The Typology of Ethno-Estate in Cossack Publications in Russia in the 19th - Beginning of the 20th Centuries

Evgeniy Valerievich Akhmadulin and Tatiana Sergeevna Degtyareva
Southern Federal University (SFedU), Rostov-on-Don, Russia

Submitted: Sep 22, 2013; Accepted: Oct 26, 2013; Published: Oct 30, 2013

Abstract: The article is devoted to the research of typology in Cossack periodical publications in Russia in the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries. The modern methods of typological research of mass media do not take into account some important characteristics of the audience of publications of the pre-revolutionary Russia. These characteristics include the classification of the audience of periodical publications by estate and ethnic characteristics. There were six official estates that existed in Russia in the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries: nobility, clergy, merchant, peasantry, urban bourgeoisie and Cossacks. All of these estates had printed media that reflected their interests in one way or another. But only the Cossack printed media, mostly for Don Cossacks, functioned in the ethno-estate environment and had the corresponding typological characteristics.

Key words: Estates • Cossacks • Typology • Classification • Ethno-estate press • Newspaper • Magazine • Cossack publication

INTRODUCTION

One of the most colorful tendencies in the modern public life in Russia and in the South of the country, in particular, is the process of Cossack movement rebirth, expressed in an unusually lively interest of Cossacks to their history, indigenous culture and spiritual traditions. By all means, an important place in this process is taken by the means of mass communication that are contributing to the development and advocating Cossack independence by Cossacks themselves: these are various Internet portals (for example, «Kazachii krug»), websites of Cossack communities, Cossack youth organizations, etc., magazines that have both a printed and an electronic version. Therefore, the today's journalism system has actively functioning «Cossack» editions (as the publishers and the readers define them).

Modern Cossack movement is analyzed a lot by the Western expert community. Therefore, S.E. Cornell states that “this positive attitude and the establishment of a Kuban Cossack movement may also be explained as a reaction to the decreased Russian influence in the Caucasus, combined with an increased flow of refugees to the region and the wakening national consciousness of neighbouring Muslim peoples in the North Caucasus” [1].

Ian Appleby, speaking about Cossack revival writes the following, “Consciously informed by academic theories surrounding nation-formation, the Host developed sophisticated strategies to promote the cultural, spiritual and moral values it claims to be distinctive features of Kuban’ Cossack identity by exploiting the education system, founding hobby circles and through various print media and the internet (Perenizhko, Znachenie obrazovatel’noi i kul’turnoi komponent)” [2].

Barbara Skinner [3] gives a lot of attention to Cossack issues, in particular, she notes, “The establishment of the Cossack movement came as a result of political change at the national level. In the wake of Gorbachev’s Glasnost’ reforms in the mid-1980s, archives were made available which opened new possibilities for the study of Cossack history” [3].

In this context the issue of the revival, establishment and development of «Cossack» publications on the Don River sounds especially relevant, touching upon the issue
of accumulating the historical knowledge about the Cossack culture (part of which were periodical publications), but also resolving the task of restoring the picture of the Don press as much as possible. Besides, the historical experience of newspaper and magazine functioning in certain aspects can be useful for the modern mass media as well.

**The Methods:** The works of D. McQuail [4] about the typology of journalistic systems at different stages of society development and the works of M.L. DeFleur [5] about the impact of the audience of mass media on the development of the American model of mass communication were the methodological foundations of our study. The audience of mass communication means specifically is the determining one in the typology of different press groups, radio and television programs.

The typological research of periodic publications is relying on a certain methodology of multi-factor characteristics of different groups of publications. The main type-forming factors in this methodology are the »target purpose (target orientation) [T]; requests of certain social groups [A]; social-demographic and problematic-theme directional property (content) [C]; the specifics of social functions [F]" [6, 293]. Since the typological methods for means of mass information have been developed mostly in the 1980s, they didn't take into account some important characteristics of the audience in pre-revolutionary Russia. The classification of the audience of periodicals by estates and ethnotypical features is part of these features.

**The Main Part:** As is well known, there were six official estates in Russia in the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries: nobility, clergy, merchant, peasantry, urban bourgeoisie and Cossacks. All of these estates had printed media that reflected their interests in one way or another. Thus, the majority of public and literary journals starting from 1760s and until 1830s served the noble elite. At the turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries the estate-noble typological attributes were preserved only for «Grazhdanin», a magazine-newspaper by prince Meshersky [7, 68-76].

The clergy was represented by an official magazine of the Orthodox Russian Church «Tserkovnie vedomosti» and «Eparkhialnie vedomosti», created in large eparchies of the Russian Empire [7, 52-58]. The information requests of the merchanty were served by the official «Torgovo-promyshlennaya gazeta», «Vestnik torgovli, promyshlennosti i mestnogo hozyaistva» and other specialized publications of the time. The official «Selskiy vestnik» and multiple popular newspapers, such as «Narodnyi listok», «Mirskoi vestnik», «Selskaya beseda» and others [7, 38-45] responded to the peasantry estate interests.

Urban bourgeoisie estate (urban dwellers, small entrepreneurs, estate managers, tradesmen, workers, etc.) did not represent any common united social stratum. This type of public had city tabloids published for them such as «Peterburgskiy listok», «Moskovskiy listok» and then even «Gazeta-kopeika» that swarmed all the large Russian regions.

The press audience that is formed from the aforementioned estates was territorially scattered all over Russia and did not have a well-expressed ethnotypical unity.

The Cossack military estate was formed according to absolutely different principles. The arguments about what Cossacks are (especially Don Cossacks), either an estate or a nation, took place and are still happening until now. However, nobody will deny the fact that Don Cossacks as a social community have a full set of ethnic characteristics (territorial integrity, dialect, everyday life, traditions, military specialty, etc.). The process of forming the »oldest« in the South-East of the country Don Cossack clan into a particular military service men estate of the Russian state lasted for a long period of time. One of the first legal contracts between Moscow and Don can be considered the act of accepting Cossacks as a completely independent political and military force in the middle of the 16th century.

Only since 1721 the supervision of Cossack areas has been transferred from the Board of Foreign Affairs to the Military Collegium Administration and the Cossack areas have been included in the state administrative-legal system in Russia. And after the Pugachev's Rebellion in 1773-1775 there was a full and final submission of Cossack armies to sovereign power. But only at the beginning of the 19th century specific actions were taken to create official documents that would determine the place of Cossack armies in the federal structure.

On May 26, 1835, after sixteen years of development, the «Provision on the Don Army» was adopted and it legally registered Don Cossacks as a special military service estate. «The Provision» prescribed the internal structure and the number of military men in the army. It set a mandatory twenty-five year service for all male Cossack

---

1An estate was a large public group that had rights and obligations that were either prescribed by law or tradition and were inherited from generation to generation. Hyerarchy is a characteristic feature of an estate
population starting from the age of 18. Each Cossack had to report to service with his own fighting horse, melee weapon, a full set of clothing and gear. At the same time, a special appendix determined the size of plots of lands that Cossacks would get in accordance with their rank [8]. People who wanted to exit the Cossack estate and people from other estates who wanted to live among Cossacks were administratively and legally banned from doing that. All of these measures, according to the government's opinion, provided the closed and stable character of the new military service estate.

Don Cossacks were living densely on their historical territory in the Don River basin that was officially called the Area of Don Army. The first newspaper of Cossacks, issued in 1839, was called «Donskie voiskovye vedomosti» that is, based on the name of it, it serviced not among them, but even in that case the estate-ethnic: the papers: the history of Cossacks, Don Cossack highest ranks, fights for establishing county institutions, between Don and the rest of Russia, provide Cossacks with an opportunity to develop civic consciousness and reanimate rich Don newspapers. rest of Russia, provide Cossacks with an opportunity to progressives Donskoi vestnik periodicals were issued in Rostov-on-Don, the most colorful representatives of the (1911-1914), were present on the destroy Donskaya leader of this group was the editor of the first private Donskie voiskovye newspapers ideological functions, caused bitter disputes press of the 19th Cossack Golos Dona, A.A. Karasev. Vecherniy listok publications played the leading role. Staying within this factor, Don «Cossack» newspapers and their publicists divided into «progressives», appealing for reforms inside the community, to overcoming military-estate barriers and aspiring civic consciousness and the conservatives (Cossack enthusiasts), defending the old setup of Cossack life and advocating ethnic independence.

The appearance and development in the closed close Cossack military-estate environment of mass media impacted the changes of interaction character in the formerly closed community. If in the past martial prowess, work spirit, discipline, career growth were highly regarded and the high ranks of chieftains and foremen were respectful, then now the communication openness led less formerly noticeable men into the leaders of public opinion: educated junior Cossack officers, village police, gymnasias teachers, lawyers, statisticians, historians, Cossack village scribes, etc. With the appearance of a new (writing) Cossack educated circles the most important ethno-estate problems were brought into the open. The statement by Marshall McLuhen is perfectly fitting here that «the medium is the message»: the «medium» of any means of communication or technology is the change of scale, speed or form that it will bring into human work” [9, 10].

Social separation inside the Cossack community gave newspapers ideological functions, caused bitter disputes among them, but even in that case the estate-ethnic typological factor in «Cossack» publications played the leading role. Staying within this factor, Don «Cossack» newspapers and their publicists divided into «progressives», appealing for reforms inside the community, to overcoming military-estate barriers and aspiring civic consciousness and the conservatives (Cossack enthusiasts), defending the old setup of Cossack life and advocating ethnic independence.

The most colorful representatives of the progressive direction in «Cossack» press of the 19th century were «Donskoi vestnik», «Donskaya gazeta», «Donskoi golos», «Donskaya rech» newspapers. The silent leader of this group was the editor of the first private newspaper on the Don River, A.A. Karasev. «Donskoy vestnik» under his supervision declared as his goal «to develop civic consciousness and reanimate rich production powers of the Don region» [10]. The newspaper condemned Cossack family life, strict parenting of the youth, distorted understanding of electivity of Cossack village chieftains and many other estate vestiges among Cossacks. In 1870s A.A. Karasev in «Donskaya gazeta», despite the opposition of Cossack highest ranks, fights for establishing county institutions on the Don River.

The main task of Don «progressives» was the fight for minimizing estate differences of the Cossacks from the rest of the civil population of Russia. They wanted to destroy «the Great Chinese Wall» between Don and the rest of Russia, provide Cossacks with an opportunity to leave military service, receive education, work as entrepreneurs, in science, art. Later on, «Donskaya zhizn», «Vecherniy listok», «Donskaya mysli», «Novocherkassky courier» and other newspapers followed the same, but more politically oriented tendency.
The conservative (Cossack enthusiasts) group of «Cossack» press in the 19th century was represented by a collected volume «Chasovoy» (1878), «Donskoy spravochny listok» (1881–1882), «Kazachii vestnik» (1882–1887), «Donskoe poles» (1889 – 1891) newspapers. The leader of this group was the editor-publisher of the aforementioned publications F.K. Trailin. He stated that the publication of «Kazachiy vestnik» was «a completely patriotic impulse; the editor-publisher acceded to the voice of 6 patriots from the Don River to have a conservative-patriotic unit to protect «old Cossack principles» [11]. These particular principles were the basis of the target purpose of the «Cossack» newspaper that the publisher-editor F.K. Trailin started distributing to all Cossack organizations in Russia. He stressed in the ad about the subscription: «Kazachiy vestnik» has a task of familiarizing the Russian society with the military, civil, economical and other sides of Cossack life for Cossacks from Don, Kuban, Terek, Astrakhan, Orenburg, Siberia, Semirechensk, Zabaikalie and Amur, as well as history and military achievements of the past war» [12].

At the beginning of the 20th century, «Golos Dona» (1905 – 1906), «Donskoy kray» (1906 – 1907), «Donskaya gazeta» (1913–1914) newspapers and «Golos kazachestva» (1911–1914), «Vestnik kazachestva» (1913) magazines abided by the same ethno-estate tendency with more of Cossack nationalism. This tendency was manifested most colorfully in the contents of «an independent public-military» magazine «Golos kazachestva», published by S.A. Kholmsky who headed the group of «renegates» who shared the principles of «Cossack nationalism». His particular views as those of a passionate proponent of Cossack welfare, «when one hand will hold a tool of culture and the other a tightly gripped father's sabre» [13], determined the target purpose of the «Cossack» magazine. The main goal of the magazine was «the protection of rights and privileges of Cossacks on condition of the firmness of all main traditions of Cossack uniqueness, civic consciousness and ancestor customs” [13].

The dreams of Don nationalists about Cossack independence came true for a short time after the February Revolution in 1917. On October 20, 1917, the Tactical Circle held to consider the Don River land as an independent republic until there was an order in Russia that Cossacks would have accepted. The newspaper «Volnyi Don» became the official authority of the Don government. The bolsheviks who took over Don also proclaimed the establishment of the Don Soviet Republic. On May 6, 1918, when the Red Army was forced out of Novocherkassk (the capital of Don Cossacks), the project of Don Constitution was accepted and the Don independence was proclaimed. This was the last ethno-estate Cossack union. Even before that, right after the bolshevick «Decree on press» (October 27, 1917) the «Decree on the abolition of estates and civil ranks» (November 10, 1917) was issued.

CONCLUSION

In the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries there was a special type of periodic press on the Don River, it was for Cossacks and the leading type forming feature of it was the ethno-estate factor. This typological subsystem of press had two movements: the liberal-progressive one promoting the freedom of choice by Cossacks in military or civil duty, opening regional institutions and compulsory education, cancellation of patriarchal lifestyle and other vestiges of the past; and conservative-Cossack enthusiasts who advocated for the firmness of Cossack lifestyle, traditions, military service and Cossack privileges.

Modern Cossack press (newspapers «Kazachiy vestnik», «Kazachiy krug», «Golos kazachestva», «Kazachii vesti», «Kazachiya pravda», «Stanica», «Kazachii vzglyad», «Kazachii prisud», etc.), by all means, relies on the experience of their pre-revolutionary predecessors, but doesn't have that very important estate factor, or the factor of territorial integrity for Cossacks and it is mostly relying on historical and ethnic sources, using propaganda rhetoric of conservatives-Cossack enthusiasts.

Cossack press as a typological phenomenon in the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries formed and functioned on the territories of compact settlement of the Cossack army.

The main type-forming feature of Cossack periodic press was its orientation on ethnic-estate groups of population that made up Cossack armies and their families.

The Cossack press had two movements in it: the progressive one directed towards liberalization of old principles and the conservative one that asserted the sanctity of Cossack lifestyle and service.

Modern Cossack press services the informational interests of public movements directed to the revival of the Cossack movement.

In its declarations it relies on the experience of pre-revolutionary Cossack publications using at the same time the rhetoric of conservative Cossack enthusiasts' propaganda.
REFERENCES


10. Russian State Historical Archive (RSHA). Fund 776, List 3, Storage Unit 402, Sheet 8.

