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ON THE HISTORY OF THE COSSACK PHENOMENON OF THE SOVIET PERIOD

Abstract: This article presents the results of a historiographical study of the entire body of research and publications devoted to Cossack issues, including scientific and popular literature, memoirs, fiction, legal, military, religious, reference, and other publications. It charts the history of the study of the Cossack phenomenon in Russia, beginning with the first mentions of Cossacks in Russian chronicles and continuing until the collapse of the USSR in the late 20th century. The emergence and development of a distinct Cossack historiographic tradition is examined separately. Particular attention is paid to the evolution of émigré Cossack historiography in the 20th century.

Key words: historiography, hypostasis, Orthodoxy, ethnocultural, demand, immunity, demography, political science, White Cossacks, Cossacks, geopolitical, stereotypical, sovereign, phenomenon, frontier.

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Introduction

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Soviet historiography of the Cossacks has evolved through several stages, each with its own unique characteristics. Analyzing the evolution of dissertation research and scholarly publications on the

Cossacks, we can identify the following stages in the periodization of Soviet historiography of the Cossacks:

- 1) historiography of the period of the Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War of 1918–1921;
- 2) historiography of the interwar period of the 1920s – late 1930s;

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3) historiography of the period of the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War;

4) historiography of the 1950s–1970s;

5) historiography of the early 1980s and the “Perestroika” period of 1985–1991.

During the years of the Revolution and the Civil War, under the regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dominance of the ideology of class struggle, the Cossacks were naturally thought of as a social-class group. From this point of view, a Cossack is a “privileged peasant”. The natural consequence of this approach was the “policy of decossackization”, carried out by the Bolsheviks in the captured Cossack regions with the inexorable cruelty of the Civil War. Today in Russia there is perhaps no more complex, contradictory and painful problem in the domestic historiography of the Cossacks than the problem of decossackization.

It was V. I. Ulyanov (Lenin) who provided the theoretical justification for the Bolsheviks’ agrarian program and translated it into practical political practice after the October Revolution of 1917, amid the outbreak of the Civil War. A direct consequence of the Bolsheviks’ consistent implementation of their agrarian reforms toward the Cossacks was the policy of “de-Cossackization.” Its theoretical interpretation and analysis of the results generated differing opinions among the Bolsheviks themselves during the Civil War itself. In particular, contradictions between Trotsky and Stalin on this issue immediately emerged. Lenin’s own position, too, underwent significant evolution during the war. A natural consequence of this incoherent policy were the omissions, discrepancies, and inconsistencies that subsequently characterized all Soviet historiography on this issue. On the one hand, the Cossacks were defined as a generally reactionary class; on the other hand, within the framework of the class approach, class stratification was postulated among the Cossacks themselves, where the “laboring Cossacks” were conceived as the support of Soviet power.

These constructs naturally led to the justification of the policy of decossackization—as a violent, revolutionary acceleration of the natural process of proletarianization of the bulk of the Cossack population, while simultaneously intensifying the class struggle. Hence the extension of the principle of proletarian internationalism to the Cossacks, particularly in regard to “non-local peasants” and mountain peoples. It should be noted that somewhat later, in the 1920s, the villages of “revolutionary” mountain peoples had to be disarmed by units of the OGPU and the Red Army, using artillery and even aviation. It was under Soviet rule, even later, in 1943, that the mass deportation of some mountain peoples was carried out. Characteristically, in the 1930s, a shift occurred from the policy of decossackization to the revival of Cossack culture in the USSR. However, traditional historiographic assessments of the Civil War and decossackization in Soviet historical

scholarship generally remained unchanged throughout the years of Soviet power and were not subject to any revisionist tendencies.

The situation began to change rapidly only in the final years of Gorbachev’s Perestroika, already at the end of the Soviet historiographic tradition, amid a clear crisis in Soviet historical scholarship. From a general methodological and formal-legal perspective, the fundamental law of the RSFSR “On the Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples” was of pivotal importance here. Article 2 of the law explicitly and unequivocally classifies the Cossacks among the peoples of Russia (as amended by RF Law No. 5303-1 of 01.07.93): “Repressed peoples are those (nationalities, nationalities, or ethnic groups and other historically established cultural and ethnic communities of people, such as the Cossacks), against whom, on the basis of their national or other affiliation, a policy of slander and genocide was carried out at the state level, accompanied by their forced displacement, the abolition of national-state entities, the redrawing of national-state borders, and the establishment of a regime of terror and violence in places of special settlement.”

Main part

Thus, Decossackization was effectively recognized as a repressive act against the Cossacks as a people. In essence, in this context, Decossackization is close to genocide in its Euroliberal interpretation. It’s also worth noting the US federal Captive Nations Act, passed during the Cold War, which classifies Cossacks as enslaved peoples in the USSR. In the new Russia, this sensitive issue, in every sense, has not been discussed at the state level until now, but, as noted above, it is actively debated within the Cossack community itself, including on Cossack websites and online forums. All of the above considerations lead us to examine the origins of the Soviet historiographic tradition in its interpretation of the Cossacks and Decossackization.

Leaving aside some discrepancies in detail, the entire Soviet historiography of the Cossack question was, on the whole, strictly based on the principles and assessments provided by V. I. Ulyanov (Lenin) in a series of works devoted to the “current moment” during the October Revolution and the Civil War. These are Lenin’s classic assessments of the Cossack South of Russia as a Russian Vendée, and of the Cossacks themselves as a petty-bourgeois class occupying an intermediate position between the middle peasant and the kulak. Or, to put it another way, a Cossack is, from Lenin’s perspective, essentially a prosperous middle peasant, a “privileged peasant.” In other words, the Cossacks were viewed within the framework of the peasantry, which provided clear parameters for the per capita land allocation of farms as the basis for a socioeconomic analysis of the Cossacks’ class interests.

Lenin writes: “As for the Cossacks, here we have

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a stratum of the population from rich, small or medium landowners (the average landholding is about 50 dessiatines) of one of the outskirts of Russia, who have preserved especially many medieval features of life, economy, and everyday life. Here one can discern the socio-economic basis for the Russian Vendee..." Lenin's most complete and consistent point of view on the socio-economic nature of the Cossacks is set out by him in a voluminous (more than 200 pages) work, "The Agrarian Program of Social Democracy in the First Russian Revolution of 1905-1907." Arguing in this work with G.V. Plekhanov about the municipalization of land, Lenin provides the following data: "The Cossack lands now represent real municipalization. Large areas belong to a separate Cossack army: Orenburg, Don, etc. The Cossacks have on average 52 dessiatines per household, the peasants – 11 dessiatines per household. In addition, the Orenburg Army owns 1.1/2 million dessiatines of military lands, the Don Army owns 1.9 million dessiatines, etc." On this economic basis, Lenin conducts a social analysis and draws conclusions about the nature of such a phenomenon as the Cossacks. "On the basis of this "municipalization" purely feudal age-old use of land for service, etc., are developing. "Municipalization" does not help the general democratic movement, but its fragmentation, the regional weakening of what can only be won as a centralized force, the alienation of one region from another."

This is followed by a series of political conclusions: "The Right Cossack Karaulov grasped the essence of the matter a thousand times more accurately than Maslov and Plekhanov. The fragmentation of the regions is a guarantee against revolution. If the Russian peasantry (with the help of a centralized, and not "regional" proletarian movement) fails to break the framework of its regional alienation, it fails to organize an all-Russian movement of separate, well-established regions, which the centralized force of the old government will direct into struggle, depending on need." And, finally, Lenin makes a final conclusion: "Municipalization is a reactionary slogan, idealizing the medieval peculiarity of the regions, dulling the peasantry's awareness of the need for a centralized agrarian revolution." Below we will examine the position of that same "Right Cossack Karaulov," but for now let us summarize the preliminary results of Lenin's analysis.

Lenin's fundamental conclusion regarding the essence of the Cossacks is clear. Lenin contrasts the Cossack military regions, along with other national borderlands such as Poland, Armenia, and the like, with the internal "peasant" Russian regions, primarily in the Non-Black Earth Region. In Lenin's view, the peasantry as a whole constitutes a petty-bourgeois class of landowners who, under the influence of developing capitalist relations in the countryside, are transitioning to private land tenure and are becoming

stratified into proletarianized poor peasants and embourgeoisified small and medium-sized landowners (middle peasants and kulaks). In Central Russia, this development is hampered by the persistence of landlord landownership, as Lenin noted in his work "The Development of Capitalism in Russia." In certain regions, where the autocracy created more favorable conditions, economic development, accompanied by rising labor productivity, proceeds more rapidly, including in the Cossack military regions. This is where land municipalization arises, when land use is determined by a collective of small and medium-sized private owners. These same owners, however, retain their medieval "regional distinctiveness," idealized and cultivated by the autocracy in order to "blunt" the peasant essence of the Cossacks and use them to suppress the revolutionary movement in the central regions of the country. Land relations were most acute in the North Caucasus, and they were one of the main causes of conflicts, both social and interethnic. Lenin cites the following data for the Caucasus: a total of 411,700 square miles or 42.9 million dessiatines. Of this, 11.2 million dessiatines are agricultural land. This includes arable land – 6.5; hayfields – 2.2; forests – 2.5 million dessiatines. Moreover, according to Lenin, "the overwhelming majority of the entire number of Cossacks" in European Russia have at their disposal over 30 dessiatines per household. Thus, the foundation of Lenin's analysis is based on the assertion that the Cossacks had a greater land supply than the bulk of the peasantry. Indeed, according to the regulations on the military class, each Cossack, upon reaching the age of 17, was conditionally (for lifelong and hereditary military service) given land from the military fund in the amount of 25-30 dessiatines per male soul. Let us consider, however, how things stood in practice, not in theory. Of course, we are leaving aside land relations in the Asian part of the country, where, with the extreme smallness of the entire population and, accordingly, its density, the Cossacks, like all other residents, could receive as much land as they wanted.

The initial data on the state of affairs with the allocation of land to the Cossack villagers were deposited in annual reports to the highest name from the appointed atamans of individual Cossack troops in the archival fund of the Main Directorate of Cossack Troops (GUKV) in the Russian State Military Historical Archive. The most acute land relations developed in the Terek region, where an insufficient amount of convenient land was combined with a relatively high population density and numerous conflict situations with the mountain population and the extreme poverty of the land fund in the mountainous regions of Chechnya and Dagestan. All the information of interest to us is contained in the summary work of the appointed ataman of the Terek Cossack Army (TKV), Major General Mikhail Aleksandrovich Karaulov, first published in 1912

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under the title "Terek Cossacks in the Past and Present". This is the same "right Cossack Karaulov" whom Lenin mentions in the polemics (see above). Karaulov's book can be divided into two parts in terms of content. The first part presents the history of the TKV, and the second, based on military statistics and regulatory documents, provides the author's contemporary (early 20th century) position on the TKV.

In addition, since it was land relations that were studied by Soviet historians most fully and accurately, this data can also be used. Therefore, it is advisable, before making far-reaching conclusions, to compare the initial data in the calculations of pre-revolutionary and Soviet authors. The Terek Cossack Host owned a total of 1,851,023 dessiatines out of 6,630,805 dessiatines, or 0.28 of the territory of the entire Terek region. At the same time, the Cossacks made up 19.5% of the total population. According to the "opinion of the State Council of April 21, 1869," all military land was divided into three parts:

- 1) allotment of village communities (the so-called yurt land);
- 2) areas of military officers and officials;
- 3) lands of military reserves.

Moreover, in the Terek Host, "not only was no allocation of new land areas for the use of the Cossacks carried out, but significant areas of land were even withdrawn from Cossack use, on the one hand, for military reserves, and on the other, for the private ownership of Cossack officers and officials in exchange for the pensions they had earned, which were supposed to be paid to them from the insignificant military income at that time, which is why these pensions were reimbursed to them at one time in the form of a grant of full ownership of the corresponding plots of military land, according to the calculation for generals at 1,500 dessiatines, staff officers at 400 dessiatines and senior officers at 200 dessiatines; those promoted to the first rank upon retirement were entitled to less: generals at 800 dessiatines, military elders at 300 dessiatines and ensigns at 100 dessiatines." As a result, during the 1869 reform in the Terek Host, it became clear that the available land was insufficient not only to form a troop reserve, but also to allocate land to the stanitsa communities at the established rate of 30 dessiatines per Cossack. Therefore, a land taxation was conducted according to five categories of agricultural quality, each of which was divided into three categories. "The lowest category of the 4th category was taken as the standard, in which it was determined that a per capita allotment would be 30 dessiatines, and a senior officer's allotment would be 200 dessiatines, while in the remaining categories, the allocation was carried out in correspondingly larger or smaller amounts." As a result, the officers' plots amounted to 117,896 dessiatines, and 1,738,896 dessiatines of yurt land were allocated for the use of the stanitsas, including "convenient" land, i.e., agricultural land 1,414,711

dessiatines, and 108,203 dessiatines remained in military reserves.

Before World War I, the Terek Host had a Cossack population of 239,500. By 1917, the Cossack population (both sexes) of the Terek region was 251,000. Therefore, a simple calculation shows that by 1917, the average Cossack inhabitant of a stanitsa had a total of $1,738,896 / 251,000 = 6.93$ dessiatines of yurt land, and 5.64 dessiatines of usable land. Naturally, an adult Cossack had more land: the average for the host was 12.3 dessiatines of usable land, and the total was 15.1 dessiatines. Moreover, the norms varied greatly between departments and stanitsas, from 7.6 dessiatines in the Sunzha department to 16.6 dessiatines in the Kizlyar department. If all the land in the host is taken into account, the average allotment would be larger, but not by much. A. P. Ermoolin, citing the work of N. L. Yanchevsky, cites the following figures: a payter Cossack had 18.8 dessiatines of total land and 15.3 dessiatines of convenient land, while in Kuban, the corresponding figure was 12.5 (total) / 7.7 (convenient). These figures demonstrate that the 1869 regulations were not implemented in practice. The majority of Cossack villagers continued to use the same land as before the reform. It should be emphasized that land was allocated specifically to village communities, not to individual Cossacks. Villages often received land in remote and inconvenient locations, and villagers were physically unable to cultivate these plots. Thus, yurt land essentially represented village capital, not a means of production. This markedly distinguished Cossack village communities from the peasant communities of European Russia. It should be noted that, in fact, the Cossacks' private, or more correctly, clan, property included the estate plot and farmstead lands (if any). The yurt land belonged to the entire stanitsa community and, as a rule, was not divided into plots, but was leased to out-of-town peasants (for arable land, orchards, and vineyards) or remained in communal use for hayfields, pastures, forests, and so on.

Since ancient times, the basis of the traditional Cossack economy was cattle breeding and horse breeding, which was facilitated by a large number of pastures for the distant keeping of cattle - both cattle and sheep, including fine-wool. Of great economic importance, especially on the Terek, belonged to fishing, gardening, viticulture and winemaking. From ancient times and until the beginning of the 18th century, grain cultivation was prohibited in the Cossack regions, although it became widespread on the Don, especially in the 19th century, after the Don became an internal Russian region. In the North Caucasus, the Great Caucasian War, which lasted for almost the entire century, prevented normal cultivation of field land. With the end of the Caucasian War, in the late 19th - early 20th centuries, the situation began to change: the role of agriculture

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gradually increased and the importance of fisheries and cattle breeding decreased. In 1901, the livestock population in the stanitsas of the Terek Host was estimated at 969,286 heads, or 452 heads per 100 people, and by 1910, respectively, 846,327 heads in total, or 304 per 100 people. This testified to both the growth of the Cossack population and the active property stratification of the Cossacks. Mainly, the yurt (stanitsa society) convenient land was leased for arable farming to the "non-urban" peasantry (i.e., Russian and Ukrainian peasant settlers who did not belong to the Cossack class). In many ways, this situation was due to the fact that the stanitsa society was responsible for equipping all Cossacks of the current queue for military service or for sending Cossacks "on privileges" for field training, exercises, internal service in the army, etc.

To visualize the necessary expenses of a Cossack family in practice, we will provide a complete list of the statutory equipment of an ordinary Terek Cossack. Each Cossack was obliged to purchase a horse at his own expense when reporting for service - this was the main expense item, therefore, the Cossack was entitled to an allowance of 100 rubles from the army for the purchase of a horse. In addition to the horse, the Cossack independently purchased cold arms, uniforms and underwear, horse equipment.

For the terets these were: a saber and a dagger with a belt, a saddle with fittings and leather saddlebags, a bridle with a lead rope, a halter, a bag and canvas bags for oats, a pack, a uniform cherkeska and an everyday cherkeska, a uniform beshmet and an everyday beshmet, dark-colored trousers and others of any color, a burka, a bashlyk, a ceremonial papakha, an everyday papakha, a pair of boots or a chevyak, a pair of warm foot wraps or socks, a short fur coat or a wadded beshmet, two pairs of warm gloves, two towels, a "bag with small change" (buhcha, kapshuk), a whip, a cartridge belt, for the horse two pairs of horseshoes, a curry comb, a brush and a tripod. It should be noted that a Cossack was held accountable for the loss, squandering, or damage of these uniform and ammunition items during service, just as he was for the loss of state property. By comparison, the treasury provided a Cossack only a blanket, pillowcase, and mattress cover, as well as a sheet, three shirts, three pairs of underwear, three handkerchiefs, three pairs of foot wraps, and two towels annually. Cossack units were supplied with firearms, entrenching tools, sheepskin coats and kengas, scythes, and other items from the treasury, but these expenses were reimbursed from the troop budget.

As we can see from the data provided, unlike the lower ranks of the regular troops, sending even one Cossack to serve placed a heavy burden on his family, the village community, and the military's capital. Not to mention low-income and large families, where several sons had to be "drafted for service." While in peacetime, peasant families typically drafted only one

son, the Cossacks served in their entirety.

These expenses were mostly monetary, meaning they could not be obtained from subsistence farming. Often, these monetary costs were borne by the entire stanitsa community; that is, the funds for the equipment of a poor Cossack came from the stanitsa capital, of which the yurt land constituted the bulk. Furthermore, the stanitsa capital also covered the costs of local self-government (the stanitsa board), primary education (the maintenance of schools, colleges, libraries, etc.), the local church, road paving, bridge repairs, and other municipal needs.

Therefore, the stanitsa administration was forced to raise considerable funds and, consequently, to exploit the stanitsa's capital—i.e., yurt land—as efficiently as possible by leasing it to peasants, for commercial livestock farming, and so on. As a result, the Cossacks had only a small amount of field land under cultivation. For example, in the stanitsa of Tarskaya, of the 11.6 dessiatines (ten acres) per male capita, "less than 2 dessiatines (ten acres) are annually allocated for plowing, while the remainder is either leased (as an additional plot), used for tillage and mowing, or is unsuitable for arable farming due to soil and climate conditions (swamps, rocks, shrubs, etc.)." All this allows us to conclude that, in essence, the allocation of land to the Cossacks in accordance with the regulation "On the land arrangement of the Cossack troops" of April 21, 1869, could not be implemented in practice and therefore was not carried out, and the entire reform was reduced to an intricate "taxation" of land in order to ensure the required parameters of 30 dessiatines per adult (subject to conscription) Cossack in the reporting.

Let's summarize. It was no coincidence that Lenin linked the issue of Cossack land ownership with the municipalization of land in the Cossack regions. Lenin's assertion of "more than prosperous" Cossack landowners with an average landholding of approximately 52 dessiatines per household, and in any case over 30 dessiatines in the European part of the country, is untrue and likely reflects an uncritical reading of official documentation. Nevertheless, Lenin's conclusion about the "specialness" of the Cossack regions, the relative cohesion of the Cossacks, and the relatively slower property and class stratification of the Cossacks compared to the Russian peasantry was generally correct.

It should be noted that Lenin himself was not a dogmatist and adhered to a fairly flexible approach, especially during the Civil War, including with regard to the Cossacks. An example is Lenin's telegram to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Southern Front on June 3, 1919, which condemned the excesses of the "de-Cossackization" policy in the Don region. The Cossacks were also subject to the basic principles of the resolution adopted at the Eighth Congress of the RCP(B) on the alliance with the middle peasant and other "non-proletarian strata of the working people," based on Lenin's report.

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As for the semi-feudal archaism of Cossack “municipal” land use, this statement was more likely dictated by political considerations than was a proven consequence of socio-economic analysis.

At the same time, it should not be forgotten that the primary goal of Bolshevik policy in the Cossack regions was to stimulate and intensify class struggle, to achieve a split in the “special” Cossack world, as Lenin put it, into Reds and Whites—that is, to accelerate social progress, as understood within the framework of Marxist historical materialism. This is precisely the root of the Bolshevik policy of decossackization, as an attempt to violently and revolutionary accelerate the natural process of proletarianization of the bulk of the Cossack population while simultaneously intensifying class struggle. An analysis of the social and political consequences of the practical implementation of this policy by the Bolsheviks during the Civil War, as well as their moral and legal assessment, are beyond the scope of this work. However, in conclusion, it should be noted that decossackization and the Civil War constituted the most tragic chapters in the history of the Cossacks in the 20th century. However, even during these years, the first attempts at historical understanding of the Cossack phenomenon can be identified in specialized studies. The first attempt to study the Cossacks in Soviet historiography can be considered the works of I. I. Ulyanov, dating from 1918–1920. Ivan Ivanovich Ulyanov (1884–1946) was born in the village of Grachev Kust near Saratov to a family of farmers. Already during the years of the First Russian Revolution, I. I. Ulyanov became an active participant in the revolutionary movement. In 1907, he joined the Bolshevik Party and worked in party organizations in Saratov and Uralsk, for which he was arrested by the tsarist authorities. From July 1917, he was chairman of the Council of Soldiers’ Deputies in Kozlov, then a delegate to the 2nd All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and elected a member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. In 1918, he worked in the Military Department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, was chairman of the Prisoners’ Bureau at the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and a member of the Center for Plenbezh. In 1919, Ulyanov was back in the Urals, serving as chairman of the Ural Regional Revolutionary Committee. It was during this time that he became one of the initiators of the creation of Red Cossack military units within the Red Army, composed of working Cossacks. His initiative did not go unnoticed, including by V. I. Lenin. From 1919 to 1921, Ulyanov served as secretary and member of the presidium of the Cossack department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and in February–March 1920, he served as secretary of the All-Russian Congress of Working Cossacks. During this party work, Ulyanov became closely acquainted with the Cossacks, and it was on the basis of his generalized party experience that he published his

works on the Cossack question.

During the years of the most fierce battles of the Civil War, it was vital for the Bolsheviks to achieve, if not the sympathy, then the loyalty of the Cossacks in order to “knock the ground out” from under the mass White movement, since it was the Cossacks who constituted the main striking force of the White armies. These considerations explain the peculiar “flirtations” with the Cossacks, the plans to create a Don Soviet Republic, permission to wear shoulder straps and stripes, and assertions about the loyalty of the Soviet government to the Orthodox Church. Very typical of the Bolshevik propaganda literature of this period is the propaganda brochure “The Red Cossack” by Demyan Bedny. In this brochure, Demyan Bedny seems to reinterpret folk Cossack songs in a new way. He creates propaganda poetic forms in the style of traditional Cossack songs, in which he discredits and ridicules traditional Cossack values - from respect for elders to the religiosity characteristic of the Cossacks. The brochure is illustrated with drawings, corresponding to that period, maintained in the style of a propaganda poster and political caricature. On the last page, after the address to his brothers “11-12 Don Cossack regiments, who went over to the side of the Red Soviet Army”, there is an illustration where a young Cossack tenderly kisses an infantry soldier-frontline soldier. And it is no coincidence that Demyan Bedny addresses, first of all, young Cossack frontline soldiers. He calls them to fight against their own elders, against priests, against officers, against their parents and grandfathers, finally. Let us cite, for example, just one small work of the poet, which he entitled “Kuban Song”. Here we see a particularly vivid contrast between the old and the new, young Cossack frontline soldiers and old men, faithful to traditional Cossack values. Before the verses themselves, an excerpt from a folk Cossack song is given as an epigraph:

“Beyond the glorious Kuban River, not a lump
of white snow will turn white,
In the open field a youthful body
It became envious.
Cossacksong”.

Thus, Demyan Bedny seems to refer the reader to the Cossack folk tradition. He then develops this poetic theme further, but in a way that speaks to the current situation:

“A white seagull flies over the glorious Kuban River.

A young Cossack with a bold head is riding
along the shore.

White seagull – kigi, oh kigi! – He cries and is
heartbroken.

The Horse stumbles under the Cossack on four
legs.

– “Are you a horse, my black horse, add some
speed and strength!

Take me away from my native village, from my
faithful grave.

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Beneath you, my black horse, the thick reeds bend.

How is Pogonyushka chasing me with the scoundrel sergeant major?

Like a chaser, there are horsemen, old villagers, officers and sergeants, fierce oprichniks.

For that the chieftain's servants bared their teeth at me,

That the people's power of the Workers and Peasants is dear to me,

That I want to serve the people, to stand for the Soviet power,

I am ready to lay down my head in battle, Oh, and my brave one!"

After the end of the Civil War, the Cossack theme lost its political urgency and relevance. The Cossack department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee ceased to exist, and I. I. Ulyanov, as stated in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, was transferred to "administrative and economic work." Nevertheless, even during the NEP years, the Cossacks continued to be the object of party attention and political agitation.

The broad political amnesty implemented by the Soviet government for ordinary participants in the Civil War was intended, among other things, to split the unity of the White émigré community and, above all, to secure the return to their homeland of the bulk of rank-and-file Cossacks from the White Army cadres, especially the "Wrangelites." Even abroad, Cossacks continued to be the most organized, united, and combat-ready force of the "White counterrevolution." They could become an object and a means of influence for "world imperialism" in organizing a new "crusade" against the USSR, that is, serve as a convenient pretext for invading Soviet Russia and constitute the vanguard of foreign intervention. For all these reasons, the Bolsheviks, using all legal and covert means, sought to create in the Cossack émigré community the impression that life was well-ordered for the Cossacks in the USSR, that the conflict between the Cossacks and the Soviet government had been resolved, and that the Cossacks were fully rehabilitated in Russia and in demand.

On the other hand, within the framework of the New Economic Policy, the Soviet government created conditions for overcoming the post-revolutionary economic devastation and restoring agricultural production in the USSR. And in this effort, it was the Cossacks who were tasked with rebuilding domestic horse breeding and livestock farming, as well as commercial production of durum wheat—the main national wealth of old Russia—in the southern regions. At the same time, the Bolsheviks wanted to preserve the Cossacks' military mobilization potential. Before the Revolution, the Russian Empire was the world's leading horse-breeding power and could mobilize more horses, sabers, and cavalry units than all other European countries combined. The First World War, two revolutions, and the Civil War of

1918–1921 inflicted irreparable damage on domestic horse breeding, cavalry personnel, and related industries and trades (ammunition, saddles, bladed weapons, etc.). The Cossacks provided nine-tenths of the mobilization potential of the "tsarist" cavalry. The Soviet government, in turn, sought to restore this potential through the Cossacks. One of the main ideologists and organizers of this endeavor was the legendary Red Marshal, commander of the 1st Cavalry Army, and national hero of the Red Cossacks, Semyon Mikhailovich Budyonny. From 1924 to 1937, he was Inspector of the Red Army Cavalry—a position similar to that of Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich the Younger under the last Emperor, Nicholas II. And on the eve of the country's entry into a new world war, from 1939 to 1941, Budyonny was appointed Deputy, and then First Deputy, People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR. It is to S. M. Budyonny that we owe the revival of domestic horse breeding and equestrian sports in the USSR. The very name of the legendary "Red Cossack" became a household word and, especially in those years, played the role of a kind of propaganda "beacon" for shaping the image of "Soviet Cossacks", both in the USSR and abroad.

On April 30, 1925, at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), it was deemed "completely unacceptable to ignore the peculiarities of Cossack life and to resort to violent measures." Quite characteristic of the "Cossack" policy in the USSR during the NEP period was the publication of a collection of articles and speeches by A. I. Mikoyan on the Cossack question in the same year, 1925. In this book, Mikoyan bluntly states: "We must not indiscriminately reject everything Cossack because it was Cossack. This would be a harmful, short-sighted policy, since it is necessary to utilize Cossack habits, as long as they do not deny the equality of the working masses. No one wants to forbid Cossacks from calling themselves Cossacks or to change their habits—both the Regional Party Committee and the Central Committee have firmly stated this. We must take into account the peculiarities of Cossack life, we must know how to overcome obstacles, we must know how to overcome those unheard-of attacks against Cossack life in the localities, which are in no way justified." Here, Mikoyan cites a number of specific examples of what were then called "excesses" in the policy toward "laboring Cossacks." These "excesses" primarily concern the stanitsa way of life and the unjustified persecution of Cossack folk culture: "There are a number of cases where Cossacks at various meetings ask: can Cossacks wear the Kubanka and beshmet? They ask the central government: is it permissible to sing free songs in Kuban? From these questions, we conclude that not all is well with us and that there are unjustified restrictions on Cossack life." And then, Mikoyan, on behalf of the party, definitively declares: "It must be stated frankly that Cossacks can wear the Circassian coat and the Kubanka, wear stripes and a

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dagger, and whatever else they like. We must firmly guarantee these rights for the farmers of our region." Mikoyan goes on to explain that it wasn't the Cossack's appearance that sparked hostility, "but the fact that the Cossacks served the tsar and beat workers with whips. We will never allow the return of this past Cossack culture, but the distinctive Kuban or Don dress, the Circassian coat, or the hat—we must allow them to wear them."

Mikoyan formulates a coherent and consistent program for resolving the "Cossack question" under Soviet rule. Below, we list only the main slogans Mikoyan outlined in his work "The Party and the Cossacks," which gave the entire collection its title:

- 1) Involving the Cossacks in active Soviet construction is the main task of the party.
- 2) A blanket denial of everything Cossack is harmful to Soviet power.
- 3) The Cossack question is partly a national question.
- 4) We must put an end to national and class discord.
- 5) The Cossacks are also concerned with the issues of the life of a farmer.
- 6) The Cossack question is partly a question for the middle peasants.
- 7) We will not allow religion to become a weapon of counter-revolution.
- 8) Do not insult those to whom we have given rights.
- 9) It is necessary to strengthen the admission of Cossacks into the party.
- 10) It is necessary to prepare the Soviet intelligentsia from the Cossacks.
- 11) Soviet Cossack youth are the best levers for linking the Cossacks with the party and Soviet power.
- 12) Being a leader in a village is the most important party matter.
- 13) Our duty is to support the military spirit of the Cossacks and all grain growers through territorial units.
- 14) We have neutralized the strong sentiments among the Cossacks and peasants.
- 15) We are not satisfied with what has been achieved; we must achieve broad activity of the Cossacks.
- 16) The turn of the Cossacks towards Soviet power is not an oratorical word, but the real truth.
- 17) We will unite the best Cossack farmers around the party and the councils.
- 18) Village councils in Cossack areas should be called stanitsa councils.
- 19) It is necessary to develop a Soviet dzhigit (a dashing horseman-cavalryman, which, according to Mikoyan, every Cossack Komsomol member should become).
- 20) We need to help the Cossack woman with her community work.

And, undoubtedly, the main idea, as we now say, the main message of Bolshevik agitation and

propaganda for the Cossacks, Mikoyan formulates as follows: "We seriously and for the long term want to make the Cossacks the mainstay of Soviet power." This thesis clearly and directly echoes Lenin's famous programmatic slogan: "NEP: Seriously and for the Long Run!"

In the 1920s, the attention of the first Soviet historians was focused on collecting sources and materials to perpetuate the recent history of the Revolution, the Civil War, and the creation of the Soviet state. The class approach occupied a dominant position, and the methodology was based on a primitive Marxism characteristic of the historical "Pokrovsky school." M.N. Pokrovsky became the founder of Soviet historiography as a whole and the class approach to Cossack issues. Mikhail Nikolaevich Pokrovsky (1868–1932), a student of V.O. Klyuchevsky, a member of the Bolshevik Party since 1905, a participant in the first Russian revolution and the revolution of 1917. His historical works were highly praised by V.I. Lenin. After the October Revolution, Pokrovsky headed the Communist Academy, the academic Institute of History, and the Institute of Red Professors; in 1918, he became Deputy People's Commissar of Education. His work, "The Conquest of the Caucasus," reflects the characteristic features of Soviet historiography in the 1920s and early 1930s. Pokrovsky's methodological foundation was Eurocentrism, including the vices of Westernization and modernization, a primitivized Marxism, a class approach, and an absolutization of class struggle. For example, he views ghazawat as a form of revolution, identifies muridism with medieval religious democratic movements in Europe, and describes Sheikh Mansur as "the first Caucasian revolutionary who had to die in the distant north..." The raiding system is turned on its head, and responsibility for the raids is placed on the Russian side, including the Cossacks, who are portrayed as geniuses of robbery and violence: "War with the highlanders was essentially so easy at that time, so profitable for the soldiers, especially the Cossacks, who robbed everything and everyone, and provided such additional pleasures for the officers..."

Thus, in the early years of Soviet power, the Cossacks were viewed as a privileged class in the Russian Empire, occupying a social position intermediate between the wealthy peasantry and the petty gentry. In this context, the Cossacks were conceived, first and foremost, as a counterrevolutionary force—an instrument of tsarism in the fight against revolution and guardians of the "prison of nations" in the national question. Publications were often overtly political in nature, and authors focused on the current events—all attention was focused on the history of the Revolution and the Civil War.

Moreover, since the Cossacks participated in the Civil War on both sides, the approach to the Cossacks was of a dual nature.

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On the one hand, the Cossacks were defined as a generally reactionary class; on the other, the class approach postulated class stratification within the Cossacks themselves, with "laboring Cossacks" conceived as the pillar of Soviet power. These constructs naturally led to the justification of the policy of decossackization—as a violent, revolutionary acceleration of the natural process of proletarianization of the bulk of the Cossacks while simultaneously intensifying the class struggle. Hence the extension of the principle of proletarian internationalism to the Cossacks, particularly in relation to "out-of-town" and mountain peoples. During the struggle to establish Soviet power, the revolution, and the Civil War, the split within Russian and Soviet society into Reds and Whites was antagonistic in nature and could not be overcome either theoretically or practically.

The young Soviet historiography that was taking shape during these years focused its entire attention on writing the history of the revolution and creating a new society, a new social world of universal equality. All previous historical experience was deemed insignificant and irrelevant, and the "old world of violence" needed to be "razed to the ground" rather than studied. The historical materialist model of historical movement through social differentiation and class struggle was an extreme intellectual abstraction, not historical reality "in all its fullness and concreteness." The dialectic of classical Marxism understands the "ideal" (idealistic) nature of this abstraction and must recognize that the "material" embodiment, the "being" of this abstraction, is impossible. However, in the first post-revolutionary years, not all enthusiasts of communist science understood the profound laws of dialectics. The low educational level of the first representatives of the proletarian "red professors" also had a negative impact. Under these conditions, philosophical methodology was replaced by slogans, and scientific criticism by public meetings. Moreover, the illiterate worker-peasant audience of those years had to first master the basics of scientific literacy, a culture of thought, and historical logic. Under these conditions and with such a "base" of research, the early Soviet historiography of the "Cossack question" suffered from one-sidedness and political bias, while its social-class analysis was deliberately oversimplified and schematic. The most striking manifestation of this formulaic approach was the attempt to divide individual mountain villages and even entire ethnic groups into "Reds" and "Whites." This later led to grave consequences in the highly complex and tangled environment of interethnic and interfaith relations, particularly the acute and long-standing kinship (such as the mountain kanla) and intertribal conflicts in the North Caucasus. The political models used within the framework of the "Trotskyist" revolutionary methods during the Civil War were also reflected in the young Soviet historiography of the 1920s and 1930s.

Later, a number of "excesses" in Soviet historiography, the so-called "Pokrovsky school of history," were condemned, including "with Stalin's direct participation," as stated in the article "History and Historiography" in Volume XXX of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, 1937 edition. The intense political and methodological struggle that ensued within and around Soviet historical scholarship ended with the adoption of a unified, mono-methodological framework for the historical process, embodied in Stalin's famous "Short Course in the History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)," and left its mark on all of Russian historiography. Visible traces of these "class battles for history" were the cut out, replaced, and then carefully pasted sheets of the above-cited article on historiography from the XXXth volume of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, submitted for production on July 2, 1936, and signed for publication on February 15, 1937. The interwar period to this day remains one of the most complex and least studied periods in the history of the Cossacks.

It's important to note the excessive ideologization and politicization of the entire Stalinist period of Soviet history, the objective study of which remains a pressing issue for Russian historiography. From a formal and methodological perspective, the solution to this problem is extremely difficult precisely because of the political relevance of our country's Soviet past. As long as the political ruling class, the intellectual elite, and all public opinion remain divided between ardent supporters and fierce opponents of so-called "Stalinism," an objective assessment of this period of our history will remain a pressing and, at the same time, very complex problem, and historians will remain constrained by this political relevance. All of the above circumstances fully apply to the study of the history of the Cossacks during this period. Here, we also observe a split in historiography between the Reds and the Whites, complicated by the legacy and remnants of the Civil War.

Clearly, in the context of dispossession, collectivization, and dispossession, along with the intense intra-party struggle, a calm and balanced study of such pressing issues as the history of the Cossacks in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War was simply impossible. However, even during these years, a distinct shift in state policy toward the Cossacks was evident. The second half of the 1930s can rightfully be called the Stalinist renaissance of the Cossacks in the USSR. Here, it's worth briefly addressing one circumstance and examining a myth common in 20th-century Cossack historiography. M. A. Sholokhov and his novels "Quiet Flows the Don" and "Virgin Soil Upturned" played a significant role in Stalin's Cossack renaissance. However, it should be noted that the mythologized legends about Sholokhov's personal intercession "for the Cossacks" with Stalin, widespread to this day in literary circles and among the Cossacks themselves, are greatly exaggerated. Examples include the books of the renowned Cossack

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writer, historian, and literary figure V. Ye. Shambarov, who devoted a separate chapter to Sholokhov's exceptional role and his relationship with Stalin, as well as articles in Cossack periodicals. Other, and contradictory, interpretations of similar issues and questions of Sholokhov's authorship were addressed in a book by S. Semanov and the works of the renowned researcher of Cossack genealogy and history S. V. Koryagin. It is also worth noting the recently published fundamental monograph by A. V. Venkov. Sholokhov's intercession "for the Cossacks" is a fact, documented, including in the writer's correspondence with Stalin, recently published in a separate edition. However, we can assume that the Cossack renaissance of the 1930s and the turn in the assessment of the Cossacks in Soviet politics and historiography were caused by much deeper reasons connected with the exposure of Trotsky and the Trotskyists in the USSR, the general condemnation of "leftist excesses" in domestic and foreign policy and, not least, military considerations in the context of growing international tension on the eve of the Second World War.

In the complex domestic and foreign policy environment of the USSR, research on Cossack issues developed in the 1920s and 1930s. Among the first authors to address Cossack topics during this period are those by V. Karpov, G. Ts. Tsybikov, and A. Ilyin. Regarding the research results, most publications examine Cossack issues within the general context of the events of the Civil War in a particular "Cossack" region. Here, we can cite the works of G. Ladokha [and others], where the Cossacks are explicitly stated in the title as the primary subject of study. The publications of prominent Soviet and party leaders A. I. Mikoyan and S. M. Budyonny, already mentioned above, deserve special mention in their analysis of policy toward the Cossacks during the NEP years.

During these same years, A. V. Mirtov laid the general foundations for the scientific linguistic study of Cossack dialects and, specifically, Don dialectology. He began his research in the famine-stricken year of 1919, and in 1929, he published the first dictionary of Don Cossack dialects at the Research Institute for the Study of Local Economy and Culture at the North Caucasus State University in Rostov-on-Don.

Alexey Vasilkovich Mirtov (1886–1966) was born on August 8, 1886, in Simbirsk. In 1906, he entered St. Petersburg University, from which he graduated with honors and the title of Candidate of Sciences, and was a student of A. A. Shakhmatov and I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay. Professor Mirtov is the author of several studies of the modern Russian language and its history, and a recognized authority in Russian and Ukrainian dialectology. He is a renowned methodologist and the author of an original methodology for teaching Russian in schools. From 1917, Mirtov worked as a teacher in Don stanitsa schools, and from 1919, as a lecturer at higher

educational institutions in Krasnodar, Novocherkassk, Donetsk, and Rostov University. From 1928, A. V. Mirtov was a member of the Dialectological Commission of the USSR Academy of Sciences. He taught at a number of universities and institutes in various republics of the USSR, including the Moscow Pedagogical Institute.

A. V. Mirtov was the first to conduct large-scale field research into the vernacular Cossack dialects of the Don Host Region. During these ethnographic fieldworks, which the researcher called excursions, from 1919 to 1927, Mirtov traveled throughout the former Don Host Region, reaching remote villages and hamlets, according to his own testimony, on foot, on horseback, in an oxcart, by steamboat on the Don River, and along all the railways of the Don Region. The result of these ten-year studies was the publication of the Don Cossack Dictionary, which for the first time documented the linguistic practices of the Don Cossacks at a high scientific level.

The importance of this work cannot be overestimated. It became not only a precedent and an important historiographical milestone in the history of Cossack linguistics. Mirtov's dictionary recorded the Cossack dialect in the form in which it was preserved in those years on the Don, when the old Cossacks and Cossack women were still alive - the direct bearers of the pre-revolutionary Cossack linguistic tradition, which in the coming years began to be eroded and lost under the influence of the literary Russian language, which came to the Don along with the Soviet power, the liquidation of illiteracy, Bolshevik agitation and the press, as well as the mass migration of workers and peasants from Russian regions on the one hand, and with the equally mass exodus of Cossacks into emigration, the death of Cossacks during the Civil War, expulsions and reprisals during the years of dispossession and dispossession - on the other hand. It should be noted that from our point of view, here too, we can see the direct linguocultural influence of the "genius Sholokhov", who gave the Cossack folk language a literary dimension and inscribed the Don dialect into the context of the Russian literary language, thus opening the way for philological and linguistic research into this phenomenon in the USSR, and in many ways on a global scale. Looking ahead, it should be said that much later, in the 1950s–1970s, it was precisely the appeal to Sholokhov's authority that sanctioned the scientific relevance of philological research into the Don folk (read: Cossack) dialects in the USSR.

Soviet military memoirs differed significantly from pre-revolutionary ones. Let us consider their main features below. Memoirs of the period of the 1917 Revolution and the Civil War are distinguished by their great originality and in many ways are close to the historiography of this period. Here again we can see, as in relation to historiography, an insurmountable split between "Red" and "White" authors. The memoirist often could not rise above

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"class" political interests. This is a common vice not only of the "Reds" but also of the "Whites". Although in this regard there were exceptions, not only among White émigré authors, but also among the Red Army memoirs of the first years after the Revolution. The level of education and the breadth of the author's outlook are of great importance for memoir literature. In this regard, the "Reds" were certainly inferior to the "Whites". But the advantage of the Reds can be considered their "closeness" to the grassroots events; those of them who came from junior commanders, and sometimes privates, looked at things very directly, did not know how to "literarily" obscure and hide facts, etc.

A typical example of this kind of memoir is the book of the dashing brigade commander of the Bashkir troops, Musa Lutovich Murtazin.

"Bashkiria and the Bashkir Troops in the Civil War", published by the military printing house of the UPR People's Commissariat of Military and Naval Affairs and the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR in 1927. In 2007, on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of Bashkortostan's voluntary entry into Russia, the book was reissued.

Ufa Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This is a unique exception against the general background of recent years, when "red" memoirs were practically not republished (in contrast to a number of reprints of "white" memoirists).

Already in the first edition, the introductory editorial noted that although "the editors, while striving to collect as complete a collection of materials on the history of the Civil War as possible, particularly on the history of national units, and while noting that military literature is very poor in this regard, nevertheless consider it necessary to note certain aspects of this work with which the editors cannot fully agree and consider them controversial." Ten years later, in 1937, Brigade Commander Murtazin, holder of three Orders of the Red Banner, was arrested and executed, and his book was banned and removed from libraries. Only two copies survived in the special collection of the V.I. Lenin Library until 1995, when the book became available to readers. The "Bashkir Host" refers to the former Bashkir-Meshcheryak (Bashkir) Cossack Host, which was formed in 1798 and transformed into the Bashkir Host in 1855, comprising Bashkirs, Meshcheryaks, Teptyars, and bobyls from the Orenburg region. At the end of the 19th century, the Bashkir Cossack Host was abolished, and in 1882, the Bashkir Mounted Militia was ordered to be formed in the event of war. Due to the peculiarities of Soviet class and nationality policy, the publication of Murtazin's book became possible, albeit within a very short period of time. Class restrictions and repressions were in effect for other Cossack hosts in the first post-revolutionary years until the late 1930s, when Cossacks were granted equal rights by the Decree of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR of April 20, 1936, lifting

restrictions on service in the Red Army for Cossacks. In the early years of Soviet power, amidst the revolutionary upsurge, there was great enthusiasm throughout Soviet society for collecting materials for future historians of the first workers' and peasants' state. During this period, numerous documents and materials were published, including memoirs not only of Red commanders and commissars, among whom the legendary army commander S. M. Budyonny deserves special mention, but even of their former opponents in the civil war. For example, the memoirs of the White General Slashchev were published, which, of course, were compiled after his "repentance" and return to the USSR. However, as the Soviet state system took shape and developed, official history emerged within the strict confines of the only true doctrine. In the 1930s, the Soviet press in general, and historiography and memoir writing in particular, found themselves under strict censorship restrictions. Soviet communist culture created a varnished "iconostasis" of the heroes of the revolution and the civil war. Amid the intense intra-party struggle and political trials of the 1930s, Writing memoirs became a very difficult and dangerous undertaking, not only for the author themselves but also for many of the people mentioned in them. Under these conditions, Soviet memoir writing was practically devoid of the merits of a historical source.

The political situation began to change rapidly in the second half of the 1930s. At this time, the military threat was rapidly growing, Europe and the entire world were approaching a new global war, and the USSR was entering the years of the "Great Turning Point" and intense intra-party political struggle. In this environment, the Cossacks and their military potential once again acquired particular political relevance. During the interwar period of rising international tensions, and especially with the onset of World War II, a certain Cossack renaissance took place. Even during the inception of the Red Army, Cossack cavalry units played a significant role in its structure (especially in the North Caucasus region). During the Civil War, it was in the North Caucasus that strategic cavalry first appeared, consisting of two cavalry armies. It should be noted that during these years on the Southern Front, I.V. Stalin became closely acquainted with both the White and Red Cossacks. Moreover, Stalin had already expressed disagreement with Trotsky's policies and openly defended Mironov. It was from this time, in particular, that Stalin's personal friendship with Budyonny and Voroshilov began. In the early interwar years, the Cossacks proved "superfluous" in military development, and only in the second half of the 1930s were they granted equal rights to serve in the Red Army.

A decisive shift in the party's policy toward the Cossacks occurred in 1936. On February 18 of that year, the newspaper Pravda published an editorial under the telling headline "Soviet Cossacks." The article's first two paragraphs categorically stated:

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"One of the remarkable victories of socialism is that the main and overwhelming mass of Cossacks has become accustomed to and ingrained in the collective farm system, accustomed to and ingrained in Soviet power, putting an end to the accursed past, when Cossack regions, especially the Don and Kuban, were strongholds of counterrevolution and nests of anti-Soviet sabotage."

The Cossacks became Soviet not only in their state affiliation, but also in spirit, aspirations, and devotion to Soviet power and collective farm construction. The Cossacks, working on collective farm land and earning a prosperous and cultural life thanks to the collective farms, have no need to look back. They have resolutely and firmly stood under the red banner of socialism and under this banner, hand in hand with the working class and the entire collective farm peasantry, are building a socialist society."

Let's keep in mind that the de facto editor-in-chief of Pravda was I. V. Stalin himself. And, in any case, it was he who edited and corrected the editorials of the country's main newspaper. Stalin's hand is also evident in "Soviet Cossacks," his recognizable style of constructing articles: first the main thesis, then a consistent, point-by-point argument, and finally, a final conclusion. What is the main thesis of this article? The answer is simple—as always with Stalin—the Cossacks firmly stand on the side of the Bolsheviks and are ready for armed struggle "for the Reds." The article describes a meeting with Stalin and a speech by the Cossacks of the Don, Terek, and Kuban before the "congress of advanced collective farmers and Stakhanovite livestock farmers" in the Kremlin: "And their speeches were about how there are no longer any generals, officers, or kulaks on the Don, Kuban, or Terek who had held the working Cossacks in their clutches."

Their speeches were about how, on the Don, Kuban and Terek lands plowed up by the revolution, people grew up who forever linked their fate with the Soviet power and the Bolsheviks.

Their speeches were about the fact that the Soviet Cossacks, like the entire Soviet people, are now united and consolidated around the Soviet government, around the Bolshevik Party, around the great and beloved leader Comrade Stalin.

Their speeches were about how the Soviet Cossacks are filled with a sense of Soviet patriotism and love for their homeland, for whose honor and interests they are ready to engage in battle against any enemy." The speeches of "ordinary" Cossacks are then quoted, along with their toasts to Stalin, Voroshilov, and Budyonny, and to the entire Red Army. Then each Cossack rises to the presidium:

"Stalin greets everyone, shaking their hands firmly. A storm of applause and cheers erupts in the hall at this moment." A fitting and expected ending crowns this editorial. "The best traits of the Cossacks" are cited—their capacity for iron discipline, courage and tenacity, and selfless dedication to their cause.

This goal should be "the transformation of the Cossack population into a powerful reserve of the workers' and peasants' Red Army." And finally, the article's final conclusion (read: Stalin's final conclusion): "And there can be no doubt that the Soviet Cossacks, having embarked on the path of collective farms and demonstrating examples of collective farm labor, will demonstrate examples of heroism and courage on the battlefield, in the ranks of the workers' and peasants' Red Army, should the enemy attack our homeland." And the last sentence, in a manner characteristic of Stalin's style, aphoristically summarizes the general conclusion of the article in a short and accessible form of a political slogan "for the broad masses of the people": "In the defeat of enemy armies, the sharp Cossack saber and the well-aimed Cossack bullet will find work."

Exactly one month after Pravda's publication about the Soviet Cossacks, they themselves "responded" to Stalin's call. On March 18, 1936, the newspaper Severo-Kavkazsky Bolshevik published an open letter, "Letter from the Cossacks of the Collective Farm Cavalry Hundreds of the Don, Kuban, and Terek," under the headline "To the Leader of the Peoples and Friend of the Cossacks, Comrade Stalin." As reported in the newspaper, the letter was adopted unanimously by the Cossacks of the collective farm cavalry hundreds of the Don, Kuban, and Terek, who had arrived for the ceremonial meeting of the Rostov City Council on March 15, 1936. The letter begins with a personal appeal from the Cossacks to their leader:

"Dear Comrade Stalin!

We, Cossacks of the Don, Kuban, and Terek villages and farmsteads, horsemen of Adygea, Kabarda, Karachay, and Dagestan, gathered for this momentous meeting with the proletarians of Rostov, send you, the wisest leader of the peoples, our heartfelt, our heartfelt, our martial greetings! We have gathered to tell you that in the steppe plains of the Quiet Don, where the Terek roars, and where the talkative, restless Kuban flows—everywhere, ever more beautifully, our socialist homeland is flourishing; everywhere, the faithful sons of the homeland have undergone the great school of life and struggle; everywhere, they glorify the great name of Stalin."

The letter's authors assert that "we, Cossack men and women, owe you especially much, Comrade Stalin." They then go on to list Stalin's services to the Cossacks, whom the leader confidently and steadfastly led to the triumph of socialism, where the Cossacks, having put an end to their shameful past, received from Stalin "a prosperous, happy, and joyful life." As a result, "the collective farms have produced brave, courageous, and resilient people who are unafraid of any difficulties," and "the collective farms have strong, fast horses." These men and horses constitute "the great strength of our defense." The letter's authors directly address the Pravda article:

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"With lightning speed, the news of the warm welcome of the Don Cossacks in the Kremlin by you, Comrade Stalin, and by the leaders of the party and government, and of the awarding of the best Cossacks with the Order of Lenin, spread throughout all the villages and all the Cossacks.

This news raised our spirits everywhere even more, made the fighting spirit of the Soviet Cossacks even stronger, increased our strength in the struggle for Stalin's harvest, for our readiness for defense."

The Cossacks further solemnly promise that "they will not spare their lives for the cause of Lenin and Stalin." They are aware of the complex international situation in the West and East and are prepared to repel both Japanese militarists and German fascists. At the same time, the Cossacks hint that they are prepared to water their horses not only with the waters of the Don, Kuban, and Terek, but also with the Elbe and Spree, the Yangtze and the Yellow Rivers. As soon as "dear comrade Stalin sounds the alarm," not only the Cossacks but also their wives, sisters, and mothers will "form an unshakable wall in defense of their great homeland." Then follows the Cossack oath to Stalin: "We swear that the entire Cossack population of our villages will become a powerful reserve for the workers' and peasants' Red Army, and if the enemy dares to attack us, in the ranks of the invincible Red Army we will drive, cut down, and destroy the enemy, in order to defeat the enemy on his own territory, in order to put an end to the enemy forever in both the West and the East." In the concluding section of the letter, we again see the address and a verbatim quote from the Pravda editorial of February 18: "From now on, both in defense and in labor, the Cossacks swear to be an example to all." We will direct the best Cossack traits – fighting spirit, organization, iron discipline, courage, tenacity – towards a rapid doubling of harvests, a rapid rise in all branches of animal husbandry, and especially horse breeding, towards transforming the Azov-Black Sea region and the North Caucasus into the most advanced, richest, flourishing, and most cultured regions of our homeland."

The final lines of "The Cossacks' Letter" are particularly intriguing. They directly and unambiguously refer to, and almost verbatim quote, "God Save the Tsar," the official anthem of the Russian Empire: "Live and prosper, dear great Stalin, to the joy of the workers of the world and to the fear of our enemies, for many, many years." For comparison, let us cite A.F. Lvov's 1833 imperial anthem, with lyrics by V.A. Zhukovsky and A.S. Pushkin:

"God save the Tsar! Strong, sovereign, Reign for our glory; Reign to the fear of our enemies, Orthodox Tsar!

God save the Tsar!"

The programmatic article about the Soviet Cossacks in Pravda was followed by a corresponding propaganda campaign in the central and local press.

This campaign included the publication of speeches and presentations by collective farm Cossacks at various rallies and meetings at the local and capital levels. Letters from Cossacks to party and government leaders were also published, along with articles about the labor, cultural, military, and athletic achievements of the Soviet Cossacks.

In turn, local party and Soviet leaders, as well as Stalin, Budyonny, and Voroshilov, addressed the Cossack collective farmers on the pages of newspapers and in public speeches.

As a result of a campaign of such a scale, logical "organizational conclusions" had to be made at the state level. The Bolshevik Party and the Soviet government responded sensitively to the political "signal" received "from the very top". Already on April 20, 1936, the Central Executive Committee of the USSR issued a Resolution on the lifting of restrictions on the Cossacks' service in the Red Army, and on April 23, by order of the People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR K. E. Voroshilov, Cossack cavalry divisions were recreated on the basis of recruiting the latter from among "the entire population of the Don, Terek, Kuban and Stavropol region, excluding the highlanders." The 10th territorial North Caucasian cavalry division was renamed the 10th Terek-Stavropol Cossack division, and the 12th Kuban territorial division was renamed the 12th Kuban Cossack division. In the autumn of the same year, traditional Cossack uniforms were introduced for these divisions. That same year, the 13th Don Cossack Cavalry Division was formed, and the 4th and 6th Cavalry Divisions of the Belorussian Military District, which until 1923 formed the core of the legendary 1st Cavalry Army, were also reformed into Cossack divisions. These units became part of the 6th Cavalry Corps, which received the name Cossack. The titles of propaganda books and brochures published during these years are quite characteristic, such as "Great Happiness. A Story about the Order-Bearing Cossack Woman Kofanova" by A. I. Busygin, or "The Cossack Oath: A Story about the Combat Actions of Soviet Cossacks in the Future War" by B. K. Verkhovsky, as well as a number of other publications of this kind. In this context, Budyonny's address to the Cossack horse breeders can also be mentioned.

As for scientific historical research, it mainly continued the traditions of the 1920s. Among the works of the thirties, one can note the monographs of I. Kutyakov [and others]. During this period, the first textbooks on the history of the Cossacks, books for children and young people, fiction, and popular Cossack songs appeared within the framework of Soviet culture. During these years, the genius of M. A. Sholokhov entered Soviet literature, who rightfully became the main "Cossack" writer in the USSR and in all world literature. All this was a manifestation of the so-called "Stalinist" (or, if you like, "Sholokhovian") renaissance of Cossack culture in the second half of the 1930s in the USSR. But the real high point for the

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Cossacks in Soviet history was the Great Patriotic War, in the operations of which the Cossack cavalry took the most active part.

The Second World War is deservedly considered a "war of motors". Indeed, it was in this war that the technical and economic component of military-strategic superiority over the enemy began to play the main role in ensuring the final victory and securing its political results during the post-war peace settlement. Therefore, it is not surprising that both in the past and in the coming 21st century, not only the general public, but also professional researchers paid primary attention to the history of such new types of troops as aviation, armored, motorized, missile troops, etc. At the same time, which is quite natural for the mass consciousness, the "old" types of troops, such as infantry or artillery, often remain in the shadows. This is especially true for such a distinguished and glorious type of troops in the past as the cavalry. In the modern public consciousness, stereotypes of the attitude to the cavalry, and even to the draft horse, as an anachronism "obsolete back in the years of the First World War" have firmly entrenched. At the same time, it is forgotten that it was the Second World War that became the last "finest hour" of the red cavalry. And if we talk, in essence, about horse traction, then all the hardships of the Patriotic War were literally "pulled" out of the front-line impassability by horses, which remained the main draft force on the eastern front, both in the Red Army and in the Wehrmacht until the last days of the war. Mechanized and motorized.

Troops were indeed always "at the forefront" in almost all offensive operations and almost all the glory of brilliant victories fell to their lot, but we must not forget that the bulk of artillery and property of field troops moved (and was supplied) mainly on horses. Moreover, horses not only carried troops, but also fed them in the most literal sense of the word. Horse meat was the main, and sometimes the only food product for encircled units, both in the Soviet army and among the Germans in the cauldron at Stalingrad. Many participants in the military operations on both sides of the front left memories of these facts. The role of cavalry in the war remains largely underestimated to this day.

During the rearmament and mechanization of the Red Army in 1939–1940, the cavalry's strength was reduced by almost a third. Some Cossack divisions were disbanded (while new tank and motorized units were created, staffed by personnel from the abolished cavalry units), and some of the remaining divisions lost their Cossack designation. Nevertheless, on June 22, 1941, the Red Army had three cavalry corps and seven separate cavalry divisions (consisting of 9.2 thousand personnel, 34 tanks and 132 guns and mortars. This was caused, on the one hand, by the insufficient provision of the infantry with modern materiel (primarily armored personnel carriers and other means of transportation), and on the other hand, by the peculiarities of the Eastern European theater of

military operations. In particular, the underdeveloped infrastructure, the absence of a network of high-quality highways, the presence of significant forests and swamps. In total, by the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, 13 cavalry divisions remained in the Red Army, including the 2nd, 5th and 6th Cossack cavalry corps of two divisions. At the same time, horse-tank groups (cavalry-mechanized) groups were created by combining cavalry divisions and tank brigades, and even the idea of creating a horse- A mechanized army consisting of two cavalry corps and one mechanized corps. The outbreak of the Great Patriotic War significantly altered these plans. Severe losses in tanks and aircraft, along with the occupation of the country's most important military-industrial regions, forced the Soviet government to abandon its plans to "fight the enemy with a small force on its own territory," switching to a strategic defense, and evacuating industry to the east. Due to supply problems and heavy combat losses, the Supreme Command Headquarters was forced to disband 29 newly formed mechanized corps. However, even in defensive operations, it was necessary to ensure the mobility of units and formations. This prompted the revival of the cavalry through the creation of so-called "light cavalry divisions" numbering up to 3,000 men and virtually devoid of modern weapons (field, anti-tank, and anti-aircraft artillery, tanks, etc.). A total of 82 light cavalry divisions were created, bringing the total number of cavalry to 500,000. Human.

Cossack militia divisions played a major role in the initial period of the war, recruiting men, horses, and melee weapons from Cossack collective farmers in traditional Cossack regions. The majority of the cavalry divisions were Cossacks from the North Caucasus Military District—Don, Terek, Stavropol, and Kuban Cossacks. Additionally, Ural, Transbaikal, and Ussuri Cossacks, Ukrainians, Bashkirs, Kalmyks, North Caucasus highlanders, and peoples of Central Asia and other Soviet republics also contributed to the cavalry. As in the past, entire Cossack families rose up to defend their homeland, swell the ranks of the Red Cavalry. For example, 63-year-old Kuban Cossack M.F. Grachev arrived with his six sons, and 62-year-old Kuban Cossack P.S. Kurkin brought with him forty volunteers from the village of Nizhne-Chirskaya. This was facilitated by the fact that, despite the policy of decossackization in the post-revolutionary years and thanks to its rejection in the second half of the 1920s and 1930s, the overwhelming majority of the Cossacks were able to preserve their customs, military skills and valor (despite the destruction of the economic base of the Cossacks during collectivization).

Despite the unsatisfactory equipment and the resulting low combat capability of the newly formed cavalry divisions, they played their role in ensuring the mobility of the Red Army units at the most difficult stage of the Great Patriotic War - in its initial period, when the strategic initiative, superiority in

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technology and air supremacy belonged entirely to the aggressor. The main role in the recreation of the red cavalry was played by the Cossacks, including old veterans of the First World War and the Civil War in the South of Russia. It was the Cossacks of the North Caucasian Military District that became the basis on which the red cavalry was recreated in new technical, and, consequently, tactical and operational conditions in the initial period of the Great Patriotic War. The contribution of the Cossacks - red cavalymen to the course and outcome of the Great Patriotic War as a whole was very significant. Moreover, the Cossack cavalry played a strategic role in this war, especially in the initial period of military action, when after Germany's treacherous attack on the USSR, the strategic initiative was entirely in the hands of the Wehrmacht. Among the first to meet the fascist aggressors on the Soviet border at 4 a.m. on June 22 were the Don, Terek and Kuban Cossacks of the 6th Chongar Kuban-Terek Cavalry Division from the 6th Cavalry Corps. The Cossacks took part in many battles in the initial period of the war, in Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine, near Smolensk and Rostov-on-Don, but their main role was to be played in the Battle of Moscow.

It should be noted that until the end of the war, no equipment could compete with the Cossack cavalry in mobility and cross-country ability on the frontline off-road. This circumstance was also noted by Rodion Yakovlevich Malinovsky, Marshal of the Soviet Union, twice Hero of the Soviet Union, participant in the First World War and the Civil War, who was familiar with the Cossacks firsthand, and from 1942 commanded the North Caucasus Front, then the Southern, Southwestern, 3rd and 2nd Ukrainian Fronts. Here is what he wrote about the Kuban Guard Cossacks of the KMG of General Pliev: "Cavalry, combined with tanks, acquired new qualities during the Great Patriotic War, played a major role in offensive operations that required high mobility and dynamism (italics mine. - I. Yu.). The horse walked even when it was almost not fed, it walked through such mud that neither a tank nor a single "all-terrain" vehicle could move from its place, the horse was always where a man could get." In wooded and swampy terrain, neither tanks nor infantry could compete with the Cossack cavalry in mobility.

The advantage of cavalry was especially evident in winter conditions, when high snow cover and low temperatures prevented German tanks from moving except on roads, and several hours were needed to start and warm up the engine. The latter circumstance not only limited the maneuverability and mobility of tanks, but also deprived German mechanized units of their main trump card - surprise. During the hours required to warm up engines and concentrate tank forces, the direction of possible enemy attacks became obvious to the Soviet command, Soviet units had time to prepare for defense and bring up reserves, deploy anti-tank defense systems in tank-hazardous

directions. Under such circumstances, the high maneuverability of the Cossack cavalry allowed the Soviet command to respond promptly to operational threats, quickly concentrating the necessary forces to repel the enemy offensive. Thus, in winter conditions, cavalry was able to win against tanks in the rate of concentration, and therefore gain an advantage in initiative. This, in turn, made it possible to carry out deep raids into the rear of the enemy's tank strike groups, destroy warehouses and columns, disrupt supplies and, ultimately, disrupt preparations for an offensive. It was these actions of the Cossack cavalry that largely contributed to the failure of the German offensive in Operation Typhoon and played an important role in the final victory of the Red Army in the Battle of Moscow. A victory that not only had great military, political and moral significance, but also, in fact, crossed out the fascist plans for a "blitzkrieg" in the USSR.

In the Battle of Moscow, one of the main roles was played by the Don, Stavropol, Terek and Kuban Cossacks of the legendary 2nd Cavalry Corps of Belov, 3rd Cavalry Corps of Dovator and other cavalry units and formations, which staunchly defended the capital, carried out daring raids behind enemy lines, and then defeated units of Guderian's tank army. For the steadfastness, courage and heroism demonstrated by the Cossacks, by order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of November 26, 1941, the Supreme Command Headquarters transformed the 2nd Cavalry Corps into the 1st Guards Cavalry Corps under the command of Pavel Alekseevich Belov, and the 3rd Cavalry Corps into the 2nd Guards Cavalry Corps under the command of Lev Mikhailovich Dovator. The North Caucasian Cossacks of these two Guards Cavalry Corps became the first Horse Guardsmen, laid the foundations and glorious combat traditions of the Soviet Horse Guards, in whose ranks by the end of the war there were seven cavalry corps. It should be noted that the majority of the personnel of the Soviet Horse Guards were Cossacks of the Don, Stavropol and Kuban. The merits of the Cossack cavalry in repelling the fascist aggression did not go unnoticed by the country's leadership. The speech of the head of the Soviet state, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR M. I. Kalinin to the Cossack Horse Guardsmen on April 25, 1942 noted the significance of the contribution of the Soviet cavalry to the defense of the country in the most difficult conditions of the initial period of the war. In essence, this was a recognition of the role that the Cossack cavalry played in thwarting the plans of the best Wehrmacht strategists for the lightning-fast defeat of the Soviet Union in 1941-1942. In this speech, Kalinin emphasized the role of cavalry in modern warfare: "I would like you to defend, so to speak, the right of horsemen to play a major role in this mechanized war. Two years ago, even in military circles, it was believed that the era of cavalry had already passed and

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that it could not play any significant role in modern machine warfare. But in the fall and winter, our cavalry showed that its role in modern warfare can be very significant and that under certain tactical conditions it can even act against tank units and not without success.”

However, despite the bravery and courage of the Cossack cavalymen, the lack of logistics, inadequate armament and equipment with modern weapons, the lack of clarity and shortcomings in the operational use of cavalry by higher-ranking commanders, the use of cavalry to patch up holes in the crumbling front, and its use for purely defensive tasks—all these factors predetermined the enormous losses of men and horses in the initial period of the war. Often, the Cossacks and their horses paid with their blood and lives for the miscalculations of the high command. Based on an analysis of combat experience in the use of cavalry units in modern warfare, the Supreme Command Headquarters issued an order in December 1941 to consolidate cavalry divisions into three cavalry corps and indicated the most optimal conditions for their use as means of developing a breakthrough, together with tanks, motorized infantry, and reinforcements (artillery, anti-aircraft, and anti-tank units) as part of army and front-line mobile groups.

Subsequently, special "collections of materials on the study of war experience" were regularly published, which also analyzed the combat employment of cavalry. However, up until 1944, these instructions and recommendations were far from always fully implemented by front and army commanders, which led to unjustifiably high losses among cavalry units. Thus, the results of an analysis of the 6th Cavalry Corps' actions in the Battle of Stalingrad confirmed the conclusion that "unsuccessful tactical actions by cavalry, especially in such a complex operation as developing a breakthrough, were almost always primarily due to the improper operational use of cavalry units by combined arms commanders and the inadequacy of the tasks assigned to the cavalry. Therefore, the further development of Soviet operational art in the field of cavalry use in modern warfare led to the idea of creating horse-mechanized groups that combined high mobility, armor, and firepower.

In January 1942, the 17th Kuban Cossack Cavalry Corps was created, incorporating the 12th and 13th Kuban Cavalry Divisions. In August of that year, for its combat achievements, the corps was renamed the 4th Guards Kuban Cossack Cavalry Corps. Its ranks included 22 Heroes of the Soviet Union. Later, the Plastun Cossack units were recreated: the Kuban Volunteer Plastun Division. In planning the upcoming offensive (against the forces of Group A), the commander of the Transcaucasian Front, General of the Army I.V. Tyulenev, who had commanded a cavalry brigade within the 1st Cavalry Army during the Civil War, proposed, based on pre-war plans, forming a cavalry army consisting of two cavalry

corps from the available cavalry divisions.

However, the Supreme Command Headquarters did not support these plans and, instead of reviving the Cavalry Army, in a directive dated November 19, 1942, it ordered “not to create a cavalry army, but to form two cavalry corps from the available cavalry divisions: the Kuban Guards Cossack Cavalry Corps consisting of the 9th, 10th Guards Cavalry and 30th Cavalry Divisions; the Don Guards Cossack Cavalry Corps consisting of the 11th, 12th Guards Cavalry and 63rd Cavalry Divisions.”

This decision was due to the fact that cavalry units were used by the Soviet command in close cooperation with tanks, and the recreation of strategic cavalry in the new conditions (unlike during the civil war) did not make operational sense, since the time of classical cavalry combat tactics had irrevocably passed due to the massive use of tanks and aircraft on the battlefield.

Cossack troops no longer conduct daring cavalry raids, but are used to reinforce and support armored forces. An example of Cossack cavalry tactics is the article "Captain Solntsev's Horsemen," published in the newspaper Pravda. It describes how tanks, supported by Cossack cavalymen, break through enemy defenses: some Cossacks, dismounted "on armor," break into German positions and hold the front line, repelling counterattacks, while the cavalry, operating from the flank, cut off the enemy infantry from the Tiger tanks, while the infantry approaches. In defense, Cossacks also dismounted, acting as regular infantry. Only in rare cases, primarily by the Kuban Cossacks in the North Caucasus, did they operate in classic mounted formation—against Romanian cavalymen. However, in these cases, the Cossacks were supported from the air by attack aircraft.

Following the crushing defeat at Stalingrad, German forces in the Caucasus, bogged down in battle with the Red Army, found themselves in a critical situation. On January 1, 1943, Army Group A began its retreat. Deprived of supplies and facing a severe fuel shortage, the Germans were forced to abandon not only artillery and other heavy weapons but also vehicles and other vehicles, saving the last remaining fuel for their tanks. The North Caucasus Front was formed to pursue the enemy. The Front's forces formed a mobile cavalry-mechanized group (MCMG) under the overall command of General N. Ya. Kirichenko's 4th Guards Kuban Corps. The group included the 4th and 5th Cossack Cavalry Corps, reinforced by a tank group. It was this Cossack MCMG that liberated the North Caucasus, including Georgievsk, Pyatigorsk, and Mineralnye Vody, and by the end of January, it had reached the Rostov region. However, it was unable to fully accomplish its assigned operational mission—preventing the Germans from gaining a foothold on the Mius River—and found itself encircled. For its combat distinctions in the Great Patriotic War, the 4th Guards Kuban

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Cossack Corps was awarded the Order of the Red Banner, the Order of Suvorov, and the Order of Kutuzov, 2nd Class. The Kuban Guards Cossack Divisions were each awarded two Orders of the Red Banner, and the Orders of Suvorov, Kutuzov, and Bohdan Khmelnytsky, 2nd Class.

This experience was used throughout the war, and the cavalry-mechanized and cavalry-tank groups of Generals I. A. Pliev and S. I. Gorshkov participated in many maneuver operations during the Great Patriotic War, liberating Budapest, Vienna, and Prague. In the final stages of the war, Cossack units were significantly strengthened. A cavalry division, in addition to three cavalry regiments, included a tank and artillery regiment, while a cavalry corps included an anti-tank artillery regiment, a self-propelled artillery regiment, and an anti-aircraft artillery battalion.

A Cavalry Main Group (CMG) consisted of two cavalry corps and one tank or mechanized corps. Such formations were capable of operating at great depth and conducting independent operations, even when separated from the main forces. During the Debrecen Offensive, both Cavalry Main Groups were cut off but were able to rejoin the main forces, covering a combined distance of over 500 km during the operation. The technical capabilities and operational conditions for creating strong and highly mobile Cavalry Main Groups were finally established during the turning point in the war after the Battle of Kursk, when Soviet forces seized the strategic initiative and the need for deep offensive operations became a pressing issue.

For these purposes, in 1943, on the initiative of the legendary hero of the Civil War, the commander of the 1st Cavalry S. M. Budyonny, the cavalry corps were reorganized and significantly strengthened. In January 1943, Marshal of the Soviet Union Budyonny was appointed commander of the Red Army cavalry. It should be noted that although Budyonny's military merits in the Great Patriotic War were small, in his post he did much to increase the combat capability of cavalry units. The number of cavalry divisions in the cavalry corps was increased to three (regular strength), the divisions' four cavalry regiments were reduced, but a tank and artillery-mortar regiment were added to the cavalry division, while the cavalry corps received an anti-tank fighter regiment, a self-propelled artillery regiment, an anti-aircraft artillery battalion, guards rocket mortars, and other reinforcements. The cavalry units' logistical and artillery support was significantly increased, and the firepower and striking force of their formations and units increased.

In the spring of 1943, S. M. Budyonny held a meeting of the commanders of all seven cavalry corps at the Steppe Front headquarters. At this meeting, combat and operational experience in the use of cavalry in modern warfare was summarized, and based on this, a decision was made to employ cavalry

primarily as part of frontline cavalry-mechanized groups, as a means of exploiting breakthroughs in offensive operations. In the final stages of the Great Patriotic War, the use of Cossack cavalry units as part of horse-mechanized groups became the primary operational method for Soviet cavalry units. Cossack Horse Guardsmen earned their units unfading glory in battles for the liberation of Soviet soil from the Nazi invaders and in victorious battles in Eastern European countries and Germany itself. Cossacks participated in all major operations of this period in Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Austria. The participation of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 7th Guards Cavalry Corps in the Berlin Offensive crowned the Cossacks with laurels of victory. The Don, Kuban, Stavropol, and Terek Cossacks were among the first to meet their American allies at the Elbe River. Once again, as in the times of Frederick the Great and Napoleon, the Cossacks appeared in Europe, entered Berlin victorious, and watered their horses with the Spree and Oder rivers. The famous Victory Parade on Red Square in Moscow became a true and well-deserved triumph for the Soviet Cossacks. Among the participants in the parade, horse guardsmen from all seven cavalry corps marched along the cobblestones near the Kremlin walls, each of which had earned the honor of being called a Guards Corps during the war.

However, it would be wrong to think that only the Cossack cavalry achieved glory in the Great Patriotic War. Cossacks fought bravely in all branches of the armed forces – artillery, tank troops, aviation, infantry, including the renowned Kuban Plastun units – and participated in partisan detachments in occupied territory. Cossack women – members of the Komsomol – fought as snipers. Women, the elderly, and children of the Don, Kuban, and Stavropol regions, in the absence of the Cossacks, worked tirelessly in factories and plants, grew grain in collective farm fields, and donated their last resources to the front. The North Caucasus provided the largest number of horsemen for the cavalry units. Regional and district party organizations took patronage over "their" Cossack regiments and divisions, supplied them with uniforms, horses, saddles, sabers, fodder and provisions, sent reinforcements from volunteers, and tanks for Cossack units were built with money collected by the villagers.

Thus, Soviet Cossacks served with honor throughout the Great Patriotic War. It became one of the most striking, tragic, and heroic pages in the history of all the peoples of our country. This applies equally to the Cossacks. The Don, Terek, and Kuban Cossacks, like many others, contributed to the common Victory. This contribution was made through backbreaking labor, through the patience and courage of women, the elderly, and children who overcame hunger, replacing the Cossacks in the fields and sheepfolds of the steppe villages, and in the mines, factories, and plants in the cities. This truly invaluable

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contribution was made through the most precious, priceless thing—human lives sacrificed on the altar of the Great War. This resulted in a rethinking of the essence of the Cossacks and a reassessment of their role in Russian history in post-war historiography. This contributed to a partial revision of political assessments of the historical role of the Cossacks as a whole, especially in connection with the military repressions and deportations of the indigenous mountain peoples, who, back in the 1920s and 1930s, were assessed by Soviet propaganda as a revolutionary force, an ally of the Reds during the Civil War and the decossackization.

It must be said that the Germans, in turn, sought to secure, if not the support, then at least the loyalty of the Cossacks in the occupied territories. And from the summer and fall of 1942, Nazi propaganda actively called on the Cossacks to wage a joint crusade against Bolshevism. The goal of Nazi ideological strategists was to recreate a hotbed of instability in southern Russia and implement the old Roman strategem of "divide and conquer." To achieve this, it was necessary to reignite the fires of the "Cossack Vendée" and, ideally, to utilize the mobilization resources of the Cossacks on their side. Moreover, it should be noted that the Germans already had experience collaborating with the "White Cossacks" during the Civil War, when German troops occupied Rostov-on-Don in 1918. And, recalling this in 1942, the Germans appealed to the Cossacks: "Then we helped the Cossacks, and now you, Cossacks, will help us in the fight against the common enemy." True to the spirit of Goebbels' propaganda, the German command generously distributed promises and promises that were clearly impossible to fulfill and even mutually exclusive. Thus, the Germans promised the highlanders assistance in the fight against the "Russian invaders" and the return of the Caucasian lands, and the Cossacks liberties from the "Bolshevik dictatorship" and "Stalin's bloody tyranny," the restoration of Cossack liberties and rights to the Kuban and other "ancestral Cossack lands." At the same time, the Cossacks were reminded of the participation of some highlanders in the decossackization. In the Don region, the Nazis fomented hostility between the Cossacks and "outsiders." The peculiarities of the traditional Cossack worldview, the "specialness" of Cossackism, and the distinction between a "free Cossack" and a "peasant" were all taken into account. The Germans sought to emphasize this distinction between the Cossacks and the Russians and to instill in them a sense of national independence and exceptionalism. The main propaganda motif was the words: "Your unwavering faith in liberation has been fulfilled. The Cossacks can and must assert their national rights."

The Prague-based newspaper "Kazachi Vestnik" and several other pro-Nazi Cossack émigré publications actively promoted the ideology of an independent "Cossackia," a topic discussed in more

detail elsewhere. In the eyes of the Cossacks, the occupiers sought to present themselves as liberators. Allegedly, it was with the arrival of the Wehrmacht that "the territories of Kuban and Terek—Cossack lands—were completely liberated from the twenty-year occupation of the Red Army." The Germans also managed to draw on the influence of some White movement heroes, such as Generals Krasnov and Shkuro, to recruit Cossacks. Some former White Cossacks responded to their appeals and believed the Germans. These Cossacks perceived the German arrival as an opportunity to "take revenge on the Reds" for their dispossession of the Cossacks and to reclaim their ancestral lands and cottages. Some hoped to "reverse" the outcome of the Civil War. However, the harsh reality of "Ostpolitik" and the methods by which the occupiers imposed the "new order" quickly dispelled all illusions. The Nazi "conquerors of Europe" turned out to be nothing like the Kaiser's soldiers as remembered by Cossack veterans of World War I.

For its part, the Soviet leadership was acutely aware of the danger of Nazi propaganda. Even before the war, the Cossack population's rights were restored, and Cossacks were allowed to serve in the Red Army. Cossack cavalry units were also revived. With the onset of the war, Soviet propaganda finally abandoned the "excesses" of internationalism. Already in I.V. Stalin's first address to the Soviet people, which began with the words "brothers and sisters," he emphasized that the war against the fascist invaders was a Patriotic War. Propaganda efforts emphasized Russia's national history. Addressing the Cossacks, the Soviet government appealed to traditional Cossack patriotism and loyalty to Russia. The Communists also managed to secure the support of the Church in the holy war. For the Cossacks, traditionally more religious than other Russians, this was a unique sign of the rebirth of Holy Rus'. The main ideology of Soviet counter-propaganda can be formulated as follows: in the face of a common enemy—a foreign invader seeking to enslave Russia—internal strife must be forgotten. In fact, Russia's freedom and independence were placed above class interests and class struggle. It's worth noting that even after the defeat of the left opposition, Stalin, a pragmatist, returned to traditional imperial Russian policy. It was largely for this reason that Trotskyists accused Stalin of betraying the ideals of world revolution and of Bonapartism. And the overwhelming majority of the Cossack masses perceived the war against Nazism as a Patriotic War. The Cossacks had not forgotten either the de-Cossackization or the repressions, but even former White Cossacks and their sympathizers could not imagine themselves outside Russia, could not abandon it in difficult times, and therefore were not tempted by promises of a "free and independent Cossackia." The Germans managed to win over only a portion of the "White" Cossacks; the majority did not follow the Nazis. Even among the White émigrés,

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the majority sided with Russia (the USSR) and opposed fascist aggression. For example, General A.I. Denikin wrote: "We feel pain in the days of the army's defeats, even though it is called 'Red,' not 'Russian,' and joy in the days of its victories." Some "White" Cossacks, embittered against Soviet power, were prepared to continue "their" war against the Bolsheviks and "replay" their defeat in the civil war. There were also those, like P. Donskov, who believed that under the Germans, the lands of "Kuban and Terek—Cossack lands—were... liberated from twenty years of Red Army occupation." However, the occupier failed to achieve his primary goal—to win over the Cossack masses, to establish a strong foothold in the Caucasus, and to utilize the Cossack cavalry and its mobilization resources. The same author admits: "It was difficult for the Kuban Cossacks to gather the remnants of their forces..., there was no opportunity... to establish... their own Cossack administration, there was no one to take on the duties of a field ataman." Subsequently, the majority of the "white" Cossacks, initially sympathetic to the Germans (from memory of 1918), Having seen the realities of the fascists' "Eastern policy," she abandoned her last illusions. The same P. Donskov stated: "Hitler's system of colonial enslavement did not allow... the organization... of the Cossacks... The Nazi Germans... did not want... the re-establishment of the Cossacks. Nevertheless, during the retreat, fearing reprisals, a certain number of refugees left with the Germans. In total, the Wehrmacht managed to form three Cossack divisions, which operated in Yugoslavia against the partisans. The fate of these Cossacks was tragic and ended ingloriously. Here are some figures. Of several million Cossacks, according to the best estimates, only less than 80,000, including those who returned from emigration, went over to the German side (in total, up to 900,000 White émigrés, including Cossacks, fled Russia after the Civil War). Three Cossack divisions were part of the German forces. At the same time, even without taking into account that virtually all Cossacks fit for military service were called up to the front, by the summer of 1942, the Red Army had 10 cavalry corps and 31 cavalry divisions fighting, the majority of whose personnel were Cossacks. In the North Caucasus alone, following successful operations in 1942, two Guards Cossack corps were formed from six cavalry divisions by order of the Supreme Command Headquarters. Thus, Nazi propaganda attempts to win over the Cossacks were unsuccessful. Victory in the ideological and propaganda struggle went to the Communists, who relied on the patriotic feelings of the Cossacks.

Very characteristic of this period was the appeal to the patriotic traditions of the Patriotic War of 1812. The revolutionary traditions of the Cossacks were also covered. In addition, during the war, various propaganda publications of a patriotic nature were published - journalism, fiction, songs and military-

utilitarian publications, for example, dedicated to the production of Cossack ammunition. Already in the post-war period, new works by M. N. Korchin and other authors on the Don Cossacks were published. However, in general, during the war and in the first post-war years, the scientific study of the Cossacks was not given special attention in Soviet historiography. In the context of increasing external military threats, characteristic of the period of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War, the military function of the Cossacks was again actualized, as at the beginning of the century. As on the eve of World War I, which was discussed above in the chapter devoted to imperial pre-revolutionary historiography, this was manifested in the publication of various military literature on Cossack issues. From the mid-1930s to the second half of the 1950s, such military-specialized publications as cavalry regulations, manuals, military-historical and theoretical works on tactics, military-sports books for horsemen, standards for the manufacture of cavalry ammunition and similar normative documentation were published. As an example, it is necessary to cite, first of all, such basic normative publications as the 1938 Drill Regulations of the Red Army Cavalry, compiled on the basis of the experience of the First World War, the Civil War and the wars of the interwar period and published on the eve of the new world war, introduced by the order of the People's Commissar of Defense, Marshal of the USSR Voroshilov, and the successor to it, already on the new experience of the Patriotic War, the Drill Regulations of the Cavalry of the Soviet Army of 1951, introduced by the order of the Minister of Defense, Marshal of the USSR Vasilevsky. In addition, one can name such publications as "Cavalry Tactics" by Colonel L. Fedorenko, "Cavalry Service" by P. Salitan published for Osoaviakhim, "Instructions for Equestrian Sports of the Red Army", approved by the Inspector of the Red Army Cavalry, Army Commander of the Second Rank Gorodovikov and other similar publications. It is important to note that even the GOSTs of that period can be considered not only as modern sources, but also as a kind of legacy of previous years. In particular, the set of all-Union standards officially adopted by the Standardization Committee under the USSR Council of Labor and Defense for the traditional Cossack saddle of the "Archak" type is not only a source for studying Soviet cavalry equipment. It clearly inherited many features and characteristics of the traditional Cossack military saddle of the "Circassian" type. This type of saddle is noted in sources dating back to the Middle Ages, and is even mentioned in Russian epics of the Kyiv cycle, including the one about the "seasoned Cossack Ilya Muromets." And this traditionalism was quite natural, since the GOST had to be oriented towards the capabilities of saddle and harness workshops, which in the traditional regions of Cossack residence, performed the corresponding work as best they could. Again, let us take into account that

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in these workshops in the 1920s and 1930s, the same Cossacks worked, who maintained their production traditions and produced traditional Cossack ammunition from local materials.

The Soviet standardization system in this case faithfully reproduced and documented the design of such a saddle. In the pre-war years, such traditional wooden saddles were still widespread in the North Caucasus, where their handicraft and even artisan production for cattle breeders, shepherds, etc. continued. The author of this work had a chance to see individual examples of such saddles "in action" in practical use by shepherds, collective farm herders and horsemen in the same region back in the 1970s and 1980s. Therefore, the Soviet military standard of the 1930s, which provided for the widespread use of such equipment in Cossack cavalry divisions created at the beginning of the war as a people's militia, can well be considered, if not an authentic, then a completely acceptable source, especially for the historical reconstruction of traditional Cossack horse equipment.

Serious scientific research on the history of the Cossacks began to be published in the second half of the fifties. For the next anniversary of the October Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power in 1957, a whole series of publications of documents and other sources, as well as historical studies, illuminating the history, were published.

Revolution and Civil War in Cossack regions. Somewhat later, at the turn of the 1960s, research began on the socioeconomic foundations of Cossack life, and publications on the history of the Civil War continued.

In the sixties, the main attention of researchers was still attracted by the history of the Cossacks during the Revolution and the Civil War. Moreover, for the most part, the Cossacks were considered in the context of the establishment of Soviet power in certain regions. Only in a few works did the Cossacks become the main subject of study when examining revolutionary events.

The fruitful study of socio-economic problems, primarily agrarian issues of the history of the Cossacks, continues. A new direction in Cossack research has become the study of ethnic and ethnographic processes.

In the seventies, the number of special works on the Cossacks increased. It was at this time that recognized scientific authorities in the study of the Cossacks appeared. First of all, it is necessary to mention the doctoral dissertation and numerous publications of the recognized patriarch of Cossack studies in the history of the Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War, L. I. Futoryansky. Among the works of ethnographers in these years, the research of L. B. Zasedateleva stands out, who, based on many years of field research in the North Caucasus, was the first to draw attention to the wide cultural exchange between the highlanders and the Cossacks.

Leonid Iosifovich Futoryansky was born on May 6, 1928, in Kyiv to a military family. In 1941, he and his family evacuated to Orenburg. He enrolled in the Moscow Institute of Chemical Technology but then transferred to the Orenburg Pedagogical Institute, where he majored in history. After graduating with honors in 1952, he was assigned to the Abdulino Pedagogical College and taught in schools. In 1964, Leonid Iosifovich returned to his alma mater to teach. That same year, he defended his dissertation, "Youth of the Orenburg Region During the Civil War," dedicated to the history of the Komsomol. During this work, Futoryansky became interested in the Cossacks, a topic that was practically taboo at the time. It was L. I. Futoryansky who became the first researcher to successfully defend, in 1974, the first doctoral dissertation in Russia and the USSR specifically devoted to the history of the Cossacks, overcoming all obstacles and political barriers: "The Cossacks during the Period of Bourgeois-Democratic Revolutions in Russia." As the scholar himself recalls today about that time and the attitude toward the Cossacks: "They were considered counter-revolutionaries. My friend and colleague at the institute hid his Cossack roots, fearing persecution. The older generation of Cossacks was indeed largely opposed to Soviet power, but the majority of young people supported it." It is difficult to overestimate the historiographical significance of L. I. Futoryansky's dissertation for the history of Cossack studies in the USSR. This work opened up an entire field of academic research on the Cossacks, previously under tacit caesura. It was Futoryansky who first drew the attention of Soviet historical scholarship to the Cossacks' contribution to the Red Army's victories in the Civil War and the Great Patriotic War. Since 1973, the scholar has headed the Department of Russian History, served as Dean of the History Department, and Vice-Rector for Research at the Orenburg Pedagogical Institute (now State University). Since 1998, L. I. Futoryansky has headed the Research Institute of the History of the Southern Urals and the Cossacks of Russia at Orenburg State University. He is the author of over 500 publications, including 80 books and brochures. His authority and the academic school he founded are highly regarded today both in Russia and abroad.

Leonid Iosifovich Futoryansky is an Honored Scientist of the Russian Federation and was awarded the medal "For Valiant Labor in the Great Patriotic War" and medals for the 50th and 60th anniversaries of Victory in the Great Patriotic War. He has also been awarded the "Excellent Worker of Public Education of the RSFSR," "Excellent Worker of Education of the USSR," and "For Excellent Achievement in Higher Education" medals, as well as the USSR Exhibition of Economic Achievements medal. The American Institute for Biographical Research awarded Futoryansky the honorary title of "Person of the Year 1998." His name is included in the Book of Honor of the Orenburg Council of People's Deputies. L.I.

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Futoryansky is a four-time laureate of the Orenburg Regional Administration Prize.

L. B. Zasedateleva pioneered the serious and systematic scientific study of the Cossack phenomenon from an ethnographic perspective. It was this researcher who, for the first time in Soviet historiography, paid serious attention to the ethnic component of the phenomenological nature of the Cossacks. This methodological and research precedent was truly a watershed event for the evolution of Russian Cossack historiography, one that, in many ways, defined a new direction for the study of the Cossacks in the USSR and Russia in the following decades.

Lidiya Borisovna Zasedateleva was born on June 14, 1933. She graduated from the History Department of Moscow State University, where she worked since 1961 in the Department of Ethnology (until 1992, the Department of Ethnography). Under the academic supervision of the head of the Department of Ethnography, S. A. Tokarev, who worked at the department since its founding in 1939, Lidiya Borisovna defended her candidate dissertation, "Terek Cossacks in the Second Half of the 16th – Early 20th Centuries: (Historical and Ethnographic Essays)," in 1969. Based on this dissertation, Zasedateleva published a very voluminous and detailed (421 pages) monograph in 1974. For many years, from 1961 to 1988, Zasedateleva was the responsible leader of the North Caucasian Ethnographic Expedition of Moscow State University. In 1995, the Applied Ethnology Educational and Research Center was established at the Department of Ethnology at Moscow State University, under the direction of Professor L. B. Zasedateleva. In 1996, she defended her doctoral dissertation, "Eastern Slavs in the North Caucasus in the mid-16th – early 20th centuries (dynamics of ethno-cultural processes)," in her specialty 07.00.07 (Ethnography, Ethnology, and Anthropology). L. B. Zasedateleva is the co-author of several textbooks and teaching aids for schools and universities, and the deputy chairperson of the Dissertation Council for Ethnology and Archaeology No. 5010078. In 1999, she was awarded the academic title of professor, and since 2006 she has been an emeritus professor of Moscow State University. In total, this scholar has authored over eighty scientific and methodological publications.

L. B. Zasedateleva's scholarly works were the result of many years of fieldwork in the North Caucasus, where Lidiya Borisovna spent extended periods living with Cossack families and studying the traditional way of life of one of the most ethnographically distinctive Cossack groups—the Terek Cossacks, who had assimilated and adopted much of the Caucasian highlanders' way of life. Recall that even during the time of the Russian Empire, all its Cossack troops, including their uniforms, ammunition, and weapons, were divided into two types: the so-called "steppe" and "mountain"

Cossacks. Historically, only the Terek Cossacks, as descendants of the Greben Cossacks, belonged to the latter group. Only during the Great Caucasian War and the subsequent reorganization of the Cossack troops, the Kuban Cossacks were added to the ranks of the highland Cossacks, formed by uniting the Black Sea Cossacks (former Zaporozhian Cossacks) and the Line Cossacks (former Caucasian Line Cossack Army) into one newly formed army.

L. B. Zasedateleva's research is not only of great historiographical significance in the study of the Cossacks in the USSR and modern Russia. It is also worth noting the absolute uniqueness of these works as a historical and ethnocultural source.

The fact is that during the subsequent perestroika in the USSR, the collapse of statehood, and the two most recent Caucasian wars, the Terek Cossacks and the unique cultural atmosphere of their villages were almost completely destroyed. The Terek Cossacks suffered decisive and irreparable losses even during the Soviet era, especially with the incorporation of the Cossack territories of the former Terek region into Checheno-Ingushetia. But this culture finally perished at the beginning of the 21st century. In these tragic circumstances, the works of Lidiya Borisovna Zasedateleva remain virtually the only source for studying the lifestyle and culture of the Terek Cossacks in the second half of the 20th century.

During this same period, the foundations for the systematic scientific study of Cossack dialects in Soviet linguistics were laid. It is worth mentioning the long-term fieldwork of O. K. Serdyukova on folk dialects in the Don and Stavropol regions, who published a total of approximately three dozen scientific and methodological works on this subject. Olga Konstantinovna Serdyukova graduated from the Philological Faculty of Samarkand University during the evacuation and, since 1953, has been working in the Department of Russian and General Linguistics at Rostov State University. In April 1958, an "interregional meeting of dialectologists from Southern Russia" was held in Rostov-on-Don, at which a decision was made to begin collecting materials for compiling a dictionary of Don folk dialects. As part of this project, O. K. Serdyukova researched materials from the Rostov Region State Archives (RRS), worked in libraries, and studied Don periodicals. From 1958 to 1974, she supervised students' dialectal practice during expeditions to Cossack villages (Bagaevskaya, Nikolaevskaya, Nizhnechirskaya, Romanovskaya) and farmsteads (Polivanov, Paramonov, and others). In 1963, just a year after the return of the Nekrasov Cossacks, Olga Konstantinovna began field research into their dialects. These expeditions continued for many years. In 1969, O. K. Serdyukova successfully defended her dissertation, "Vocabulary of the Nekrasov Cossack Dialect (Research and Dictionary)," before the Dissertation Council of Rostov University. The vocabulary section of Serdyukova's dissertation was

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recently published as a separate publication, having great historical and linguistic value.

The main subject of O. K. Serdyukova's research was the unique dialects of the Nekrasov Cossacks, who fled Russia during the reign of Peter the Great and returned to their homeland only in 1962. This unique ethnographic group of Cossacks, thanks to their isolated position for more than two and a half centuries and the peculiarities of their religious doctrine, preserved not just individual archaic elements, but the entire complex of Cossack cultural archaism from the pre-Petrine period.

Serdyukova has made a significant contribution to not only Russian but also international scholarship—her research and, most importantly, her conscientious documentation of the linguistic practices of the Nekrasov Cossacks. The particular value and uniqueness of Serdyukova's collected materials stems from the fact that she was the first, immediately after the Nekrasov Cossacks' return to Russia, to study and describe their dialect, which subsequently inevitably began to dissolve and involuntarily modernize within the surrounding linguistic environment of southern Russian (including Cossack) dialects, after the end of cultural isolation in the alien ethnic and religious "Turkish" environment where this unique Cossack subculture existed from the 18th to the first half of the 20th centuries. Doctor of Philology, Professor V. I. Degtyarev gave the following professional assessment of Serdyukova's work: "O. K. Serdyukova's 'Dictionary of the Dialect of the Nekrasov Cossacks' is the only work that provides a more or less complete description of a unique dialect that is rapidly being lost amidst the modern Southern Russian dialects. The importance of this work for Russian scholarship and culture cannot be overstated." We can only agree with this opinion.

During these same years, extensive field research into Cossack dialects was conducted by a team of Rostov and other authors. In 1975–1976, Rostov State University, based on many years of fieldwork by a large team of scholars, published a three-volume "Dictionary of Russian Don Dialects." The authors of this fundamental publication were Z. V. Valyusinskaya [and others], under the academic supervision of Associate Professor V. S. Ovchinnikova and Professor T. A. Khmelevskaya.

In 1984, preparations began for a second edition of this dictionary, supplemented by new fieldwork conducted during student internships. The first volume of the dictionary was published in 1991, but the collapse of the USSR, the ensuing economic crisis, and the cessation of funding for fundamental research and education prevented its completion. Furthermore, the manuscript of the second volume was lost at the publisher during these turbulent times. It was only in 2003 that this work was finally completed and published, marking a major event for all of Russian Cossack scholarship, and especially for philologists and linguists.

This edition was prepared by N. A. Arkhipenko [and others] under the scientific guidance and editorship of the already mentioned above Professor V. I. Degtyarev.

In the 1970s, historiography continued to be dominated by studies of the Cossacks in the context of the Civil War. By this time, the accumulated body of research had already allowed some authors to begin historiographical reflection on historical knowledge. This primarily affected the historiography of research on the period of the 1917 Revolution and the Civil War. One of the first historiographic works was an article by K. A. Khmelevsky.

A real surge of interest from researchers and publishers in the Cossack theme occurred in the 1980s. Moreover, as our research shows, the beginning of this process falls in the first half of the eighties, that is, even before the beginning of "Perestroika", in what is commonly considered the "stagnation years".

By the early 1980s, a common methodological approach to solving the problem of the phenomenological nature of the Cossacks had developed in Soviet historiography. After the "class battles" of the revolution, the Civil War, "decossackization," "dekulakization," and the battles of the Great Patriotic War had died down, the Soviet Union, in the context of the communist paradigm of socio-historical progress, constructed a "new historical community—the Soviet people," devoid of social and national differences, within the framework of which the Cossacks were thought of, first of all, as an ethnographic historical-cultural phenomenon or a socio-cultural phenomenon. However, despite the fact that approaches to the study of the Cossacks and assessments of their historical role changed, the core of research remained the class approach. This is especially true for the history of the Civil War. But now the emphasis is shifting to examining the agitational work of the Bolsheviks among the Cossacks and the voluntary transition of the latter to the side of the Soviet power. One of the most complete studies on the history of the Cossacks in the Civil War, generalizing the results obtained by the entire Soviet historical science, was the monograph by A. P. Ermolin. It can be taken as a standard of Soviet historiography of this problem.

Ermolin's main conclusion is to affirm the uniqueness of the life and everyday life of the Cossacks, which required the development of a special political approach to the "middle Cossack" in order to attract him to the side of the Soviet power. It should be noted that methodologically the Cossacks are considered in this case as part of the peasantry, while the main difference is seen from a social-class point of view only in the provision of land. Due to this, the bulk of the working Cossacks were middle peasants, and the peasantry - poor. As a result, the "working Cossacks", in contrast to the "kulak-ataman" elite, are placed in the ranks of the revolutionary

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forces - the allies of the proletariat in the Great October Revolution and the Civil War. The main blame for the split of the Cossacks is placed on the Entente, the "anti-Soviet separatism of the atamans", which was actively supported by the Americans, the incitement and propaganda of the Cadets. Many Soviet researchers turn to the revolutionary traditions of the Cossacks – their role in popular uprisings and peasant wars is studied, especially under the leadership of S. Razin and E. Pugachev, who become true heroes of the 17th–18th centuries for Soviet historiography.

Thus, in the Soviet historiographic tradition, the Cossacks were presented as a socio-cultural group within the Russian people. The idea that the Cossacks were Russian by nationality was firmly established in science, which was reflected in the methods and, consequently, in the materials of the population censuses. Therefore, studies of the Cossack way of life, culture, and dialects, based on field research by demographers, came to the fore. Since it was claimed that the Cossacks as an estate ceased to exist after the revolution, their history seemed exhausted and did not attract the attention of researchers. The Cossacks in Soviet historiography were considered only as a certain fluctuation (branch) of Russian folk culture, as a component of the culture of the Soviet people. However, already in the early eighties, these largely ideological theoretical constructs began to be questioned. In this decade, which became the last for classical Soviet historiography, the range of studies and publications on the Cossacks sharply expanded. A large number of popular, journalistic, children's and fiction publications dedicated to the Cossacks are appearing.

A particularly large number of publications were related to the participation of Soviet Cossacks in the Great Patriotic War, the 40th anniversary of the victory in which was widely celebrated in 1985, and the 45th anniversary in 1990. In this regard, a particularly large number of memoirs were published. Coverage of the combat actions of cavalry and Cossack units on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War occupies a prominent place in domestic historiography. This applies, first of all, to Soviet historiography. Here we can name both general works on the history of the entire Great Patriotic War, and a number of special studies, memoirs and publications,

Dedicated specifically to Cossack units. In the postwar years, Cossack issues in Soviet historiography were, figuratively speaking, "put on hold." The number of specialized historical studies on the history of the Cossacks in general and their role in the Great Patriotic War was very limited. On the other hand, the living historical memory of the Great Patriotic War was still fresh. Therefore, military memoirs occupied a central place in Soviet postwar historiography. Extensive memoirs of the Great Patriotic War occupy a special position – intermediate between historiography and sources. After the

victorious conclusion of the war, Soviet military memoirs experienced a certain revival of the old traditions of the Russian army, a kind of "renaissance" of the officer subculture. In the postwar decades, the memoirs of Soviet military leaders were primarily published and republished in the "Military Memoirs" series. In addition to the memoirs of senior commanders, the post-war years saw the publication of memoirs by political, engineering, and creative figures from the front and rear—party leaders and commissars, prominent military designers, journalists, actors from frontline theaters, and the like. As a rule, these memoirs, with rare exceptions, were even more politicized than war memoirs. These memoirs are more literary in nature, but also less substantive. One example is the collection of memoirs by the All-Russian Theatre Society, "About Time and About Myself," in which A. Ageyeva's memoir, "Don Cossack Zinaida Razbezhnova," presents a brief episode from the actress's life at the front during the Battle of the North Caucasus, when she had to pretend to be a Don Cossack, supposedly fleeing from the Nazis behind the front lines to join the Cossacks, mobilizing them to fight for the liberation of the Don from the atrocities of the occupiers. According to the author of the memoirs himself, her entire "story" and appeal to the Cossacks was composed by the director of the front-line theater.

As we have seen above, the Red Army Cossack units played a valiant role in the war. Deep and daring raiding operations have always been a distinctive feature of the Cossack cavalry. It can be said that, along with the famous Cossack lava, the deep raid behind enemy lines was the "calling card" of the natural-born Cossack cavalymen. During the Great Patriotic War, the operational experience of daring Cossack raids, understood and applied at a new, high level of logistical and military science, also found widespread application. Twice Hero of the Soviet Union, General of the Army I. A. Pliev, distinguished himself as an outstanding organizer of daring Cossack raids. The memoirs of this legendary Cossack cavalry general during the Great Patriotic War, commander of the 1st Guards Cavalry-Mechanized Group, can be cited as a striking example of Soviet Cossack military memoirs of that time.

Issa Aleksandrovich Pliev (1903–1979) was born in the village of Stary Batako-Yurt in Ossetia. He joined the Soviet Army in 1922. In 1926, he graduated from the Leningrad Cavalry School, and in 1933, from the M.V. Frunze Military Academy. Later, in 1941, he successfully graduated from the Military Academy of the General Staff. In the 1920s, Pliev was a course commander at the cavalry school in Krasnodar. From 1933 to 1936, he served as chief of the operations department of the 5th Cavalry Division headquarters. From 1936 to 1938, he was appointed a military adviser and served in Mongolia. After returning from the Mongolian People's Republic, he served as a cavalry regiment commander. From the beginning of

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the Great Patriotic War, Pliev commanded the 50th Cavalry Division. In December 1941, he was appointed commander of the 2nd Guards Cavalry Corps, then successively commanded the 5th, 3rd, and 4th Guards Cavalry Corps, and from November 1944, the 1st Guards Cavalry-Mechanized Group (KMG). After the war, he commanded an army, and from 1958, he commanded the troops of the North Caucasus Military District for 10 years. Issa Aleksandrovich was a candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee, a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of the 2nd–7th convocations, and was awarded six Orders of Lenin, the Order of the October Revolution, three Orders of the Red Banner, as well as many other orders and medals, including those of foreign states. Cossack cavalymen under the command of I. A. Pliev participated in the battles of Moscow and Stalingrad, as well as in the Melitopol, Bereznegovato-Snigirev, Odessa, Belorussia, Budapest, and Prague operations of the Great Patriotic War. After the war, General Pliev was honored with leading one of the most brilliant and daring cavalry raids of World War II during the Soviet-Mongolian Offensive in Manchuria, which led to the defeat of the Japanese Kwantung Army in August 1945.

Even in the interwar decades, during heated debates about the place of cavalry in modern warfare, Soviet military theory, within the framework of the developing concept of deep operations, developed the model of the cavalry-mechanized group (KMG) as a form of operational use of cavalry units in new conditions. The KMG was conceived as a temporary operational or operational-tactical formation, created to exploit breakthroughs in frontline and sometimes army offensive operations, along the main axes, primarily in forested, marshy, mountainous, and mountainous desert terrain. The KMG included several cavalry, mechanized, and/or tank units.

The theory of a deep operation envisaged the simultaneous suppression of the enemy's defenses to their full depth, a breakthrough of their tactical zone by an attack echelon, followed by the rapid development of a tactical success into an operational one by introducing into the battle a breakthrough development echelon consisting of army and front mobile groups, and landing airborne assault forces deep in the enemy's rear behind the line of his operational reserves. It was assumed that the frontal operation would have a depth of up to 300 km, while ensuring in the main attack zone of 60–100 km a density of 0.5 rifle divisions, 50–100 guns, and 50–100 tanks per 1 km of front, which would ensure an advance rate of 10–15 km/day for infantry and 40–50 km/day after introducing into the breakthrough mobile troops consisting of tank, mechanized, and cavalry corps. The outbreak of the Great Patriotic War did not stop the debate about the legality and expediency of the operational use of cavalry units and associations based on them. Although in the first, most difficult months of the war, the Cossack cavalry played an

important role in the defense of the country, the strategic retreat and the predominantly defensive nature of the actions of the Soviet army at the first stage of the war, insufficient technical equipment, an acute shortage of heavy weapons, the seizure and maintenance of air superiority by the Germans - all this did not allow the creation of truly powerful KMGs and the full demonstration of their operational potential. Again, as in the pre-war years, doubts were expressed about the effectiveness of KMGs and the very possibility of deep cavalry raids: "The time for operational raids has passed. Such raids are dangerous and lead to the death of cavalry units." Concerns were also expressed about the vulnerability of cavalry in the depths of the enemy's operational formation, about its "defenselessness" under the blows of German aviation, etc. However, supporters of the operational use of the KMG, such cavalry officers as I. A. Pliev, believed that the best defense of the KMG should be its mobility and high rates of raid operations, and, of course, saturation with reinforcements - artillery, including self-propelled artillery, air defense and anti-tank defense systems with the obligatory inclusion of tank units. The conditions for operational success, I. A. Pliev notes in his memoirs, were the introduction of the group directly into the breakthrough, without spending its forces on "breaking through" the enemy's tactical defense zone, and reliable air cover.

The technical capabilities and operational conditions for creating strong and highly mobile cavalry and motorized groups were finally established after the turning point in the war, when Soviet forces seized the strategic initiative and the need to conduct deep offensive operations became a priority. To this end, in 1943, the cavalry corps were reorganized and significantly strengthened. A tank and artillery-mortar regiment were added to the cavalry division, while the cavalry corps received anti-tank fighter and self-propelled artillery regiments, as well as an anti-aircraft artillery battalion. In the spring of 1944, a cavalry and motorized group was formed within the 3rd Ukrainian Front under the command of General Pliev. It included the 4th Guards Kuban Cavalry and 4th Guards Stalingrad Mechanized Corps, forming the front's main mobile forces. Having entered the breach, Pliev's Cavalry-Mechanized Group captured Novy Bug just two days later, on March 8, and dismembered Hollidt's 6th German Army. Raiding behind enemy lines, the Cavalry-Mechanized Group smashed headquarters and warehouses, disrupted troop command and control, and sowed panic. According to I.A. Pliev's own recollections, the front commander, General of the Army R. Ya. Malinovsky, eloquently assessed the role of the cavalry: "To successfully implement the idea of a powerful frontal attack, an explosion from within was necessary, but that was precisely what we lacked. The Cavalry-Mechanized Group in this operation produced such an explosion. Get ready, Issa Aleksandrovich, we'll launch the same 'mine' in the Odessa direction." Pliev's Cavalry-

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Mechanized Group was no less successful in the following operation, where the Kuban and Stalingrad troops met the expectations of the front commander and captured the vital junction of Razdelnaya.

The rapid pace (up to 50 km/day) of the KMG advancement in raid operations, separated from its troops, created serious supply difficulties. They were partly resolved by capturing enemy warehouses and, above all, fuel and lubricants to provide the troops with ammunition. I. A. Pliev recalls: "Everything possible - packs, carts, tachankas - was loaded with ammunition without any standards," and each tank was loaded with up to 20 boxes of shells. Later, the problem of supplying and supporting the KMG that had entered operational space was solved with the help of aviation. Looking ahead, we note that the most striking example of such close cooperation is the Gobi-Khingan operation of the Soviet-Mongolian KMG under the command of Pliev. From Ukraine, the Kuban Guards went to the forests of Belarus, where the KMG was again formed as part of the 1st Belorussian Front under the command of Pliev. In a month of intense fighting, the group covered more than a thousand kilometers behind enemy lines and reached the Vistula. The Cossacks were already preparing to storm Berlin and water their horses in the Spree. But by order of the command, they were sent to the 2nd Ukrainian Front, where they were to participate in the liberation of Romania, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. As part of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, a KMG was created consisting of the 4th Guards Kuban Cossack Corps, the 6th Guards Cavalry and 7th Guards Mechanized Corps, as well as reinforcement units. Thus, Pliev's KMG included about 400 tanks - more than the neighboring 6th Guards Tank Army. The trend towards ever-increasing strengthening of the KMG was evident during the Debrecen operation by uniting under the command of Pliyev with the KMG of Lieutenant General S. I. Gorshkov, which included the 5th Guards Don Cavalry and 23rd Tank Corps. During this operation, 4,655 enemy soldiers and officers were captured and 15,876 were killed. At Pliyev's suggestion, the Headquarters sanctioned the creation of a regular headquarters body for the KMG, effectively at the rank of an army one. By order of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command of October 31, 1944, the 1st Guards Cavalry-Mechanized Group was formed, consisting of the 4th and 6th Guards Cavalry and 7th Guards Mechanized Corps.

In the final operations of the Great Patriotic War, the 1st Guards KMG under the command of Pliev once again showed itself from the best side. In his memoirs, I. A. Pliev describes numerous and brilliant feats accomplished by the guardsmen - Cossacks and tankmen. He himself was honored with the following words from A. M. Vasilevsky:

"Issa Aleksandrovich Pliev showed himself to be a true hero during the war, a master of raids that stunned the enemy, a brave division commander,

corps commander, and commander of a cavalry-mechanized group." I would like to note that the example of General Pliev.

No, but it is necessary. The brave and decisive Cossack commander confirms the vitality of the old tradition of the Caucasian Cossacks - joint service and the inclusion of people from the most diverse peoples of the North Caucasus.

As for the historiographical significance of Soviet military memoirs in general, with the exception of such classic works as the famous "Memoirs and Reflections" by G.K. Zhukov, who was not only a military but also a major political figure, post-war Soviet memoirs remained under strict censorship. The memoirs of Soviet military leaders were, in most cases, professionally edited and historically proofread, which undoubtedly diminishes their status as historical sources. One episode from the Battle of the Caucasus provides a typical example of such editing.

During the Red Army's winter counteroffensive and the liberation of the North Caucasus, both German and Russian sources note the presence of intermediate defensive lines during the Germans' hasty retreat from the Caucasus after the Battle of Stalingrad. The presence of these lines was "beneficial" to both sides, but only on paper. The German High Command strictly demanded a stubborn defense, and Hitler (who at the time was both Supreme Commander-in-Chief and commander of Army Group A in the Caucasus) strongly opposed the withdrawal of troops from the Caucasus. Manstein, who was at the time feverishly "pulling out his boots" stuck in the Caucasus, was willing to support his Führer's confidence in a stubborn defense of all possible lines and a planned, organized withdrawal of troops.

Paradoxically, at first glance, the situation on the other side of the front was developing in a similar way. The Soviet Supreme Command Headquarters demanded a vigorous pursuit of the enemy and the cutting off of Group A's forces from Rostov-on-Don. However, the Soviet frontline command was unable to quickly accomplish these objectives. In this situation, the existence of an intermediate defensive line of the German 1st Tank Army in the area of the Kalas River - the village of Aleksandrovskeye was a "convenient" justification. This line can be seen on military history maps dedicated to the liberation of the North Caucasus. For example, see the map in the inset to page 84 of the book "History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945" in six volumes. See also the map "Offensive Operation of the Northern Group of Forces in the Stavropol Direction" in the appendix to A.A. Grechko's memoirs "Years of War." At this point, the highway runs along the former Azov-Mozdok line and, between the villages of Aleksandrovskeye and Severnoye, crosses Mount Glavnaya (675 m)—the highest pass on the highway in the Stavropol Upland. It was here, according to the memoirs of A.A. Grechko, that the Germans managed

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to "organize resistance along the Kalinovskoye, Severnoye, and Poltavsky line. Two days of intense fighting were required to break through the enemy's defenses along this line..."

However, according to eyewitness accounts of the events described, collected by the author, the Germans did not occupy any intermediate line here in 1943; several days passed between the Germans' flight and the appearance of the first two Red Army soldiers at the pass. This episode is discussed in more detail in another work by the author, so here we can limit ourselves to the assumption that in this case, Grechko's recollections more likely reflect the official viewpoint of Soviet historiography than the personal opinion or impression of the memoirist.

Tellingly, we don't see such an episode in the memoirs of Manstein or Mellenthin, other than mentions of these lines in the context of the "struggle" with their own supreme command for a rapid withdrawal of troops. This can be explained, on the one hand, by the fact that this episode didn't play a significant role in the overall development of events at the front, and therefore remained outside the attention of memoirists. On the other hand, the Germans, unlike their Soviet adversaries after the war, were not constrained by the need to fit their memories into the overall historical narrative of official historiography.

Another distinctive feature of Soviet military memoirs is the almost complete absence of the "personal dimension" in the memoirs of Soviet commanders, a characteristic feature of pre-revolutionary memoirs and a genre characteristic of personal memoirs in general. Here, we essentially see not so much personal recollections and assessments of events as dry histories of units, formations, the contribution of various branches of the armed forces to the overall victory, and similar material, rarely interspersed with the author's own memoirs. These are primarily memoirs of a mundane nature, which could not have had any "political" significance. One can conclude that Soviet post-war memoirs are closely aligned with official historiography and political ideology, and that any movement beyond these boundaries was virtually unheard of.

In the 1970s and 1980s, numerous ethnographic and ethnocultural materials and studies were published. The quantity and thematic diversity of scholarly research on Cossack issues increased significantly. In the 1980s, after a long hiatus, new publications on the medieval and pre-revolutionary history of the Cossacks began to appear. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, major comprehensive works devoted to individual Cossack armies were published,

such as I. Ya. Kutsenko's monograph.

Research on the history of the Cossacks during the October Revolution and the Civil War continues, but is gradually losing its position, which had been undisputedly dominant in previous decades. The share of such research in the general flow of literature on the history and culture of the Cossacks is rapidly declining throughout the 1980s. And this is despite the general surge of interest in revolutionary topics in the first years of "Perestroika" and, especially, in connection with the next anniversary of October in 1987. Among the works of this direction, in addition to the above-mentioned A. P. Ermolin, one can only name the monograph of K. A. Khmelevsky and S. K. Khmelevsky, as well as books by G. L. Voskoboinikov and D. K. Prilepsky, Yu. K. Kiriyeenko, I. I. Dedov.

The most important event of the eighties in the study of the phenomenon of the Cossacks in Russian history was the holding of the first all-Union scientific conferences specifically devoted to the Cossack problem. This was a reflection of both the growing interest of scientists and the scientific community in the problem of the Cossacks in general and a manifestation of the actualization of this topic, as well as an indicator of the rapid growth in the number of studies and researchers - specialists in the Cossacks, who naturally needed an academic "information platform" for discussions and the prompt exchange of opinions and accumulated research experience. The initiator of the first all-Union conferences on the Cossacks was the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

The first All-Union scientific conference in Soviet history, "The Cossacks in the October Revolution and Civil War," was held in 1980 on the initiative of the Scientific Council of the USSR Academy of Sciences on the complex problem of "The History of the Great October Socialist Revolution" and personally of Academician I. I. Mintz. It was organized on the basis of the Karachay-Cherkess Research Institute of History, Philology and Economics. The second similar conference was held here in 1986, and the third in Nalchik in 1990. The main significance of these conferences was that they summarized the Soviet historiographic experience of studying the phenomenon of the Cossacks and opened the way for a broad scientific discussion on this problem. The general historiographic results of the Soviet experience of studying the Cossacks in quantitative and qualitative terms are reflected in Table 1 below.

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Table No. 1: Dynamics research and publications ByCossack themes in the USSR

No.	Variety publication date	1917-1920	1921-1930	1931-1940	1941-1950	1951-1960	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991	total
1	Monographs	4	12	6	4	6	10	10	24	15	91
2	Publications of sources	-	2	6	3	6	-	1	9	4	31
3	Conference Proceedings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	3
4	Collections of works	-	-	-	-	1	4	4	2	-	11
5	Articles in scientific journals	-	3	-	-	1	1	-	2	8	15
6	PhD dissertations	-	-	-	3	5	8	8	18	2	44
7	Doctoral dissertations	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2*	7*
8	Popular literature	-	-	9	5	-	-	-	5	27	46
SUM		4	17	21	15	19	23	24	65	58	248

In 1991, two doctoral dissertations were presented, one of which—in Ukraine—could be considered either "Soviet" or "sovereign Ukrainian," depending on the date chosen for the abstract submission, dissertation defense, or award of the academic degree. In general, such historiographical "misunderstandings" between Ukraine and Russia regarding the history of the Cossacks have become a hallmark of all modern historiography. This is particularly true of such historical topics as the history of the Black Sea/Kuban Cossacks, the history of the Civil War in southern Russia and in Cossack regions, "independent" historiography in exile, the history of Cossack collaboration during World War II and the Great Patriotic War, and other similarly controversial issues.

The table clearly demonstrates that the growing interest of researchers in the Cossacks dates back to the mid-twentieth century. A further increase in scholarly activity, as well as the total number and diversity of publications on Cossack topics, was a characteristic feature of Soviet historiography throughout the subsequent decades. These trends are particularly well illustrated by the dynamics of dissertation defenses and the total number of scholarly and popular publications.

The development of Soviet Cossack historiography resulted in 248 dissertations, monographs, and other publications on this topic. As a result, we can conclude that the common stereotype about Cossack topics being "taboo" in the USSR and the insignificant value of the Soviet historiographic legacy on this subject is untrue. It was precisely Soviet historiography that laid the foundations for the explosive surge of scholarly and public interest in Cossack history and culture that followed in the 1990s and 2000s.

Conclusion

Thus, in the second half of the 20th century, after the "class battles" of the Revolution, the Civil War, "decossackization" and "dekulakization" had "died down", the Soviet Union, in the context of the communist paradigm of socio-historical progress, constructed a "new historical community – the Soviet people", devoid of social and national differences, within the framework of which the Cossacks were conceived, first of all, as an ethnographic historical-cultural phenomenon or a socio-cultural phenomenon. And already within the framework of Soviet science, the study of the phenomenon of the Cossacks acquired a multidisciplinary character. The Cossacks became the subject of study of various humanities: history, ethnography, philology and linguistics, local history, archeology, theory and history of culture, military sciences, horse breeding and equestrian sports. As can be seen from the above table, the development of the Soviet historiographic tradition reached its peak by the early 1980s. This decade saw a real surge of public and scientific interest in the phenomenon of the Cossacks. Let us take, for example, such an indicator of scientific research activity as the defense of doctoral and candidate dissertations. If in the previous decade (1971–1980) eight candidate dissertations and the first doctoral dissertation in the USSR by Futoryansky were defended on the Cossacks, then during the period 1981–1990 the number of defended candidate dissertations increased to eighteen units, and doctoral dissertations – to four. However, this period, in all its characteristic features and evolutionary tendencies, no longer belongs to orthodox Soviet historiography, but to the newest stage in the study of the phenomenological nature of the Cossacks that began in the years of "Perestroika" in the USSR. The second book of our study will be devoted to this historiographic period, which continues to this day.

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