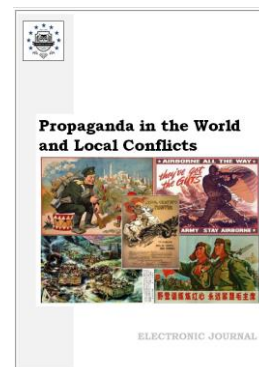


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Published in the USA
Propaganda in the World and Local Conflicts
Issued since 2014.
E-ISSN 2500-3712
2022. 9(2): 48-56

DOI: 10.13187/pwlc.2022.2.48
<https://pwlc.cherkasgu.press>



Articles

‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ (1919): An Account of the History of Don Cossackdom for Readers from the Countries of the Entente. Part 2

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Abstract

This work analyzes ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’, a book released in 1919 by the Don government headed by Ataman A.P. Bogayevsky for readers from the countries of the Entente (there were plans to release the book in English and French; the Russian edition of the book was intended for the Slav allies).

It is shown that the book consistently advanced the idea that the Cossacks were ideological allies of the British and the French and were committed to upholding the traditions of freedom and democracy. However, the book was inconsistent in terms of content – for the most part, the factual material did not align with the ideas; it was mainly reduced to describing Cossackdom’s military victories (the exception is the section on the Civil War). This can be explained by the fact that by 1919 there had been produced no summarizing works on the history of Cossackdom written from the standpoint of democratic and republican traditions, while it also was difficult to conduct meaningful research amid the Civil War in the country. Nevertheless, the key conceptual ideas in ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ were subsequently elaborated in the work of Don émigré historian S.G. Svatikov, who very well may have been its real author.

Keywords: Don Cossackdom, Almighty Don Host, Civil War, military propaganda, Entente, S.G. Svatikov

1. Introduction

The question is – Who was the author of ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’? The book was published anonymously as an official text reflecting the position of the Host administration. It even had a portrait of Ataman A.P. Bogayevsky on the inside front cover. This was not the only such work in Don historiography. ‘The Pictures of the Past Quiet Don’ by P.N. Krasnov, released in 1909, had no mention of the author’s name on the front cover either – but it did mention that it was published “at the instance of Lieutenant General Samsonov, the Host’s appointed ataman” (Krasnov, 1909: forzats). This was revealed inside the text (Krasnov, 1909: 522). By contrast, ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ contains no mention of authorship whatsoever, leaving researchers with the task of establishing it.

In the preface to his monograph ‘Russia and the Don’, a work of acclaim in Cossack émigré historiography, S.G. Svatikov states that between 1918 and 1919 he produced an essay entitled

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‘The Political-Legal Environment in the Don in the 16th and 20th centuries (1549–1919)’ (Svatikov, 1924: III). Allegedly, the book’s first part, ‘The 1549–1721 Era’, was published in 1919 by the Regional Printery of the Almighty Don Host, but it did not get to the reader as a consequence of the nearing of the front line, with most of the copies perishing at the hands of the Reds (Svatikov, 1924: III). Nevertheless, according to S.G. Svatikov, “several copies of it have been preserved and are in the possession of different individuals in South Russia” (Svatikov, 1924: III). However, the book’s traces have been found only in a number of bibliographical reference books – it must have gotten there via the mention in the preface to Svatikov’s monograph. Another person who has been unable to retrieve the text of this book is S.M. Markedonov, a researcher focused on the work of S.G. Svatikov. According to the scholar, during the Civil War, S.G. Svatikov produced a book that may have been entitled ‘Russia and the Don. The 1549–1721 Era’, which existed only as a manuscript that perished in 1920 (Markedonov, 1996: 163-173).

Thus, we may assume that during the Civil War S.G. Svatikov was working on a certain book about the political-legal situation of the Don Host, which eventually was published in 1919 by the Regional Printery of the Almighty Don Host; most of its copies perished, and not a single copy of it has been retrieved so far. That said, in 1919 the same printery published ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’, which, in essence, is concerned with the same subject. One should not rule out that ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ is actually that very lost work by S.G. Svatikov – adapted by the publisher for the Western reader. Even if it is not the case, ‘Russia and the Don’ by S.G. Svatikov and ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ have significant ideological and conceptual similarities – something that can only be explained by the influence of Svatikov’s ideas on the unknown author of ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’.

To caveat from the outset, no direct textual coincidences were found between the two texts. However, they appear to be highly similar in their appraisals of Don history, while being tangibly different from the works contemporary to them and the earlier ones. As mentioned earlier, ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ was focused on suggesting to the Western reader that the Cossacks were the chief bearers of longstanding Russian democratic traditions and “ancient Russian political freedom”. S.G. Svatikov was open in articulating similar views: “In an era when the Tsars of Muscovy were strengthening their autocratic rule on the ruins of the federation of ancient Russian principalities and northern Russian republics, the primordial Russian principle of popular sovereignty returned to life in the pristine Cossack democracies in the Don, Yaik, Terek and, temporarily, Volga regions” (Svatikov, 1924: 1). S.G. Svatikov saw as Cossackdom’s major historical achievement the creation of “Don Cossack law”, a system predicated on “the great principles of equality and freedom” (Svatikov, 1924: 529). The two texts contain some terms and cite some literature that are precisely identical. This will be examined in more detail below.

Let us take a brief look at the biography of S.G. Svatikov. Born in 1880 in Rostov-on-Don, he was a public figure of social-democratic orientation who had taken a stand against Tsarist autocracy since 1904 (Markedonov, 1996: 163-173). He supported the Provisional Government and even served as its commissar for liquidating Czarist political police who had escaped abroad. He was opposed to both Tsarist autocracy and Bolshevism (Markedonov, 1996: 163-173). Of particular importance to the present study is the fact that in 1919 S.G. Svatikov openly engaged in military propaganda during his brief tenure as Deputy Head of the Department of Propaganda of the Special Council under General A.I. Denikin (Markedonov, 1996: 163-173). According to S.M. Markedonov, “the new “Minister of Propaganda” [N.Ye. Paramonov, the newly appointed Head of the Department of Propaganda] deemed it necessary to engage in the White Movement socialists who were opposed to Bolshevism. This approach was shared by S.G. Svatikov, who considered the triumph of the monarchists an impossibility” (Markedonov, 1996: 163-173). Thus, invoking the ideas of S.G. Svatikov in White propaganda in South Russia was quite a natural thing to do. In fact, his fairly sincere socialist and democratic ideas were well-suited for popularizing Cossackdom among the Western allies.

Modern historians tend to be interested in S.G. Svatikov not as a public figure but as the author of the monograph ‘Russia and the Don’, possibly the first book to provide a consistent anti-monarchical description of the entire history of Don Cossackdom, in which the primary focus is on the civil, rather than, military, history of the Don Host. As fairly pointed out by S.M. Markedonov, “[S.G. Svatikov] dismantled the old stereotypes of describing Cossack history only as one of wars

and campaigns” (Markedonov, 1996: 163-173). The second part of the present article will juxtapose the key ideological tenets in ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ and the monograph ‘Russia and the Don’ in order to trace the presence of Svatikov’s ideas in the book under our examination.

2. Materials and methods

The primary source employed in this work is ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919). Unfortunately, searching the State Archive of Rostov Oblast and the Ataman Chancery holding for documents relating to the production of this book produced no results. Therefore, the present work will primarily focus on its ideological component. It will compare the book both with a set of earlier summarizing works on the history of Don Cossackdom (‘Materials on the Geography and Statistics of Russia Gathered by General Staff Officers: The Land of the Don Host’ (Krasnov, 1863), ‘A Statistical Description of the Province of the Don Cossack Host’ (Nomikosov, 1884), and ‘The Pictures of the Past Quiet Don’ (Krasnov, 1909)) and with the monograph ‘Russia and the Don’ (Svatikov, 1924), which, in essence, further develops and substantiates the ideas articulated in ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’.

Use was made of the historical-descriptive and historical-comparative methods, with foci on identifying the key differences between the concepts discussed in ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ and the views common in early-20th-century Don historiography and on revealing the inconsistencies in the book.

3. Results

Before we proceed any further, it will be a good idea to finish off the analysis of ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ – more so that its last two chapters contain some very interesting material worthy of discussion.

The Don Economy

This chapter is not of much interest in the context of the present study. The bulk of it is made up of information on the economy and geography of the Don Host that is commonly known in early-20th-century Russian historiography. Of interest, however, is the way it is delivered to the foreign reader: facts about the Don region are regularly juxtaposed with facts about different foreign states. Specifically, it is stated after the information about the coordinates of the Host’s northern and southern boundaries that “the northern extremity [of the Don Host] lies in about the same latitude as the cities of London and Leipzig and the city of Winnipeg in Canada; on the other hand, its southern extremity lies in the same latitude as the city of Lyon, the city of Milan, the city of Trieste, and the city of Montreal in Canada” (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 91).

The text contains only one nuance worthy of special notice. The Don Host is regularly compared with small states. In each such case, it is stated that the Don Host surpasses its counterpart in area size, population size, the development of certain sectors of the economy, and so on. Incidentally, the author’s selection of the countries is somewhat strange, even factoring in the geopolitical state of affairs in 1919, when certain national borders had yet to be defined after the end of World War I. For instance, among the states that the Don Host surpasses in area size the author mentions Saxony and Bavaria, while Saxony is also mentioned among those it surpasses in population size (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 91). It would be somewhat odd to place these German principalities, which had long been part of the German Empire, alongside, say, Belgium or the Netherlands. In addition, Belgium and the Netherlands are mentioned exclusive of their colonies, and that reduces their area size by several times (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 91). Finally, Serbia and Yugoslavia are mentioned as two separate states (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 91). Thus, while the author of ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ undertook to substantiate a perfectly legitimate suggestion – the idea that the Don Host was comparable economically and geographically to a small country, it was not done without errors.

The takeaway from this chapter is that the Don Host was “quite capable of sustaining an independent economic existence” (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 96-97). Thus, it appears as though the Don did not need Russia – the Don Host was being presented in ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ as a region much more developed both economically and politically than the rest of Russia. The final chapter was to provide the Western reader with a

glimpse into the future of government in Russia through the lens of the interests and historical traditions of the Don Cossacks.

The Don's Political Aspirations

'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' was written at a time when the White Movement was highly successful. It directly tells the reader that "the victorious armies of the Southern Front are approaching Moscow", so "the day is near" when decisions must be made about the form of government in a new Russia (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 99). In the light of what has been said above, it can be admitted that the author of 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' sought to manipulate the reader into believing that the Cossacks had a perfect idea of what this new Russia was to be like, with the administrations of Atamans A.M. Kaledin, P.N. Krasnov, and A.P. Bogayevsky having been perfectly consistent in carrying out a single policy ("Right from the outset of the revolution, the Don assumed a clear stance, to which it has remained true over the course of 2 years" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 99)). The basis for these conclusions was the statement released in 1917 by the Host's Krug saying that there were plans to turn Russia into "a united, undivided democratic republic built on the principles of self-determination of the peoples and wide local autonomy in particular parts of the state" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 99). That said, as early as the spring of 1918, the administration of P.N. Krasnov declared the Almighty Don Host "a sovereign state" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 100). However, in the interpretation of the author of 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host', the declaration of sovereignty did not contradict the Krug's earlier statements about the region's intentions to be part of a democratic Russia but was aimed against the "ambitions of the German leadership and the Ukrainian State" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 101). Thus, here too the Don was acting in the interests of the Entente, and its executives were displaying "great courage and resolve" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 101). And in 1919 the Krug again articulated its vision of a future Russia as a "united and free democratic nation", the only imperative condition being that the Don Host be "an autonomy within the state" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 101).

The Don Host being a future "*autonomy within the state*" is what was being substantiated in the final pages of the book. Special emphasis was laid on needing a completely novel form of autonomy, one that had no comparable counterparts in existing law (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 102). Ordinary self-government, which in the text is construed as "a legal state where a part of a country is governed by a local government put in place by the central government and based on legislation that is, too, put in place by the central government" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 102), was rejected as a possible future form of government for the Don Host due to its "conditional nature", meaning that under such a system the central government would continue to wield too much sway over the region (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 103). The system that the author of 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' saw as best suited for the Don Host was the autonomy, i.e. "self-government based on the area's own laws, rather than those imposed by the state" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 103). That said, the then-available examples of the autonomy (e.g., the Grand Duchy of Finland within the Russian Empire, the dominions of the British Crown, and the principalities of the German Empire) were different from the Don Host in that they were "inescapably non-sovereign states" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 103-104). By contrast, in the interpretation of 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host', the status of the Don Host as a sovereign state was an "inescapable fact" as of 1918 (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 104). And, while the Don was not just ready but desired to give up its sovereignty for the sake of becoming part of Russia, it also wished to retain its "primordial historical right to autonomy" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 104).

We are talking here about being part of Russia based on "voluntary allegiance" – similar to how it was done by the first Cossacks, who "were happy to serve the state without taking an oath of allegiance to it" (Ocherk politicheskoi istorii..., 1919: 104). The only possible way to do this would have been through a "reciprocal agreement", i.e. incorporating the Don Host into a new Russia on conditions that would suit the *Cossacks* first and foremost. Thus, it was about some sort of extreme form of autonomy unprecedented at that time.

Naturally, earlier popular essays on Don history and officially published historical-statistical descriptions of the region contained no statements about a willingness to see the Don Host as an autonomy within the Russian Empire. However, most of this material did align with the aspirations

of some of the local elite – starting at least in the 1860s. As early as then, a Don public figure named I.S. Ul'yanov wrote that “the efficiency of the Don Cossacks’ indigenous institutions cannot be assessed from the standpoint of being up-to-date – it can only be assessed from the standpoint of the extent to which Cossacks using them are constrained in their primordial rights” (GARO. F. 243. Op. 1. D. 28. L. 229-229ob.). During the same decade, representatives from the stanitsas of Khoper District raised before a government commission the issue of “the need for any future changes to the Regulation with regard to service, land ownership, and other rights and privileges granted to the Host by the Monarchs to be agreed with deputies from all over the Host” (GARO. F. 55. Op. 1. D. 240. L. 79-79ob.). In fact, elected Host deputies admitted into the commissions regularly solicited the government to grant the Don Host statutory autonomy and sign into law a measure requiring all new laws dealing with Cossackdom to be agreed with some sort of local elective body. The chairman of one of the commissions, General N.A. Maslakovets, simply took proposals of this kind off the voting agenda, citing “their unprecedentedness in local and national governance in the Empire” as a reason (Maslakovets, 1899: 10). Thus, not only did members of the Don elite seeking wide autonomy for the region know exactly what they wanted, something they had been articulating over the course of half a century, but they also wished the potential Don autonomy to be something “unprecedented”. As we can see, the author of ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ wrote about this quite openly, admitting that the kind of autonomy that was desired for a future Don would have no comparable counterparts in international law.

Let us now move on to the paper’s most controversial narrative. We already know that ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ is a text that is internally discrepant and inconsistent in terms of content – many of the facts it provides do not align with the ideas it declares. However, regardless of whether the text’s author was, indeed, S.G. Svatikov or an unknown propagandist with similar views, the causes behind those discrepancies and inconsistencies must not be reduced to a deliberate distortion of reality in a propagandist narrative or even a genuine misconception. The conceptual foundations of ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ are quite adequate, even if suited to a particular, democratic, view of the history of Cossackdom – something that was proven in 1924 by S.G. Svatikov, who substantiated these views in his monograph, ‘Russia and the Don’, in a fairly academic fashion. That said, as mentioned earlier, as at 1919 there, as of yet, were no summarizing works on the history of Don Cossackdom written from a similar perspective. On the other hand, some of the Don elite had sought to have a political autonomy with democratic representation from the stanitsas since the 1860s, while claims of the first Cossacks having had a “republic” were not uncommon in Don historiography. Therefore, with the abolition of political censorship in Russia in 1917 (even irrespective of the existence of a “sovereign” Almighty Don Host between the 1918s and 1920s), the way had been paved for members of the democratic wing of the local elite to engage in propagandizing and popularizing their views of the past of Don Cossackdom. Incidentally, S.G. Svatikov openly wrote in the preface to his ‘Russia and the Don’ that both himself and the publisher of his book, the Don Historical Commission, were pursuing not only academic objectives but wished to “eliminate the many misconceptions and prejudices and establish a view of Cossackdom that is aligned with its purpose and role in the history of the Russian state” (Svatikov, 1924: VI). According to S.G. Svatikov, this role was, once again, not about the Cossacks serving the Crown and their motherland, as claimed by monarchical historiography and propaganda, but about creating “Don Cossack law”, a system predicated on “the great principles of equality and freedom”.

In other words, there is no doubt that ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ reflected the real self-identification of the democratic wing of the Don Cossack elite. What is more, not only did its members wish to reap situational gains from the presentation of their democratic ideals to British and French readers – they also wished to shake the prejudices of the Russian reader through historical research proving the natural democratism of Cossackdom. However, all this required time and effort. According to his own confession, S.G. Svatikov made some serious changes to ‘The Political-Legal Environment in the Don in the 16th and 20th centuries (1549–1919)’ while in emigration. For instance, its volume changed – in its 1919 edition, ‘The Political-Legal Environment in the Don in the 16th and 20th centuries (1549–1919)’ had 110 pages, while the size of the monograph ‘Russia and the Don’ was 592 pages (and that is considering that it covered events only up to March 1, 1917) (Svatikov, 1924: III)! Incidentally,

‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ had about 110 pages (its last numbered page being Page 105, followed by a blank page and three contents pages), which once more suggests the possibility of it being that very lost work by S.G. Svatikov.

So, despite the desire of the democratic wing of the Don Cossack elite to substantiate its view of the history of Cossackdom and spread it among the reading audience, the corresponding research by S.G. Svatikov was in 1919 still far from completion. The situation was calling for action – with White regiments approaching Moscow, the downfall of the Bolsheviks seemed imminent, so decisions needed to be made about the form of government in a future Russia, with S.G. Svatikov working for the Department of Propaganda of the Special Council under General A.I. Denikin at the time. So, in that situation, the Don authorities resolved to produce a logically inconsistent text that, nevertheless, would give one an idea of their ideals and aspirations. They were aware of imperfections in the book they were releasing – it is stated in the preface to ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ that the “publisher is fully aware of imperfections in this edition, both in content and in form” (*Ocherk politicheskoi istorii...*, 1919: I). So, it is no wonder that ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ was internally discrepant. Members of the democratic wing of the Don elite had a perfect idea of what the Don was to them – a historically sovereign republic where the deepest roots had been struck by the ideals of democracy and freedom, a republic keen on having maximum autonomy within a single Russia. However, the material needed for such a description of the Don Host had not been gathered yet, “the old stereotypes of describing Cossack history only as one of wars and campaigns”, as put by S.M. Markedonov, had not been dismantled by S.G. Svatikov yet, and the factual part of ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ had been constructed along the lines of conservative-monarchical popular essays on Don history available at the time, with a focus on Cossackdom’s military exploits committed for the glory of the Crown and the motherland.

Therefore, it may be worth concluding the present study by comparing ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ with the monograph ‘Russia and the Don’ by S.G. Svatikov, inasmuch as the latter further develops and substantiates the ideas articulated in the former. To caveat from the outset, we will not dwell here upon individual physical overlaps in the two texts, although there are some. For instance, in analyzing the various types of autonomy in international law, both ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ and ‘Russia and the Don’ rely upon ‘Essays on Russian State Law’ by B.E. Nolde (*Ocherk politicheskoi istorii...*, 1919: 103; Svatikov, 1924: V). Our main interest is the conceptual similarities and differences between the two.

S.G. Svatikov wrote extensively and in depth about the form of government in the Don Host in the earliest days of Cossackdom, devoting to this narrative an entire chapter – ‘The Power of the Don’ (Svatikov, 1924: 33). The principal idea promoted by S.G. Svatikov was fully aligned with the narrative in the earlier text: “The aspiration to resolve common matters through collective consultation and agreement, so typical of the Slavic peoples, ethnic Russians in particular, which had been subject to eradication in the Muscovite state, continued to live in the hearts of free craftsmen, warriors, and hunters leaving the Tsardom for the Wild Fields. The Cossacks were natural-born republicans” (Svatikov, 1924: 33-34). However, in Svatikov’s text this tenet stops hanging in the air and is substantiated through a number of specific examples. S.G. Svatikov cited specific documents (‘Don Affairs’) and the works of S.M. Solov’yev, amateur Don historians A.A. Leonov and V.D. Sukhorukov, and others (Svatikov, 1924: 33-36). Thus, the form of government in the Don Host was described not by way of analogy to Swiss cantons but directly. While Svatikov’s text has no references to the Western experience of the Swiss and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, it mentions the ancient Russian *veche* as the prototype of the Host’s *krug* (Svatikov, 1924: 33-35). That said, Svatikov’s text does attempt to modernize and liken the early Don republic to modern Western democracies. For instance, in one place in the text the ataman is referred to as “the elected president of the Don Republic”, while at the end of the chapter the author postulates the existence in Cossack society of fully functional “legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government” (Svatikov, 1924: 38, 40). Finally, there is even a partial textual similarity between the chapter’s general conclusion and what we find in ‘An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host’ – it says that in its early days the Don Host was “an *ordinary* (not federative) *immediate democratic republic* [original italics]” (Svatikov, 1924: 41). So, as already mentioned earlier, a tenet that hung up in the air in 1919 was substantiated academically in 1924. By all means, Svatikov’s

view of the early history of Cossackdom remains debatable. However, despite its author's obvious political preferences, this text is not a politically discrepant one and is one done to a level that is in line with early-20th-century Don historiography.

As a specific example of internal discrepancies in the narrative in 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host', we considered in the first part the uprising of Stepan Razin. Svatikov's text, which devotes an entire chapter to it, contains no logical discrepancies in this respect. Its account of the uprising of S. Razin is fairly consistent, although it does contain elements of modernization. It describes it as a "red" riot of the anarchic poor against the "white" reactionary government (e.g., "The reign of Alexey Mikhaylovich was an era that saw a strengthening of the autocratic and serf-owning regime in Russia" (Svatikov, 1924: 98); "Razin wished to annihilate everybody who stood above the poor; his men were keen to plunder and divide the spoils" (Svatikov, 1924: 103); "Autocratic and serf-owning Russia responded to the red terror of the proletariat and the insurgent peasantry, lured by Razin's proclamations ("cunning conspiratorial letters written with larcenous intent"), with white terror" (Svatikov, 1924: 104)). Thus, while, just like 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host', Svatikov's text describes the uprising of S. Razin as that of "the utter destitute", it contains nothing suggesting a change in "the image of brigand Razin in the public consciousness" and his movement being "a precursor to a great public protest against autocratic power". Quite the opposite, throughout the corresponding chapter Razin's followers are viewed as predecessors of the Bolsheviks. It is in this context, rather than the context of Cossackdom's military victories, that the text considers the Cossacks' first official swearing of fealty to the Tsar subsequent to the Razin uprising. It views this step as destroying a well-developed and modern democratic republic and subjugating it to autocratic and serf-owning Moscow (Svatikov, 1924: 108-109). Cossackdom's subsequent military achievements are simply not mentioned, i.e. the text is reticent about the link between these achievements and the swearing of fealty to the Tsar.

The bulk of Svatikov's book is devoted to the imperial period in Don history. It describes in a consistent manner the central government's encroachment upon the Cossacks' rights and privileges. The first part of the present article considered as a case in point the public administration reforms in the Don Host that followed the Pugachev uprising. As a reminder, in Don historiography they were viewed up to 1917 as "the installation of a proper system of administration and governance" by the Host. Therefore, there is no mention of them in 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' whatsoever. S.G. Svatikov described these reforms in much detail, a lot more detail than they had been described in before, and in full accordance with fully established facts, while giving those facts new explanations based on documentary sources. S.G. Svatikov cited G.A. Potemkin, who had attributed the need for new regulations for the Don Host not just to the imperfection of the then-existing institutions and the absence of laws that would regulate their work but to the fact that "regional and local matters are handled in their [Don Cossack] society not in accordance with national laws applicable to all citizens but, just like military matters, are decided by the Ataman in a purely arbitrary manner" (Svatikov, 1924: 229). S.G. Svatikov agreed with this assessment and, just like his predecessors, acknowledged that the 1770s reforms subjugated Don atamans and the Don administration as a whole to the law. That said, he argued that the very emergence of unlimited ataman authority was the consequence of imperial government's encroachment upon the republican traditions of the Don and took place after the abolition of elections for the post of ataman: "He [G.A. Potemkin] overlooked the fact that the unlimited authority of the ataman was the result of the abolition of ataman elections and saw as a cure for this evil the strengthening of administrative control" (Svatikov, 1924: 229). And, more to the point, while G.A. Potemkin was not a proponent of imperial laws regulating life in Cossack society, he openly argued that "above all else, there was a need for a leader of proven loyalty and ability", i.e. a Don ataman absolutely loyal to the government (Svatikov, 1924: 229).

Thus, there appear to be no conceptual differences between 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' and the monograph 'Russia and the Don' by S.G. Svatikov. The difference between these two books boils down to the genre (a popular propagandist essay versus a serious historical-legal study) and the fact that the first one was produced in haste, using unsuited materials and ideological constructs, and the second one was the result of extensive research by the author. It is based on the second edition that we get an idea of what the future

representation of the Almighty Don Host in the international arena would have been in the event of the Whites' victory – a historical democratic republic whose ataman had resembled the president of a Western democratic state since as early as the 16th century, as opposed to a land of warriors whole-heartedly devoted to the Monarchy.

4. Conclusion

The key ideological concepts in 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' did align with the self-consciousness of some of the Cossack elite. Starting in the 1860s, elected representatives on various local commissions and certain Don public figures advocated for an autonomous Don via an elective body. The opinion that the early Cossacks had a republic had been voiced going further back – since the early 19th century. It was not until after the Civil War that a Don political figure named S.G. Svatikov wrote, in 1924, a research monograph entitled 'Russia and the Don', in which he made the case for the existence of democratic and republican traditions in Cossack society. Thus, although 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' contains obvious exaggerations and incorrect statements, the sincerity of its author in terms of the treatment of general concepts can hardly be doubted.

In fact, there is a likelihood that 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' was written by S.G. Svatikov himself. What also speaks to this assumption is the ideological affinity between this text and the monograph 'Russia and the Don', as well as the use in the books of the same literature (reliance upon 'Essays on Russian State Law' by B.E. Nolde on legal issues) and the same terms (e.g., "the immediate republic" of the early Cossacks). Note, furthermore, that S.G. Svatikov worked for the Department of Propaganda of the Special Council under General A.I. Denikin. During the Civil War, he published a book on the history of Cossackdom – it matches 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' in size and in place and year of publication. According to S.G. Svatikov, it was entitled 'The Political-Legal Environment in the Don in the 16th and 20th centuries (1549–1919)'. However, no copies of it have been found to date. Hence, it can be argued with a high degree of confidence that 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' is the same book as 'The Political-Legal Environment in the Don in the 16th and 20th centuries (1549–1919)' by S.G. Svatikov – the latter appears to have been adapted for the foreign reader and renamed amid the tumult of the Civil War.

What hastened the release of 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' by the Don government was its hope that the Bolsheviks would fall soon. At the time the text was being written, with the White Armies approaching Moscow, there were important decisions to be made about the form of government in a new Russia, so the Bogayevsky administration sought to substantiate its preferences on this to the Western reader. This is where 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' would have come in handy. It was to demonstrate to the Western reader that, as bearers of longstanding democratic traditions and successors to the independent republic of the early Don Host, the Don Cossacks were ready to be part of Russia only as inhabitants of a democratic republican autonomy, and their autonomy would need to be as wide as possible at that. However, despite the hypothetical ability of 'An Essay on the Political History of the Almighty Don Host' to help popularize the idea in the mind of the Western reader and enlist the Entente's support for the cause of an autonomous Don, the victory of the Bolsheviks in the Civil War not only put paid to the political future of the Don Host but prevented the book under examination from reaching libraries and bookstores in the French Republic and the British Empire.

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