malicious litigation and miserliness. <...>. At the same time, remarkably widespread among them are all sorts of sectarianism. Yet, even in this Taurida people push any kind of advantages and benefits: dodging from military service, evading from paying for church services and more” (Bogachev, 1919: 346). In fact, he pre-emptively offered excuses for possible repressions against the ethnic group by the Cossacks as repressions against an anti-social and malicious population. It is appropriate to note here that, according to P.N. Krasnov himself, the administration of his predecessor, A.M. Kaledin, “was ruined by their trust in peasants”, “the wolves in sheep’s clothing” (Grazhdanov, 2015: 143). P.N. Krasnov called peasants “guests in the Don region”, and, although in the end he allowed them minimum representation in the elected bodies, he arranged parallel punitive expeditions to cleanse villages of those who supported Bolshevism and land reallocation ideas (Grazhdanov, 2015: 143-144).

V.V. Bogachev even argued that the Razin and Bulavin Rebellions were actually sparked off not by Cossacks, but by peasants who had fled to the Don. As proof, he referred, however, not to historical sources, but to a folk song:

“Stepanushka did not ever come to the Cossack Assembly,
Nor did he, with us, Cossacks, meditate on things;
He caroused, he went, Stepanushka, to the tsar’s tavern

He devised a plan with the *golutva* (golytba (the rural and urban poor) – A.P.)” (Bogachev, 1919: 270).

As for Cossacks, they allegedly “pitied” the peasants who came to the Don region, but at the same time “kept themselves separate from the muzhik who did not belong here” (Bogachev, 1919: 270).

In principle, the opinion was also expressed more than once earlier. For example, in the 1880s, S.F. Nomikosov, a Don statistician, gave the following description of the Razin Rebellion: “At the end of the first century <of the history of Cossackdom>, the word of brigands’ ataman Stenka Razin was spread across the Don, calling on ‘brothers, tavern riff-raffs to sail to the blue sea, to pillage ships of infidels’” (Nomikosov, 1884: 19). However, in the context of the Civil War and aggravating antagonism between Don Cossacks and Don peasants, such a suggestion that the “Cossack” revolts were in fact allegedly raised by Don peasant *golutba*, and Cossacks were engaged in their suppression – this suggestion clearly communicated a new political connotation.

Therefore, despite being a textbook on geography, “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” had a certain ingrained image of Cossackdom, which readers were supposed to take in. And the military dimension was the primary aspect of the image – it underscored the beauty of Cossacks’ warlike past, the danger arising from the very geographical position of the Don region, and prophesied that the Don would more than once stand in the way of “disorderly hordes”. But as glorious as the image was, it was largely built through the demonization of Don peasants, and a young Cossack who had assimilated the ideas of V.V. Bogachev, would have imbibed not only a love for his native land, but also an attitude towards Great Russians as uncleanly, “envious and suspicious” people of the second rate, claiming Cossack lands out of envy.

And in the afterword to his work, V.V. Bogachev made an attempt to explain his peculiar “love for Cossacks” but in fact he compromised it even further. We should quote all his arguments regarding the issue: “We cannot deny the laws of heredity. The traits only gradually disappear influenced by a changing environment and (marriage) mixing with members of other races and minorities. The history of innate (rather than acquired) Cossackdom could not yet dissipate from the inheritance passed down from generation to generation: this takes much more time” (Bogachev, 1919: 518). As a result, the particularism (and in essence – the superiority) of Cossacks in comparison with Great Russians was eventually justified by V.V. Bogachev by their origin and heredity. The idea expressed should not, of course, be viewed as a basis to attribute consistent fascist beliefs to the Don geographer. On the other hand, one fact is to be remembered – the initiator behind “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host”, P.N. Krasnov, as well as V.V. Bogachev himself collaborated with the Nazi regime during the Great Patriotic War. So, the book under review is a good example of how, in wartime, a love for Cossackdom and propagandizing love for the Don region could metamorphose into xenophobia and hatred for Great Russians.

5. Conclusion

The design to publish textbooks featuring some of basic elements of the ideology of the Almighty Don Host during the Civil War was rather a progressive move. However, “Essays on the

geography of the Almighty Don Host” starkly illustrates that the ideological constructs of the Almighty Don Host in the period, when P.N. Krasnov held the ataman office, were fraught with significant limitations and contradictions. This book, together with “Don chrestomathy”, was intended to nurture a love for the homeland and a willingness to defend it from “disorderly hordes” in Don school learners. However, grossly insulting the Don peasants and accusing them of envy and uncleanness immediately halved the book’s target audience among the Don population. Moreover, the book suggested that a peasant could not even hope to become a true Cossack: one could only be a Cossack, be born as a Cossack because Great Russians by birth had no many positive Cossack qualities. Note should be made that P.N. Krasnov himself addressed the subject in a much more delicate manner in the pre-revolutionary “Pictures of the past Tikhii Don”: he emphasized that it took more than simply being a Don Cossack, one had to deserve the name, “to become a dashing horse warrior” (Krasnov, 1909: 521). Therefore, although “Essays on the geography of the Almighty Don Host” had a potential to consolidate in the future a new generation of Cossacks to defend their homeland from enemies, the book could only worsen the opposition between the new generation of Don peasants and Cossacks.

Moreover, V.V. Bogachev’s text implied that Cossacks were no longer what they used to be, that they became increasingly weaker in their moral virtues. Perhaps the Don geographer simply tried to be impartial on the issue; perhaps by making the statements he wanted to stress the need to cling even more firmly to the customs of their ancestors. But in fact, he showed an opposite picture – if we decipher his own metaphor, it turned out that the “white Cossack Cathedral” would inevitably be replaced by “the black shapes of the mines”. Generally speaking, the description of the positive ideal of Cossackdom was very unconvincing in his work: it was limited to Orthodoxy and a peculiar love for the native land and fellow countrymen, a love allegedly incomprehensible to Great Russians. All in all, it turned out that Cossacks should defend and love their native land purely out of the fact of being born in the area, without imparting any profound meaning to the love.

It only remains to conjecture how Don schools would react to V.V. Bogachev’s book. Soon after its publication, the Almighty Don Host collapsed, swept away by the Red Army. At present, historians of the Don region know the book quite well and actively use it in research articles. And the appreciation is well deserved: despite the book’s erratic and secondary character, which V.V. Bogachev himself realized, he managed to collect valuable information from many rare pre-revolutionary publications. However, after completing the work, he admitted that “an ultimate, clear realization of its unsatisfactory nature” came to him, and we think the opinion is quite justified. It was hardly possible that the book could achieve its prime purpose of instilling a love for the homeland in the general Don reader – its target audience were Cossacks, in particular the Cossacks who already loved not so much the Don as their social class. Many of V.V. Bogachev’s statements would be unacceptable even for more broad-minded Cossacks: already P.N. Krasnov’s grandfather, I. I. Krasnov advocated the rights of Don peasants, calling them “our Russian brothers in origin, language and religion, brothers who unanimously share with us devotion to the Holy Christian Faith and feeling of allegiance to the throne and fatherland” (GARO. F. 243. D. 28. Op. 1. L. 253ob-254).

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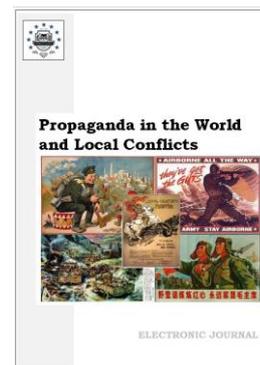
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An Article by B.G. Plyushchevskii and Reminiscences by A.D. Sergeeva of the Trip Made by the Krasnaya Zvezda Agitation Steamer in Udmurtia during the Russian Civil War

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Abstract

The paper publishes previously unprinted materials from the archival collection of the Center for Documentation of Contemporary History of the Udmurt Republic, which are dedicated to the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer. The materials' chronological frame of reference is limited to July and August 1919, i.e. to the period when the ship was on the territory of modern Udmurtia. The first work is a scholarly article by Professor B.G. Plyushchevskii, written in the 1950s. The second one is comprised of two versions of A.D. Sergeeva's reminiscences of her meeting with N.K. Krupskaya on board the steamer, recorded apparently by V.Ya. Barinova in 1977 and stored in her archive.

As historical sources, both materials have limited value. B.G. Plyushchevskii's article delivers no conclusions but only cites truisms. For this reason, his work is more a synopsis rather than a comprehensive study. Similarly, A.D. Sergeeva's both versions predominantly use the published memoirs of N.K. Krupskaya as a basis. The work offers almost no original information.

Nevertheless, both materials can be instrumental in providing personal opinions of people, who lived in the 1950s and 1970s, to uncover what they put their focus on in the first place. As they act within the confines of the existing ideology, they are impelled to repeat "the only correct viewpoint". For example, B.G. Plyushchevskii's phrase that Kolchakites dug a mass grave of Red Guards soldiers in Votkinsk and burned the bodies, is given without any comments and communicates a noticeable negative shade of meaning. The Whites had to take this step out of necessity for sanitary reasons because the coffins were buried at such a shallow depth that spring melt waters completely washed out the burial. Similar ideological overtones, which had fully taken shape in the USSR by the time, can be perceived in assessments of other events mentioned. This explains quite logically why both materials have not been published so far.

Keywords: Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer, N.K. Krupskaya, Udmurtia, civil war.

1. Introduction

The Center for Documentation of Contemporary History of the Udmurt Republic, Izhevsk, Russian Federation, the former Party archive of the Udmurt Republican Committee of the Communist Party of the RSFSR, houses several archival collections of personal provenance. Two of them contain unpublished manuscripts about the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer that operated in Udmurtia between July and August 1919.

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The documents, which belonged to Boris G. Plyushchevskii (1912–1998), includes a manuscript “Activity of the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer on the territory of Udmurtia in the summer of 1919” (CDNIUR. F. 4976. Op. 1. D. 45). From 1949, B.G. Plyushchevskii was a teacher in the Department of History of the USSR, Udmurt State Pedagogical Institute (now – Udmurt State University). In 1954, he presented his thesis for the Candidate Degree in Historical Sciences (at the A.A. Zhdanov Leningrad Order of Lenin State University) and in 1974 – for the Doctor Degree of Historical Sciences. The main corpus of his works addresses the question of peasants’ situation, and for this reason the work on the trip of the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer stands by itself. No confirmation of its actual publication was found. However, the list of B.G. Plyushchevskii’s scholarly works, has a reference to the manuscript, which reads as follows: “*Works not related to the topic of the dissertation: <...> 4. From the history of agitation and propaganda activities during the civil war and intervention (Activity of the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer in the territory of Udmurtia in the summer of 1919). Izhevsk, 195_. 1 p[printed] sh[et].*” (CDNIUR. F. 4976. Op. 1. D. 18. L. 3).

The absence of exact imprint and year (it only indicates that this is the 50s) also verifies the opinion that the manuscript never went to press. In addition, with the gaps in the manuscript (to insert missing dates and bibliographic references), as well as question marks in pencil and underscored text, we can conclude that this is most likely just a draft of the manuscript, if nearly completed. The manuscript is typed on standard sheets of writing paper, there are no corrections in the manuscript, except for the underscored fragments and question marks mentioned.

The second manuscript is stored in the documents of personal provenance of Valentina Ya. Barinova (born June 12, 1940), former Head of the Department “History of the Bolshevik Organization of Izhevsk City” at the Udmurt Republican Museum of Local History. The manuscript is A.D. Sergeeva’s reminiscences of the work of N.K. Krupskaya on the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation and instruction steamer in 1919. The file specifies no information about the memoirist, but makes it clear that it is quite an elderly teacher because the manuscript dates from 1977. The manuscript is typewritten sheets with multiple corrections in the text. The abstract to the file provides the date November 11, 1977 and says that there is no ending in the manuscript. However, a detailed analysis brings forward an assertion that the file comprises two versions of the same manuscript.

Both versions are typewritten on standard sheets of writing paper. Both versions have erased places (blotted out by the repeatedly typed letter “x”) and inconsistent sentences. This suggests that both versions were created from dictation. Perhaps, when typing a later version, the memoirist had a typewritten earlier version available, to which they made changes during the dictation. The first version abounds with quotes from an unnamed work by N.K. Krupskaya, which suggests that the first version may be a kind of butt prepared before a meeting with the memoirist.

2. Results and discussion

Plyushchevskii B.G. Activity of the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer in the territory of Udmurtia in the summer of 1919

During their fight against the allied intervention and counterrevolution, the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet government attributed critical importance to strengthening the connection between the center and regions. The peripheral Party and Soviet cadres needed support to correctly adopt the political line of the Communist Party in their efforts to roll out agitation and propaganda campaigns, activities in public education, culture development, health care and other measures. It was also crucial to introduce as flexible and varied forms of control as possible to enforce strict adherence to revolutionary legality at a local level. It was particularly imperative and urgent to address these challenges in the regions of the country where Soviet power was established for the first time or was re-established following a period of the White Guard rule.

In this context, it is interesting to review the activity of agitation trains (*agitpoezd*) and agitation steamers (*agitparokhod*), which contributed significantly into building up Party and Soviet efforts in regions in 1919–1920.

In the late 1918, the initiative of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party of the Bolsheviks (CC RCPb) created a detachment of literary agitation trains and steamers as part of the military department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (VTsIK) publishing house. In 1919–20, it operated 13 agitation trains and steamers. Journey plans were primarily developed to cover the areas recently liberated from White Guardists. Beginning in the late 1920, the literary

agitation trains and steamers were renamed into agitation and instruction trains and steamers. In February 1921, they were transferred from the VTsIK's jurisdiction to Glavpolitprosvet (Main Political and Educational Committee of the Republic).

As the Russian Civil War and Allied Intervention ended, changes in the environment enabled a shift to other method of communication between the center and local organizations. In the second half of 1921, Party agitation trains and steamers (*agitpartpoezds* and *agitpartparokhods*, as they were termed at the time) stopped their operation except for the *Oktyabr'skaya Revolyutsiya* train, which made trips until the end of 1922.

This paper is an attempt to spotlight the activity of the *Krasnaya Zvezda* agitation steamer that visited Udmurtia in late July and early August 1919.

The work of the agitation steamer's team is featured in the article by Ts. Gofman "On the history of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*, VTsIK's first agitation steamer", but the author provides only a general description of the part of the trip that took place in Udmurtia (*Voprosy istorii*. 1948. 9). The book "Some questions of the history of the Udmurt ASSR" by M.A. Sadakov (*Sadakov, 1960: 77-79*)¹ briefly focuses on the work of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s agitation team in Udmurtia, which basically corresponds to the material in Ts. Gofman's article. Available archival materials give a possibility to have a closer look at the issue.

The *Krasnaya Zvezda* steamer (formerly known as the *Anton Chekhov*) was one of the agitation steamers in the Volga Kama flotilla. It made a long trip in the summer and autumn of 1919, with a significant portion of the route passing through Udmurtia that had recently been liberated from Kolchakite armed gangs. The steamer was accompanied by a barge assigned to it, which transported a motion picture projecting apparatus and a stock of propaganda literature with a capacity to store four cars of books, magazines, newspapers, leaflets, brochures and paintings. The agitation steamer team included representatives of some of the key people's commissariats, with the People's Commissariat of Education represented by N.K. Krupskaya. The agitation steamer carried on its activity through the following departments:

- 1) Political Department,
- 2) Information Department,
- 3) Instruction Department,
- 4) Complaints Office,
- 5) Board of Agitators,
- 6) Bureau of Rosta (Russian Telegraph Agency) and Radiotelegraph,
- 7) Book warehouse and bookstore,
- 8) Print Shop.

The planning of the agitation steamer's all aspects of operation and control over the activities of other departments were centrally delivered by the Political Department. The Political Department directly supervised the most important and politically relevant issues that arose in the process of scrutinizing the work of local bodies. The Instruction Department provided local Party and Soviet workers with guidelines on how to organize field activities – delineating scopes of responsibility, which were managed [the author's words – N.M.] by individual institutions, maintaining a reporting process, etc. The Information Department collected data related to the political and economic situation in the areas which were visited by the steamer. The work of the board of agitators was directed and reviewed by the Political Department on a systematic basis. After the work was completed in a particular destination, the Political Department called a meeting for agitators to share views and provide instructions on further activities. The Bureau of Rosta and Radiotelegraph issued a special bulletin designed to serve the local population, which was printed in the printing shop installed on the agitation steamer. The same printing shop also ran off leaflets written in simple and easy-to-understand language to explain a political and military situation as well as primary goals and specific activities of the Soviet government. The Complaints Office received written reports from the population and, if possible, immediately conducted on-the-spot investigations. Distributing printed propaganda and agitation materials was an essential part of the activities, which was done through a book warehouse and a bookstore.

¹ In this case, it seems logical to provide a reference to the entire book, but the author's work gives a reference to specific pages.

The Krasnaya Zvezda's port of departure was Nizhny Novgorod, from which the steamer set off on 4 July 1919. The Krasnaya Zvezda arrived in Kazan on 10 July and began a new trip up the Kama River, to Perm inclusive, on 15 July. This period, i.e. from the end of July to the beginning of August 1919, when the team of the agitation steamer operated in Udmurtia, will be subject for review in the paper.

The visit of the Krasnaya Zvezda team to the territory, which now constitutes the Udmurt Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, lasted from 28 July to 5 August 1919. Udmurtia had been liberated from Kolchakite armed groups shortly before the events. The Red Army liberated Izhevsk [omission] July, Sarapul [omission] July, Votkinsk [omission] July, and Glazov [omission] July. The region's economy suffered colossal damage. A significant part of the population hid from the Whites in forests and returned to settlements very cautiously. Party and Soviet bodies in such trying circumstances embarked on the economic reconstruction and set up supply chains for the population, while serving the needs of the still close front. The agitation steamer leadership noted that the farther north the Krasnaya Zvezda traveled along the Kama River, the more striking were the defects in the work of the recently restored Party and Soviet apparatus and inefficiencies in agitation and propaganda activities.

Here are some facts that provide more dimension to the background in Udmurtia of the period. Despite the fact that the Kolchakite domination did not last long here, the injuries inflicted by White Guardists to the regional economy were disproportionately severe. The region's two largest manufacturing enterprises – Izhevsk and Votkinsk plants – lost most of their personnel and industrial equipment. The Izhevsk plant, immediately after the liberation, retained only 31.2 % of its pre-war number of workers, and the Votkinsk plant – 21.5 %. The share of skilled workers dropped to 5 % of the total personnel (TsGAOR ¹. F. 2351. Op. 1. D. 1. L.8, 2 i D. 7. L. 1-2). Kolchakite cut off drive belts, took away machine parts and demolished the power plant at the Votkinsk plant. They also transported a considerable part of equipment from the Izhevsk plant to Omsk. In addition, the rest of the equipment was sent away to the country's central regions when the Red Army evacuated Izhevsk and Votkinsk. Its prompt return was impossible, and it was delivered back to the plant administration step by step in the second half of 1919. Documentary evidence portrays horrific images of the White Guard terror, to which the population of Udmurtia fell victim in April and May 1919. In the Sarapul district alone, according to the Sarapul District Party Committee, the Whites tortured to death and shot down over 23 thousand people. Over 800 bodies were found outside Votkinsk. The Whites shot families of communists and everyone they suspected of being in sympathy with the Soviet government. They excruciated women, old people, teenagers and children. Coerced mobilization into the Kolchak army took place with thousands forcibly driven to Siberia during the retreat of the Whites. In Votkinsk, Kolchakite dug a mass grave of Red Guard soldiers and burned the bodies of the buried.

White Guardists also gravely impaired the republic's agriculture. Nevertheless, by the time of the Krasnaya Zvezda's trip through the Kama region, the working population of Udmurtia, led by Communists, had already achieved some successes in rebuilding the economic life in the region, and the efforts were, of course, prioritized so that to support the front. In the late June, the Izhevsk plant produced over 500 rifles per day², and the day [shift] in the second half of July raised the output to 700 rifles (Izhevskaya pravda. 1919. 19 iyulya). In June-July 1919, the Votkinsk plant carried out repairs of various types of materiel and equipment for the Red Army, delivered 400 grates for the Volga-Kama warship flotilla, reconstructed and prepared vital shops, such as steam locomotive building and bridge building, for commissioning. The workforce at the Izhevsk plant amounted to 9 thousand people, and in Votkinsk – 6 [omission, the number is given in pencil] thousand, considering the fact that before the White Guard invasion in February 1919, the corresponding figures were – 30 thousand³ in Izhevsk and 8 [omission, the number is given in pencil] thousand in Votkinsk. The workers who had just experienced the atrocities of the Kolchakite regime, demonstrated considerable political enthusiasm. At a rally on July 8, 1919,

¹ The Central State Archive of the October Revolution, from 1957 – the Central State Archive of the RSFSR (TsGA RSFSR), now – the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF). The reference to the archive makes it possible to identify that the article was written before 1957.

² This line contains a question mark that was apparently put by a reviewer.

³ The number is underlined in pencil, the line opposite it has a question mark.

Izhevsk workers resolved to maximize labor efficiency, refused to have weekends and holidays, and reduced their lunch break to a minimum (*Izhevskaya pravda*. 1919. 19 iyulya). Despite undermining activities by anti-Soviet groups, elections to local workers' councils were successfully held in Izhevsk and Votkinsk.

The middle peasant classes of the village showed an undoubted pivot to the Soviet power, resulted from the decisions by the 8th Congress of the RCP (b) on the attitude towards the peasant of medium welfare, as well as from the harrowing experience of the three-month Kolchakite rule. However, the influence of SRs, mainly of SR Maximalists, was still noticeable. Maximalists waged a brazen campaign of anti-Soviet slander and tried to disrupt the measures of the Soviet power. For example, in July 1919, i.e. quite shortly before the arrival of the *Krasnaya Zvezda* in Udmurtia, the Izhevsk Union of SR Maximalists resolved to employ any means to upset the elections to the local council, chanting the counter-revolutionary slogan: "Soviets without communists" (*TsGAOR. F. 2351. Op. 1. d. 86. L. 1*). Anti-Soviet agitation was also under way among workers at plants and among the rest of the population, designed to undermine workers' morale, criticize the Soviet government's policy on the food issue, etc. Against this background, the support, which could be provided by the leading workers and the agitation team of the *Krasnaya Zvezda* steamer to the local Party and Soviet bodies was of particular value and relevance.

As it continued its trip from Kazan to Perm up the Kama River, the *Krasnaya Zvezda* arrived in Karakulino on 25 July, in Kambarka on 27 July 1919, in Sarapul on 30 July. On 31 July, the steamer moored at a pier in Golyany¹. Officials of the people's commissariats and the heads of the *Krasnaya Zvezda* political department left Golyany for Izhevsk and Votkinsk, and stayed in Izhevsk from 31 July to 2 August, and in Votkinsk from 3 to 5 August 1919.

Here is a list of activities carried out by the *Krasnaya Zvezda* personnel in Udmurt localities they visited.

The first settlement on the territory of the current Udmurt ASSR, included into the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s route, was Karakulino, a large village. The agitation steamer arrived here on 25 July. On the following day, representatives of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s Political Department and members of the local Revolutionary Committee and the volost executive committee conducted a joint meeting, the evening saw a rally held with a report entitled: "Two powers". The number of attendees was up to 300 people. Afterward the *Krasnaya Zvezda* headed for Kambarka. In Kambarka, a factory village at the time with 3 or 4 thousand people living there, which was set up around a medium-sized metallurgical plant, the *Krasnaya Zvezda* team spent two days – 27 and 28 July. On 27 July, in the afternoon, they examined the plant and held rallies in several shops. In the evening, a joint meeting was carried out with the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s political department and political and technical leaders of the Kambarka plant present. On 28 July, in the morning, instructors of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s political department worked in the departments of the Kambarka Revolutionary Committee, where they became acquainted with the current situation and reports and carried out instructing sessions. At 4 p.m., a meeting of the political department instructors took place to finalize findings and results of the work done. At 5 p.m., a general plant rally was arranged, with a report on: "The political and military situation of the Soviet Republic and the objectives of the Soviet power". At 10 p.m. – a joint meeting by the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s political department and Kambarka Revolutionary Committee. The agitation steamer's book warehouse and bookstore worked in Kambarka with a great result as well. The warehouse distributed 4,395 printed publications (brochures and books), and the store – 314. Considering Kambarka's population, the figures clearly show that local residents felt a desperate craving for agitation and propaganda literature, for the Bolshevik printed word (*TsGAOR. F. 2351. Op. 1. D. 18. L. 9*).

On 29 July, the *Krasnaya Zvezda* was in Sarapul. Political Department instructors were put in the picture of the process set-up in the departments of the Sarapul Revolutionary Committee. A joint meeting was held with the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s Political Department and members of the Revolutionary Committee. On 30 July, N.K. Krupskaya delivered a speech at a meeting of Sarapul teachers. The event was attended by many educators from neighboring volosts, including those located to the east of the Kama. As an opening to the meeting, attendees sang the Internationale. In her speech, N.K. Krupskaya spoke about the outlook for public education, created by the Soviet Power, and highlighted the principles on which the new school was being built. With a passionate

¹ The author spells the name as "Galyany" throughout his article.

appeal, she finished her speech urging everyone to support the Soviet Power that brought the light of enlightenment to the people. At first some of those present took a 'let's wait and see' attitude and were even wary, but then the audience's sentiment marked a turning point. Nadezhda Konstantinovna was seen off with enthusiastic applause and warm cheers. N.K. Krupskaya became acquainted with the situation of local teachers and asserted that the utmost would be done to ensure the normal operation of schools and alleviate the material burdens of teachers.

On 31 July, the *Krasnaya Zvezda* moored at the Golyany pier, where the shipbuilding shop of the Votkinsk plant was located¹. Part of the agitation team remained in Golyany, and leaders of the Political Department went first to Izhevsk, and then to Votkinsk. In the Golyany village, the arranged an exhibition, which displayed posters, diagrams, paintings and literature available on the agitation steamer and its escort barge. The exhibition was attended by workers who worked at the Golyany pier and peasants from neighboring villages, in total over 400 people. The agitation steamer itself hosted a rally which presented a report on the political and military situation. The rally was very successful. In their reporting documents, the *Krasnaya Zvezda* board of agitators wrote that attendees expressed sentiments totally in favor of the Soviet Power (TsGAOR. F. 2351. Op. 1. D. 17. L. 7).

In Izhevsk, the event program was the following: 31 July – a joint meeting by the *Krasnaya Zvezda* Political Department and the Izhevsk Party Committee, City Executive Committee, General Plant Committee, representatives of the Metalworkers' Union and the plant's Political Committee. Following the meeting, a rally was held in the city garden in the evening on the topic: "Two powers". 1 August, in the morning, instructors of the *Krasnaya Zvezda* political department became acquainted with the work done by the departments of the Izhevsk District Committee and the City Council. In the afternoon, a rally was held at the plant on the topic: "Soviet power and the world socialist revolution". At 7 p. [m.], a rally was launched in the hall of the summer theater, dedicated to: "Nationalized industry and tasks of the working class". At 8: 30 p.m., another rally was held on the topic: "Two powers".

On 2 August, in the morning, instructors continued their work in the departments of the Izhevsk Revolutionary Committee and the City Council. At 5 p.m., the second joint meeting began held by the *Krasnaya Zvezda* Political Department and leading Party and Soviet bodies, which summarized the findings of the inspection carried out by instructors and gave instructions on the further steps to build up the work. At 7 p.m., a general meeting of the city party organization took place.

On 2 August, Izhevsk saw two more rallies: at 5 p.m. in Tatar in the Tatar quarter of the city, discussing: "Current moment", at 8 p.[m.] a rally in the city garden, discussing: "Where are workers and peasants lead to by the Soviet power".

On 3 August, officials of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s Political Department and agitation team were already in Votkinsk. The general plant rally featured, among other speakers, N.K. Krupskaya, whose speech proceeded interrupted by rapturous prolonged applause that refused to quiet down. The instructors of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s political department became acquainted with the work process in place in the Party and Soviet institutions in Votkinsk, and in the evening, officials of the agitation steamer's Political Department held a joint meeting with the Votkinsk Revolutionary Committee and the plant administration. On 6 August, the *Krasnaya Zvezda* continued its trip northwards along the Kama in the Perm direction, and on 7 August, made a stop and carried out a rally at the Galevo pier.

As the reporting documentation gives figures, characterizing the performance of the *Krasnaya Zvezda* team in the summer and autumn of 1919, for the entire trip in general, it is impossible to sift out data related to the activities in Udmurtia. However, it follows from the above that the agitation steamer's team worked here in five locations – Kambarka, Sarapul, Golyany, Izhevsk and Votkinsk, with two of them (Izhevsk and Votkinsk) having a considerable proletarian population. Their work process was set up everywhere, based on one plan – becoming acquainted with the activities of local Party and Soviet bodies and with local Party, Soviet and trade union leaders. They commended achievements and pointed out at drawbacks in the activities by local bodies, heard their comments and requests and provided instructions on how to advance with the work in the future. They carried out rallies that attracted a large audience. All in all, 15 rallies were held – one in Karakulino, two in Kambarka, two in Sarapul, six in Izhevsk, one on the agitation steamer near the Golyany pier, two in Votkinsk and one in Galevo. The agitation team

¹ The shipbuilding shop of the Votkinsk plant was located in Galevo.

noted the audience at the rally demonstrated high engagement: speeches were delivered one after another following the main report. Resolutions were passed reiterating the strong commitment to spare no pains to win the final victory over White Guardists. SR Maximalists made several attempts to take the floor at Izhevsk rallies, but their anti-Soviet demagoguery provoked a negative reaction from attendees.

The work unmatched in scale and fruitfulness was done by N.K. Krupskaya. Her speeches in Sarapul, Izhevsk and Votkinsk brought forth an enthusiastic and sympathetic response from the audience. N.K. Krupskaya reminisces about her impressions received during the Krasnaya Zvezda trip in her "Memoirs of Lenin": *"I shall never forget the meeting at the Votkinsk Works, where the Whites had shot almost all the teenagers. Never shall I forget the countless outrages and acts of violence which the peasants – mostly middle peasants – living around the Kama told us about"* (Krupskaya, 1937: 39-40). The report of the agitation team of the Krasnaya Zvezda steamer reads: *"Note should be made of the outstanding rallies at the Izhevsk Works, in Perm, Motovilikha, at the Votkinsk Works... Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya-Ul'yanov got particularly warm welcome at the rallies"*. N.K. Krupskaya spoke with great success in front of the teachers who came even from remote areas to listen to her¹.

Analysis of the activities by the Krasnaya Zvezda Political Department and agitation team can identify several key lines in which they rolled out their work in the Kama region and, in particular, on the territory of Udmurtia. The first one was to provide help to rebuild industrial enterprises, badly damaged by the Kolchakite invasion, which played a major role in the country's economy and above all in meeting the needs of the front. After they had updated themselves to the existing situation, the leadership of the Krasnaya Zvezda Political Department, by sending urgent government telegrams, requested to dispatch experienced engineers and technicians to the Izhevsk plant, to assist the plant agents in purchasing critically scarce electrical accessories, as well as to return the evacuated equipment to Izhevsk and Votkinsk in the shortest possible time (TsGAOR. F. 2351. Op. 1. D. 17. L. 2).

Another challenging task was mobilizing food resources that the country's eastern regions could allocate to support starving proletarians in Moscow and Petrograd. In the summer and early autumn of 1919, the food crisis reached its worst. In July, Moscow's population received no bread at all for 10 days. Petrograd workers, who heroically repelled the onslaught of the Yudenich gangs, also struggled a desperate plight. It was necessary to establish facilities supplying food to the center in Udmurtia, just liberated from White Guardists. Meanwhile, local officials failed in some cases to pursue a sufficiently tough policy on the food issue. In Izhevsk, instead of three procurement categories, only two existed: the first one – workers, the second one – the rest of the population. Issue norms for the categories were higher than national ones. In June-July 1919, Izhevsk and Votkinsk had a practice of free trade in meat and vegetables in place, and senior Party and Soviet officials in Votkinsk justified this by alleging grain shortage and by the fact that liquidating the trade could, in their opinion, adversely affect political sentiments of the local people. The leadership of the Krasnaya Zvezda Political Department strongly commanded to correct the abnormalities and subordinate local interests to national ones.

The support, rendered to the local Party and Soviet apparatus, in building up political indoctrination was highly valuable. As mentioned above, SR Maximalists were still at work in Udmurtia in the summer of 1919. Assuming a mask of loyalty to the Soviet power, they orchestrated anti-Soviet falsehoods and tried to disrupt all the activities of the Party and Soviet government. Maximalists made efforts to run an anti-Soviet campaign in rural areas as well. It was all the more inappropriate that some of the local officials had poor knowledge of the decisions by the 8th Congress of the RCP (b), which took place in the second half of March 1919, in particular, of the Party's policy on middle peasants. The speeches, delivered by senior officers of the Krasnaya Zvezda Political Department before the officials of the local Party and Soviet apparatus, helped rectify the deficiency, and the rallies, which drew several hundred and sometimes more than a thousand attendees, played an important role in exposing Maximalists' anti-Soviet demagoguery.

¹ The page has no footnote on it, but has a bibliographic reference (TsGAOR. F. 2351. Op. 1. D. 108. L. 2).

In addition, the Krasnaya Zvezda team helped local Party and Soviet bodies to address a range of other issues.

Officials of the Political Department distinguished certain successes in restoring Party organizations in the Kama region liberated from the Whites. While there were only 5 communists in Izhevsk in the first days after the liberation, the number rose to more than 150 already by the beginning of August 1919¹. However, the Political Department leadership emphasized the need to create a communist faction in the Metalworkers' Union in Izhevsk and Votkinsk. They also pointed out the insufficient outreach of the trade union among Izhevsk and Votkinsk workers (around 10–12 %), and set the goal of one hundred percent worker engagement in the trade union.

The Krasnaya Zvezda's political workers and N.K. Krupskaya in the first place focused much attention on the situation in public education and health care in the areas in which the agitation steamer traveled. Interesting figures on the issues survived, outlining the situation in Udmurtia in the summer and autumn of 1919. At the end of July, i.e. only a month and a half after the Izhevsk liberation from White Guardists, the city already opened playgrounds for two thousand children, launched music classes and set up the work of a Proletkult sub-department. Two recreation center were opened for workers. The department of public education was comprised of three sub-departments – of school, preschool and extracurricular education. The situation with heating fuel for schools for the coming winter was bad. Teachers were paid at long intervals, which made many of them seek additional earnings. Local Party and Soviet bodies were suggested to allocate as big share from local resources as possible to help schools, and, at the same time, the steamer's Political Department reported to the People's Commissariat for Education about special attention needed for schools in the recently liberated areas.

The Krasnaya Zvezda Political Department required the Party and Soviet organizations to take special care of the families of Red Army soldiers, who were at the front, and to the families of those killed for the Soviet power. As a serious shortcoming in their work, it was pointed out that such families were not even registered in many localities in July 1919. The families of Red Army soldiers, as Political Department leaders clarified, were subject to tax exemption, they were to be provided with support in cultivating land if the family did not have able-bodied members.

The instructions by the Political Department pointed out that there was no a clear functional differentiation between local bodies. Many officials had no precise understanding what they were responsible for and what entitled to. The lack of experience had its impact, and, moreover, the corresponding instructions from the center failed to reach the local level. For example, the Sarapul District Military Commissariat extended, at its discretion, leave certificates of the Red Army front soldiers who were on vacation. The book warehouse and bookstore of the agitation steamer provided local Party and Soviet officials with many works of political literature and materials from the 8th Congress of the RCP(b) in the first place, as well as with guidelines and references required for their day-to-day work. As a side note, the bookstore and warehouse distributed propaganda brochures in numbers among the population, for example, A. Dickstein's² "What do people live by", revolution fiction, for example, works by M. Gorky, fables by Demyan Bedny and others.

Izhevsk's Revolutionary Committee and the Executive Committee requested the Krasnaya Zvezda's Political Department to support their petition to isolate Izhevsk and 18 adjacent volosts into an independent administrative unit. A similar petition was set in motion by the Revolutionary Committee and the Executive Committee in Votkinsk in respect to Votkinsk with its adjacent volosts. With a comment that the issue required careful consideration, the Political Department leadership expressed no final judgment ([Arkhiv Votkinskogo zavoda³. F. 785. Op. 1. D. 73. L. 6](#)). The administrative territorial reorganization was not implemented in the period of the Civil War and Intervention⁴.

¹ Numbers 5 and 150 are underlined in pencil, and a question mark is put on the margin opposite them.

² This refers to Shimon Dickstein (1858–1884), a Polish biologist and publicist, translator of Karl Marx's "Capital" into Polish, author of the brochure "What do people live by" (Kto z czego żyje?), popular among socialists and reproduced in Russia in great quantities.

³ The author's works, this refers to the Votkinsk Plant archive in the modern Central State Archive of the Udmurt Republic.

⁴ The sentence is underlined in pencil with a question mark opposite it.

Certainly, the above matters were secondary to measures aimed to revive industrial enterprises in the Kama region, mobilize food supplies to support the center and building up the fight against SR Maximalists.

The trip by the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer, which V.I. Lenin set a high value to, played a major role in cementing the connection between the center and localities and in improving the work of all links within the Party and Soviet apparatus (Krupskaya, 1937). This conclusion is amply demonstrated by the facts, relating to the activities by the Krasnaya Zvezda team in Udmurtia.

A.D. Sergeeva [The title is written in hand, illegible]

11.11.77

In the summer of 1919, an initiative by V.I. Lenin sent VTsIK's agitation and instruction steamer Krasnaya Zvezda to the areas along the Volga and Kama Rivers, liberated from the White Army. The boat carried representatives of the CC of the Party, VTsIK and Sovnarkom (Council of People's Commissars), among them was N.K. Krupskaya.

From 27 July to 3 August, the Krasnaya Zvezda agitation steamer traveled across Udmurtia. The participants of the trip visited Kambarka, Sarapul, Galevo and Votkinsk in this period. They became acquainted with the activity of local Party, Komsomol and trade union organizations and helped them set up the work. N.K. Krupskaya devoted much attention to public education with a deep look into the activities of public education departments and schools.

N.K. Krupskaya kept a journal during the trip¹. Here are some excerpts from Krupskaya's journal of the trip: "Last year (1919), I had to work for 1 ½ months as an instructor of the People's Commissariat for Education on the Krasnaya Zvezda steamer. *I made a journey from Nizhny Novgorod to Kazan along the Volga and to Perm along the Kama. We sailed only at nights and in the daytime stopped in cities, villages, at factories, in suburbs...*

I was lucky to work in the best possible conditions, together with a group of about 20 fellow instructors and agitators, with whom we discussed everything we saw after each stop and jointly developed a plan for further work. Thanks to this, we succeeded in implementing a relatively large organizational work, and this turned out to be of special relevance for areas which only recently had been occupied by the Whites and where efforts were made to set up the work anew.

For a report to my commissariat and for myself, I kept a "Journal" for the entire 1,5 months, excerpts from which I am citing" (N.K. Krupskaya).

N.K. Krupskaya's travel journal reflects the style she worked in. In addition to speeches at rallies, N.K. held endless conversations. All and sundry were eager to talk with N.K. Krupskaya. These were Party and Soviet heads, peasants, workers, teachers and lots of women.

The boat was also visited by Azin, the legendary division commander, who had liberated Izhevsk from the Kolchakite.

N.K. writes in her journal: "*In the evening, Azin, whose name is resounding throughout the Ural region, came to see me on the boat*".

It should not go unspoken what a cordial, what a comprehensive, what a thorough approach did N.K. adopted in her conversations on public education with teachers and women. "*Izhevsk and Votkinsk suffered the horrors of White Guardists and Kolchakites. And when at one of the meetings women told us about what had just happened in these parts, when there were victims in every family, when it was a rare family that sustained no loss at the hands of the Whites. And when they suddenly burst into song 'You fell victim', sobs broke out*", N.K. writes

Understandably, with deep sympathy and compassion did N.K. perceive the grief experienced in the fight against White Guardists. "*At this meeting, when this feeling of anguish rose to such force that the audience sang 'You fell victim', sobs broke out*", N.K. writes in her journal.

It was then when I first realized how close N.K. was to the people, how close and dear the school, the education of the people was to her, how deep her concern was for children – our younger generation. What bitterness she endured when she was told how many teachers had gone with White Guardists. N.K. described how Lenin spoke about the role of the teacher in the

¹ The work constantly refers to an unnamed journal of N.K. Krupskaya. Perhaps the author means a journal published under the title "Through the cities and villages of the Soviet Republic" (Po gorodam i vesyam Sovetskoy respubliki) in the Novy Mir journal in 1960.

socialist so[cie]ty: *“One must not confine oneself to narrow pedagogical duties”, that “teachers must join forces with the entire body of the embattled working people”, that “the task of the new pedagogics is to link up teaching activities with the socialist organization of society”.*

How opportune and insightful this Leninist thought, expressed by N.K. in those circumstances, is. She writes in her journal how one teacher said that they, the teachers, now understood what a labor school was.

For me, this interaction with N.K. was a crucial event.

**A.D. Sergeeva N.K. Krupskaya – my teacher
[A handwritten note: “In the Motherland”]**

19.11.77

I first saw N.K. in my Motherland, in Udmurtia, when she traveled on the Krasnaya Zvezda steamer as part of the activist group of prominent propagandists, and N.K., in the humble position of public education instructor, was included [in it], as ordered by the CC and advised by V.I. The Krasnaya Zvezda steamer sailed through the areas from which White Guardist hordes, who had committed appalling crimes of mass terror, had just [been] driven out. The people lived through inerasably horrible days. Mass shootings were perpetrated in prisons, [people] were imprisoned in sheds, on barges, starved to death, barges were drowned in the Kama. The wounds still bled, a rare family sustained no grief.

The propagandists on the Krasnaya Zvezda steamer worked tirelessly, speaking at meetings and rallies. Workers, peasants and teachers came to the boat.

N.K. writes in her journal that Azin, the legendary division commander, who has liberated Izhevsk from Kolchakites, came. Everyone was anxious to hear revolutionary words coming from Moscow, from the center, a word from Lenin.

What rallies, what meetings these were. How vital this revolutionary word was, convincing, calling for struggle. A word that heals wounds, unites, urges for the fight against counterrevolution. And there were these words. They were needed for the people. And the people heard them. The agitators heard the words of willingness from the people to continue the fight, no matter how hard it was. To fight did the speeches of the agitators and Red Army soldiers unflinchingly encourage. The call for fight was consonant with the people. The oath of allegiance to the revolution was sworn in the words of the workers and peasants. Unity with the agitators also gave rise to deep feelings of the loss of their comrades, relatives, loved ones and children.

N.K. writes in her journal how thousands of people at a rally sang *“You fell victims in a fatal battle of selfless love for the people...”* weeping with unbearable sorrow and pain, with those overly excruciating sufferings for the fighters who died for the people’s cause.

N.K. writes in her journal about a meeting with teachers with whom she had a conversation. There were about a hundred of them. And the meeting saw the same thing as the rally. Without the slightest preparation, the teachers began singing during the conversation: *“You fell victims in a fatal battle...”*

This was an expression of the lofty sentiments and love for the people, for the cause of the revolution and for the fighters fallen in a fierce battle with Kolchakites.

It was then that I saw and comprehended N.K., her strength, her revolutionary spirit, her deep love for the people. And I remember what I felt: Here she is, a great, noble, staunch revolutionary. And the feeling still lives inside me – a feeling of respect, recognition, gratitude. I am committed to her pedagogical ideas. Wherever I work in public education, I am guided by N.K.’s pedagogical thoughts.

3. Conclusion

The works under review – a scholarly article by Professor B.G. Plyushchevskii and two articles in the personal reminiscence style by A.D. Sergeeva – have a rather limited value as historical sources. B.G. Plyushchevskii’s article delivers no conclusions but only cites platitudes. Therefore, his work can only be considered as a synopsis. Similarly, A.D. Sergeeva’s articles predominantly quotes information borrowed from N.K. Krupskaya’s reminiscences. It offers almost no its own original details.

Nevertheless, both materials can be instrumental in providing personal opinions of people, who lived in the 1950s and 1970s, to uncover what they put their focus on in the first place. As they exist inside the existing ideology, they are impelled, echoing already printed works, to repeat “the only correct viewpoint”. For example, B.G. Plyushchevskii’s phrase that Kolchakites dug a mass grave of Red Guards soldiers in Votkinsk and burned the bodies, is given without any comments and as a result carries a noticeable negative connotation. The Whites had to take this step out of necessity for sanitary reasons because the grave was so shallow that spring melt waters completely washed out the burial. Similar ideological overtones, which had fully taken shape in the USSR by the time, can be perceived in assessments of other events mentioned. This explains quite logically why both materials have not come to press up to this day.

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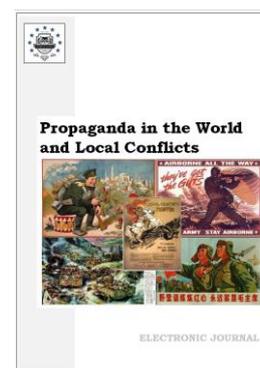
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The Use of High-Powered Loudhailer Units by the Red Army on the Front during World War II

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Abstract

This work draws upon archival materials and materials of private origin to examine the use of the MGU-39, a high-powered loudhailer unit, by the Red Army during World War II. It describes certain technical means and methods employed by propagandists to conduct agitation, including via the use of misleading sounds.

A key source used was the reminiscences of announcer and translator L.G. Nagler (married name Gerulaitis), who during the war was a member of a team operating a high-powered loudhailer unit while serving in the 11th Army of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (RKKA). Use was also made of archival materials, namely reports recording the use of an MGU-39 by the 5th ("to misinform the enemy"), 48th, and 65th Armies of the RKKA. The documents were obtained from the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation (Podolsk, Russian Federation).

The author's conclusion is that the MGU-39, created in 1941, was employed throughout World War II. In a period of defensive action, the unit was employed to subvert enemy troops through agitation. For these purposes, special propaganda materials were designed and use was made of prisoners. Broadcasting of this kind was normally conducted in the nighttime.

At a time of the Soviets advancing, the unit was employed to create noises designed to mislead the enemy (e.g., by means of artificially reproducing or, on the contrary, drowning out the sound of tanks moving). In the areas of operation of the 5th, 48th, and 65th Armies, this kind of work was a great help to the advancing Soviet units. In addition, the MGU-39 was employed at the time to help provide agitation support for the Red Army's own units.

Keywords: sound broadcasting station, high-powered loudhailer unit, MGU-39, reminiscences, propagandists, leaflets.

1. Introduction

Relatively little recorded history exists about the use of the MGU-39, a high-powered loudhailer station, on the front. This may be associated with the negligible number of such stations at the time – just 1-2 on an entire front. The station was primarily intended for the conduct of psychological operations aimed at agitating enemy troops into crossing over to the Soviet side. However, the effectiveness of this kind of activity remained low up until 1943, with there being just a few cases of members of the German armed forces crossing over to the Soviet side as a result. Starting in 1943, such stations were employed with the aim of misleading the enemy (e.g., by means of artificially reproducing or, on the contrary, drowning out the sound of tanks moving).

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The MGU-39 was added to the military's arsenal in 1941, on the eve of World War II. The unit had a range of 3-4 km, or even more in good weather conditions. The present work examines the use of the MGU-39 by the 5th, 11th, 48th, and 65th Armies of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (RKKA).

2. Materials and methods

A key source used was the reminiscences of announcer and translator L.G. Nagler (married name Gerulaitis), who during the war was a member of a team operating a high-powered loudhailer unit while serving in the 11th Army of the RKKA (Gerulaitis, 2010). Use was also made of archival materials, namely reports recording the use of an MGU-39 by the 5th ("to misinform the enemy") (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 32-35), 48th, and 65th Armies of the RKKA (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 58-61). These documents were obtained from the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation (Podolsk, Russian Federation).

Methodologically, use was made of a set of principles fundamental to historical-military research, including those of historicism, systemicity, and objectivity. The simultaneous use of these principles helped examine the use of the MGU-39 on World War II front lines in the context of the historical situation at the time and through the lens of certain adjacent events (e.g., the use of the MGU-39 in periods of defensive and offensive action). Use was made of all the documents found to gain the most comprehensive insight possible into the Red Army's use of the MGU-39 on the Eastern Front.

3. Results

The first example that will be examined in this work is the use of the MGU-39 by the 11th Army's MGU-39 team, headed by Captain Kogan. The use of the MGU-39 was described in the recollections of announcer and translator Liba Grigor'evna Nagler (married name Gerulaitis). L.G. Nagler was born in 1924 in Moscow. In the fall of 1942, she joined the army at the age of 18. She could speak German, so she was sent to work for the 7th Division of the 11th Army's Political Department, concerned with conducting special work amongst enemy troops. L.G. Nagler was appointed to the role of Announcer/Translator within the MGU-39 team. Based on her reminiscences, the MGU-39 was a GAZ-AA truck borne unit (Figure 1) with an extension loudspeaker connected to the truck by a 300-meter cable (Figure 2).

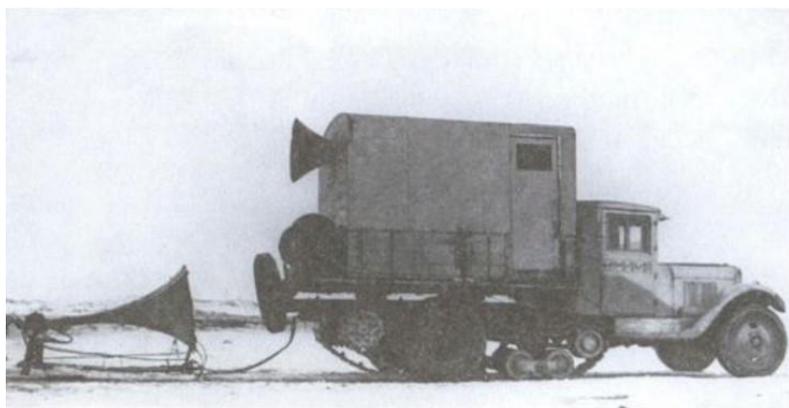


Fig. 1. MGU-39



Fig. 2. Loudspeaker being moved to the forward line

If it was not possible for the truck to get to the front line, use would be made of the OZU, a mobile trench loudhailer unit ([Figure 3](#)).



Fig. 3. Trench loudhailer unit (OZU)

A typical MGU-39 team consisted of four regular crewmembers: an operations manager, an announcer/translator, a radio operator/technician, and a driver. The team was guarded by two soldiers ([Gerulaitis, 2010: 30](#)).

For agitation purposes, use would be made of broadcasts in German and leaflets. L.G. Nagler would read out news from Soviet Informbureau – above all, news about Soviet troops’ victories and advances. The more the German army retreated, especially after the Battle of Stalingrad, the more detailed such news bulletins became. In addition, the announcer would call on the Germans to surrender and tell them about conditions in captivity (e.g., the amounts of bread, butter, meat, tobacco, etc.). Such broadcasts would take place only in the nighttime. Broadcasting was possible at the time only in a climate of positional warfare. It must be admitted that the MGU-39 was something disliked by the Germans and Soviet troops alike, as, given its range of nearly three kilometers, both German and Soviet service members faced sleep deprivation as a consequence of such broadcasts.

L.G. Nagler would normally start a broadcast with the March from the opera *Aida*. She would then read out a text, and would conclude the broadcast with Grieg's *Solveig's Song*. Every time the music would be broadcast, the Germans would respond with heavy fire. The Germans would try to drown out the sound from the MGU-39 with their shooting. There were times when shooting would subside amid German letters (captured by Soviet intelligence) being read out to and captive Germans addressing the German side.

The enemy's mood changed significantly subsequent to the Battle of Stalingrad. By that time, Germany itself had been subjected to massive bombardment, with food shortages ensuing – something communicated in letters to those on the front. Propagandists drew up bulletins for the General Staff regarding the situation in the enemy rear based on such letters, and employed them for agitation purposes as well. It must be understood that the reading out of German letters would be possible at the time only when Soviet intelligence had intercepted German military mail (Gerulaitis, 2010: 30).



Fig. 4. 11th Army's MGU-39 team: Captain Kogan, Larin (artificer), Sergeant Afanas'ev, and Nagler (announcer/translator). Oryol Oblast. August 1943 (Gerulaitis, 2010: 31)

The team's crew chief was Lev Moiseevich Kogan, who in February 1943 worked as an instructor at the Political Department of the 33th Tank Brigade of the 2nd Mechanized Corps. Captain Kogan was born in 1915 in Kiev. He had been serving in the RKKA since 1937. As at February 1943, he had no battle injuries and no awards. In February 1943, he was decorated with a Medal of Valor. The awards and decorations documentation contains the following information on him: "While working as an agitator at the brigade's Political Department, Comrade Kogan has fought as part of the brigade in the front line during its battle action. He has done a great job of organizing educational work with the personnel and mobilizing them for the fulfillment of the battlefield mission. He has been brave and assertive. During the advance on Bryukhin and Botovo, he participated in charging the enemy's line" (TsAMO RF. F. 33. Op. 682525. D. 425. L. 63). It turns out that Captain Kogan was not a member of the MGU-39 team prior to 1943. He must have joined the team subsequent to the Battle of Stalingrad. The awards and decorations documentation contains no information about the other members of the crew.

As regards prisoners, according to L.G. Gerulaitis, "the prisoners would say in broadcasts that they were not hurt, were fed, were given cigarettes and soap, and, in general, were treated in compliance with the international regulations of the Red Cross movement" (Gerulaitis, 2010: 31). Sometimes this kind of agitation did help get enemy service members to defect. These mostly were Czechs and Austrians, although there were Germans too. It is to be noted that the requirement that captive enemy troops be employed more often as part of agitation broadcasts was established back on February 26, 1942, by the Main Political Administration of the Red Army via the directive

‘On the Objectives for Propaganda amongst Enemy Troops’ (TsAMO RF. F. 208. Op. 2511. D. 2298. L. 57-57ob.).

The MGU-39 team participated in putting together leaflets. The leaflets normally contained quotes from the speeches of Joseph Stalin, like the following one from a speech he delivered in 1942: “Hitlers come and go, but the German people remain”. Propagandists were to translate this kind of quotes and include them in leaflets (Gerulaitis, 2010: 31).

There were several ways of getting the leaflets to the front line. They were mainly dropped from airplanes, with artillery (propaganda ammunition) and intelligence (during raids to the enemy line) employed as well (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 116. L. 147).

There is a method for distributing leaflets that was developed by the MGU-39 team L.G. Nagler was a member of. Here is how she personally describes it: “Our chemical warfare unit had provided us with what we call “ampoule throwers”, initially designed to pelt the enemy with easy-to-break ampoules containing chemical agents. However, considering that there was no chemical warfare going on at that time, it was decided to make a different use of such ampoules – charge them with leaflets. Launched with an ampoule thrower, the ampoules would fly for about 100 meters and land just short of the German trenches. On landing, the ampoules would break, with the leaflets getting scattered all over the ground (Gerulaitis, 2010: 31).

The MGU-39 was used by other armies as well.

In 1943, subsequent to the Red Army’s shift from defense to offense, the MGU-39 began to be used for creating misleading noise as well. For instance, it was employed by the 6th Army during the Soviet advance in the vicinity of the town of Sevsk. Prior to storming Sevsk, the Army Command directed the MGU-39 team to create misleading noise to drown out the sound of the approaching tanks. As a result, on August 26, 1943, the MGU-39 team spent the entire night drowning out the sound of the approaching tanks and artillery with music and text (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 32). In the morning, the Soviet troops stormed the town and captured it. By contrast, on September 8, 1943, the team engaged in artificially reproducing the sound of tanks moving to mislead the enemy into thinking there were tanks approaching the enemy strongpoint (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 32). On October 1, the MGU-39 was set up near a crossing with the aim of drowning out the sound of the tanks crossing the River Sozh (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 32). This was done in such a lifelike manner that the Germans even dispatched a reconnaissance aircraft on a moonlight night to have that information confirmed (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 59ob.). Similar work was carried out by the 48th Army as well.

Particularly extensive work in terms of artificial reproduction of the sound of tanks approaching or battling was carried out by the MGU-39 team of the 19th Rifle Corps of the 65th Army October 4 through 6, 1943. Here, the MGU-39 team had the task to drown out the sound of the Soviet tanks crossing to the right bank of the River Sozh in the vicinity of the village of Novyye Tereshkovichi. The MGU-39 team conducted broadcasting from the bank of the River Sozh from 2:30 am to 5:30 am. Half of the tanks crossed without sustaining any losses. The enemy, who earlier had been shooting up the crossing, began to shoot up the MGU-39 area during the broadcast, with the tanks taking advantage of the shift of fire to complete the crossing (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 60). In the morning of October 5, it was resolved that the 19th Rifle Corps would undertake an advance. Prior to the Soviets’ artillery softening up in the vicinity of the village of Fedorovka, the MGU-39 team conducted from the edge of the forest a broadcast reproducing the sound of tanks moving into the area (four sessions, each an hour long). As early as 15 minutes in, the enemy, positioned to the right of the road to Fedorovka, opened powerful artillery fire on the road leading to Fedorovka. Thirty minutes later, the enemy, positioned along the River Sozh west of Fedorovka, opened fire with six-barreled mortars on the approaches to Fedorovka. However, that was firing on empty areas. After the MGU-39 team finished work and left the place, the enemy unleashed fierce artillery fire on the spot where the MGU-39 had been working (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 60ob.). While the enemy were waiting for the tanks to appear in the vicinity of the Fedorovka and concentrated their artillery fire on this sector, the Soviet tanks, subsequent to the artillery softening up, successfully attacked the enemy in the vicinity of the village of Novyye Tereshkovichi, where the tanks had not been expected to appear (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 60ob.). On October 5, 1943, at 10:30 am the MGU-39 was directed to conduct a broadcast reproducing the sound of tanks moving into the area against a well-fortified enemy stronghold in the village of Novyye Dyatlovichi. At 12:30 am, the MGU-39 team began to broadcast the sound of

tanks moving for the conduct of an offensive in the forest against the Novyye Dyatlovichi stronghold. On hearing the sound of a large number of tanks moving in, the enemy left their positions. That made it easier for the Soviet infantry to accomplish the task (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 600b.).

In the period from November 1 to November 10, the use of the MGU-39 was a great help to the Command of the 3rd Army in carrying out a number of operations. Specifically, on November 2, the Chief of the Army Staff in association with representatives of all arms of the armed forces developed a plan for misleading the enemy using the MGU-39. Upon approval of the plan by the army's Military Council on November 6, they set about carrying the task into effect. A broadcast reproducing the sound of tanks moving was conducted in the sector of the 121st Guards Rifle Division in the vicinity of the villages Strumen and Korsun. During the broadcast, the enemy opened artillery fire on the MGU-39 team three times, which indicates that they were successfully misled into believing in Soviet tanks gathering at the edge of the forest by the village of Strumen. The MGU-39 was used in the early hours of November 7, in the morning of November 7, and in the early hours of November 8 (TsAMO RF. F. 201. Op. 390. D. 15. L. 600b.-61). The RKKA's experience of employing the MGU-39 to mislead the enemy indicates that the use of artificially reproduced sounds was a great help to many of its units in carrying out combat operations.

Overall, based on the information available today, the two MGU-39 teams of the RKKA's 5th Army conducted in June 1944 a combined 503 broadcasts, with 207 of those being based on materials from the National Committee for a Free Germany, 50 being related to the Allied landings in northern France, and 10 being short addresses by defectors. The units also had six trench sound broadcasting stations, which were used to conduct a combined 622 broadcasts around the same time (TsAMO RF. F. 460. Op. 5047. D. 544. L. 74).

Following the start of the Soviet advance, broadcasting would be conducted in respect of the Soviets' own troops as well. This included the broadcasting of orders from the Supreme Commander, messages from the military councils of the army and the front, and recorded music (TsAMO RF. F. 460. Op. 5047. D. 544. L. 74).

As the hostilities drew to a close, the number of loudhailer units in the Red Army increased, with even division level units getting an MGU-39 team of their own (TsAMO. F. 33. Op. 690155. D. 7515. L. 144).

4. Conclusion

The MGU-39, created in 1941, was employed throughout World War II. In a period of defensive action, the unit was employed to subvert enemy troops through agitation. For these purposes, special propaganda materials were designed and use was made of prisoners. Broadcasting of this kind was normally conducted in the nighttime.

At a time of the Soviets advancing, the unit was employed to create noises designed to mislead the enemy (e.g., by means of artificially reproducing or, on the contrary, drowning out the sound of tanks moving). In the areas of operation of the 5th, 48th, and 65th Armies, this kind of work was a great help to the advancing Soviet units. In addition, the MGU-39 was employed at the time to help provide agitation support for the Red Army's own units.

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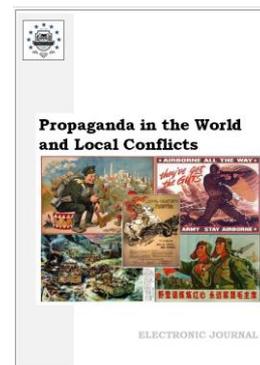
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The Arsenal of Psychological Tools and Methods Employed by the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front in the Area of Operation of the Red Army's 128th Rifle Division (May–July 1944)

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Abstract

This paper examines the arsenal of psychological tools and methods employed by the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front in the period from May through July 1944 based on materials from the operational and intelligence reports of the headquarters of the Red Army's 128th Rifle Division.

Principal use was made of materials from the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense (Podolsk, Russian Federation). This was the first time the documents had been introduced into general circulation.

Methodologically, in reliance on the principles of objectivity and historicism, the author sifted through every archive material on the subject available. Importantly, use was also made of a systems approach, with all the relevant propaganda influence facts being arranged and systematized based on the chronological principle.

The author's conclusion is that the Germans' extensive use of means of psychological influence in respect of the 128th Rifle Division between May and July 1944 suggests that the Germans were undertaking a full-scale psychological operation in the area. In that period, the Germans employed a whole range of propaganda methods and tools from leaflets and audio broadcasting to collaborationist units of the Russian Liberation Army on the front line. Neither before nor after that period had the 128th Division been subjected to a psychological impact that extensive.

Keywords: World War II, Eastern Front, propaganda, Vlasovtsy, leaflets, audio broadcasting, 128th Rifle Division, Wehrmacht.

1. Introduction

The arsenal of psychological tools and methods employed during World War II by the Wehrmacht has been discussed quite extensively in the literature. Worthy of particular mention in this respect are the memoirs of former specialists in the area of propaganda, like those of W.K. Strik-Strikfeldt ([Shtrik-Shtrikfel'dt, 1993](#)) and S.B. Fröhlich ([Frelikh, 1990](#)), as well as certain works on the history of psychological operations (e.g., [Krys'ko, 1999](#)). The author of the present work employed a different approach – study a set of daily operational and intelligence reports from the headquarters of the 128th Rifle Division, extract from them everything related to psychological operations, and systematize those materials.

2. Materials and methods

The author drew upon a large array of materials from the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense (Podolsk, Russian Federation). Use was made not only of operational and intelligence reports from the headquarters of the 128th Rifle Division but intelligence from the fire support team, as well as the operations record books of the regiments and divisions involved.

Methodologically, in reliance on the principles of objectivity and historicism, the author sifted through every archive material on the subject available. Importantly, use was also made of a systems approach, with all the relevant propaganda influence facts being arranged and systematized based on the chronological principle.

3. Discussion

The subject of psychological operations on the Eastern Front during World War II has been discussed in the literature quite extensively. This body of research may be divided into the following two major categories: 1) literature on general issues of psychological warfare; 2) literature on the history of specific psychological operations.

In terms of the first category, worthy of particular mention are V.G. Krys'ko's 'Secrets of Psychological Warfare' (Krys'ko, 1999) and A.V. Okorokov's 'The Special Front: German Propaganda on the Eastern Front during the Second World War' (Okorokov, 2007). Another work that merits serious consideration is M.I. Semiryaga's 'Collaboration: Its Nature, Typology, and Manifestations during the Second World War', which is dedicated to the history of Soviet collaborationism (Semiryaga, 2000). In addition, F.M. Sergeev provides a glimpse into the secret operations of German intelligence (Sergeev, 1991), while A.M. Mamadaliev offers an insight into propaganda on the Eastern Front in the early period of World War II (Mamadaliev, 2015).

In terms of the second category, worthy of special mention is research by the following scholars: V.A. Nesterenko, with his insight into the Eastern Scorpion operation (Nesterenko, 2015), D.A. Zhukov and I.I. Kovtun, with their glimpse into the Gray Head operation (Zhukov, Kovtun, 2015), and E.F. Krinko, with his account of German propaganda in the North Caucasus (Krinko, 2014). The subject of Ukrainian nationalism during World War II is discussed in a study by A.A. Cherkasov, E.F. Krinko, and M. Shmigel' (Cherkasov et al., 2015). S.I. Degtyarev views the Russian Liberation Army as a propaganda project of the Third Reich (Degtyarev, 2015). The collaborationist periodical press in Kursk Oblast is discussed in a work by S.V. Bogdanov and V.G. Ostapuk (Bogdanov, Ostapuk, 2016). A.A. Kokhan supplies an insight into the activity of the collaborationist newspaper Golos Kryma [The Voice of Crimea] (Kokhan, 2016).

4. Results

As already mentioned earlier in this paper, its primary purpose was to examine the arsenal of psychological tools and methods employed by the Wehrmacht in respect of the units of the Red Army's 128th Rifle Division. In late March 1944, the division moved to its new defensive area around the city of Pskov (Pskov was being held by the Wehrmacht at the time) (TsAMO. F. 7178. Op. 69301. D. 1. L. 21), and over the course of several months, up until July 22, the opposing sides would largely engage in positional warfare. During the German occupation of Pskov, the city became a major center for the formation of the Russian Liberation Army (RLA), with the RLA having its own units, its own newspaper (Za Rodinu), and even its own song and dance band based there.

The personnel of the 128th Rifle Division first experienced the impact of the Germans' psychological warfare about two weeks after taking up a defensive line at Pskov. This took place on April 15, 1944. At 9:30 pm, an enemy plane dropped leaflets in Russian in the vicinity of the village of Ogurtsovo (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 45. L. 31-31ob.). It is to be noted that the division had witnessed more than once the enemy distributing leaflets by dropping them from an airplane in the period 1941–1943 as well, so that was not something new.

However, starting in May, the enemy employed the entire spectrum of its psychological weapons – and that was done quite frequently, as often as several times a week.

On May 1, at 11:40 pm the enemy began to conduct agitation over the radio (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 2) using short-range audio broadcasting stations.

The following day, on May 2, the enemy conducted radio agitation between 3 am and 4:30 am (TsAMO. F. 843. Op. 1. D. 86. L. 19). The rationale behind the use of audio broadcasting stations in the nighttime was that in a climate of nighttime silence a much greater sound transmission range could be achieved. In addition, as per specialists in psychological warfare, propaganda tends to have a better effect on the enemy in the nighttime, as there is a possibility of security sentries taking their time to think about the source of an agitation effort and the messages communicated by it. Another factor was that in the daytime it was easier to spot an audio broadcasting station and then attack it with mortar and artillery fire.



Fig. 1. Leading article in the December 3 1942 issue of the *Za Rodinu* [For the Motherland] newspaper

In the meantime, on May 6 whole new events began to take place in the area of operation of the 128th Rifle Division, something the division had not experienced since the beginning of the war – the use of collaborationist units on the front line against the Red Army. May 6 is actually when the first “acquaintance” took place. On the eve of that day, the division’s recon team seized from the Wehrmacht outpost an area code named ‘Forester’s Cabin’. In an attempt to regain their positions, the Germans launched a counter-offensive. More specifically, at 11:50 am five enemy soldiers appeared from the forest outside the front of the 4th Rifle Company of the 374th Rifle Regiment of the 128th Division, gesturing in the direction of the regiment’s lines and shouting ‘hurrah’, subsequent to which a group of another 15 men ran out of the forest shouting the same word. All infantry resources of the 4th Rifle Company were employed to open concentrated fire on the men, which resulted in three of them being killed and two wounded, with the rest fleeing back into the forest (TsAMO. F. 843. Op. 1. D. 86. L. 28). Despite the failure, the RLA moved up artillery and mortar guns and relaunched the offensive on May 9. This is indicated by a report of the headquarters of the 128th Rifle Division. According to the report, on May 9 at 10 pm, subsequent to a 20-minute-long artillery strike, the enemy, represented by three groups with a combined membership the size of a company, proceeded along the left bank of the River Pskova and with shouts of ‘hurrah’ and ‘surrender, Rus’ attacked the 6th Rifle Company of the 741st Regiment. Superior numerically and with covered routes of approach to the regiment’s main line, the enemy concentrated dense artillery fire on the company’s lines. At the expense of heavy losses, the enemy drove back the 2nd Platoon of the 6th Company and tried to cut off and trap the 1st Platoon. The enemy managed to capture 40 meters of the enemy’s trenches. Following a two-hour hand-to-hand battle, the enemy was forced to retreat to its initial positions, after sustaining heavy losses from infantry and artillery fire. From grenades, infantry fire, and artillery fire the Germans sustained about 45 casualties. The following spoils were captured: two light machine guns, two rifles, and several ammunition belts. The 741st Rifle Regiment sustained four dead and three wounded (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 24-24ob.). The participation of former Soviet citizens in battle against the Soviet army had a powerful psychological effect, as it violated the doctrine about the unity of the Soviet people in the fight against the aggressor. The antagonism between the Vlasovtsy and the Soviet servicepersons was so pronounced that both sides would normally take no prisoners.

On May 16, the enemy employed audio broadcasting again. The division’s headquarters reported that the enemy conducted radio agitation at 2:30 am and at 4:30 am (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 43).

Two days later, on May 18, watching the enemy helped establish that at 7 pm the enemy released from the vicinity of Pskov eight balloons with leaflets (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 52). Balloons of this kind had been developed back during World War I, with both Germany and the Entente employing them actively at the time.

On May 21, there took place as many as four events of a psychological nature. Specifically, the enemy conducted radio agitation in Russian outside of the front of the 374th Regiment at 12 am and at 12:30 am. To this the Russians responded with mortar fire. Between 2 pm and 2:30 pm, an enemy plane dropped six balloons with leaflets, with one of them landing in the village of Yazykovo and the rest being carried away eastwards (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 59). It was the first time that the division's headquarters had witnessed leaflet-carrying balloons being dropped from an airplane by the enemy in that period.

On May 24, the enemy's audio broadcasting station resumed work. Specifically, an agitation transmitter was used from 12 am to 1 am (TsAMO. F. 843. Op. 1. D. 86. L. 66). The report from the division's headquarters does not record an effort to counteract the activity.

Another six days later, on May 30, the enemy conducted broadcasting toward the 128th Rifle Division again. According to the report from the division's headquarters, the enemy conducted agitation in Russian at 2:15 am (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 95).

Thus, in May, the enemy conducted broadcasting six and dropped leaflets two times, while the Vlasovtsy confronted the Red Army on the battlefield twice, too.

On June 12, men could be heard conversing in Russian in the trenches of the enemy's main line south of the village of Klishevo (TsAMO. F. 843. Op. 1. D. 86. L. 106). This provided indirect confirmation that there were RLA units present in this part of the front line.

The following day, the enemy resumed radio broadcasting. Specifically, on June 13 at 1 am the enemy conducted radio broadcasting in broken Russian from the vicinity of the village of Luni. The following was overheard in the broadcast: "Come over to our side. The Allies are having unsuccessful operations on the northwestern coast of France. We are constantly destroying the Allies' troops disembarking there". In addition, at 1:45 am men were heard working with axes and conversing in Russian in the enemy's zone (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 145).

On June 14, the enemy used an audio broadcasting station to conduct agitation again. Specifically, the operational report from the division's headquarters stated the following: "At 1:30 am the enemy conducted radio broadcasting in broken Russian from the vicinity of the Luni sovkhov. Due to poor audibility, it was not possible to establish the contents of the broadcast" (TsAMO. F. 843. Op. 1. D. 86. L. 109). The fact about the broadcasting being in broken Russian is quite an interesting one, given that German propagandists were insisting on using either deserters who used to serve with the same unit toward which broadcasting was going to be conducted or girls from the local population. Considering that the Germans should have had no problem finding the right girls in Pskov, where there was in operation at the time a facility for training nurses for the RLA, it is somewhat strange that they broadcasted in broken Russian.

In the daytime of June 18, the enemy resumed its psychological warfare. Specifically, at 11:45 am the Germans released three agitation balloons with leaflets (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 163).

As early as June 20, the Germans' audio broadcasting station resumed broadcasting. The report states the following to that effect: "At 12:40 am the enemy used a radio transmitter to broadcast in Russian into the zone of the 741st Rifle Regiment" (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 169).

The division's observers and listeners-in (persons concerned with listening in to enemy communications in the nighttime) were watching the enemy closely, and on June 26 at 12:45 am they detected in the enemy's main line shouts and laughter that came from people who spoke Russian (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 186).

Thus, in June there was a decline in the number of acts of psychological influence by the Germans in the area – just three audio broadcasting sessions, two instances of collaborationist units being used in the enemy's main line, and one instance of leaflets being distributed.

July witnessed a few cases of this kind as well. Specifically, the enemy launched a radio broadcast at 12 am on July 5 (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 216).

Two days later, on July 7, the enemy resumed broadcasting. The report from the division's headquarters states that at 1:30 am the enemy conducted agitation over the radio (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 220).

On July 9, it was established through the division's observers and listeners-in that the enemy was conducting some engineering work, with axes and saws being used. Russian women were heard laughing. The nature of the activity was not established (TsAMO. F. 1345. Op. 1. D. 44. L. 224). This was the last recorded case of psychological influence in the area.

The first decade of July witnessed three instances of psychological influence in the area – twice via audio broadcasting and once via collaborationist units.

It must be taken into consideration that in July the Germans were preparing Pskov for evacuation, with many RLA organizations based in the city being moved to the rear in the final days prior to the Soviet advance, and as early as July 22, 1944, the 128th Rifle Division launched an offensive with the aim of seizing the city of Pskov, which would result in it coming to be called '128th Pskov Rifle Division' (TsAMO. F. 7178. Op. 69301. D. 1. L. 22).

Overall, between May and July 1944 the 128th Rifle Division was subjected to a broad spectrum of psychological influence. There were nearly 20 recorded cases alone, with 11 of those being a case of psychological influence by way of audio broadcasting, five being a case of influence by way of being pitted against compatriots on the front line (twice in combat), and three being a case of influence by way of leaflet distribution. The operational reports from the headquarters of the 128th Rifle Division did not say anything about the actual effect of these psychological operations.

5. Conclusion

The Germans' extensive use of means of psychological influence in respect of the 128th Rifle Division between May and July 1944 suggests that the Germans were undertaking a full-scale psychological operation in the area. In that period, the Germans employed a whole range of propaganda methods and tools from leaflets and audio broadcasting to collaborationist units of the Russian Liberation Army on the front line. Neither before nor after that period had the 128th Division been subjected to a psychological impact that extensive.

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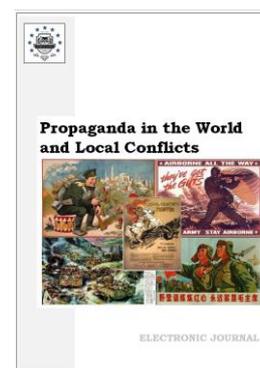
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The Newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” (1992–1997) as a Historical Source

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Abstract

This article examines the monthly newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” as a historical source for the period 1992–1997 in the south of Russia.

Issues of the monthly newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii,” which was published in Sochi, Russian Federation, in the years 1992–1993 and again after a hiatus in 1996–1997, were this study’s sources. A total of fourteen issues were published (five issues in 1992, from August to December; four in 1993, from January to April; one in 1996, in December; and four in 1997, the first three from January to March, and the fourth a double issue for April-May).

The complete run of the newspaper is held in the electronic library of the Cherkas Global University (Washington, DC, USA) and in the Library of Congress (Washington, DC, USA).

The present author applied the content analysis method, which is usually employed in academic research of this genre. Content analysis serves as a standard research method in the social sciences in cases that require quantitative analysis of texts with subsequent interpretation of their textual content.

The author finds that the newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” serves as a valuable source of information on the creation of volunteer units in the Russian Federation after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The materials presented convey the atmosphere of the situation in the early 1990s in the south of Russia. During its existence, the newspaper greatly increased the quality of the publication, and regular columns appeared. In addition, the newspaper published exclusive information about local conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union and the former Warsaw Pact countries.

Keywords: Vestnik Leib-Gvardii, newspaper, 1992–1997, source, collapse of the Soviet Union, volunteer movement.

1. Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 provoked a significant patriotic outpouring in the territory of Russia; volunteer units, created in memory of the pre-revolutionary Russian army or the White Guard during the Civil War, began to arise spontaneously in the country. By 1992, such volunteer organizations existed in almost all the major cities of the Russian Federation. Enthusiasts, history lovers, and monarchists participated in the formation of these units, and the Cossacks, whose revitalization had begun, also played a prominent role. Early in 1992, one such organization sprang up in the city of Sochi, an organization which became the military-patriotic club the “Life Guards Semenovskiy Regiment.” As is well known, the regiment began its history in 1692 during the reign of Emperor Peter I as a “play (*poteshnyi*) regiment” and existed as a military organization until 1917.

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An attempt was made to form a volunteer unit in honor of this organization in Sochi. As early as August 1992 the organization's press organ was founded—the monthly newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii”.

2. Materials and methods

Issues of the monthly newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” which was published in Sochi, Russian Federation, in the years 1992–1993 and again after a hiatus in 1996–1997, served as sources for this study. A total of fourteen issues were published (five issues in 1992, from August to December; four in 1993, from January to April; one in 1996, in December; and four in 1997, the first three from January to March, and the fourth a double issue for April-May).

The complete run of the newspaper is held in the electronic library of the Cherkas Global University (Washington, DC, USA) and in the Library of Congress (Washington, DC, USA).

This study employs the method of content analysis, which is usually applied in academic research of this genre. Content analysis is a standard research method in the social sciences in cases that require quantitative analysis of texts with subsequent interpretation of their textual content.

3. Discussion and results

References to the newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” are rare but do exist. For example, the seventh issue of the newspaper, from 1993, was deposited in the Perm State Archive of Socio-Political History ([PermGASPI, f. 574, op. 1, d. 12](#)).

Thus, the monthly newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” appeared chronologically from 1992 to 1997. From May 1993 to November 1996, however, the newspaper experienced a hiatus in its publication. Consequently, one can divide the publication history of the newspaper into two chronological periods: the first during the years 1992–1993, and the second during the period 1996–1997. Throughout the entire period, A. A. Cherkasov published the newspaper: the newspaper's first issue contained no information about the editor, while the second issue published an address for letters specifying A. Cherkasov's name; this information also appeared in subsequent issues during the years 1992–1993. Only beginning with the eleventh issue in 1997 did the publication name its editorial board, which consisted of two people—second lieutenant of the Guard A. A. Cherkasov and junior non-commissioned officer E. A. Khramova. One may learn of the subsequent fate of the publisher of the “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” from the article “Aleksandr Cherkasov: A Scholar, Publisher, and Organizer of Research Collaborations (to the 20th Anniversary of the Scholar's Research and Pedagogical Activity)” ([Tarakanov, Ludwig, 2019: 914–920](#)). In 1999, Alexander Arvelodovich Cherkasov finished university and began working at Sochi State University. In 2002 he defended his PhD thesis, and in 2007 he received his doctorate, becoming a Doctor of Historical Sciences. He founded a large publishing house (Academic Publishing House Researcher s. r. o.), which today traces its history to 1992, that is, to the founding of the newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” ([Tarakanov, Ludwig, 2019: 914](#)).

Now let us turn to the bulletin itself. Throughout its publication, the newspaper appeared in A4 format on two sheets (four pages). Moreover, in 1992, all five issues were handwritten and reproduced on a copying machine. From January 1993, a typewriter was used for typesetting. From 1996, the quality of the layout increased dramatically, in all likelihood due to the use of a more modern typewriter and to efforts to design the newspaper's format.

The first period (1992–1993). During this period, one change in the name of the organization occurred. While the first issue of the newspaper was the publication of a club, from the second issue the newspaper appeared as the publication of a reserve platoon of the Life Guards of the Semenovskiy Regiment. That is, on August 22 and 23, 1992, the First All-Russian Monarchist Congress was held in the city of Taganrog, at which, in addition to business matters, the creation of a United Imperial Corps from volunteer units took place. Colonel G. V. Sarychev, commander of the Moscow Life Guards of the Semenovskiy Regiment, was elected commander of the corps. At the congress, it also emerged that organizations with the same name had been established in Moscow and Sochi; as a result, Colonel Sarychev invited a representative from Sochi to lead a reserve platoon of the Moscow regiment ([Tragedy..., 1992: 1](#)). The newspaper was the publication of the reserve platoon of the Life Guards of the Semenovskiy Regiment from September 1992 to April 1993, that is, for the entire first period of its publication.

In the first period of the newspaper's existence, a double-headed eagle on the background of a sword was placed on the first page (Figure 1).



Fig. 1. The first page of the newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” in the period 1992–1993

The section in the newspaper, especially in the initial period of its publication, were not regular. Up to half of an issue's volume was spent on local news coverage, followed by editorial articles or recollections of military conflicts. For example, an interview with Sergei Vladimirovich Aliamovsky, a participant in the conflict in Transdnier, appeared in the first issue (Interview..., 1992: 4). Beginning with the second issue, excerpts from Leonid Belinsky's work “A Catechism of Monarchism” (Belinskii, 1992; Belinskii, 1992a; Belinskii, 1992b) were published.

From the fifth issue, a news column appeared in the newspaper, as well as a “Military Imperial Song” column. For example, among the news was the celebration of the tercentenary of the Life Guards of the Semenovskiy Regiment (300-letie ..., 1992: 1-2), and the publication of Leonid Belinsky's work continued on the last page (Belinskii, 1992c).

From the sixth issue, titles for the news items appeared, such as “A parade of monarchist troops,” “Celebrations of the Kuban Cossack army,” and others. In the column on military imperial song, the composition “Monologue with Russia” was published (Monolog..., 1993: 3). On the last (fourth) page, the presentation of Leonid Belinsky's work continued (Belinskii, 1993).

The newspaper's eighth issue published materials concerning the Ossetian-Ingush conflict of the years 1992–1993 (Osetino-Ingushskii konflikt, 1993: 3) and information about the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict of 1992 and 1993 (Abkhazo-gruzinskii konflikt, 1993: 3).

A large number of local items appeared in the ninth issue of the newspaper, specifically “The Composite Cossack Regiment of the Life Guards,” “Easter celebration,” “A chronicle of the cadet corps,” “On patrol,” and others. One page contained materials on the formation of the Composite Cossack Regiment of the Life Guards (Leib-gvardii svodnyi..., 1993: 3). The last item in the last issue of the newspaper's first period was the continuation of Leonid Belinsky's work “A Catechism of Monarchism” (Belinskii, 1993a).

Second period (1996–1997). In December 1996, the newspaper resumed its publication as the print organ of the headquarters of the southern Russian district of the United Imperial Corps. Judging by the materials published in the newspaper, one can determine that the district included several volunteer units, including the following: the First Separate Terek Cossack *Sotnia* [i.e., a “hundred”] (Maisky, Kabardino-Balkaria), the First Troop of the Fifth Hussars of the Alexandrinsky Regiment (Nalchik, Kabardino-Balkaria), the First Separate Kuban Cossack Platoon (Krasnodar, Krasnodar Krai).

The title page of the newspaper changed only from the February 1997 issue (Figure 2). The double-headed eagle was replaced by a shield with the letter “M” and a crown. The newspaper’s title incorporated Old Slavonic orthography.



Fig. 2. The first page of the newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii” from February 1997

Beginning with the tenth issue of the newspaper in 1996, a new column, “Everyday life and holidays in the district,” appeared. This column established that the district was founded on December 31, 1994 (Budni i prazdniki..., 1996: 2). This explains why the year 1994 was part of the newspaper’s title design and indicates that the district’s emblem was placed on the newspaper. Igor Girkin’s recollections concerning the Second Russian Volunteer Detachment in Bosnia in the years 1992–1993 were published on the newspaper’s fourth page (Girkin, 1996: 4).

In 1997, the district’s personnel at that time had developed brochures for internal use entitled “In support of the command staff of units of the U. I. C. [United Imperial Corps].”¹ Some of these materials appeared in the newspaper “Vestnik Leib-Gvardii”. For example, the paper’s eleventh issue published the duties of military ranks (*Obiazannosti voinskikh chinov*, 1997: 3). Information for quartermasters also began to appear; for example, in Sochi in January 1997, a set of camouflage uniforms cost 230 thousand rubles (*Intendantskaia informatsiia*, 1997: 3). This makes it possible to ascertain the cost of uniforms in the region. The newspaper’s fourth page contained a continuation of the memoir about the Second Russian Volunteer Detachment in Bosnia in the period 1992–1993 (Girkin, 1997: 4).

In the twelfth issue, the paper continued to present the column on the everyday life and holidays of the district. Information from the district’s localities now constituted 75 percent of the newspaper. Along with news from Sochi, items about regional matters began to appear. Thus, in the article “Search operation” from Nalchik, district officials reported on attempts to find the grave of General Krukovsky (*Poiskovaia rabota*, 1997: 3). The fourth page of the newspaper contained the continuation of Igor Girkin’s recollections of the fighting in Bosnia in the years 1992–1993 (Girkin, 1997a: 4).

In the thirteenth issue of the newspaper, the editorial board turned to the “Historical Perspective” genre and presented material about the military schools of the Russian Empire. (*Istoricheskii pakurs*, 1997: 3). The editor devoted the fourth page to continuing the reminiscences of Igor Girkin (Girkin, 1997b: 4).

In the fourteenth and last issue of the newspaper, three pages contained materials about the everyday life of the district: awards, memorable dates (for example, May 23, 1997, marked four years since the consecration of the flag in Sochi), the opening of a representative office, and field

¹ This work had been prepared in 1995 (*Ob"iavlennii*, 1997: 3)

training. The column “Historical Perspective” published an article about the cadet corps of the Russian Empire ([Istoricheskii pakurs, 1997a: 3](#)). The last installment of Igor Girkin’s memoir about the conflict in Bosnia concluded the fourteenth issue ([Girkin, 1997c: 4](#)).

4. Conclusion

In summarizing this analysis of the materials in the monthly newspaper “*Vestnik Leib-Gvardii*”, I would like to note that this organ serves as a valuable source of information on the creation of volunteer units in the Russian Federation after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The materials presented convey the atmosphere of the situation in the early 1990s in southern Russia. During its existence, the newspaper greatly increased the quality of the publication, and regular columns appeared. In addition, the newspaper published exclusive information about local conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union and the former Warsaw Pact countries.

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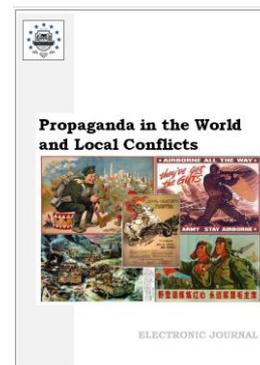
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Military Propaganda at the Second Stage of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War (October 12 – November 10): Official Materials of Armenia and Azerbaijan Defense Ministries

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Abstract

The series of research papers spotlights the high-profile issue of propaganda around the next and very fierce development in the Nagorno Karabakh conflict with far-reaching political and territorial implications; it focuses on the war between forces of the unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (although Armenia was not legally a party to the conflict, its official military media often ignored the fact, considering their forces a side in the conflict. We will provide details on the situation below) and the Azerbaijan military from September 27 to November 10, 2020, which was won by Azerbaijan. The scope of our interest extends beyond fighting to the sides' propaganda campaigns or the so-called "ideological warfare".

The paper, which completes the cycle of the works dedicated to the propaganda efforts mounted by Armenia's and Azerbaijan's official military departments during the Nagorno-Karabakh war in autumn 2020, looks into the sources of the countries' defense ministries, which were released in the final, second stage of the war, namely from October 12 to November 10, 2020.

The study delivers analysis of information messages, front-line status reports and statements by the warring sides and draws conclusions on how effectively they used specific propaganda and agitation methods. The scope of the research work does not include the analysis of communications in the mass media.

Findings of the study suggest that both sides extensively used a range of propaganda techniques throughout the stage, such as enemy demonization, praise for own armies and their successes, and encouragement of patriotic sentiments. Messages by the Armenian Defense Ministry were uninformative (relied on generalized phrases and clichés) and more reserved in expressions. The latter, perhaps, was connected to the situation at the front. The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry issued a much greater number of messages and confirmed them by respective photo and video materials; addresses by President Ilham Aliyev were very emotional.

Keywords: Nagorno-Karabakh conflict from September 27 to November 10, 2020, propaganda, military propaganda, propaganda campaigns in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

1. Introduction

In our previous works, we noted that the conflict on the territory of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), a breakaway state, which is recognized de jure as part of Azerbaijan, but primarily inhabited by ethnic Armenians, has simmered over 100 years. History has proved that

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the establishment of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast in 1923 was only a stop-gap measure and was unable to resolve the ethnic and territorial conflict.

One of the major confrontations was the “acute phase” that took place in the autumn of 2020. In the aftermath, most districts of Nagorno-Karabakh were transferred under the de facto control of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The outcome indicates that the Azerbaijani military had achieved their goals and, accordingly, had been victorious in the respective confrontation.

The heroism showed by Armenian and Azerbaijani servicemen in battle, along with many other factors, was also driven by the work of the “propaganda machine” set into action by the warring sides. One of the “mechanisms” in the “machine” was the activity of Armenia’s and Azerbaijan’s military departments.

As the title of the work specifies, the time frame in our paper is the second and final stage of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, i.e. the period from October 12 to November 10, 2020.

The limited scope of the work makes it impossible to analyze all messages of the Azerbaijani and Armenian defense ministries, and we selected most representative of them in terms of illustrating respective propaganda methods. Note should also be made that official sources have much more powerful impact on citizens’ trust in the information space than the mass media.

2. Materials and methods

For sources, the paper proceeds from official publications by the Armenian and Azerbaijani Defense Ministries within the specified chronological frame (there is no point in elaborating on the sources classification here – its detailed description was provided in the first and second parts of the cycle, see [Mamadaliyev, 2020](#); [Mamadaliyev, 2021](#)).

The methodological basis of the research is comprised by both specialized historical and general research methods. The specialized historical methods conventionally used include:

a) historical systematization: sources were reviewed in tactical/situational (situation at the front, socio-economic situation in front cities, hardships faced by non-combatants/civilians, etc.) and strategic (history of the conflict) contexts.

b) historical comparison: in particular, sources were compared in terms of chronology (the rhetoric of the sources altered even in this very short time frame under review) and through the lens of the warring sides, etc. The latter method can be considered the primary tool for the work because it directly compares the “propaganda machines” of Armenia’s and Azerbaijan’s official agencies.

c) historical genetics (the impact of the front and political situations on the forms and techniques of propaganda).

In addition, general research methods such as synthesis, analysis, generalization, classification and categorization were employed.

3. Discussion

We built our research using works on the theory of propaganda ([Lasswell, 1927](#); [Lasswell, 1938](#); [Lippmann, 1922](#); [Дьюи, 2000](#); [Дьюи, 2002](#)), historical backgrounds of the warring states (e.g. [Istoriya Azerbaidzhana, 1960a](#); [Istoriya Azerbaidzhana, 1960b](#); [Istoriya armyanskogo naroda, 1980](#)), on the history of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (in particular, [Dashdamirov, 2005](#); [Kornell; Semichastnyi, 2002](#); [Aliyev, 2020](#)) and regional wars in general ([Baryn'kin, 1994](#)).

In addition, instrumental were the works in complementary disciplines, such as conflict resolution ([Antsupov, Shipilov, 1999](#)) and philology ([Slovar', 1999](#)), as well as reference books ([Brokgauz, Efron, 1892](#); [Ali-zade, 2007](#); [Gritsanov, Sinilo, 2007](#)).

4. Results

4.1. Statements made by the sides (12.10.20-10.11.20)

4.1.1. Statements of the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Armenia

Statements, created by the RA DM¹ at the second stage of the conflict, utilizes a neutral tone of voice. This, in our opinion, could be dictated by the frontline situation and international climate, which changed unfavorably for the Armenian army and the Nagorno-Karabakh defense forces.

¹Defense Ministry of the Republic of Armenia.

In particular, the statement of 16.10.20 underlines the AF¹'s strong commitment to the agreements: "The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia once again reaffirms that the units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia and Defence Army of Artsakh are ready to observe the terms of the humanitarian ceasefire signed in Moscow on October 10, as well as to apply the agreed ceasefire monitoring arrangements. ...In this regard, we urge the international community, in particular the Co-Chairs of the OSCE² Minsk Group, to address directly in their statements and appeals to the side of the conflict which by various means avoids establishing ceasefire and necessary verification mechanisms for the maintenance of the ceasefire regime". The statement leverages several propaganda tools:

- demonstrating legality, i.e. declaring that the actions of the controlled military departments are in strict compliance with international regulations and agreements;
- demonstrating both its "determination" to act in accordance with the agreements, and willingness to cooperate ("...The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia *once again reaffirms*" (*highlighted by us – author's note*));
- demonstrating peaceable disposition ("...the units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia and Defence Army of Artsakh are ready to observe the terms of the humanitarian ceasefire");
- demonizing the adversary without finger pointing ("... we urge ...to address directly ...to the side of the conflict which ...avoids establishing ceasefire...").

Another statement, dated October 26, 2020, already identifies the object of demonization: "The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia once again officially announces that the Armenian side strictly observes the humanitarian ceasefire regime established from 08:00. ...The statements of the Azerbaijani side that the Armenian side allegedly violated the humanitarian ceasefire do not correspond to reality and they are obviously of provocative nature. ...In this regard, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia highlights the importance of the immediate introduction of definite parameters for maintaining the ceasefire regime, start of the process of exchanging the prisoners of war, other detainees and bodies of the killed with the mediation of the International Committee of the Red Cross" ([Zayavlenie, 2020a](#)). Other propaganda techniques, mentioned above, can also be seen.

Another propaganda tool, wielded by the Armenian side in its statements, implies demonstration of the togetherness/consolidation of the country's all governmental bodies and agencies in facing a shared threat. This is illustrated in the article published on October 27, 2020: "The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia and the General Staff of the Armed Forces strongly condemn the attempts of some political circles to sow contradictions between the political leadership of the Republic of Armenia and the Armed Forces. ...Especially in the conditions of martial law, the Armed Forces of Armenia are committed to the hierarchy provided by law and will continue to unconditionally carry out the orders and decisions of the Supreme Commander, Government and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Armenia. ...The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia and the General Staff of the Armed Forces call on the political and close political circles to refrain from dissenting statements and actions" ([Zayavlenie, 2020b](#)).

Surely, we cannot ignore the statements by the RA DM made on the last day of the conflict – on November 10, 2020. One of the two communications published on the day was an address to the Defense Ministry and the General Staff of Armenia's Armed Forces. It was a defensive message attempting to free the government from blame because the war was lost. The statement underlines the unprecedented scale of the war ("... unprecedented in terms of the forces, means, quantity and type of the armament involved"), disparity in forces, both military and diplomatic ones ("... our army was, in fact, fighting not only against the 10 million-strong Azerbaijani armed forces, but also against Turkey's direct military participation and full and unconditional political, military and diplomatic support, as well as against the several thousand mercenary terrorists"), the direct involvement of the Armenian AF ("In these conditions, our army..."), as well as the selfless devotion of its soldiers and command personnel ("In these conditions, our army did everything possible and impossible to resist the opponent. Every serviceman, officer and general of the Armenian army did his best for the defence of the Homeland, devoting himself to that struggle and

¹ Armed Forces.

² Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

creating many heroic stories”; this fact is emphasized in the statement more than once: “Each of you must be sure, no one should have the slightest doubt that our army has done everything possible and impossible”), it heroifies fallen servicemen (“This war took away from us our best sons, whose memory will forever remain in the hearts of all of us as real heroes of our time”). It also justifies the defeat out of humanity considerations (“But it is time to stop the bloodshed”, “...We are obliged to stop the bloodshed. We are obliged to find the bodies of all our heroes and bury them with military honor. We are obliged to soothe the pain of our mothers who have given birth to heroes and heal the wounds of the injured”) and the need to recover strength of the army (“...We are obliged to restore the potential of our army and strengthen it, turning it into a state-of-the-art and super-efficient fist. There is too much to do”). The statement indirectly acknowledges the weakness of the RA’s AF and also (in our opinion) gives a hint of revanchism: “We call to refrain from the actions that could undermine the foundations of the statehood and, learning lessons from all the possible mistakes made, create an incomparably strong and efficient army, which our heroic people deserve” (Poslanie..., 2020).

The second and last statement by the RA DM on the day was exceptionally laconic: “The RA Ministry of Defence announces that starting from 05:00 of November 10 of this year, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia, together with the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, will carry out the implementation of the provisions in the relevant part of the tripartite agreement reached between the Prime Minister of Armenia and the Presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan to end the Karabakh war” (Ob'yavlenie, 2020b).

Summarizing the findings of our study into the statements by the Armenian military department, we should conclude that the communications employ a wide variety of propaganda tools and techniques, such as demonizing the opponent, declaring the unity of all government bodies when faced with a common enemy, displaying peacefulness, humanity, and readiness to act in strict compliance with international regulatory provisions and diplomatic agreements. The bottom-line reports, following up the war failed by Armenia, focus on heroifying combat veterans and the fact of ceasing hostilities from a humane motive, rather than through military defeat. In the second period of the war, the statements by the Armenian side of the conflict feature a number of distinctions, including political correctness and high level of ethical culture (no insults and other methods of humiliating the opponent and its leadership), which, we think, shows the extensive expertise of the RA DM’s relevant personnel.

4.1.2. Statements of the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The dominant and recurring focus in many statements of the AR DM¹ at the second stage of the war is themed around accusations of the Armenian military personnel of provocative acts, and condemnation of the RA DM’s statements for the falsehoods contained in them: “The information disseminated by the Armenian side about the alleged shelling of the village of David Bek near the Armenian city of Gafan from the territory of the Gubadli region of Azerbaijan, as a result of which there are a large number of victims, is false and yet another provocation. ...Having placed artillery firing points at a depth of 4-5 km in the Gubadli sector of the Armenia-Azerbaijan state border, the enemy subjected the liberated villages of the Gubadli region and units of the Azerbaijani Army to intensive shelling during the day. We have taken adequate actions against these enemy firing points only within our borders. ...We declare once again that Azerbaijan has no military target in the territory of Armenia. The Azerbaijan Army is restoring the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within the borders of our country recognized by the international community” (Informatsiya ob obstrele..., 2020).

We can see that the AR DM makes use of the same propaganda techniques as their counterpart in the RA DM:

- demonizing the opponent (accusing it of spreading false information and committing provocative acts);
- declaring compliance with regulatory provisions (“...We declare once again that Azerbaijan has no military target in the territory of Armenia”, “...within the borders of our country recognized by the international community”);

¹ Defense Ministry of the Azerbaijani Republic.

- declaring the righteous nature of the war (“...restoring the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan”).

In advance of victory – the end of the first third of November 2020 marks the increased rate of statements by President and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan A.G. Aliyev on the settlements liberated from the adversary. In particular, on November 9, 2020, as many as two such messages (as that they were delivered by the head of state, we categorized them as statements) were released: “President Ilham Aliyev: Victorious Azerbaijani Army liberated 48 more villages, 1 settlement and 8 strategic hills from occupation” ([Prezident İl'hām Aliev, 2020a](#)) and “President Ilham Aliyev: Victorious Azerbaijani Army liberated 23 more villages from occupation” ([Prezident İl'hām Aliev, 2020b](#)). The first of them is the text with the following content: “The victorious Azerbaijani Army has liberated from occupation Mets Taghlar, Salakatin, ... (other settlements and heights are enumerated – *author's note*), metres). Glory to the Azerbaijani Army! Karabakh is Azerbaijan! ...President, Victorious Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev said in a post on his Twitter account”. The texts suggest that the principal propaganda method is inciting patriotic sentiments by lauding military successes, praising the armed forces and personally their commander-in-chief.

Particular attention should be paid to the “final” statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan after the signing of the trilateral peace agreement – “President Ilham Aliyev addressed the nation” ([Obrashchenie Prezidenta Azerbaidzhana..., 2020](#)). It is very large, so we will cite specific excerpts that most accurately characterize certain propaganda techniques. It was quite naturally published on the day of the end of the war – November 10, 2020.

The initial part of the address, above all, highlights the finalization of the outcomes of the war that ended: “Dear fellow countrymen. ...It is a historic day for our country today. An end is being put to the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict today. I think that the trilateral statement that has just been signed will put a full stop in resolving the issue. ...The statement has been signed by the President of Azerbaijan, President of Russia and Prime Minister of Armenia. I would like to familiarize you with the text of the statement” ([Obrashchenie Prezidenta Azerbaidzhana..., 2020](#)). Further on, I. Aliyev quotes the text of the joint statement on the end of the war, which seems to be a very rewarding technique, because, first, it is the result of successful combat operations and, second, the president gives complete freedom to readers to make their own unbiased evaluation of the results of the war, without any excerpts with “one-sided advantage” from the text; the tactic is very compelling in terms of propaganda, as it gives the impression of the objectivity of the country’s top leadership.

This part is immediately followed by the President’s address to the nation, and, significantly, the final cliché in the introduction is known, perhaps, to every person who grew up in the USSR: “Dear fellow countrymen, dear *sisters and brothers*” (italicized by us – *author's note*). The cliché feels particularly close to the older generation (for convenience, we would define it as “45+”, i.e. citizens who received primary education in the USSR and who vividly remember the first phrase in Joseph Stalin’s address to the nation, declaring the start of the Great Patriotic War); to our mind, the parallel, drawn by I.G. Aliyev, was quite deliberate.

In addition to another reiteration that “...this statement has historic significance”, the Azerbaijani president did not miss the opportunity to mock his counterpart – prime minister of the Republic of Armenia N.V. Pashinyan “...I want to say again that this action (refusal to sign the end of war statement during a live televised conference – *author's note*) of Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan is understandable. However, I think that everyone should be held accountable for what they do. Everyone must have some respect for themselves even in the most difficult and critical situations for themselves and for their country. Pashinyan will sign it anyway. We have forced him to do that. But he will sign it in a closed place, in a locked-up room, far from the cameras, in a cowardly and treacherous manner. He is not signing it of his own free will. He is signing it under pressure from the iron fist!”, “... Pashinyan was forced to sign the statement – in a very pathetic and miserable state” ([Obrashchenie Prezidenta Azerbaidzhana..., 2020](#)): it seems obvious that the confrontation between the two politicians is personal. With emphatic repetition of the fact, I. Aliyev probably wants to show his people his uncompromising attitude, harshness and determination, as well as his readiness to “go to the end”. The method exerts a powerful propaganda effect, as it strengthens patriotic sentiments and allegiance of citizens.

The statement teems with clichés and trite phrases well-known from Soviet propaganda, such as “our glorious victory”, “broke the back”, “...in a very pathetic and miserable state”, “hated enemy”, “savage enemy” “took revenge on them with a vengeance”, “would drive the enemy out of our lands”, “crushed the enemy” and many more.

It actively exploits the demonization technique not only in its presentation of the Armenian military personnel, but, as the phrases in the statement show, even of the nation as a whole: “...The whole world can see now what the hated enemy has done to these lands. All our buildings have been destroyed, all our historical sites have been destroyed, our museums have been looted, our nature has been severely damaged, our mosques have been destroyed and desecrated. In the half-destroyed mosques in the liberated lands, the savage enemy kept pigs to insult us and hurt our pride” ([Obrashchenie Prezidenta Azerbaidzhana...](#), 2020). Certainly, we cannot question the reliability of the information but from an ethics perspective, the approach does not stand up to criticism.

The statement often underlines the country’s support of Azerbaijani IDPs who moved from the Karabakh territory and demonstrates total solidarity with them: “...We have returned to Shusha, we have returned Shusha, we will live in Shusha, people will live in all other lands liberated from occupation. People will return to those lands, live there, our people's 30-year longing will come to an end. ... Every time an occupied district or city was liberated, I congratulated the residents of those cities and districts. I can imagine what it means for them. Some, perhaps many, have lost hope because the issue had not been resolved for many years. Over the past 17 years, I have been in numerous meetings with the IDPs, attended ceremonies to present them with new homes, and I saw that their hopes were diminishing with every passing year. I saw it. I saw it with a sore heart. I saw that some of them had already lost hope. Yes, they expressed their gratitude, of course, we have created good conditions for them and resolved their problems. As you know, the work done for the IDPs in Azerbaijan is not done in any other country. There are IDPs in many countries around the world, but the situation of our IDPs is incomparably better than in other countries. But their main desire has been to return to their native lands, and they asked me, “Mr. President, please return us there”. Every time I met with them, I saw a strong resolve, invincibility, loyalty to the state, but at the same time, I saw grief and longing in their eyes. This is over, my fellow compatriots, may your eyes be clear now, you are going back, we are going back, Azerbaijan is going back! Azerbaijan is restoring its territorial integrity. Could there be a greater happiness?” ([Obrashchenie Prezidenta Azerbaidzhana...](#), 2020). The excerpt indicates that the method of arousing sentimental feelings is also capitalized on.

Although it does not mention the name of the leader of the Artsakh breakaway republic, A.V. Harutunyan, several hard-hitting words in the statement might as well refer to him: “...It was in Shusha that the leader of the gang who is now looking for a hole to hide, the leader of the junta was sworn-in and the prime minister of Armenia attended. Wasn't that intended to annoy us? Did they think that no-one would hold them to account for that? We did, we put them to their knees, they are on their knees now! (below, judging by the text, it refers to Armenian Prime Minister N. Pashinyan – *author's note*) There is hardly anyone he didn't call over the past 40 days, begging for help and humiliating himself. We have humiliated him and we were absolutely right. When he danced drunk on Jidir Duzu in the holy city of Shusha, he should have thought that this day would come, he would receive his punishment, hide like a mouse, take this document and sign it crying. We showed him his place, we taught him a lesson. We chased them out of our lands like dogs. I said that we would chase them, that we would chase them like dogs, and we chased them, we chased them like dogs. He is now signing this document out of fear, knowing that we will come to Aghdam, Kalbajar and Lachin...” ([Obrashchenie Prezidenta Azerbaidzhana...](#), 2020). Was it wise for the country’s leader to use such unethical expressions in the landmark statement for the Azerbaijani history to achieve propaganda effect? It is difficult to give a simple answer to the question...

The line of demonizing the opponent is supported by the arguments about the war crimes of Armenia (“They could not confront us on the battlefield, fled and then fired on civilians with ballistic missiles. This is a war crime. They will be held accountable for this war crime. To hit the city of Ganja with ballistic missiles from Armenia is a disgrace, a despicable act, a crime. It is a war crime to shoot Barda with cluster munitions. I said earlier that the city of Tartar is similar to the city of Stalingrad, which was destroyed during World War II”: the statement again draws a parallel with the Great Patriotic War), uses the propaganda techniques designed to humiliate the opponent, in particular by ridiculing them for mass desertion (“But the Armenians fled. Their “invincible”

army was destroyed, desertion began, the head of the junta in Nagorno-Karabakh ordered that whoever ran away would be held accountable”). At the same time, the statement praises the Azerbaijani armed forces (“Did any of us run away? It didn't happen! Not a single person! This is what the people of Azerbaijan are! Civilians lost their homes, their property, their loved ones, but kept saying, “Long live the Motherland”. Go ahead, go forward!”); I.G. Aliyev made sure to pay a compliment to himself: “...The letters to me say, Commander-in-Chief, go forward! We support you, go forward, don't stop, and so I did, I did not stop”. The speech also underlines Azerbaijan's compliance with the regulations of international humanitarian law: “...we respect international law, we defend international law, we defend justice, and we are implementing UN Security Council resolutions. I said that all our steps were based on the norms and principles of international law, were based on morality, and all our steps were taken in this direction. We took our revenge on the enemy, we took it on the occupier. We have not dealt with and will never deal with civilians. There is no major destruction in the cities where the enemy lives and hides because we did not open fire on civilian facilities. That is the difference between us” ([Obrashchenie Prezidenta Azerbaidzhana..., 2020](#)).

I. Aliyev did not forget in his address to the nation to express gratitude to his allies: “...In my remarks at the signing ceremony in the videoconference format, I praised the efforts of both the President of Turkey, my dear brother Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin. Because they made truly great efforts during these 44-45 days to resolve the issue peacefully. At the same time, I am very glad that these two leaders have already played a positive role in ending the conflict. I think that it also largely determines the format of future cooperation in the region. Because if we look at the history of relations between Turkey and Russia today, I think they are at the highest level. Both countries are friendly and neighboring countries for us. So I think that this format of cooperation can be even more diverse in the future” ([Obrashchenie Prezidenta Azerbaidzhana..., 2020](#)).

Overall, we can say that the address “drew a line” under all the statements issued in the period of the war under review and represents a kind of culmination: it thanks the army and the Azerbaijani people, mentions the nation's unity, praises soldiers killed in action, etc. – in other words, it takes advantage of the entire range of propaganda techniques, such as inciting patriotic sentiments, promoting solidarity and togetherness, as well as stirring up hatred towards the leadership of the enemy army.

4.2. Front-line status reports (12.10.20–10.11.20)

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

As the conflict ripens and draws to an end, the front-line status reports by the RA DM become increasingly concise and less informative. As one of the examples, we can cite a message, released in an article titled “The destruction of the opponent's equipment and bases” ([Unichtozhenie tekhniki..., 2020](#)) on October 16, 2020, in which the video is supplemented with the text reading “The Defence Army of the Republic of Artsakh continues to deliver accurate artillery strikes, destroying the opponent's combat equipment and bases, after which the Azerbaijani units flee”. However, the short video does not show the moment when the opponent's equipment/personnel is destroyed; although the element is the best evidence for a naive viewer. Presumably, no successes at the front corresponded to the message, but there was a need for such a “success report”, and this forced the RA DM officers responsible for events coverage and media relations (in fact, those responsible for propaganda) to create the flimsy video footage.

Note should also be made that assembling a “director's cut” for videos as a propaganda technique (see e.g. [Unichtozhenie boevykh pozitsii..., 2020](#)), in which the video is a staged and edited version, but fails to explicitly record the confirmation of the losses inflicted on the opponent.

In sum, the front-line status reports of the second half of October are formalistic communications, but some carries a propaganda component, in particular, the message dated October 18: “According to the information received from the Defence Army of Artsakh, on the night of October 17-18, the humanitarian ceasefire, in general, was maintained in the Artsakh-Azerbaijani conflict zone, with the exception of the periods from 00:04 to 02:45 in the northern direction and from 02:20 to 02:45 in the southern direction, when the enemy forces also used rocket artillery strikes. ...In the morning, at around 07:20, after active artillery fire, the Azerbaijani armed forces started to attack in the southern direction. There are victims and wounded from the

both sides. ...The entire responsibility for the escalation of the situation on the frontline falls on the military-political leadership of Azerbaijan” (Soobshchenie dlya pressy, 2020c). It is evident that here the propaganda technique of demonizing the opponent and, above all, its leadership is put into action.

Near the end of the conflict, the flow of communications on the RA DM’s website becomes much thinner; the only section that continues to appear features front-line status reports with the “Artsakh” hashtag and is often the only one during the day; the section offers largely schematic messages with a “standard” set of phrases such as “...According to the information received from the Defence Army of Artsakh, the relatively stable and tense situation in the Artsakh-Azerbaijani conflict zone did not change on the night of October 22-23. The artillery battles and shootouts continued in some areas” (Soobshchenie dlya pressy, 2020d). At the same time, the reports are used on a regular basis to demonize the opponent: “...In the evening, once again grossly violating the norms of the international humanitarian law, the enemy forces shelled Askeran and at midnight they again targeted Martuni. ...Currently, the battles of local importance are taking place in all the directions of the frontline. The Defence Army units continue their operations to find and destroy the enemy’s subversive groups of mercenary terrorists” (Soobshchenie dlya pressy, 2020d).

As a tradition, the front-line status reports make use of propaganda methods that incite hatred towards the opponent by providing information on civilian casualties, in particular, in the communication dated November 2, 2020: “Today, at around 6:10 pm, the Azerbaijani side opened artillery fire in the direction of the positions of the Armed Forces of Armenia and the settlement of Davit Bek, as a result of which one civilian was killed and two others were wounded” (Soobshchenie dlya pressy, 2020f).

When analyzing the front-line status reports, it is impossible to oversee information garbling: each message insists that “the army units completely control the operative-tactical situation” and “take steps to further detect and neutralize the enemy forces” (Soobshchenie dlya pressy, 2020g). It is known that the front-line situation in the period was not favorable for the Armenian side of the conflict; undoubtedly, misinforming its own population was another desperate measure. However, from our viewpoint, such spread of false information had a backlash effect. Considering the small size of the warring states and the advance level of the current communication technology, rumors about the actual situation spread very quickly. Such methods worked well during the Great Patriotic War, but today they are totally ineffective. Hence, in the conflict, efforts to mislead its own population, we think, only undermined public confidence in official military sources in particular, and the entire structure of the country’s executive bodies in general. We can suggest that covering the real state of affairs, combined with other propaganda techniques, could have boosted both patriotic sentiments and hatred towards the opponent, and the volunteer movement.

Let us summarize. The front-line status reports by the RA DM can be characterized by one idiom – it was an attempt to “put a brave face on a sorry business”. As propaganda techniques, it makes use of falsifying information, silencing down facts, inciting hatred towards the opponent and discrediting the relevant agencies in the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry. However, the techniques implying the spread of falsehoods, we believe, produced the opposite effect, because of the advanced communication technology and the media, as well as thanks to the local scale of the conflict (meaning a small area of the combat zone, extensive family ties of those involved in military operations, etc.), which enabled the dissemination of actual information on the front-line situation through rumors.

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

At the final stage of the war, the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry released quite numerous front-line status reports as compared with Armenia’s military agency. Traditionally, the reports accuse the opponent of treacherous behavior (violation of previous agreements); the information provided is the exact opposite of the one posted on the RA DM’s website.

In addition to capitalizing on “standard” phrases (“...During the night from October 11 to 12, the situation along the entire front remained tense”), the messages most commonly use the enemy demonization technique (“...Armenian armed forces, which did not comply with the humanitarian truce, repeatedly tried to attack the positions of the Azerbaijan Army in small groups in the direction of Aghdere-Aghdam and Fizuli-Jabrayil in order to regain lost positions” (Nashi voiska...

2020); or “URGENT. ...The territory of the Goranboy, Terter and Aghdam regions are being shelled by the Armenian armed forces, which do not comply with humanitarian truce” ([Geranboiskii..., 2020](#))), however, unlike their counterparts in the RA MD, the Azerbaijani military officials provide more specific information, giving more facts, and this, of course, is a much more beneficial move in terms of propaganda. For example: “...As a result of the combat activities carried out, a large number of enemy forces, as well as three BM-21 "Grad" MLRS, one T-72 tank, several vehicles, were destroyed and wrecked in different directions of the front. ...According to the information received, during the combat operations, the chief of artillery of the 9th regiment of the Armenian armed forces withdrew from the direction of the settlement of Hadrut, and the 5th battalion of the regiment left their equipment at the battle positions and fled. In addition, the military personnel of the 5th and 522nd regiments withdrew leaving their auto and armored vehicles behind. ...As a result of an artillery strike in the direction of the Girmizi Bazaar, an underground shelter and two vehicles of the retreating enemy unit were destroyed at the place of permanent deployment of the 1st regiment. ...According to the report, the battalion commander of the 246th regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Grigoryan, was among those killed in the enemy army, which suffered heavy casualties” ([Nashi voiska..., 2020](#)). Of course, it is difficult for an outside reader to figure out whether the article says truth or not, but the “factual evidence” provided lends credence to the material.

In general, status reports by the Azerbaijani DM are quite similar to each other and were released in numbers, and for this reason, we consider it inefficient to review other messages of the type in the scope of the paper.

In general, we note that the front-line reports of the AR MO are filled with photo and video material, which, in contrast to the reports of the RA MO, looks much more advantageous and, from the point of view of propaganda, such an approach seems to be much more effective (see e.g. [Osvobozhdennoe ot okkupatsii..., 2020](#)).

4.3. Information messages (12.10.20-10.11.20).

4.3.1. Information messages by the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Armenia

Information messages regularly demonstrated the legal non-involvement of the Armenian armed forces in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, with posts of the following type: “According to the information received from the Defence Army of Artsakh, on the night of October 11-12, the relatively stable tension was maintained in all the directions of the frontline. The opponent was active especially in the northern, northeastern and southern directions. ...All the attempts of the enemy forces to change the operative-tactical situation in their favor were stopped by the Defence Army units. The opponent suffered heavy losses of manpower and military equipment. ...In the morning, the opponent resumed shelling, accompanied by the artillery fire, which was suppressed as a result of the equivalent actions taken by the Defence Army units” ([Soobshchenie dlya pressy, 2020a](#)).

However, the Armenian Defense Ministry “forgot” from time to time that the country de jure did not take part in the armed conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh (even within one day’s news). We find one of the many confirmations on 12.10.20 in the video footage entitled “Trainings before leaving for the front”; the video is commented with a short text: “The participants of the mobilization actively conduct trainings before leaving for the Artsakh front. The reporting of “Zinuzh Media” tells about the tankers’ trainings who responded to the call to defend the Homeland” ([Trenirovki..., 2020](#)).

Moreover, the official website of the Armenian Defense Ministry even contacts its neighboring state (Iran) on behalf of the Artsakh Defense Forces: “On October 16, Head of the Department of the Defence Policy and International Cooperation of the RA Ministry of Defence Levon Ayvazyan met with Military Attaché of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Republic of Armenia, Colonel Bahman Sadeghin. ...Levon Ayvazyan informed that, in spite of several calls made by the Armenian side, the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan continue to accumulate forces and carry out operations along the length of the border of the Islamic Republic of Iran, thus taking shelter at the state border. Levon Ayvazyan reiterated the need to move the operations of the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan at a safe distance from the border with Iran. ...On behalf of the Defence Army of Artsakh, it was reported that in case the situation in the mentioned sector remains unchanged, the Defence Army reserves the right to carry out devastating strikes against the Azerbaijani Armed Forces in the given sector and the military-political leadership of Azerbaijan will bear the entire responsibility for the consequences” ([Voennyi attashe..., 2020](#)).

However, the above messages still contain “reservations” of some kind, namely, in the form of the #Artsakh hashtag. Some messages were created in the style of the official policy and had direct references only to Artsakh as a participant in the conflict without mentioning Armenia: “According to the information received from the Defence Army of Artsakh, on the night of October 12-13, the relatively stable tension in the Artsakh-Azerbaijani conflict zone remained unchanged. ...In the morning, the opponent resumed operations in the southern, northern, northeastern and eastern directions, accompanied by the active rocket artillery fire. The enemy is particularly active in the northeastern part of the frontline. ...The units of the Defence Army take equivalent actions in all the directions to suppress the opponent’s fire and thwart the latter's plans, keeping the operative-tactical situation under control” ([Soobshchenie dlya pressy, 2020b](#)).

Therefore, we can conclude that this forced ambiguity of the Armenian government’s policy did not produce any positive effect on the ideological “front-line”; what is worse, it created many obstacles for propaganda activities of the respective departments in the Armenian military agencies.

The Armenian Defense Ministry employed another beneficial propaganda technique that, in particular, was very broadly (and very effectively!) used by the Soviet media – the technique of heroification of specific individuals. It is illustrated by a 5-minute video post published on dated October 16, 2020 and entitled “Colonel Vahagn Asatryan – National Hero of Armenia” ([Polkovnik..., 2020](#)).

Another propaganda tactic, which inspires patriotic sentiments and has much in common with the previous technique, is the publication of pictures of Armenian servicemen, while they were deployed in the field, in an article without text “Defenders of the Motherland”, dated 21.10.2020.

On October 20, 2020, the website of the RA Defense Ministry posted a very interesting (and unconventional in terms of propaganda) announcement (based on the communication content, we categorized it not as a statement, but as an information message): “The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia informs that the acceptance of the applications and complaints that are being sent to the Military Medical Department of the Armed Forces by the servicemen, citizens drafted through mobilization and volunteers about the state of health is temporarily suspended. ...During martial law, the medical services are equally provided to all the servicemen, including those drafted through mobilization and volunteers in accordance with the procedure existing in the general system for the medical-evacuating measures of the Armed Forces, military units or places of deployment” ([Ob'yavlenie, 2020a](#)). The message may imply a personnel shortage, the unwillingness of conscripts/volunteers/the military to be involved in combat operations, a large number of the wounded combatants (and resulting problems with MES¹ provided by the military and medical directorate of the Armenian armed forces) or other concerns. Despite some subtleness of the message, its presence in the news feed is a blunder in terms of propaganda organization because it indirectly reveals the actual situation at the front. However, its publication, we believe, is another desperate measure.

Demonstrating care for the military is another impactful propaganda technique, and the RA Defense Ministry masterfully uses it, which is exemplified by the communication “The Minister of Defence of the Republic of Armenia visited the wounded servicemen”, dated 24.10.2020: “Minister of Defence of the Republic of Armenia David Tonoyan visited the servicemen wounded during the yesterday’s operation of neutralizing the opponent’s unit of special importance and destroying a large amount of equipment in the southern direction” ([Ministr oborony RA..., 2020](#)). Note should be made that the message contains not a single reference to the Artsakh Defense Army, and this, in our opinion, may give a hint to an outside reader that the military of the RA Defense Ministry have been involved in the conflict; whether the omission was deliberate (for ideological reasons) or inadvertent, we cannot say.

So, at the point, we can identify the key feature of the RA DM’s messages in the second period of the war – this is the issue of the “two-faced position”, which is related to Armenia’s legal non-involvement in the conflict, but its de facto utmost support for Artsakh. This two-faced position, in our opinion, was not taken voluntarily, but the messages on the RA DM’s website are not characterized by any specific consistency/continuity/succession regarding Armenia’s role in the war. This discredits the respective departments of the Armenian armed forces in the minds of

¹ Medical and evacuation support

outside readers. The ministry makes use of various patriotism incitement techniques, such as heroification of the conflict participants, introspection (publishing photos showing front-line soldiers in the combat zone) and others.

4.3.2. Information messages by the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry most massively used demonization of the opponent as a military propaganda technique. One of the striking examples is the article dated October 31, 2020 – “The enemy is firing at our human settlements”: “– URGENT – ...The enemy is subjecting to artillery fire the Terter city, the Shikharkh settlement, and the Eskipara village of this district, as well as the Giyameddinli village of the Aghjabedi district” ([Protivnik podvergaet ..., 2020](#)).

A very potent technique of military propaganda, which was also copiously used by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry, implies accusations of violations of international laws and conventions. A good illustration of this is the article “The enemy is attempting to lay the basis for his further provocations by delivering phosphorus cargo to the territory of Khojavend”, posted on October 31, 2020: “Intelligence data has been received on the delivery of a large amount of phosphorus cargo to units stationed in the defensive site of the 3rd motorized rifle regiment of the 37th rifle division of the 1st combined arms army of the Armenian armed forces in the occupied Khojavend direction. ...It is expected that the aim of the enemy on delivery phosphorus-containing ammunition to the specified regions is primarily their use against the Azerbaijan Army Units. On the other hand, it targets to spread misinformation that the ammunition was allegedly scattered over the terrain by the Azerbaijan Army Units. ...The Armenian side lays the basis for its further provocations by spreading on October 30 false and fake information about the alleged use of weapons containing white phosphorus by the Azerbaijan Army. ...We declare once again that the Azerbaijan Army does not have any prohibited ammunition in its armament” ([Protivnik pytaetsya..., 2020](#)).

The article is fitted with a number of military propaganda template techniques:

- the primary propaganda tool here is to “expose” the opponent’s violations of international conventions that regulates warfare, first of all, the use of munitions prohibited by the international community (in this case, the use of white phosphorus). It is general knowledge that munitions containing white phosphorus as a warfare agent was banned by the 1977 Additional Protocol to the Geneva Convention of August 12, 1949, in which paragraph 2 of Article 35 sets forth that “it is prohibited to employ weapons, projectiles and material and methods of warfare of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering” ([Konventsiya, 1949](#)). White phosphorus (with the operating temperature, together with an auxiliary fuel when contacting atmospheric oxygen, reaching as high as 1,000 °C and a chemical reaction continuing to the agent’s complete burnout – let alone a caustic poisonous gas released during the reaction) produces deep, hard-to-heal penetrating burns and damages both muscle and bone tissues. White phosphorus gas not only causes the respiratory damage, but, due to its high solubility, caused poisoning of the entire body. Considering this, the use of WP not only results in irreversible losses of military personnel, but also exerts a strong demoralizing effect. The CWC¹ recommended destruction of the munitions, in addition to other types of chemical weapons. Unfortunately, combatants in many armed conflicts, according to some sources, including both sides in the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war, continue to use white phosphorus as a warfare incendiary and toxic agent (see e.g. [Armenia uses..., 2020](#); [Azerbaijani obvinil Armeniyu..., 2020](#); [Armenia's Army Drops..., 2020](#); [Armeniya zayavila o primenenii..., 2020](#); [Armeniya raskryla..., 2020](#), etc.).

- accusing the opponent of spreading falsehoods;
- declaring compliance with international regulatory provisions.

The Azerbaijani side in the conflict, as its counterpart did, appealed to the civilian population for financial aid. One of the messages was published on the website of the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry on October 12, 2021 under the heading “Armed Forces Relief Fund opened additional accounts”: “Considering the numerous requests received by the Ministry of Defense from our

¹ Abbreviation for the “Chemical Weapons Convention” – the abbreviated name of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (Paris, 1993), ratified by most countries across the globe (190 states by 2013).

compatriots living abroad, about the provision of financial support to the Azerbaijan Army in the bank accounts of the Armed Forces Relief Fund in the International Bank were added accounts in Turkish lira and British pound” ([Otkryty dopolnitel'nye scheta..., 2020](#)). From the propaganda perspective, the article is noteworthy for several important, in our opinion, points. The first one is the reference to the “numerous requests”, which evokes patriotic feelings and encourages citizens to act “as all do”; the move helped achieve two objectives – arousing patriotism and mobilizing economic support from the civilian population.

The communications by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry, as did the ones by the Armenian Defense Ministry, intensely used in their military propaganda conventional methods of refuting accusations and declaring commitment to international regulatory provisions and agreements. A typical example is an article dated October 12, 2020 – “The Azerbaijan Army strongly complies with the humanitarian truce”: “The information spread by the Armenian side about the alleged concentration of a large number of forces by the Azerbaijan Army with the aim of entering Hadrut and the fierce battles conducted in this direction is misinformation. ...It should be recalled that the Azerbaijan Army has already liberated Hadrut from occupation several days ago. ...We declare that the Azerbaijan Army strongly complies with the humanitarian truce and does not conduct active combat actions” ([Azerbaidzhanskaya Armiya strogo..., 2020](#)).

The information messages by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry (as opposed to those of the Armenian Defense Ministry) massively use photo and video materials (see, in particular, [Sozdany peredvizhnye punkty..., 2020](#)) that, in terms of agitation, produce a much greater impact than simple text.

We should also note that the messages at the end of the first third of November, when the victory of the Azerbaijani army became evident, gave praise for President I.G. Aliyev, reviving the “best” traditions of Soviet heyday: “Victorious Commander-in-Chief, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today made a phone call to Commander of the Joint Corps, Lieutenant General Hikmat Mirzayev. ...The Commander-in-Chief congratulated Hikmat Mirzayev on the liberation of the city of Shusha from the occupiers. The head of state extended his congratulations to the servicemen and all the military personnel of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces who heroically and valiantly participated in the liberation of Shusha. ...Lieutenant General Hikmat Mirzayev on behalf of the military personnel extended his deep gratitude to the Commander-in-Chief. He reported that the personnel are always ready to fulfill the orders and justify the confidence of the Commander-in-Chief” (08.11.20, [Soobshchenie press-sluzhby Prezidenta, 2020](#)). The study does not seek to analyze what the success in this war means for the Azerbaijani people and what the Azerbaijani President’s personal tremendous contribution to the victory was, but we should necessarily note that although such clichés may have a propaganda effect inside the country, but in an outside reader, such obsequious assessments can provoke a negative reaction.

Reviewing the results of our investigation into the propaganda messages by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry, we found out that it generally utilized propaganda techniques and tools identical to those used by their counterpart from the Armenian Defense Ministry, namely demonizing the opponent (its cruelty, non-compliance with international regulatory provisions and humanitarian principles of warfare, dissemination of false information and other), glorifying their own armed forces (heroism, compliance with the laws on the conduct of wars, thwarting the spread of false information and other) and personally the Supreme Commander-in-Chief.

5. Conclusion

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

1. The analysis of the propaganda campaigns activated at the second stage of the conflict (and during the entire period of the war) enables a general conclusion that ideological was taken to a new level; the difference will be especially striking if compared with the Soviet propaganda, above all in the period of the Great Patriotic War. Although Armenia and Azerbaijan design their current propaganda for the general audience, the culture of the activity is very strong; it contains no blatant offensive (derogatory) statements about the opponent and its leadership, and the enemy demonization is delivered in a careful manner with the main emphasis on non-compliance with regulatory provisions.

2. Speaking of the quantity, the website of the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry posted much more messages than the website of the Armenian Defense Ministry. This is particularly

characteristic of the second and final stage of the war, when on some days the latter published only one article per day. We think the situation is directly connected with the state of affairs at the front.

3. In the messages of both sides, the most broadly used propaganda technique implies mutual accusations of treacherous behaviors (i.e. violation of agreements); the technique has been known since ancient times and strives to provoke hatred towards the opponent.

4. Many articles created by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry, in particular front-line status reports (as compared with similar messages on the website of the Armenian Defense Ministry in the final period of the war) are supplemented with photo and video material; this tactic is much more compelling from the propaganda perspective than simple texts.

5. The propaganda efforts of the Armenian military agency at the second stage of the conflict are styled with politically correct phrases (no explicit insults, etc.), vague clichés and generalities without appropriate photo and video evidence to describe the situation at the front. The choice of the approach, from our viewpoint, was caused by the agency's failures at the front.

6. Key highlights of the propaganda efforts, mounted by the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry at the second stage of the conflict, include emotional speeches delivered by Supreme Commander-in-Chief I. Aliyev and the multitude of messages with photo and video footage of the agency's advances; the messages put the emphasis on inciting hatred towards the opponent and patriotism through military propaganda. On the other hand, some of the statements by the head of the republic are explicitly offensive, which makes them dubious in terms of political correctness and ethics; this "rush" for propaganda performance can be meaningful inside the country (and among the naive population), but evokes a negative reaction in an outside reader.

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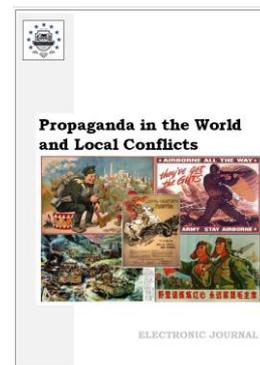
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Letter to the Editor

The Agit-Steamer Krasnaya Zvezda in Later Photographs

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Abstract

The period 2019–2021 marks 100 years since the launch of the storied agit-steamer sailings along the Kama and Volga rivers, which had a significant cultural effect on life in the regions. During the Soviet era, the topic of these sailings was highly popular, as they were taken part in by top Soviet government officials. Yet at the same time, the fate of the actual steamers remains largely obscure. To date there are no integrated works on the biography of those ships. This paper reviews a set of existing photographic sources dealing with the later period of the life of the steamer Krasnaya Zvezda [Red Star]. Use was made of materials from the city of Sarapul's municipal and private archives, as well as materials from the Center for Documenting Contemporary History of the Udmurt Republic. The photographic testimonies provided offer an unequivocal indication that in the late 1960s the steamer Krasnaya Zvezda was no longer a self-propelled vessel. Its paddle wheels appear to have been removed, while the space within the housings appears to have been put to use. Its boilers and engines clearly appear to have been removed too. Despite some sources indicating that the steamer was transferred from the Kama River Shipping Company to the Izhevsk Mechanical Plant, within the timeframe under examination the vessel appears to have been on the books of the Sarapul Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory, which is indicated by the captions accompanying the photographs. In 1973, while being beached on the shore, the vessel sustained a severe deformation to its hull, which would eventually make impossible both its further use and restoration. Despite certain elements of the ship's hull being still in existence as of the early 2000s, it appears to be highly unlikely that one will be able to reconstruct the steamer just based on those remains.

Keywords: agit-steamer, Krasnaya Zvezda, Kama, navigation, photographic source.

1. Introduction

The period 2019–2021 marks 100 years since the launch of the storied agit-steamer sailings along the Kama and Volga rivers, which had a significant cultural effect on life in the regions. During the Soviet era, the topic of these sailings was highly popular, as they were taken part in by top Soviet government officials. Yet at the same time, the fate of the actual steamers remains largely obscure. To date there are no integrated works on the biography of those ships. This paper

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reviews a set of existing photographic sources dealing with the later period of the life of the steamer *Krasnaya Zvezda* [Red Star].

2. Materials and methods

In putting this work together, principal use was made of collections of photodocuments from the Udmurt archives. While some other archives may, too, contain photographs showing the steamer *Krasnaya Zvezda* subsequent to its removal from the fleet of the Kama River Shipping Company, the relevant photographs were found only in three major repositories. The first place is the Department for Archives of the Administration of the City of Sarapul (Sarapul, Udmurt Republic). The second place is the holdings of the Sarapul Historical, Architectural, and Art Museum Preserve. This is no wonder as the steamer was on the books of the Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory and was being used not far from Sarapul. The third place is the photoarchive of the Center for Documenting Contemporary History of the Udmurt Republic (Izhevsk, Udmurt Republic). In addition, use was made of private photocollections, specifically that of well-known Perm collector G.A. Rakitin.

Currently, amid active efforts to digitize photomaterials, the photograph has become a mass source that is especially valuable in terms of history. Yet, despite considerable research analyzing photographic material, special methods for analyzing it have yet to be produced. Perhaps, the problem is that this objective is hard, or maybe even impossible, to formalize at this time. Consequently, photograph analysis is currently performed using the methods of integrated source studies, with a focus on engaging as many sources pertinent to the photographed item as possible. In this regard, there appears to be an issue with the photographic source attribution. In this particular case, it appears to be in conflict with the existing recordkeeping documentation. Specifically, based on the documentation of the Kama River Shipping Company, on decommissioning the *Krasnaya Zvezda* was transferred to the Izhevsk Mechanical Plant, while, based on the captions to the photographs, the vessel was on the books of the Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory. This mismatch provides the basis for research aimed at reconstructing the later biography of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*.

3. Discussion

Despite the abundance of literature mentioning the steamer *Krasnaya Zvezda*, to date there are no integrated works on its biography. Among the poorly covered timeframes is the period subsequent to the decommissioning of the vessel from the fleet of the Kama River Shipping Company.

In the mid-1970s, a number of newspapers published in the area near the River Kama carried a sensational story about the scrapping of the agit-steamer's hull. Specifically, on August 28, 1976, the *Kama Pravda* wrote that "the steamer's hull [had] already been sawed in half" (Tyurina, 1976). However, after the *Bolshaya Kama* published on December 24, 1987, a photograph showing a vessel that is allegedly being disassembled, most of the veterans alive at the time argued it was not the *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Bol'shaya Kama, 1988). The reason behind this confusion may be due to the fact that, subsequent to being decommissioned from the fleet of the Kama River Shipping Company on September 18, 1963, the vessel was officially put on the books of the Izhevsk Mechanical Plant. However, the photographs indicate that it actually was on the books of the Sarapul Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory.

In the days of the 100th anniversary of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*'s storied sailings along the Kama and Volga rivers, the periodical press was taking a renewed interest in the steamer's biography (e.g., Vostrikov, 2019 and Kachkina, 2019). However, this mostly was limited to a series of unoriginal messages intended to make a splash (e.g., "The *Krasnaya Zvezda* has made three agitation sailings along the Volga – in 1919, 1920, and 1921. Prior to the 1960s, the vessel was employed for regular sailings by the Volga River Shipping Company, and later by the Kama River Shipping Company. Subsequent to being decommissioned (1963), it was used as a holiday ship of the 60th Anniversary of the USSR Izhevsk Mechanical Plant. Starting in 1968, the *Krasnaya Zvezda* was employed to transport holidayers from Sarapul to the Krutyte Gorki holiday center. The vessel was damaged during a spring ice drift. By some accounts, in the late 1980s its hull was scrapped for metal. However, based on what is shown in a set of photographs that surfaced in 2013, the steamer is still alive and is in the Kama boatyard. The issue of restoring it has been raised more than once in the Perm press" (Kachkina, 2019). There are a number of logical discrepancies in the material about the steamer, so it is obvious that its later history needs detailed reconstructing. With

this in mind, the object of this work was to review a set of later photographs of the steamer that could possibly shed some light on the issue.

Photographs from the holdings of the Sarapul Archive

The holding R-840 ('Platova Margarita Afanas'evna – Honored Worker of Public Education of the UASSR, Head of the Lenin Museum at Sarapul Boarding School for Hard-of-Hearing Children (16.01.1937 – 16.11.2008)') of the Department for Archives of the Administration of the City of Sarapul contains two photographs of the steamer *Krasnaya Zvezda*. Given M.A. Platova's being in charge of a museum, it is quite likely that the photographs were taken either by herself or by an employee of the school at her request (Figures 1 and 2). Both of the photographs have the same caption: "The steamer *Krasnaya Zvezda*, which in 1919 took a group of instructors from the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to the areas near the Volga and Kama rivers for the conduct of agitation-propaganda and cultural-educational work among the military units and the population. The agit-team included member of the Collegium of the People's Commissariat for Education N.K. Krupskaya. The city of Sarapul [1970]" (SGA. F. R-840. Op. 3. D. 810, 811). Unfortunately, no other additional information about the photographs is available in the archive.

The first photograph (Figure 1) must have been taken in summer, which is suggested by the exuberant vegetation in the fore- and backgrounds. The picture also takes in two people, who are sitting on a bench in the foreground with their backs to the photographer, two more people, who are standing on the ramp at the entrance to the steamer, and one more person, who is sitting on a bench on the left, all wearing summer outfits, which confirms the assumption that the picture was taken in summer. The steamer is missing its wheels and smoke funnel. There being a trodden road and a well-fitted-out holiday area near the steamer is suggestive of the spot being the vessel's permanent dock by a holiday center.

The second photograph was taken at a time the vessel was wintering (Figure 2). It, likewise, is missing its paddle wheels and, apparently, its smoke funnel. A few other wintering ships can be seen in the background. The name '*Krasnaya Zvezda*' and the registration number 'KM-177' are clearly visible on the side of the vessel. There is a poster attached to its side. While it appears to be impossible to make out what it says, it seems to start with the word 'Comrade', so it can be suggested that it is a poster designed to warn people against getting on the ship from the ice.



Fig. 1. Photograph of the steamer *Krasnaya Zvezda* (SGA. F. R-840. Op. 3. D. 810)

The holding R-750 contains a photograph showing the steamers Krasnaya Zvezda and Lunacharsky (Figure 3). The caption to it says the following: “The steamers Krasnaya Zvezda and Lunacharsky at the dock of the Krutyye Gorki holiday center of the Sarapul Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory, with their cabins used for the accommodation of holidayers” (SGA. F. R-750. Op. 1F. D. 10880). The photograph is dated May 1969. It was taken from a steep bank of the River Kama. On the left, there is an anchored steamer that has the words ‘Krasnaya Zvezda’ written on its side, and to its right there is another vessel with an illegible name. Both steamers are shown with their ramps down. As the spot is a shallow one, there is a small special raft propping the long ramp of the Krasnaya Zvezda.



Fig. 2. Photograph of the steamer Krasnaya Zvezda (SGA. F. R-840. Op. 3. D. 811)

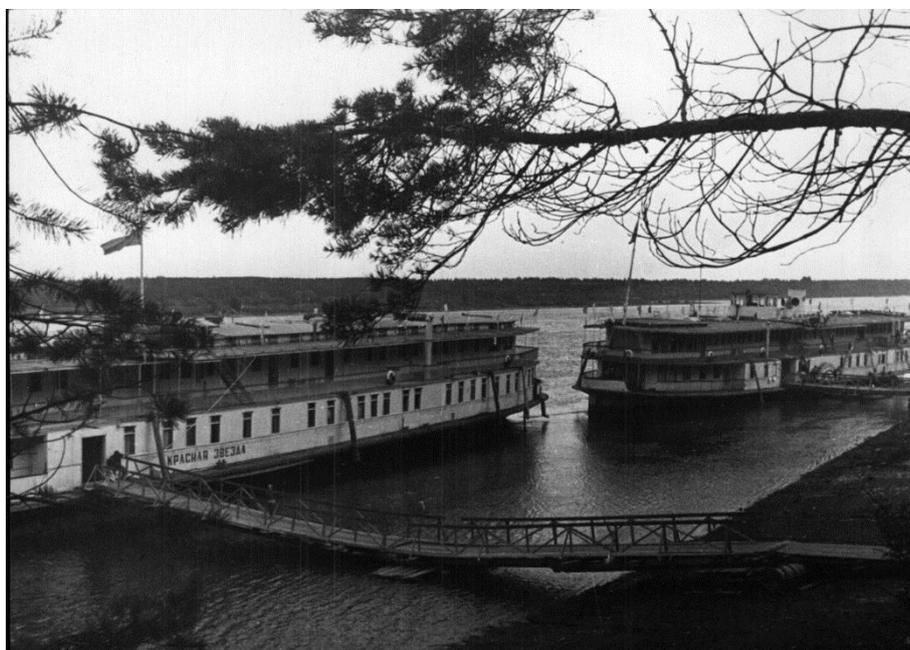


Fig. 3. Steamers Lunacharsky and Krasnaya Zvezda by the Krutyye Gorki holiday center (SGA. F. R-750. Op. 1F. D. 10880)

Photographs from the Sarapul Museum

The holdings of the Sarapul Museum (SM) contain several photographs of the steamer Krasnaya Zvezda. Three of them, all of poor quality but fairly unique, are dedicated to the same event – a failed

beaching of the steamer. The event resulted in a deformation in the ship's hull, making impossible its further use. Based on the captions, the photographs were taken in June 1973 (Figure 4). All three photographs are a film negative. However, given the fact that the image is quite blurry, it can be suggested that we have here a photograph reproduction. This is supported by the characteristic flaws of a paper image in the form of scuffs and creases, which would not have been there had the photograph been taken from life.

An analysis of the photographs indicates that two of them (Photo No. 20297/2429 and Photo No. 20297/2430) represent the same item (Figure 4, right). In the second photograph, the image of the steamer is cropped, and there is a black smear on the right. However, the images have the same point of view, as well as the same characteristic basic natural elements (some driftwood and rocks by the foreship). The third photograph (Photo No. 20297/2428) was taken from a different point of view (Figure 4, left). In it, the steamer is seen in stern view. One of the photographs takes in the front part of an unknown powerboat. The image is too blurry to determine what kind of powerboat it is. However, it may well be what the photographer arrived at the place on. The first photograph (Photo No. 20297/2428) must have been taken prior to the vessel hitting the beach, onboard the powerboat, and the rest of the pictures must have been taken later on the shore. This scenario is supported by the positioning of the photographs on the film, with them numbered in ascending order.

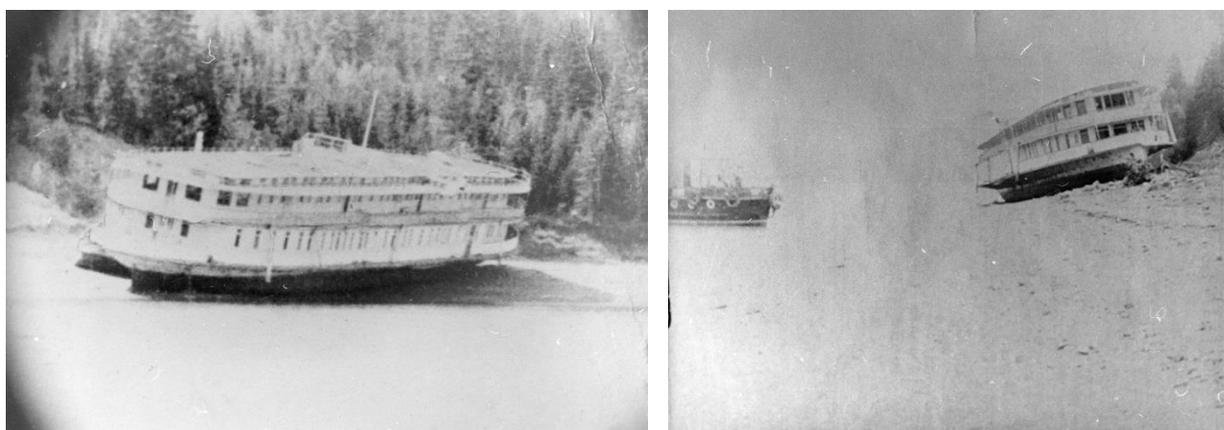


Fig. 4. Failed beaching of the steamer Krasnaya Zvezda in June 1973: left – Photo No. 20297/2428; right – Photo No. 20297/2429

There are another two photographs from the holdings of the Sarapul Museum, and these were clearly taken earlier, despite their large accession numbers (Figure 5). Yet again one gets an impression that the negatives were made based on existing photographs. This, for instance, is confirmed by the characteristic worn corners, a result of being fixed in a photoalbum (Figure 5, left). Both photographs have the same caption and date: “The Krasnaya Zvezda, a one-time agit-steamer, served in 1969 as a holiday center for workers at the [Sarapul Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory]” (Photo No. 20297/2456, 2457).

It is well possible that these photographs were taken in the same place as the one shown in Figure 3. This is supported by the date – 1969. There is also a characteristically long ramp, although the raft propping the ramp in the middle was left out. Whereas the photograph in Figure 3 takes in just one branch of a fir tree, the one in Figure 5 clearly shows an entire forest on the bank. Of interest is also the second photograph, which shows two powerboats to the left of the ramp. The one closer to the photographer is most certainly a bridge erection powerboat. Unfortunately, the number on its side is illegible.

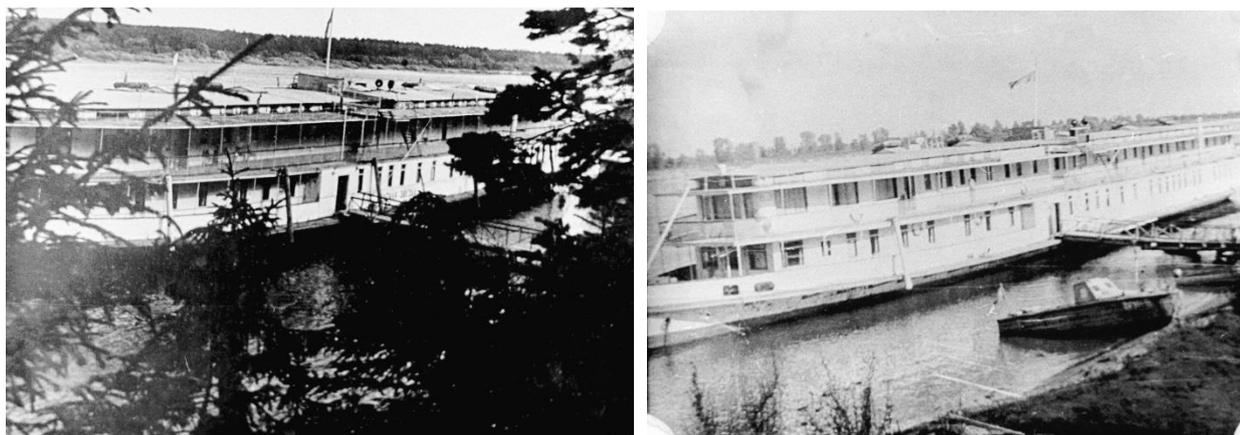


Fig. 5. Krasnaya Zvezda serving as a holiday center for workers at the Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory: left – Photo No. 20297/2456; right – Photo No. 20297/2457

Photographs from the holdings of the Center for Documenting Contemporary History of the Udmurt Republic

The holdings of the Center for Documenting Contemporary History of the Udmurt Republic contain one later photograph of the Krasnaya Zvezda. Holding 120 (‘A Collection of Photodocuments’) contains a photograph captioned ‘Steamer Krasnaya Zvezda at the harbor of the city of Sarapul’ (Figure 6). It is dated July 26, 1969 (TsDNI UR. F. 120. Op. 3F. D. 5620).

One of fairly high quality, the photograph shows the one-time agit-steamer Krasnaya Zvezda. The date, again, suggests that it is the holiday center of the Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory. While the photograph does not take in all of the long ramp, which is seen in Figure 3, the characteristic bend suggests that there is a supporting raft somewhere on the left. What makes the photograph particularly interesting is that it makes it possible to see a few parts that cannot be seen in the previous photos. Specifically, to the left of the ramp there is a garbage chute hanging from the second floor. That is where the kitchen must have been located on the ship. In the photo’s upper right corner, one can clearly see a ramp leading upwards. Given that the roof of the second floor has no space for strolling, the ramp must be leading to an old captain’s bridge. The photo also takes in the bridge’s left wing, along with its support brackets. Thus, it can be suggested that during the taking down of the pipe the bridge and its wings were kept in place.



Fig. 6. Photograph of the Krasnaya Zvezda from the holdings of the Center for Documenting Contemporary History of the Udmurt Republic

Photographs from the private archive of G.A. Rakitin

The private archive of well-known Perm collector G.A. Rakitin contains several interesting photographs of the *Krasnaya Zvezda*. [Figure 7](#) displays a photograph that, according to the collector, shows the *Krasnaya Zvezda* at the In Memory of Dzerzhinsky Dockyard in the township of Nizhnyaya Kur'ya. This must be the early 1950s, i.e. when the vessel was still on the books of the Kama River Shipping Company. The *Krasnaya Zvezda* stands on the left in a row of steamers, the closest to the shore. The photograph was taken onboard another wintering steamer. The second photograph ([Figure 8](#)) is perhaps more interesting, as it shows what the *Krasnaya Zvezda* looked like in the early 2000s, with the underbody being what was left of it, most of it eaten away with rust and full of sand.



Fig. 7. *Krasnaya Zvezda* in winter layup at the In Memory of Dzerzhinsky Dockyard (from a private collection of G.A. Rakitin)



Fig. 8. Hull of the now-defunct *Krasnaya Zvezda* in the early 2000s (from a private collection of G.A. Rakitin)

4. Conclusion

The photographic testimonies provided offer an unequivocal indication that in the late 1960s the steamer *Krasnaya Zvezda* was no longer a self-propelled vessel. Its paddle wheels appear to have been removed, while the space within the housings appears to have been put to use. Its boilers and engines clearly appear to have been removed too. Despite some sources indicating that the

steamer was transferred from the Kama River Shipping Company to the Izhevsk Mechanical Plant, within the timeframe under examination the vessel appears to have been on the books of the Sarapul Ordzhonikidze Radio Factory, which is indicated by the captions accompanying the photographs. In 1973, while being beached on the shore, the vessel sustained a severe deformation to its hull, which would eventually make impossible both its further use and restoration. Despite certain elements of the ship's hull being still in existence as of the early 2000s, it appears to be highly unlikely that one will be able to reconstruct the steamer just based on those remains.

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