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## **Kharkov Imperial University as a Crucial Center for the Development of the Don Cossack Intelligentsia (1800–1810)**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examines the interaction between Kharkov Imperial University and Don Cossackdom in the period 1800–1810. The conclusion drawn herein based on an analysis of relevant works by prerevolutionary authors on the history of Kharkov Imperial University and those on the history of education in the Don region is that Kharkov Imperial University and the Don Host formed a single scientific-educational space together and that this university is where the bulk of the Don Cossack intelligentsia formed. It is to be noted, however, that after 1917 there were some zoning changes in both education and geography in Eastern Europe at large, with the once-existing single scientific-educational space gradually ceasing to be of interest to researchers.

The paper shows that the development of cultural ties between the Don Host and Kharkov began no later than the mid-18th century, and that was something done on the initiative of local figures. The government creating the Kharkov Educational District and making Kharkov University its center only formalized the already existing ties. The Don Host and Kharkov University worked together in the following three major areas: (1) Kharkov University providing support to the Don region's educational institutions (above all, substantial financial and organizational assistance for the only gymnasium in Novocherkassk); (2) educating Don students (27 individuals over the course of 11 years, with 5 of those going on to play a major role in the history of Don science and culture); (3) publishing the first-ever research on Don Cossackdom (which would turn out to be a failure). Note that attending Kharkov University both facilitated the integration of young Cossacks into the common imperial cultural space and, on the contrary, helped cultivate in them a distinct Cossack identity. It is by individuals who graduated from Kharkov University during that period that the

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classic work 'A Historical Description of the Land of the Don Host' would be created, and it is Kharkov University that would publish works by Don students imbued with local color.

**Keywords:** Don Cossackdom, Don intelligentsia, Kharkov Imperial University, history of education, M.I. Platov.

### **1. Introduction**

The interaction between Kharkov Imperial University and the Don Host has been long neglected as a subject of dedicated research, although the contribution of Kharkov University to the development of science and culture in the milieu of Don Cossacks in the 19th century can hardly be overestimated. Indeed, a whole host of figures with a significant role in the history of Don Cossackdom, as it will be shown below, went to school in Kharkov, while the Don Host's main educational institution, Novocherkassk Gymnasium, worked with the university's professorial staff on a regular basis. In essence, thanks to the successful operation of the Kharkov Educational District, it is with Kharkov, not Moscow or Saint Petersburg, that Don Cossackdom formed part of a single scientific-educational space.

However, in the 20th century this scientific-educational space split between two countries – Russia and Ukraine. And up to now the existing scant research on the history of education in the Don region has shed almost no light on the subordination of local educational institutions to the Kharkov Educational District and, correspondingly, on their ties to Kharkov Imperial University. For instance, the article by A.N. Karpenko 'The Development of the System of Education in the Province of the Don Cossack Host in the Second Half of the 19th Century' mentions that in the 1860s one witnessed an intensification of a trend for Don Cossacks to seek education at various educational institutions in Moscow, whereas there is absolutely no mention of cases of Don Cossacks going to school in Kharkov (Karpenko, 2006: 242). The most substantial work on the history of prerevolutionary education in the Don region so far is S.Yu. Grechko's candidate's dissertation entitled 'Public Education in Ust-Medveditsky District in the Province of the Don Cossack Host', defended in 2019. Compared with the majority of other similar works, Grechko's not only speaks of the formal subordination of educational institutions in Ust-Medveditsky District to the Kharkov Educational District but mentions multiple visits to these educational institutions by Kharkov professors (Grechko, 2019: 41, 46, 172). However, S.Yu. Grechko offers no conclusions regarding the significance of such visits. What appears to hamper the study of narratives about the ties between the Don intelligentsia and Kharkov Imperial University is the actual model of examining the history of education in the Don region in the context of Russian history, whereby the local system of education is explored mainly in conjunction with common imperial processes and decisions that impacted on it, with little attention devoted to entities that are between the local and imperial levels. Yet to this model there appears to be no alternative in the work of contemporary Russian historians who have explored the subject of education in the Don region, including not only the already-mentioned A.N. Karpenko and S.Yu. Grechko but, for example, S.M. Sit'ko (Sit'ko, 2009) and the duo M.A. Kolomeitseva and A.N. Komandzhaev (Kolomeitseva, Komandzhaev, 2014) as well.

On the other hand, the works of Kharkov authors focused on the history of the local university quite predictably devote to the Cossack subject no attention. In this respect, of particular interest is the classic work by D.I. Bagaley 'Best Practices from the History of Kharkov University (Based on Unpublished Materials)' (Bagalei, 1898; Bagalei, 1904). During the period covered in the work, Kharkov University was attended by V.D. Sukhorukov, a major Don prerevolutionary historian and, doubtless, a seminal figure within the Don intelligentsia. Don statistician N.I. Krasnov wrote this about him in the second half of the 19th century: "Neither before nor after him was there ever a Don writer, opinion journalist, or public figure as popular in his native land as Sukhorukov was" (Korolev, 1991: 241-242). However, D.I. Bagaley says nothing about V.D. Sukhorukov's schooling at Kharkov Imperial University. And that appears to be logical to do within the framework of the university history model adopted by him, whereby the primary focus is on the university as a scientific-cultural institution, rather than on its prominent graduates. This model is followed by many Kharkov historians to this day. Specifically, of particular interest is the highly detailed bibliographic collection 'History of Kharkov University (1804–2006)', published in 2007 (Istoriya Kharkivs'kogo universitetu, 2007). It, too, contains no material on V.D. Sukhorukov, who, it must be acknowledged, indeed played no part in the history of Kharkov University.

Finally, in existing works of a more general nature devoted to the history of Cossackdom or that of education in Eastern Europe the material tends to be geographically structured based on contemporary national borders. In this context, of particular interest is the following relatively recent book by a group of prominent experts on the history of Cossackdom, released as part of a Russian Academy of Sciences project, – ‘Essays on the History and Culture of Cossackdom in the South of Russia’ (Ocherki istorii..., 2014). It examines, along with the cultural sphere, the history of Don, Kuban, Terek, and Astrakhan Cossacks. While there, obviously, is nothing wrong with bringing together the histories of four Cossack communities in one book, it must be noted that, as part of the process of geographic zoning in the Russian Empire in the 19th century, the lands of Kuban and Terek Cossacks even formally belonged to Caucasus Krai, while the Don Host was a standalone administrative unit (the Don Ataman was vested with the authority of Governor General in the 1860s) (Volvenko, 2017: 173). Larger territorial units were treated the following way – the land of the Don Host was joined not with Caucasus Krai but with the neighboring Ukrainian governorates. In ‘Russian Empire Military-Statistical Review’, one of the country’s more reliable publications in the 19th century, the contemporary areas of Ukraine, the Don Host, and Bessarabia were covered in Volumes 10 through 12 (the Don Host (Voenno-statisticheskoe obozrenie..., 1852), along with the Kherson (Voenno-statisticheskoe obozrenie..., 1849a), Taurida (Voenno-statisticheskoe obozrenie..., 1849b), and Yekaterinoslav governorates (Voenno-statisticheskoe obozrenie..., 1850b) and Bessarabia (Voenno-statisticheskoe obozrenie..., 1850a), was covered in Volume 11). Caucasus Krai was covered in Volume 16. Thus, the 19th-century Don Host was geographically perceived as belonging to the Black Sea locus, which brought it into affinity with the areas of contemporary Ukraine, while the Kuban and Terek hosts, along, for example, with Georgia, were part of the Caucasus locus. They even were often referred to in official documentation together as the ‘Cossack hosts of the Caucasus’ (RGIA. F. 560. Op. 41 D. 147. L. 130b.). Yet today historians focused on Cossackdom are building, after the fact, a distinct historical locus, ‘The Cossackdom of the South of Russia’, which combines lands that are geographically contiguous but, from the standpoint of contemporaries, belong to different regions. Furthermore, the territory of that Cossack locus is almost entirely within the boundaries of the Russian Federation, which aligns with contemporary notions about geographic zoning but distorts the research optics. Accordingly, in the work of contemporary authors the question of why, from the standpoint of 19th-century educated individuals, the Don Host was geographically closer to the Ukrainian governorates than to the Cossack hosts of the Caucasus is not even raised.

So, in contemporary historiography, narratives on Don history belong to the subject area of Russian history, while those on the history of Kharkov – to the history of Ukraine. On top of that, Russian authors focused on the study of the history of the education system in the Don region are characterized by having embraced a traditional state-oriented narrative whereby entities that are between the Don Host and the imperial authorities and are within a different country geographically are not given special attention. On the other hand, historians focused on Kharkov University are not interested, either, in narratives dealing with Don Cossacks who attended the university at some time but did not have a serious influence on its development. As we can see, a tear in the unity of the scientific-educational space between the Don region and Kharkov led to the memory of its existence getting forgotten – not only for political reasons but for purely historiographical ones as well. This paper aims to demonstrate how this unity formed and how significant Kharkov Imperial University was as a cultural center where the formation of a large portion of the Don Cossack intelligentsia took place. It can be suggested that a lack of attention to this issue precludes a definitive insight into the history of the development of science and culture in the Don region, one into where education came to this region from.

## **2. Materials and methods**

There is a large amount of research on Kharkov Imperial University, with new materials and sources on its history, some quite specialized, appearing to this day. For example, the following works were published after 2010 alone: ‘Reminiscences of Professor Ludwig Jakob about Kharkov University’ (an excerpt from the memoirs of one of the university’s first professors) (Posokhov, 2014); the articles ‘A Rather Interesting Find Made in the Central Research Library of Kharkov National University’ (a description of an 18th century manuscript that somehow became part of the university’s library collection) (Eliseeva, 2018), ‘Foreign Professors at Kharkov Imperial University’

(Pavlova, 2018), and ‘The Organization of the Educational Process in Kharkov Imperial University (1835–1863)’ (Lebid, Shevchenko, 2021). The problem, however, is that it is somewhat difficult to extract from these texts information about the ties between Kharkov University and the Don Host. Even A.E. Lebid’s study on the social composition of the university’s student body in the second half of the 19th century does not set the Cossacks apart into a separate category (Lebid, 2022: 266-274). Education in the Don Host has been explored in fewer research studies, with Kharkov Imperial University often not mentioned in them at all (Karpenko, 2006; Kolomeitseva, Komandzhaev, 2014).

Therefore, reference in the present work will be made mainly to works by prerevolutionary authors, including the already-mentioned classic research on the history of Kharkov Imperial University by D.I. Bagaley (Bagalei, 1898; Bagalei, 1904), a book by I.P. Artinsky on Novocherkassk Gymnasium (Artinskii, 1907), and several publications by Don local studies experts on education and culture in the Don region in the period between the 18th and early 19th centuries (Kirillov, 1905; Filonov, 1859). While these works do not specially address the narrative about the ties between the Don Host and Kharkov University, they offer a lot more relevant details, including the name list of all Don Cossack students who attended Kharkov Imperial University in the period 1808–1818 (Delo o direktore..., 1906: 183-184). Such details help trace the way the interaction between the Don authorities and Kharkov Imperial University began, who organized it, what forms this cooperation took on, and the way a single scientific-educational space gradually developed based on this cooperation.

In light of the latest events, the caveat must be made that the authors of the present work do not consider this space specifically Russian or specifically Ukrainian. In fact, most of the first-ever instructors to teach at Kharkov Imperial University were foreigners. D.I. Bagaley writes of 18 Germans, several French individuals, and several “Slavs” (Serbs, apparently) – a total of 29 foreign instructors versus 17 “Russian” ones (meaning Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians) (Bagalei, 1898: 538-541). Thus, the scientific-educational space within which the Don Host developed throughout the 19th century was built by members of a number of ethnicities guided by a common educational, rather than political, mission. It can be suggested that gaining insight into the characteristics of spaces like those that existed in Eastern Europe in the 19th century is methodologically crucial for the study of the history of education. Therefore, the aim in this paper is also to trace, through a descriptive method, the way Kharkov University, i.e. an institution created from above, by the government of the Russian Empire, simultaneously both drew Don Cossackdom into the imperial supranational cultural space and facilitated the study of the local history of the Don Host, taking thereby part in the formation of the distinct Cossack intelligentsia.

### **3. Discussion**

The orientation of the Don Host administration toward Kharkov as a cultural center emerged long before it became home to Kharkov University. Unfortunately, cultural life in the 18th-century Don region remains much underresearched due to a lack of relevant sources, which may remain a problem in the future for researchers willing to explore the ties between Don atamans and Kharkov Collegium which emerged back then. In any case, as early as 1753 a group of poets from the collegium led by Yakov Semonovich dedicated a large apologetic poem (panegyric) to ataman S.D. Yefremov (Filonov, 1859: 106-129). At this time, nothing is known of either the circumstances of writing this poem or the reaction it was met with in the Don Host. Its original survived into the mid-19th century, when it came to the attention of A.G. Filonov, an instructor at Novocherkassk Gymnasium (Filonov, 1859: 106). What is more, as asserted by this author, there was one more such poem, of which no more information is, unfortunately, provided by him (Filonov, 1859: 106). The very fact that poets from Kharkov Collegium dedicated to S.D. Yefremov as least two large poems, something that must have required long work, while the manuscripts for these poems were kept for a century somewhere in the Don region, indicates that one is dealing here not with situational interaction between the authorities and cultural figures but with some form of cultural patronage, something that the Don ataman provided Kharkov poets with repeatedly.

In the late 18th century, a priest named A.G. Oridovsky, who was a former junior school teacher at Kharkov Collegium, moved to Cherkassk (Kirillov, 1905: 7-8). According to himself, this was initiated by Don ataman A.I. Ilovaysky personally (Shadrina, 2016: 157-165). Indeed, the ataman is known to have petitioned for creating a new post at the Cherkassk Resurrection

Cathedral, making A.G. Oridovsky its fourth priest, which he supported with the assertion that “the city of Cherkassk is in need of educated priests capable of composing and verbally delivering sermons, as well as providing instruction in catechism; this need leaves many a blighting superstition in place” (Kirillov, 1905: 7-8). Later, researchers characterized A.G. Oridovsky as an ardent educator who, while forgotten to most, was, without exaggeration, an outstanding figure in Don history. A.A. Kirillov, a prominent local studies expert, describes him as “a brilliant pedagogue, an ardent champion of education, a top-class instructor, a truly “senior” teacher in the newly-opened gymnasium” (Kirillov, 1905: 8). Without going into the details of A.G. Oridovsky’s rich and controversial biography, which is yet to be subjected to dedicated research, it is to be noted that the priest enjoyed the patronage of not only A.I. Ilovaysky but another Don ataman as well, the famed M.I. Platov, who would even personally provide funds to get one of his sermons published (Oridovskii, 1811: forzats). Under M.I. Platov, A.G. Oridovsky influence in the Don region reached its acme – it was A.G. Oridovsky who represented the local clergy at the ceremony of breaking ground for the city of Novocherkassk and supervised the construction of the first chapel in the new capital of Don Cossackdom (Savel'ev, 1906: 39-41).

Since the post of Don ataman at the time of the opening of Kharkov Imperial University was held by M.I. Platov and A.G. Oridovsky was a leader in the local clergy, it is no wonder that the Don and university administrations developed a great relationship right from the outset. Curiously, not only Don historians who are not always objective in respect of M.I. Platov but D.I. Bagaley too note the ataman’s special attention to the university and his desire for having young Cossacks attend it. D.I. Bagaley even furnishes an excerpt from a letter written by M.I. Platov to the principal of Novocherkassk Gymnasium, A.G. Popov, in which the famed ataman states the following: “I am much pleased that through their hard work Don Cossacks not only have managed to earn enrollment at an institution of higher learning but attract the attention of the university’s rector and staff with the fact that their tuition is funded by the Don Host and that they always wear their Cossack uniform” (Bagalei, 1898: 800-801). D.I. Bagaley matches M.I. Platov’s position against the conduct of certain members of the clerical hierarchy who opposed persons of ecclesiastical status attending the university (Bagalei, 1898: 801).

On the other hand, Kharkov Imperial University played a significant part in terms of establishing and supporting Novocherkassk Gymnasium (which initially was based in Cherkassk, later Starocherkassk, and was known as Don Host Gymnasium). Of particular importance in this respect is the activity of professor I.F. Timkovsky, a prominent education organizer. Around 1805, A.G. Popov, who at that time was the principal of Cherkassk’s main public school, reported to his superiors that there was a shortage of individuals with a sufficient level of knowledge to be junior-level students at the gymnasium (Artinskii, 1907: 23). Consequently, they dispatched I.F. Timkovsky to Cherkassk with the task of finding out for the university what needed to be done “to expedite the transformation of the school into a gymnasium” (Artinskii, 1907: 24). As a result, the gymnasium opened on July 11, 1805, with the ceremony attended by M.I. Platov and A.G. Oridovsky delivering the event’s most inspiring address (Filonov, 1859: 168-169). I.F. Timkovsky gave a speech there as well, in which he said the following: “The university, which is duly grateful to the Don Host for its patriotic contributions to the education of youth, has ordained to institute in this, the Don Host’s main, city a gymnasium and a primary school” (Artinskii, 1907: 34). Thus, it was Kharkov Imperial University that instituted in the public field the first gymnasium in the Don region.

I.P. Artinsky provides several cases where it is the university that stood up for the rights of Don Host Gymnasium during the first years of its establishment. For instance, I.F. Timkovsky succeeded in having the Host’s administration provide 3,000 rubles annually toward classroom and library fit-out (Artinskii, 1907: 46). In 1806, the university provided 2,000 rubles of its own funds toward ordering from London some “physical instruments for Don Host Gymnasium” ((Artinskii, 1907: 47). The university provided help to primary schools as well. The same I.F. Timkovsky visited primary educational institutions in the Ust-Medveditsky and Second Don okrugs. Of particular interest is the fact that it was I.F. Timkovsky, not A.G. Popov, who, as Don Host Gymnasium’s first principal, reported to the administration of the educational district that the schools were ready to be transformed as per the new school statute (Iz otchetov..., 1905: 145-146).

Almost immediately subsequent to the opening of the gymnasium, that same year 1805, the issue was raised of inviting its more talented students to Kharkov Imperial University.

Apparently, I.F. Timkovsky had doubts about the gymnasium's ability to prepare them the right way on its own, so he requested that its best second-graders be sent to the university's preparatory department. A fact that is telling of the professor's involvement in matters dealing with education in the Don region is that he personally proposed three specific candidates from among the gymnasium's student body (Filonov, 1859: 178). In the end, the Don authorities would arrange for sending not three but six students to the university, laying down the tradition of having Don scholarship holders attend Kharkov Imperial University (Filonov, 1859: 178).

D.I. Bagaley shares the following characterization of Kharkov Imperial University's first Don Cossack students, which is based on the account of professor H. Rommel: "Amongst the students, there are young and handsome Don Cossacks distinguished by alacrity and humility, some even by poetical talent" (Багале́й, 1898: 834-835). At first glance, it follows from the above characterization that Don students were quite active individuals and were in good standing with others. Indeed, the university's publishing house even released in 1811 a book entitled 'Compositions by Nurselings of the Don Host at Kharkov Imperial University' (Bagalei, 1898: 833). Here, however, one comes across a curious phenomenon – the bulk of the active Donian students mentioned by D.I. Bagaley would not do anything exceptional after finishing school and would not become major figures in Don history, while D.I. Bagaley makes no mention of several Kharkov Imperial University alumni who would go on to become key figures in Don history.

However loud its title may seem, 'Compositions by Nurselings of the Don Host at Kharkov Imperial University' was written by just two persons, S. Grechanovsky and V. Kondrat'yev. Tellingly, they dedicated this book to M.I. Platov (Багале́й, 1898: 833). The book contains an article by S. Grechanovsky, 'A Description of Where Don Host Cossacks Live and What They are Like' (perhaps, the first-ever published study on Cossacks by a Cossack), and a set of lyrical miniatures in poetry and in prose, some of which are imbued with local color (e.g., the poem 'Don Sturgeon') (Bagalei, 1898: 833-834). It is revealing that this book, despite obviously being a seminal work, remains unknown within Don historiography. Another interesting fact is that initially S. Grechanovsky was a very difficult student – not only did he "not have the slightest inclination to do good in school", but one of his acts "could in no way be tolerated at a university" (Bagalei, 1898: 988). The issue of expelling S. Grechanovsky was raised more than once, but the university's administration let him stay. As asserted by D.I. Bagaley, the student's erratic behavior eventually changed for the better, which can be attested to by the university publishing his compositions (Bagalei, 1898: 988). V. Kondrat'yev was not particularly disciplined either, although at first he was doing pretty good in school. In his case, it took just one threat of expulsion to get him to reform himself (Bagalei, 1898: 989). Lastly, there also was a Don Cossack student, named I. Rubashkin, who, despite much tolerance on the part of the teaching staff and all exhortations and threats, actually ended up getting expelled for drinking (Bagalei, 1898: 989).

Furthermore, according to M.I. Platov's letter about Kharkov Imperial University's first Don students cited by D.I. Bagaley, it enrolled just three Don Cossacks in 1808 – Kondratov (who must be Kondrat'yev), Grechenovsky (Grechanovsky), and Rubashkin (Bagalei, 1898: 800). All three had serious problems with discipline, and were even on the brink of expulsion, with one eventually getting expelled. This casts doubts over H. Rommel's positive characterization of the University's first Don students. In fact, praising them, just like publishing their works dedicated to M.I. Platov, may very well have been a political move aimed at preserving a good relationship with the Don ataman and inviting new students from the Don region.

It is worth remembering that the mid-19th-century Don Host was a poorly developed region scientifically and culturally. According to an anonymous contemporary, "prior to Platov, the Don region was dominated by age-old ways of life, with all the strict requirements of patriarchy, like having to regularly attend church services, fast, celebrate holidays and birthdays, and engage in various inter- and intrafamily activities, both quiet and noisy" (Krasnov, 1875: 718). Most Don officers were listed in records of service at the time as either "illiterate" or "capable of reading and writing in Russian but not knowledgeable of any other sciences" (Zakharevich, 2005: 67). Coming from a society like that, many Cossacks were simply not prepared for university life. It could take some time to adapt to it, and many struggled to do so. Nevertheless, things would change very quickly – as early as the 1820s, with the post of Don ataman going to A.V. Ilovaysky. This period was described by contemporaries as follows: "Under Ilovaysky, they would remunerate every educated Donian. His Staff included the best of our youth, like Sukhorukov, Selivanov, Kushnarev,

Kucherov, Kolesnikov, and other university alumni” (Krasnov, 1875: 718). Unfortunately, little is known of specific persons on that list, but, judging by the close ties between the Don Host and Kharkov Imperial University, it can reasonably be supposed that all of them had graduated from this particular university.

It was owing to a lucky accident (a confrontation between Don ataman A.K. Denisov and the principal of Novocherkassk Gymnasium, A.G. Popov) that Kharkov Imperial University would in 1819 put together a report containing the number of Don Cossacks students enrolled at it for the first time in its history (exclusive of those attending the preparatory department and the boarding school). Based on the report, the university enrolled 3 such students in 1808 (the already-mentioned S. Grechanovsky (Grechenovsky), V. Kondrat'yev (Kondratov), and I. Rubashkin), 7 – in 1809 (including M.G. Kucherov, who was on the above-mentioned 1820 “best youth” list and who is known within Don historiography owing to the help he provided V.D. Sukhorukov with in putting together a historical-statistical description of the Don Host), 2 – in 1810, 1 – in 1811, 3 – in 1812 (including V.D. Sukhorukov himself and another assistant of his from among “the best youth”, A.K. Kushnarev), 2 – in 1813 (including another assistant of V.D. Sukhorukov’s – V.P. Posnov), 0 – in 1814, 1 – in 1815, 2 – in 1816 (including I.Ya. Zolotarev, a poet who was the first Don Cossack to teach at the university and a long-time principal of Novocherkassk Gymnasium), 5 – in 1817, and 1 – in 1818 (Delo o direktore..., 1906: 183-184). Thus, in the period 1808–1818, Kharkov Imperial University enrolled Don Cossacks almost each year, with the total number being 27, 5 of which would go on to play a major role in the development of Don science and culture.

Among the above individuals, the most researched within Don historiography are V.D. Sukhorukov and the three of his assistants – A.K. Kushnarev, M.G. Kucherov, and V.P. Posnov. These men put together between 1820 and 1830 a work that would go on to occupy a seminal place within all of the subsequent prerevolutionary historiography and continues to be reprinted to this day – ‘A Historical Description of the Land of the Don Host’ (Sukhorukov, 2001). A.A. Kirillov had the following to say about it back in the early 20th century: “This work is fundamental in Don history” (Kirillov, 1909: 17-18). Starting in as early as the 1830s, members of the Don intelligentsia repeatedly matched this study against works on Cossackdom by Russian authors which they viewed as poor research (Morozova, 2007). Thus, one is dealing here with a text that appears to have been crucial in cultivating a Don Cossack identity in the 19th century, one that was fundamental in shaping the notions of many Cossacks in that era about their history. It, however, must be noted that, while working on ‘A Historical Description of the Land of the Don Host’, V.D. Sukhorukov and his assistants interacted with historians based not in Kharkov but in Moscow and Saint Petersburg, including N.M. Karamzin (Korshikov, Korolev, 2001: 8). Nevertheless, what appears to be quite an important fact here is that this groundbreaking work on the history of Don Cossackdom was put together by graduates of Kharkov Imperial University, two of whom were in the same year at it, with the third being just a year below them there, which suggests that they may have had contact with each other back in university. Thus, Kharkov Imperial University appears to have stood at the origins of both Don education and Don science. Unfortunately, it is somewhat difficult to discuss this narrative in more detail, as there is this paradox, which was already mentioned earlier – there, apparently, was nothing special about the activity of V.D. Sukhorukov, A.K. Kushnarev, M.G. Kucherov, and V.P. Posnov, i.e. figures whose role in the development of science in the Don region was significant, with regard to Kharkov Imperial University, so they do not figure in any research on its history.

Of much more significance in the history of Kharkov Imperial University was I.Ya. Zolotarev. Information about this man is available not only in D.I. Bagaley’s monumental work specifically devoted to 19th-century Kharkov University but also in a bibliographic reference book for this university released in the contemporary period (Istoriya Kharkivs'kogo universitetu, 2007: 153, 157). It is known that I.Ya. Zolotarev was the son of a Don officer. He graduated from Novocherkassk Gymnasium in 1816, and in 1820 he graduated from Kharkov Imperial University, where he majored in philology. Afterwards, he served up until 1830, attaining the post of associate professor of Russian and philology (Artinskii, 1907: 314). It follows from the information provided by D.I. Bagaley that the young Cossack tried his hand at poetry back in college, with some of his work published in the university’s publications. For instance, ‘Works by Students with a Penchant for Domestic Philology at Kharkov Imperial University’ carried in 1819 for the first time two of his

verses – ‘Singer (for A.V. Sklabovsky)’ and ‘To Delius (An imitation of Horace)’, which later were reprinted in ‘Student Compositions and Translations Read on June 30, 1820, Following the Exams’ (Bagalei, 1904: 919-920). Of interest is the fact that A.V. Sklabovsky wrote epistles to I.Ya. Zolotarev too (Bagalei, 1904: 919). A.V. Sklabovsky was not just a poet – he was a prominent figure in literary Kharkov, working as the editor of *The Ukrainian Journal*, published from 1824 to 1825 (Kiselev, 2015: 69). Apparently, the relationship between the two was not limited to literature, for in 1821 A.V. Sklabovsky worked as the head of a student Bible society, where I.Ya. Zolotarev was his secretary (Bagalei, 1904: 98). Moreover, D.I. Bagaley actually considers A.V. Sklabovsky the most outstanding exponent of the religious-mystical views so popular at 1820s Kharkov Imperial University, while claiming that I.Ya. Zolotarev “aligned himself with Sklabovsky” (Bagalei, 1904: 693, 695).

Apparently, individuals who were part of V.D. Sukhorukov’s circle and I.Ya. Zolotarev followed extreme models of behavior, something done by Don Cossack students at Kharkov Imperial University later too. Some Don students wished to pursue a service-based career back home in the Don region – this group would eventually enjoy greater prominence in Don history than those who had other plans. Those within this second group hoped for the continuation of a scholarly career, which, if successful, would inscribe them into the history of particular Russian universities – although, in actual fact, this would write them out of the history of the Don region. Tellingly, the return to the Don region of I.Ya. Zolotarev, incorporated into the Kharkov university environment ever since his student years, was a forced move – he was brought back by the Don administration, which for some reason resolved to appoint him as a line officer in a regiment; it was only upon the intervention of the administration of the educational district that he became the principal of the gymnasium in Novocherkassk (Bagalei, 1904: 604). By contrast, there is no evidence of any ties individuals from V.D. Sukhorukov’s circle may have had to the Kharkov university environment subsequent to graduation. Of course, there were in-between variants, but, in general, those inclined to pursue service in the Don region tended not to keep in long-term touch with the university, despite all the exposure to science and arts at it, while those willing to pursue a university-based career detached themselves easily from the Don environment (e.g., the figure of G.K. Ul’yanov, a Don Cossack who went to Moscow, not Kharkov, University and who in the early 20th century became the rector of Warsaw University, is virtually not covered within Don historiography, and no information is available on his ties to the Don intelligentsia). Thus, the scientific-educational space linking Kharkov Imperial University and the Don Host provided as early as the period 1800–1810 Don Cossack students with a choice of two models of behavior to pick from: 1) a model envisaging gradually detaching oneself from regional identity and getting incorporated into the common imperial scholarly environment; 2) a model envisaging applying the knowledge acquired in university with a view to developing one’s regional identity. In this regard, it is quite telling that all famous compositions by V.D. Sukhorukov, whose other noteworthy work is ‘A Statistical Description of the Land of the Don Cossacks Composed in the Period 1822–1832’ (Sukhorukov, 1891), are devoted to the Don region, whereas, by contrast, the verses of I.Ya. Zolotarev, including those published in capital-based publications (I. Z-v", 1826), are, by and large, devoid of local color.

The scope of this paper does not allow a detailed exploration of I.Ya. Zolotarev’s activity as the head of Novocherkassk Gymnasium, which is brilliantly described by I.P. Artinsky. Suffice it to note that under him this gymnasium began to look like a properly organized educational institution. It was under I.Ya. Zolotarev that Novocherkassk Gymnasium made it a regular practice for teachers to fill out relevant documentation after each lesson (Artinskii, 1907: 88-89), set up the Teachers Council (Artinskii, 1907: 96), and began to develop curricula in liaison with the Kharkov Educational District (Artinskii, 1907: 108-110). In addition, I.Ya. Zolotarev, who as a university instructor actually gravitated more towards literature than science, managed to properly organize the “work of instructors at the gymnasium in the scholarly area”, which included the conduct of work related to translation and the composing of one’s own research papers (Artinskii, 1907: 101). Thus, while the influence of I.Ya. Zolotarev on the history of Don science and culture is not as substantial as that of V.D. Sukhorukov and his assistants, he can definitely be considered one of the most influential figures (along with A.G. Popov) to have contributed to the development of the Don region’s education sector in the 19th century.

Concluding the discussion about Kharkov Imperial University’s Don Cossack students, it is worth noting that Donians attended not only the actual university but the boarding school at it as well. While



only one such case is known, it involves General I.I. Krasnov, who was a hero of the Crimean War, a prominent public figure, and one of the Don region's first writers. As noted by his biographer V.N. Korolev, who worked with archival materials whose whereabouts are not known at this time, while at the boarding school the young Cossack "picked up a solid knowledge of some foreign languages, history, and literature"; afterwards, he kept in touch and corresponded with one of his teachers (Korolev, 1991: 211). It is to be noted, however, that prior to that I.I. Krasnov had received an excellent home-based education, which makes it somewhat difficult to tell how much his study specifically at Kharkov University influenced the shaping of his personality (Vospominaniya..., 1873: 365-366).

Lastly, one more area where Kharkov Imperial University and the Don administration cooperated was the publishing of the first specialized study on the history of Don Cossackdom. The author of the two-volume 'The Story of the Don Host' was the already-mentioned principal of Novocherkassk Gymnasium A.G. Popov. Dedicated to M.I. Platov, the book was published in 1814 and in 1816 by the Kharkov University's publishing house (Popov, 1814; Popov, 1816). Unfortunately, unlike V.D. Sukhorukov's 'A Historical Description of the Land of the Don Host', which chronologically followed them, the books by A.G. Popov sank into almost complete oblivion, with later Don scholars viewing them as a mere isolated case, one based on the use of highly archaic historical writing practices. Prominent contemporary historian N.A. Mininkov has the following to say on this: "Popov's composition was recognized as poor and subjected within later Don historiography to tough, yet fair, criticism, becoming for certain historians the object of irony and sarcasm. This, above all, is the case with Popov's express suggestion that most Don Cossacks descend from the Amazons, a claim the author did not even attempt to back up by evidence" (Mininkov, 2010: 266-285). This made this book, one by an alien author, even if it was published by Kharkov University, all the more unreadable to Kharkov historians.

On the other hand, 'The Story of the Don Host' does merit attention, at least because of its first volume 3,000 copies were published, which makes this book the university's most widely published publication in 1814 (Bagalei, 1898: 436). What is more, this was one of the largest print runs in the first decade of the university's existence – from 1805 to 1814. To compare, of the classic work 'Accounts of the Russians in Antiquity' by professor G.P. Uspensky, reprinted in the 21st century, just 605 copies were published (Bagalei, 1898: 434). Thus, this publication was clearly conceived as significant for the history of the university, and even an entire region that at the time was part of the Kharkov Educational District (i.e. contemporary Ukraine, Southern Russia, and the Caucasus). Indeed, the first book on the history of Cossackdom, which was released in 1814, i.e. the time when the Cossacks distinguished themselves by their military exploits during the Napoleonic Wars, could potentially have been of interest to many. Besides, an interest in the book was being displayed by M.I. Platov, who had long patronized the university. Soon after being published, a copy of the first volume was sent to the Don ataman (he was in Warsaw at the time). Platov replied with a letter discussing in detail the significance of the book. In his view, both young and old Donians were interested in "acquiring accurate information about their origins", while A.G. Popov deserved "enduring fame" and recognition from "all of our society" (Artinskii, 1907: 37). Finally, it was about the possibility of local residents willing to know more about their region's history. D.I. Bagaley provides numerous examples of Kharkov professors demonstrating an interest in regional topics, while A.V. Sklabovsky expressly states the following in The Ukrainian Journal: "However interesting Russian magazines might seem to residents of Ukraine, they most definitely would read Ukrainian ones with greater willingness and curiosity" (Kiselev, 2015: 70).

Thus, 'The Story of the Don Host' was a project of significance for both Kharkov Imperial University (based on the number of copies thereof published) and the Don Host (based on the interest displayed in it by the Don ataman personally). Had this project been a success, research on the Don region would have been organized in the 19th century differently and it is Kharkov Imperial University that would have played a significant role in that. However, this work remained a mere isolated historical case, while the first work to be recognized as a narrative on the history Cossackdom was 'A Historical Description of the Land of the Don Host', created exclusively by amateur Don historians – with no participation from professional scholars (yet with participation from the local and imperial authorities) and published only in the 1860s in Novocherkassk (Istoricheskoe opisaniye..., 1867). As a result, the Don region witnessed the development of strictly amateur historiography, with publications on local history published mainly in Novocherkassk by local organizations and enthusiasts and with such publications subjected to little to no scholarly examination.

Note that 'The Story of the Don Host' was admitted into print by G.P. Uspensky, not just a professional historian but one of the most prominent historians in early-19th-century Russia (Popov, 1814: *forzats*; Popov, 1816: *forzats*). According to D.I. Bagaley, the release of 'Accounts of the Russians in Antiquity' would enhance his standing among his contemporaries so much that that some of them would consider him the second-most influential researcher in the field of Russian antiquity behind N.M. Karamzin (Bagalei, 1898: 646). Personally, D.I. Bagaley's estimation of G.P. Uspensky was a little lower, but he, too, found 'Accounts of the Russians in Antiquity' satisfactory even from the standpoint of early-19th-century science, with the exception of the chapters on the origins of the Russian people and on the pagan religion (Bagalei, 1898: 646). The problem is that it is only the early history of Cossackdom (its history up until the 16th century) that the first volume of 'The Story of the Don Host' was devoted to, with A.G. Popov attempting to prove that the Cossacks originated from the Scythians and the Sarmatians (Popov, 1814: VII-IX). It is this area that the professional historian G.P. Uspensky appears to have been a poor consultant in, as he did not remove from A.G. Popov's book the manifestly fantastic hypotheses presented therein. Later Don authors viewed A.G. Popov's legacy mainly through the prism of these very hypotheses. "Popov had become absorbed with a distant historical period for which there is no information available in the local archives," wrote A.A. Kirillov (Kirillov, 1909: 6). The second volume of A.G. Popov's book, which is much larger than the first one and is devoted to events from the period between the 17th and early 18th centuries, appears to have been completely compromised, failing to attract the attention of later Don authors.

In any case, the fact that the first historical study on Don Cossacks was released by the university's publishing house, and with permission from a major historian like G.P. Uspensky, is another testimony to the influence that Kharkov Imperial University had on Don science and culture. Unfortunately, in this case this influence failed, as the book on Don Cossackdom published by the university would acquire a bad reputation in later historiography, with nothing known of any research on Don Cossackdom that Kharkov Imperial University took part in.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Cultural-educational ties between the Don Host and Kharkov began to form back in the 18th century. These ties were not inspired by the imperial government but emerged naturally, as a result of cooperation between local figures. Don atamans who were in need of educated individuals could look for them at Kharkov Collegium, while figures from this collegium who sought patronage could turn to Don atamans. Unfortunately, existing sources do not allow establishing how close those ties were. However, the earliest text, a work dedicated by Kharkov poets to a Don ataman, dates back to the mid-18th century, while, by the time Kharkov University opened up, a great deal of influence in the Don region was wielded by A.G. Oridovsky, a former teacher at the collegium, who was invited to Cherkassk specially for educational purposes.

The opening of the university and the incorporation of the Don Host into the Kharkov Educational District created the conditions for such unofficial ties to be formalized within a single scientific-educational space. It appears that the interest in this was again mutual – the university's administration exhibited as early as 1805 a willingness to provide assistance with the organization of the educational process in the Don region, and some time later Don ataman M.I. Platov personally stated in a letter that the academic successes of Cossack students were a matter of great joy to him. Of note, in this respect, is the fact the university's publishing house released in 1810 three books that touched upon the history of the Don region, all dedicated to M.I. Platov. However, the process of involvement of the Don Host in the scientific-educational space forming around the university was not effortless – many young Cossacks were often not prepared morally for school, with the teaching staff having to exert some effort in motivating them to learn science and observe discipline. In the end, despite these difficulties, the following three major areas for cooperation between the Don Host and Kharkov Imperial University emerged in the period 1800–1810:

- 1) Kharkov Imperial University provided substantial assistance to the activity of educational institutions in the Don region. Even the very opening of the first gymnasium in the Don Host was the result of assistance and support from professor I.F. Timkovsky, who had come to Cherkassk from another area. The university petitioned for an increase in funding for the gymnasium and used its own funds to purchase equipment for it. I.F. Timkovsky visited uyezd schools as well, with the entire system of education in the Don Host being, consequently, coordinated and guided by the university.

2) Kharkov Imperial University was the first educational center outside of the Don Host to be attended by Cossacks on a regular and systematic basis. In the period 1808–1818, Cossack students enrolled at the university almost each year (with the exception of 1814 only – perhaps, due to the war with Napoleon). According to a contemporary, as early as by 1820 several “university alumni” had gained prominence among members of the Host Staff. The period’s Kharkov Imperial University graduates included individuals who would play a significant role in the development of 19th-century Don culture, namely V.D. Sukhorukov, A.K. Kushnarev, M.G. Kucherov, and V.P. Posnov as the authors of ‘A Historical Description of the Land of the Don Host’, a work of major significance for future Don historiography that would have an effect with regard to the very identity of Cossackdom, I.Ya. Zolotarev, an outstanding Don educator who for many years was the principal of Novocherkassk Gymnasium and was the first Don Cossack to teach at the university, and I.I. Krasnov, a hero of the Crimean War who was one of the Don region’s first writers (he attended the university’s boarding school).

3) Kharkov Imperial University released the first specialized study on the history of Don Cossackdom, ‘The Story of the Don Host’ by A.G. Popov. Judging by the number of copies (3,000), which was large for that time period, the publication must have been regarded as fairly important for the university. It was admitted into print by professor G.P. Uspensky, a well-known historian. Unfortunately, the two-volume work by A.G. Popov was not a success; in fact, it would even go on to be viewed as highly archaic because of the attempts to prove the ancient origins of Cossackdom. Therefore, whereas the first two areas for cooperation between the Don Host and Kharkov Imperial University remained topical throughout the 19th century, the university no longer displayed interest in research on the history of Cossackdom, with this kind of research mainly conducted afterwards by amateur Don scholars with support from the authorities.

Thus, it was Kharkov, not Moscow or Saint Petersburg, that was the nation’s center for science and education in the period 1800–1810. Further research into the resulting single scientific-educational space can both provide a useful insight into the cultural history of Cossackdom and help gain a better understanding of the research optics employed in the study of education in Eastern Europe. The relationships between Kharkov Imperial University and Don Host are just one case illustrating this space, which existed in the 19th century but was torn and forgotten in the 20th century as a consequence of changes to the country’s borders and modifications to its geographic zoning standards.

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